

Park Board Meeting Minutes
Jackson City Hall
10/10/2023
5:30 p.m.

Attendees:

- Attendees: Matt Skaret, Luke Ewald, Tony Oxborough, Mike Eddy, Michael Gruhlke, Lynne Anderson, Joe Pell (City Council Representative).
- Absent: Michael Haeffner, Mike Gilbert, Neal Carlson.
- Guests:

Matt facilitated the meeting due to Michael Haeffner having to work.

City Park Bicycle Racks:

- Luke noted that some of the parks have seen a number of kids leaving bicycles near sidewalks or open greenspace; Central Park has kids who play football in the open greenspace, often leave their bicycles unintended.
- Look at purchasing a portable bike rack to try out in the park.
- **Motion made by** Lynne, seconded by Mike Eddy to approve purchasing one bicycle rack for Central Park, all in favor, motion carries.
- Bicycle rack options could include the following:
 - [Bicycle Shape Rack](#), [Bicycle Rider Rack](#), [Classy Styled Bike Rack](#), and a variety of fun designs from [Madrax](#).

Grant Season:

- Matt shared the Healthcare Foundation Grant has been very giving over the past few years for our projects we've applied for over the past years; we currently have \$25,000 budgeted in our Park Board budget for 2024.
- Luke noted there are a couple grant opportunities coming up yet this year:
 - The Jackson Healthcare Foundation- this will likely be due end of December 2023.
 - The Odell Wind Farm Grant- this is due mid-January 2024.
 - Jackson Community Foundation Grant- this will open in February or March 2024, due April 2024.
 - If there are projects we'd like to pursue funding for these would be good grants to apply for.
- SafetyFirst has been completed, so grants to focus on projects associated with Safety First would not be necessary at this point.
- Grant Request suggestions- shade structures, toy structures, etc.
- **Motion made by** Mike Eddy, seconded by Mike Gruhlke to write for grants to go toward shade structures, sandbox toys, and holiday light for Sunset Park and Memorial Park.

Parks, Trails, Recreation Survey Review:

- Luke shared the results from the parks, trails, and recreation survey; there were 266 individuals who took the survey, including JCC high school and middle school health and science classrooms to allow for greater youth engagement; a quick overview of the survey:
 - Question One: Majority of respondents said that parks and trails are important for the quality of life in Jackson.
 - Question Two: Accessibility was the most common term used to describe Jackson's parks and recreation, followed by fun and nature-oriented.
 - Comment Section- many respondents noted the trails are great, the parks improvements (i.e. updating, more or better play equipment).
 - Question Three: Good was the common term used to describe the overall impression of park, trail, and recreation amenities in Jackson, followed by fair.
 - Comment Section- many respondents noted the trails are great (but need snow removal in the winter), the parks and recreation areas need improvement (i.e. more opportunities for tweens and teens, year-round accessibility, park updates).
 - Question Four: Majority of respondents stated that they use Jackson's city parks once or twice a month, followed by once a week or more.
 - Comment Section- examples include moving sand volleyball to Ashley Park, improve softball fields, a few responses that folks have aged out of using the parks.
 - Question Five: Majority of respondents stated that they use Jackson's pathways (trails and sidewalks) once a week or more, followed by daily.
 - Comment Section- examples include poor sidewalks, snow removal is needed, more trails on east-side of Jackson.
 - Question Six: The top recreational locals, activities, facilities, and/or events that respondents stated they visit most often include: Ashley Park (1st), Nelson Creek Trail (2nd), Dumont Park (3rd), Des Moines River Trail (4th), Springfield Parkway Trail (5th), Central Park (6th).
 - Comment Section- a few examples of the skating rink needing to offer skate rentals, dog park concerns (i.e. shade, size), park concerns (i.e. wood chips, playground equipment).
 - Question Seven: The top other park/recreation/community events that respondents stated they visit. most often include: Jackson County Fairgrounds (1st), Jackson Chamber of Commerce events (2nd), Jackson Hot Dog Night (3rd), Jackson County Parks (4th), Clear Lake (5th), there was a three-way tie for 6th, including the Farmers Market, JCC Indoor Gym, and the Motorplex.
 - Comment Section- comments about the indoor pool (keep the pool), e-bike/e-scooter rentals, bike parks, senior center improvements.
 - Question Eight: Majority of respondents stated that Jackson's current parks and recreation facilities meet their needs as good, followed by fair.
 - Comment Section- benches/picnic tables near playground equipment, band stand in Ashley Park, County Park camping is good.

- Question Nine: Majority (two-way tie) of respondents rate the overall physical condition of Jackson's parks and recreation facilities as good and fair.
 - Comment Section- a few examples include Sunset Park and Patterson Park need a lot of work, updated shelter house in Ashely Park, flowers/plants planted throughout parks, improve park restrooms.
- Question Ten: The top items that discourage individuals from using the parks and trails in Jackson include: amenities available (1st), proximity to their location (2nd), condition of amenities/facilities (3rd), and safety concerns (4th).
 - Comment Section- some issues with teenagers at parks, some issues with county parks, age limitations, lighting improvements.
- Question Eleven: this question was a comment section, focusing on educational events or recreational programming in Jackson- a few examples shared included:
 - Cross country ski rentals, bandshell for concerts/more outdoor concerts, outdoor/nature learning experiences, fishing league, community sport leagues (i.e. tennis, volleyball, kickball, softball), seasonal events (i.e. pumpkin carving in the park), more fun runs/walks, walk/bike clubs, astronomy group.
- Question Twelve: The top enhancements for parks and recreational infrastructure shared by respondents included: trail snow removal (1st), canoe/kayak rental (2nd), pedestrian safety improvements- lighting, intersection safety (3rd), nature trail leading to AGCO (4th), splash pad (5th), and winter recreation- snowshoeing, fat tire biking (6th).
 - Comment Section- trails for ATVs/UTVs, E-Bikes, safer pedestrian crossing on US-71, after school activities (students involved in extra curriculars, fishing docks, concerns with park sandboxes, advocate to keep the indoor pool.
- Question Thirteen: Majority of individuals didn't express interest/willingness to volunteer time to an area of interest- 72% no, 28% yes.
 - We should've put a question pertaining to "please share your contact information with us if you wish to volunteer."
 - Comment Section- interest to help with communications for weekly email or newsletters, grant writing, trail running group, art/history, create an organized sign-up sheet for volunteer opportunities,
- Question Fourteen: Majority of individuals prefer receiving information related to recreational classes, events, and programs: through social media (1st), Jackson Connect (2nd), newspaper (3rd), community flyers (4th), Jackson city website (5th), and emails (6th).
 - Comment Section- weekly email of community events and Jackson County events, monthly or weekly Facebook Live, posters in the schools and flyers to take home.
- There were 46 participants who shared additional comments or suggestions related to Jackson's parks and recreation.
 - Comment Section- address teens in parks who are vandalizing/using profanity/horsing around, improve safety, accessibility for all ages, advocate for the pool, improvements for winter recreation (indoor and outdoor), recreation portfolio for Jackson.

- Demographic information:
 - Individuals who took the survey- 63% female, 31% male.
 - Top age ranges who participated in survey- 35-44 years old (1st), 25-34 years old (2nd), 12-17 years old (3rd).
 - Majority of individuals who participated the survey work in Jackson- 69% vs. 31%.
 - Majority of individuals who participated in the survey live in Zip Code 56143- 83% vs. 17%.
 - Majority of the individuals who participated in the survey- 89% White, 5% other races, and 6% prefer not to answer.
- The survey results can be found at this link: https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-J9UI6j5keNadjwCy28lm8w_3D_3D/

Park Identification Project:

- The overall theme of the survey shows that individuals are forward thinking and would like to see new or updated park features; the next step would be identified parks to work on and invest in that park rather than spread work over all the parks at once.
- Example: Sunset Park could benefit from having a large shade structure that goes over the sandbox area; remove the volleyball court and place in Ashley Park.

Park Holiday Light Project:

- Tony shared the holiday light project for Memorial Park is going to be put on hold for this season, and ready for the 2024 autumn season due to having to bury the wiring; the goal would be to light all 40-50 trees in Memorial Park.
- We will apply for the Healthcare Foundation Grant for lights, and purchase them when the holiday season is over.

Tony/Neal Report:

- Tony will be working on getting the ice built up for the skating rink, Tony is open turning the water on in the middle of the night when it is cold enough to help freeze the rink faster than past years; an end goal is to get a hockey league set up in the future.
- Tony will visit with Drew at the JCC School District to see if the school can help with trail snow removal.
- Tony will keep park water on until later October 2023, restrooms will be cleaned up and closed usually last (late Autumn 2023).
- **Motion made** by Luke, seconded by Joe, to begin application process for seasonal help, with a starting wage of \$12.00 per hour, all in favor, motion carries.

Next Meetings:

- 11/14/2023 and 12/12/2023 at 530 pm at Jackson City Hall.

Adjourn:

- Meeting adjourn at 642pm.