

Minutes of Recreational Work Group Meeting

1-18-11 6:00 PM

Present: Tom Ferrier, Bruce Schaal, Keith Olsen, Ray Arbet, Jon Rudie

Absent: Annie Jones, John Trione, Val Lass

Introduction and welcome to Keith Olsen (Cross-County/Track Coach @ Westosha Central).

Presented an overview of park-land history, County acquisition, Green Ribbon Committee and Work Group formulation. Reviewed park-land development activities to date.

Discussed past Recreation Work Group activities – and the need identified by the Green Ribbon Committee to “step-back” and define a clear vision for the Park’s development to ensure all Work Group activities align with the vision.

Distributed a copy of and discussed the Vision Statement developed by the Green Ribbon. All members felt they understood the Vision for the Park.

Re-examined the list of potential recreation activities identified in a prior Work Group meeting and refined the list to more closely align with the Vision Statement. Here is the discussion list:

Water Based Recreation:

- Scuba Diving (winter/summer)
- Fishing
- Swimming
- Wind-surfing
- Kayaking/Canoeing

Land Based Fitness:

- Children’s Playground (sustainable materials)
- Hiking
- Long-Distance Running
- Orienteering
- Cross Country Skiing (day/night)
- Snowshoeing (day/night)

Non-Traditional:

- Geo-caching
- Letter-boxing
- Falconry
- Dog sledding
- Hot-air ballooning

Passive/Educational

- Birding
- Astronomy
- Bat Habitat Development
- Living history events, Revolutionary War, Civil War, etc.
- Fishing education (ie. making lures/poles etc.)

The Group discussed some of these potential park features/activities in more detail and began to assign follow-up tasks, as summarized below:

Water Sports Discussion: Bruce Schaal wanted to know how soon the park would be open for diving. Ray said that we are developing plans to open the Park on a limited basis in 2011 - but water activities probably won't be permitted initially because of the logistics required to safely allow such activities. Accommodations for emergency dive/rescue practice could be possible. Discussion continued regarding diver's pier needs and fishing pier needs and how to possibly address both. Also discussed the possible need for a submerged diving platform and drop box to collect diving fees. In addition to this, Bruce will attempt to identify a contact person for wind-surfing to begin gathering information.

Fishing: Tom Ferrier discussed some the things needed to accommodate fishing – a removable, floating T-shaped pier could possibly be configured to accommodate both fishing and diving. Also discussed the need to contact the DNR and identify other resources necessary to begin developing recommendations for managing fishing in a sustainable way. Determining how to effectively address the need for education regarding “catch & release”, bait selection/sustainable fishing techniques and the dangers of invasive species, was also discussed. Tom indicated that his experience in 4-H demonstrated that fishing tournaments are a great way to get youth involved and simultaneously provide educational opportunities. He hoped we'd be able to hold an ice-fishing derby in 2012. In addition to these topics, Tom and Bruce agreed to work together to begin researching pier design options.

Running/Hiking: Keith Olsen indicated he was not intimately familiar with the park-lands, but from what he knew – he thought it would be a great long-distance training venue. He didn't think it would be conducive for holding races – because it didn't appear to offer the ability for spectators to view the race from enough vantage points. He explained that it is common practice at cross-county meets - that spectators move to multiple observation points during the course of the race to view the progress. Keith thought that the “mobile spectator” concept would be difficult to accommodate at the Park. It was suggested that Keith be given a tour of the Park so he could review the potential for a spectator to view nearly an entire race from a limited number of “look-out” points (negating the need for “mobile spectators”). Keith also suggested that it may make sense to establish “fitness stations” along certain trails so participants could perform a complete full-body work-out in the Park.

Land/Water Management: In light of a number of the topics covered at the meeting, Jon Rudie indicated that he will continue to work with the DNR to gather information for land/invasive species and specifically contact Doug Welch for additional lake management information.

Next meeting for the Work Group is tentatively planned for 6:00 PM Wednesday, March 16.