

**WALKER CITY COUNCIL
WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES
WALKER FIRE HALL MEETING ROOM
MONDAY APRIL 2, 2018**

CALL TO ORDER –Mayor Shaw

- Mayor Jed Shaw called the regular scheduled meeting to order at 5:03 p.m.
 - Council members present: McMurrin, Moore, Shaw, Senenfelder and Wilkening
 - Council members absent:
 - Others present during portions of the meeting included:

Terri Bjorklund, City Administrator
Pamela Smith, City Employee

John Valen, City Attorney
Travis Bakker, City Police

DISCUSSION ON ORDINANCE 2018-02-Mayor Shaw

- **An Ordinance amending Chapter 22 Parks and Recreation and Chapter 24 Streets, Sidewalks and other Public Places.**

The Board discusses the definitions of commercial use and noncommercial use in the park. The discussion also included limiting the number of events allowed between May 1st and September 30th. Valen stated that there needs to be some rational distinction to correctly define commercial use; assuming you have a good definition of commercial use it's not arbitrary to restrict their usage to certain low usage months of the year. Moore brings up a pending musical event the Chamber is hosting in the park and charging people to go attend.

Bjorklund states she doesn't believe that it is as much the Chamber as it is a group of people that the Chamber helped to organize. It's a group of citizens that want to do live music in different places, not just the park. The Arts & Culture group has gotten together with this group and they are supposedly doing this together.

Moore states she doesn't believe they will be with the Arts & Culture group.

Wilkening questioned that he thought that's why we are building a band shell?

Wilkening brings up that the upper area of the park for use would not be as bad as the lower part of the park.

Shaw brings up the other side of the road that is known as the chicken shack. Senenfelder added that when that area was brought up to the bike group they were met with a lot of resistance.

Bjorklund states that this year \$10,000 is earmarked in this budget cycle for the park board to spend from their funds to put in electric.

McMurrin reminded the board that Shingobee and Turtle Lake Township stated they would pay for the electric to go over there. If we want to continue to have joint government with these Townships we need to do something they want to; they want the skating rink there and that is why they said they would pay to put the electrical there.

Shaw agreed that is a good idea, they could use it as a skating rink in the winter and the City could use it for their events in the summer.

Wilkening brings up that fact that we have a dedicated access to Leech and we have to preserve that; that is one reason people come here as well as bikers for the trails.

Shaw and Wilkening agree on the idea of having certain designated camping areas. Wilkening suggested that it may be just as easy to have the current map that we use for the park and have 'Area 1' and 'Area 2' designated for overnight camping tent use. Bjorklund suggested filling the 'chicken shack' area first and if there is overflow the other area is available. Shaw added that if you are going to set up a temporary structure of any nature than your first option is the 'chicken shack' area and the overflow potentially if approved by Council would be allowed in the upper park.

Wilkening questioned how that would impact Walker Bay Days? Terri added that they would be reduced commercial but so are the bike people.

Bjorklund brings up a possible definition that includes any commercial use event requesting to use the Walker City Park will use the South Side area which is designated for those types of events.

Senenfelder reminds the board that the NWC fishing tournament is largely a commercial event.

Shaw suggests if the event they are holding relays to a certain degree on being within certain proximity of the beach or by the water; your use would potentially be permitted within the lower park. The board discusses different events that rely on water.

Bjorklund suggested to have a line item that defines fishing tournaments and where you are going to allow them and the wellbeing of Leech Lake and the number of fishing tournaments that we have.

Valen questioned if the distinction between commercial and noncommercial set any limitations on use of the park.

Bjorklund clarified that it defines those on the application to determine the amount of the fee.

Valen questioned why the council wanted to set limitations on commercial uses. Do you want to minimize usage of the park during the summer months? Does this mean commercial use takes up more space than noncommercial activities?

Wilkening stated that as of yet it doesn't but we don't want it to. Wilkening added that it seems like we are getting more use of that park where it is closed up more days each year.

Valen questioned if you want to minimize the use of the park why are you talking about commercial use verses all other uses?

Bjorklund stated that it is because they want the everyday citizen of Walker to be able to go down and not feel like they can't go down and utilize the park which their taxes pay for. They want it open to individuals throughout the day and want them to feel comfortable going down there. A lot of people don't feel comfortable going down there when there is a big event.

Valen questioned if a big event was necessarily commercial; couldn't it be just as well noncommercial?

Senenfelder added that he believes that the largest events down at the park are noncommercial.

Valen stated that he doesn't see why the distinction between commercial and noncommercial would make a difference. The distinction should be the size of the event rather than whether it's commercial or noncommercial.

Shaw stated that using the park for camping purposes is one change they could ‘hang their hats on’.

Bjorklund questioned the size of the tents for Walker Bay Days versus the size of the tent that the Church used. You could do it by size of tent and number of people in the group. With the bike group it is the number of tents not the size of their tents.

Shaw believes that the purpose of the tent would be a simple definition; if it is used for the purpose of camping overnight.

Senenfelder indicated that we are not the only community with this problem. Places like Bemidji and Baxter also deal with this.

Wilkening added that they have multiple parks; if we had multiple parks it would be less of an issue.

Moore brings up when Bemidji has their Dragon Boat races and the craft vendors are set up, Bemidji charges the vendors a hefty amount and questioned how they do it.

Senenfelder stated that if a commercial event where to have an event between a date specified that they could not use the park that they simply deny the permit.

Valen questioned if they would also deny the permit for noncommercial use?

Senenfelder answered that they could possibly depending on what else was going on in the park.

Valen states that the distinction should not be whether or not it’s commercial or noncommercial but the size of the event.

Shaw stated that it is partially that but it also the ability to shift some of the pressure from one portion of the park to another portion of the park where it is perfectly functional for the event that these people from our perspective that they want to hold. They can use a specific portion of the park. Whereas right now they can insist that they hold their event exactly where they want to be and be set up as long as they want to be set up, we have no way of saying no you’re not.

Senenfelder reads from the first line of Section 22.24 Camping: Overnight tent camping may be allowed in area designated by City Council. He questioned if they should revise it as ‘all applications if granted will be allowed in area designated by Council’?

Valen stated that you have an upper park, a lower park and across the road. With some rational basis you could identify those areas and denote whether or not they can use them. Shaw suggested the revision ‘for the purposes of overnight camping these areas shall be utilized’.

Senenfelder added that they could do it for all applications. The revision would read ‘all applications will be allowed in area designated by City Council’.

Bjorklund brings up a wedding at the park this summer will have around 150 guests; so we can’t depict it by size. They will not be using tents and they are only there for an hour or two.

Valen clarified that trying to do it on the basis of commercial versus noncommercial would be difficult.

Shaw agreed and stated that they not base the approval on whether or not it is commercial or noncommercial.

Valen believes that can create categories other than commercial or noncommercial that would get you to where you want with what area of the park a specific group should be in. Camping is the most obvious one that comes to mind and fishing tournaments are another one.

The Board recognizes that certain events like fishing tournaments and Walker Bay Days need to be near the water for their events.

Senenfelder questioned if they are sending this back to park board again.

Bjorklund stated that Pam and herself will dedicate time to this Ordinance and come up with some ideas for the park board to consider.

Valen questioned if there was a clear geographical distinction between the lower park and the upper park? The Board agreed that yes there is a very good distinction between what is considered upper park and what is considered the lower park. Valen suggested that naming those and the one across the road and start looking at categories.

Wilkening questioned Bjorklund if she felt comfortable with what she has heard from the Council.

Bjorklund stated she did and understands the direction that they would like to go.

ADJOURNMENT-Mayor Jed Shaw

Mayor Shaw adjourned the special work session meeting at 6:02 p.m.

Jed Shaw, Mayor

Attest: _____
Terri Bjorklund, Administrator