

Cheboygan Parks and Recreation Commission Minutes
Wednesday, July 19, 2023, 5:00 pm
Cheboygan Council Chambers

1. Roll call: Present: Bill Thompson, David Martin, Dale Riger, Darrin Deeter, Council Liaison Mary Darling and City Manager Dan Sabolsky
Absent: Tony Eustice

2. Approval of Minutes: Dexter, and Martin: 4-0

3. Approval of Agenda: Martin, Dexter: 4-0

4. Overview of proposed dog park:

Dale Rieger:

Because of requests from community members, in November he began further research regarding Dog Park options. After following various leads, he found that Jeff Lawson (County Supervisor) was supportive and had a suggestion for using county property within the City limits.

The proposed location is a +/- 1.43 acre parcel north of the Lincoln Avenue horseshoe pits and bordered on the west and north by DNR property near the Cheboygan locks and dam.

The DNR has approved use of the existing fence on a 1-year trial basis (for use of parking and fence) with a DNR passport required for parking.

Initial research indicates the size should be minimum 1 acre.

The proposal is for the following

A 100' x 150' run for small dogs

A 150' x 250' run for larger dogs

Upon soliciting estimates, \$45K for fencing seems likely (benches and signage would be additional)

Pursuit of a potential matching grant has been discussed with Jeff Lawson, Dan, Sabolsky, and Dale Rieger. It was agreed that the idea deserves further consideration.

Dale laid out the general characteristics of the potential grant (a two-month window for fundraising, a 12-month window for completion of the project, etc.) Dale noted his belief that a non-political, citizen lead fundraiser would be important.

Details regarding maintenance, cleanup etc. would be worked out between the county and city.

Questions from the audience:

Who will be responsible for the on-going maintenance (City or County?). Dan replied that he and Jeff would need to work through some details. County may be better for mowing. A Memorandum of Understanding would need to be in place.

Many years down the road, would the City be responsible for replacing?

Dan S.: The DNR deeded this property to the County for recreational activities. A MoU would be in place before fundraising begins, and the MoU would need City Council approval.

The following comments were made/questions asked:

The fund raising should not happen until all the agreements are in place.

What about plowing in the winter?

"The dog park would be 'value added' for our city, I think this would be a great thing".

There are some people who drive to Gaylord or elsewhere to run their dogs.

Ron Weisberger: We have had dogs for years. I visited GA recently and they had a dog park and we used it daily. It became a social thing. It does bring people in (economic impact). The City was responsible for maintenance.

People are looking for places to interact and socialize (after covid etc.).

Is the County willing to invest in this?

There has been some discussion but nothing definitive set, there are possibilities

What specifically are we asking the community to do?

Partner with the Parks & Rec commission to bring this idea to life.

5. Committee Reports:

- Felix Merchant Park:
Mary Darrow noted that she and Roger Kopernick have discussing the general plans for the park. David Martin will be meeting with Roger to make specific plans on how to bring the park back to life.
- Majestic Pocket Park:
Dale Rieger drew attention to the mural and explanatory sign erected at the park.
- Improved Communication:
Darrin Deeter explained the goal of finding an Internet site that could host news about activities and entertainment opportunities in the Cheboygan area.
- Recreation Authority - no report

6. Public Comments: None

7. Commissioner Comments:

Darrin Deeter expressed a desire to see a disc golf course created.

Mary Darling expressed her pleasure in seeing members of the public in attendance.

Dan Sabolsky reviewed activities by the city, including having tagged what needs to be repaired at Gordon Turner Park and creating plans for restoration/improvement.

Next meeting: September 20,2023 at 5:00 pm.

8. Adjournment: Deeter/Martin: 6:09.