

Coralville Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes

January 25, 2021

Call to Order Commission Chairperson Fred Fevold called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. Present were Commission Members Kyle McEvilly, Marti Mount, Dhuha Tawil, and Alex Taylor, Council Member Jill Dodds, Mayor John Lundell, City Administrator Kelly Hayworth, and Parks and Recreation Director Sherri Proud. This meeting was held by Zoom given inclement weather. Guest Speaker present was Judy Joyce.

Citizen Comments No comments.

Approval of December 2020 Minutes Commission Member McEvilly made recommendations related to corrections in the meeting minutes. Commission Member Taylor made a motion to accept the minutes with the corrections. Commission Member Mount seconded the motion; unanimous approval.

COVID 19 Discussions Mayor Lundell and City Administrator Hayworth addressed the Commission related to the City of Coralville, Parks and Recreation, and COVID 19. Lundell shared the historic overview related to COVID 19. Lundell noted that the City had learned many lessons during the times we've been through floods. Like during floods, the City's emergency response was transferred to the emergency response required to reduce the impact on businesses. Similarly, Lundell continued that the city's programming has changed dramatically due to the impact with COVID. Considerations related to mandatory stay at home orders were considered but were deemed not necessary.

In April, the first death in Johnson County created the reality of the true impact of the pandemic and demanded even greater changes. Over the spring and summer, the Parks and Recreation Department really provided teamwork to continue services and opportunities. The City dependency on the hospitality venues strained resource but has created opportunities for federal funding included the CARES funding to help some of the hospitality venues. This program provided some assistance related to expenses but were not replacements for revenue. A large sum was also obtained for the transit system related to financial assistance. In comparing Coralville with Iowa City, due to sizing differences, Coralville was not always eligible for funding opportunities given our population census.

In addition to the Johnson County vaccination rollout with Phase 1B with population numbers and vaccines available, the impact again reflects the population census in how the vaccine is distributed across Iowa. Locally, the mask mandates have provided one of many mitigations to reduce transmission of the virus.

City Administrator Hayworth addressed the financial impact. In June 2020, an estimate was given; in December, the numbers were recalculated with the impact being better than initially anticipated. The greatest industry impacted was hospitality which effected hotel/motel tax revenues coming to the City. Services for the City were also affected: library fines were pardoned, parks and recreation programs were suspended, summer camps saw reduced participation, and CCA events were cancelled. Varied revenue losses were reported for respective revenues. This was then transferred to budgetary reductions in June by the departments. A hiring freeze was imposed and staff reductions were also imposed. As previously reported, transit received allocated federal monies to support the subsidy of general funding. These funds were utilized with the remaining allocated funds being available yet during the next year.

Hayworth discussed the longer impact of the pandemic. Concerns relate to whether parents will want to send their children back to summer camp programs and whether parents will need school age care if their employment moves to home office options permanently. Hayworth noted that 20-30% of employers will select working from home rather than onsite.

Hayworth also recognized the opportunities that Parks and Recreation have created which should be credited. The staff have been doing remarkable with the intense hybrid learning program as an educational option. The grant programs to support scholarships have allowed families to take advantage of these options.

Hayworth responded to the question related to the anticipation of normalcy in the budget. The quarterly funds from the hotel and motel tax will be noted during the next year. He also noted that the property tax lag will be approximately eighteen months. The concern is the decline in collection given business values and how COVID has impacted and will continue to impact the businesses. The concern is also the decline in collection on property taxes. These will all be unknown until after January 2022 and may continue for at least three to five years.

Hayworth highlighted that the largest budget is Parks and Recreation. This is unusual for city budgets. Typically, police and fire departments are the largest. He noted that a review of aging facilities will be required given our current situation during the next two years. Thus far, the departments have done well with their buildings ranging from roofs

to mechanical systems. The Council has determined unanimously to replace the recreation center as part of their goal setting session. The Council will need to include all aspects of the budget during their planning with allotments and reserves.

Council Member Dodds noted that the Council is having these discussions regarding hard decisions about programming, facilities, and services. Recent legislation and pandemic variants have created uncertainties. A review of specific programming options and services were reviewed and comparisons with other communities were presented. It is recognized that similar options in other communities have been cancelled and Coralville has tried to continue programming and facility access to help keep as much normalcy for our community as possible. Focusing on best practices in the immediate geographical area and populated communities will continue to address aspects ranging from transit to hotel and motel. These discussions will not only include the Council but will also need to include the Commissions.

Hayworth also spoke about the project that would be presented later in the agenda and the positive benefits for the environment benefit and possible opportunities for contributing to future projects. Discussions among cities to explore opportunities to partner have occurred. Judy Joyce's presentation regarding Wetland Mitigation is very timely.

Clear Creek Streambank Mitigation presentation, Judy Joyce, Impact 7G

Judy Joyce provided a presentation regarding the proposal of the Clear Creek Streambank Mitigation project. This project will focus on water quality and may provide recreational improvements. The project utilizes these focused aspects to build credit for sales. This project is made possible by changes to the mitigation code for the US Army Corp of Engineers that allows for stream bank mitigation banks in 2017.

The City of Coralville will provide the investment with the study, permit, staffing, constructing, monitoring and maintenance, conserving easement, and managing with the conversation easement resulting in a shared community benefit. This economic development will improve stream access, water quality, reaction, and the habitat.

Joyce noted that Clear Creek includes the ownership of the urban stream by the City of Coralville. The mitigation banking would include the City of Coralville as the inventory of credit by developing the wetlands and streams which then can be sold on the open market. This development could include large scale improvements which would benefit the community. Mitigation must be at equal or higher value.

Two different locations could include the Iowa River mitigation bank and the Clear Creek mitigation bank. The Clear Creek Greenbelt is a recreational open space and the project would aim to slow the velocity of the stream with re-meandering and riparian buffers. By decreasing stream velocity, this would decrease erosion of the stream. The project would include stability techniques which will naturalize the bank, create deeper pools, and oxbows improvements.

Percentages of credits may be sold prior to construction; performance standards can promote credit sales. Hayworth and Dodds addressed how if the mitigation projects were not utilized to gain these credits, expenditures would need to be assumed by the City and still be required for current mitigation. The Riverfront Project could be utilized to sell credit that are used to possibly funding as the project is completed. Joyce and Dodd noted that the impact of water amenity is great.

Joyce and the City of Coralville Team entertained questions and comments from the Commission Members. Although a formal action will be required at a later date, Council has been conducting an initial study related to design next steps.

Council Report Council Liaison Dodds expressed her excitement related to the opportunity for the Parks and Recreation Department related to Judy Joyce's Clear Creek Streambank Mitigation presentation. Dodds noted that Council will continue to focus on the budget in upcoming sessions.

Director Report Parks and Recreation Director Proud encouraged Commission Members to partake in the ZOOM City Council meeting February 9th to recognize the Volunteers of the Year. The award will be presented to a Mom and her two daughters who have served as volleyball coaches.

Proud shared recent work at the Aquatic Center with the block pillar project with future spring work including the walls, locker replacement, and slide renovations. An upcoming project also includes planning for play space and park sections at Scanlon Farms. Proud also reviewed changes in positions including the resignation of Wayne Albrecht (29 years of service with the Parks Department) and the transfer of Shawn DeGood to the Naturalist Coordinator position and Nick Houg to the general park worker position. In addition, an OT doctoral student focusing on the

development of sensory integration as a doctoral capstone will begin this semester focusing on our playgrounds and how children with sensory deprivation disorders interact with the playgrounds.

Proud and Dodds reflected on the hybrid and online learning models initiatives and contribute their efforts as a compliment to the department. By offering the scholarships, slots and services have been maximized.

Commission Comments

Commission Member Fred Fevold	Commission Member shared that the presentation provided today is mind blowing and expressed his appreciation for the information that would benefit the department and city.
Commission Member Kyle McEvelly	Commission Member extended his thanks to Judy for her intrinsic detail and the information provided in her presentation.
Commission Member Marti Mount	No comment.
Commission Member Dhuha Tawil	No comment
Commission Member Alex Taylor	No comment.

Adjournment Commission Member Taylor made the motion to adjourn at 8:42 p.m.; Commission Member McEvelly seconded the motion; unanimous approval.