

**Village of North Hudson
Park Board Meeting
Thursday, October 6, 2016, 6:30 p.m.
Village Hall, 400 7th Street North
Hudson, WI 54016**

Call to Order: roll call

Chair Colleen O'Brien-Berglund called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. Answering the call were members Doug Ernie, John Helgeson, Howard Novotny, and Todd Wolf. A quorum was present and the meeting was duly noticed. It was noted that Mona Houston and Michelle Ortner were absent. Also in attendance were Public Works Director Mark Ekblad and Recording Secretary Anne-Marie McDonald.

Approval of minutes from September 1, 2016 Park Board Meeting

Motion (Helgeson/Wolf) to approve the minutes of September 1, 2016 meeting as written. Motion carried.

Comments from the floor

None

Superintendent's Report

Nothing to report.

October Tree Planting

Now is the time to plant the trees selected on Arbor Day. There are two lilacs, two lindens, two river birch and one honey locust tree to be planted in the village parks. Ekblad suggested three of the seven be planted on the west side of Woodcrest Park, and the remainder planted in Chief Jansen Park; board is in agreement. Ekblad will arrange to have the trees picked up from the City of Hudson and planted in the respective parks.

Ferry Landing Beach

O'Brien-Berglund read several letters from residents describing their experiences with recent activity by personal watercraft (PWC) operators at and near Ferry Landing Beach. Observed activities included a large number of loud watercraft on the river at the same time, watercraft circling near the beach and making lots of noise, and numerous watercraft parked on the beach along with gas and oil cans. The watercraft operators often were drinking and leaving trash on the beach. Resident Mike Christensen, of 246 Sommers Landing Road North, spoke about the changing aesthetics of the beach area, including increased noise, drinking by watercraft operators, and threats made by the operators. On a recent Sunday, Christensen said the PWCs were on the river at 8:30 am. As potential solutions, Christensen suggested boat launch permits and/or fee-based boat launch use, as well as separate swimming and launch areas marked by buoys and enforced. Resident Ralph Swenson of 707 Galahad Road North has observed an increased level of noise on the river and increased speeds of operators of PWCs. The PWC operators appear to be "cruising" the river, making circles in the same general area of the river. The noise level is high enough to be heard inside his home with the windows closed.

Resident Mackenzie Kozoglu of 250 Sommers Landing Road North echoed the thoughts of the letter writers and previous speakers. She is concerned about the noise, number of PWCs in the area of the beach, and an inability to reach the beach from a boat due to the number of PWCs parked on the beach and on the river. She is concerned about the potential danger to people and pets by being injured by PWC operators. Resident Bryce Thorpe of 232 Sommers Landing Road North has made multiple observations of PWC activity at and near the beach. He has taken photos and video, which he submitted to the board chair and village police chief for review. He has observed PWC use starting as early at 8:00 am, and noted that noise levels are very high in his home with the windows closed. PWC operators leave their watercraft stands, fuel containers, tool boxes, and coolers on the beach while they are on the water, and their vehicles are illegally parked.

O'Brien-Berglund stated that she will check with the National Park Service's National Scenic Riverway regulations regarding personal watercraft usage. Helgeson stated that he has seen the National Park Service sign along the riverway regarding no-wake zones, and his interpretation is that a no-wake zone is required through this area of the river, which makes this an enforcement issue.

Discussion included some possible solutions, including shutting down the boat launch, restricting usage to fishing boats under a certain length or horsepower rating, or prioritizing use to village residents. Ekblad stated that the North Hudson police department currently doesn't have any ordinances that they can enforce regarding this situation. For the police department to put more pressure on the PWC operators, the Park Board must enact stronger ordinances which can be enforced. Ekblad also mentioned that, despite Ferry Landing not being an official boat launch, numerous agencies use it as a boat launch, including Minnesota and Wisconsin DNR departments, Hudson and Lower St. Croix Valley fire departments, and the National Park Service. Swenson asked whether anyone on the Park Board has considered contacting Sheila Harsdorf or Dean Knudson's office for assistance at the state level. Nothing has been done in that regard to date. The Park Board will be investigating current rules and statutes from the various agencies and working towards a solution that hopefully will be in place by next year's boating season.

Resident Tom Springer of 711 Galahad Road North asked the Park Board why, if the launch at Ferry Landing isn't an official boat launch, there is designated trailer parking in the area. Ekblad explained that previously, boat trailers were parked all over the park, so a designated trailer parking area was created to allow others room to park their vehicles.

2017 Budget

Ekblad stated that the parks operating budget for 2017 will be the same as 2016. O'Brien-Berglund stated that the only additional expense that has been requested is new sandbox equipment, sandbox edging, and sand blanket at Glen Oaks Park. Ekblad stated that the village administrator and village engineer will apply for grants to assist with the cost of paving Ferry Landing Road and replacing the retaining walls at Brown's Beach.

Glen Oaks Park-Sandbox and Digger, discussion and possible recommendation

Ekblad stated that the Glen Oaks Park sandbox upgrades will be included in the 2017 budget as a capital expense. He will also include some funds to refresh or replace the sand – he is working with the village administrator and the village clerk to determine the dollar amounts for these items.

Future Agenda Items

Ferry Landing Beach.

Adjournment

Motion (Wolf/Helgeson) to adjourn. O'Brien-Berglund declared the meeting adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Anne-Marie McDonald
Recording Secretary