

AGENDA
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
OCT 7th @ 5:00 PM
Meeting in person at Veterans
Memorial Park

1. Call to order
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes August 4, 2021
4. Citizen Comments –
Any citizen who wishes to address the Commission on a matter not listed on this agenda may speak at this time. Persons addressing the Commission may state their name, address and, if applicable, their affiliation. The Commission Chair should recognize the citizen before speaking. A five-minute limitation applies unless extended by the chairman. Citizens wishing to speak on matters listed on the agenda will be permitted, under the same limitations, to speak when the matter is brought before Commission.
5. NEW BUSINESS
 - a. Green ER proposed event
 - b. Assessment of Memorial Park
6. Correspondence
7. Reports- Council Liaison, Other members
8. Next Meeting – Set meeting date
9. Adjournment

**Minutes
Village of Elk Rapids
Parks and Recreation Commission
September 2, 2021**

Present:

Charlie Pryde, Gordon Stewart, Melissa West, Paula Moyer

Staff: Village Manager Brian Gruesbeck

West calls meeting to order

Motion to approve agenda by Moyer. Second by Pryde. **Motion Carried**

Motion to approve last meeting minutes by Pryde. Second by Stewart. **Motion Carried**

Citizen Comments: n/a

New Business:

Ice Rink Location: Susie and Lewis Cooper, owners of the Elk Rapids Marina presented hosting the ice rink on their property along River Street. They proposed leasing the space to the Village for \$1. They will keep the food truck open as much as possible and plan to set up a fire pit and outdoor lighting. Parks and Recreation Commission will maintain the rink. Marcus Evans, DPW Superintendent was in favor of the idea and proposed moving the Garden Shed to the property to house skates and trainers.

Motion by Stewart to move the ice rink to the Elk Rapids Marina and send the request to Village Council for approval. Second by Pryde. **Motion carried.**

Food Trucks in Veterans Memorial Park: Discussion on having food trucks on a regular basis in the Veterans Park and how it would benefit the community and enhance the Parks and Recreation Commission goals for the Park. Discussed reaching out to the DDA to be involved in the discussion since they represent downtown businesses. The Commission recommended permanent Food Trucks not be allowed in Veterans Park but could be allowed for Special Events authorized by the Village Council. More discussion to follow.

Unfinished Business:

CommUNITY Event September 18: The event will be held from 12-3:00 pm in Veterans Park. Discussed event schedule and groups planning to participate in the event. Park and Recreation Commission members were encouraged to attend and assist as needed. Discussed publicity for the event.

Motion by Pryde to use Parks and Recreation funds to advertise the CommUNITY event, not to exceed \$750. Second by Stewart. **Motion carried.**

Budget Discussion: Evans discussed the poor condition of playground and swing equipment and the deteriorating condition of the tennis/basketball courts in Veterans Park. Discussed the need to replace the bridge structure and the Commission will research and get public input on what other type of equipment would be a good fit for the Park and how it will be funded. More discussion and a possible decision will occur when the Commission holds the October 7 meeting at 5:00 pm in Veterans Park. West requested the timer for the lights at the basketball courts be left on longer and it was decided to shut them off at 10 pm.

Nakwema Update: A stakeholders meeting is planned later in September.

Norte Update: The Slow Roll is going well.

Swim Lessons in Lake: Discussed the need to find a certified open water instructor to teach lessons next summer.

Trail Town: Application is finished and will be submitted since it has been approved by Village Council.

Correspondence: n/a

Reports-Council Liaison: Pryde reported the Council was given an update on the upcoming CommUNITY event. The Powerhome Solar update will be addressed at the next meeting. A motion to support the Pure Michigan Trailtown designation passed. The 13 Ways Community Project update report is available. The Elk Rapids District Library Board has not settled the library lease issue and will begin fundraising later this year for library upgrades.

Next meeting Thursday October 7 at 5:00 pm in Veterans Park.

Motion by Stewart to Adjourn. Second by Moyer. Meeting adjourned.

PERIOD ENDING 10/31/2021

GL NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	2021-22 AMENDED BUDGET	YTD BALANCE 10/31/2021	ACTIVITY FOR MONTH 10/31/2021	AVAILABLE BALANCE	% BDGT USED
Fund 101 - GENERAL FUND						
Expenditures						
Dept 694 - PARKS & RECREATION						
101-694-700-000	WAGES	4,241.00	975.67	8.88	3,265.33	23.01
101-694-715-000	SOCIAL SECURITY	324.00	74.67	0.68	249.33	23.05
101-694-716-000	HEALTH INSURANCE	639.00	357.98	0.00	281.02	56.02
101-694-718-000	RETIREMENT	424.00	97.57	0.89	326.43	23.01
101-694-719-000	SICK & ACCIDENT BENEFIT	69.00	40.36	0.00	28.64	58.49
101-694-720-000	WORKER'S COMP	74.00	40.00	0.00	34.00	54.05
101-694-818-000	CONTRACTUAL/PROF SVCS	3,500.00	900.00	0.00	2,600.00	25.71
101-694-864-000	TRAINING/CONFERENCES	500.00	0.00	0.00	500.00	0.00
101-694-880-000	RECREATION PROGRAMMING/FUNDRAISING	0.00	10.29	0.00	(10.29)	100.00
101-694-956-000	MISCELLANEOUS	200.00	38.14	0.00	161.86	19.07
101-694-970-350	TRAIL PROJECTS	2,500.00	0.00	0.00	2,500.00	0.00
101-694-977-500	TO/GEN CAP/401/P&R PROJECTS	5,000.00	0.00	0.00	5,000.00	0.00
Total Dept 694 - PARKS & RECREATION		17,471.00	2,534.68	10.45	14,936.32	14.51
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		17,471.00	2,534.68	10.45	14,936.32	14.51
Fund 101 - GENERAL FUND:						
TOTAL REVENUES		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		17,471.00	2,534.68	10.45	14,936.32	14.51
NET OF REVENUES & EXPENDITURES		(17,471.00)	(2,534.68)	(10.45)	(14,936.32)	14.51

Dear Melissa and Commissioners,

The Green Elk Rapids committee is requesting approval to have a Nature Fair in Veterans Memorial Park on Saturday, June 18, 2022, 10 a.m. -4 a.m. Our plans are general and exploratory at this time. We envision 40 + participants from local and regional organizations that focus on environmental missions. We propose a layout plan similar to that used in the Park previously by Art Rapids for their art fairs, which included booths/small tents for 40-50 exhibitors. We have recently solicited their advice and suggestions on layout and other management issues.

Included below is general information on this request presented in the most recent village council packet, which was our opening discussion:

The Green Elk Rapids Committee would like to host an educational event for organizations that promote care, preservation and enjoyment of the natural environment. This event would inform our community about all the groups that promote an environmental message.

Initial plans propose approximately 40 environmentally focused organizations to participate with an exhibit, presentation, booth, etc. to engage and educate the public about their mission(s). This event will be free for all to attend.

The anticipated layout would include an estimated 40 organizations.

We would appreciate guidance on the permit application process and any other information from Village Government to ensure that this is a successful educational event for our community.

Plans are general as we research the scope and possibilities for such an event.

Please let us know of any special process or arrangements that are appropriate. Committee members would be happy to provide further information at your next meeting, or to meet personally at your earliest convenience, in order to have as much planning time as possible. We appreciate all suggestions and advice you have to offer.

We hope to use the Park venue for this event as it is very much in keeping with our joint master plan, the Parks and Rec master plan, and the general goals and character of our village. We would greatly appreciate your support for this venture.

Regards,
Royce Ragland, chair
Green Elk Rapids Committee
264-0618

MEMORIAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN

Village of Elk Rapids, Michigan

2015

Developed by the Parks and Recreation Commission

Planning Commission Approved, _____

Village Council Approved, _____

Introduction

The purpose of the Memorial Park Management Plan is to incorporate the public interest in Memorial Park that will identify short and long term preservation items and improvements. The plan will rely on activity areas and map(s) to communicate Plan concepts. It should be noted that activity areas may overlap and therefore activities of one type may spill into another activity area. However, physical improvements within an activity area should tend to improve the type of activity identified for that area. It is the intent of this plan to incorporate and allow only recreation activities and facilities that are practical. However, due to the limited space and sensitive environmental characteristics, many recreation activities may not be practical or acceptable.

Historical Background

In the early 1900s citizens first entertained the notion of developing a park in the area of the present park and the island where the library is now located. Village Trustees approved purchasing Lot #11 of Section 21, Township 29 North, Range 9 West, but enthusiasm for further development waned. Then on June 27, 1912 the Village considered a deal with Dexter & Noble Land Company for the property known as Memorial Park. For \$500 per year, paid years 1912 through 1917, the Village could use the park land. A maintenance man would be hired for 5 months a year and gradual improvements could be made. Special considerations were that there would be no dumping or building on the site and the Dexter & Noble Land Company would not be responsible for taxes or any other fees that may be imposed. Village Council members could not decide on the offer, so on March 13, 1913 a public referendum was held and the public voted down the offer by a no vote of 181 and a yes vote of 70.

Time passed and in March of 1922 the offer was accepted by the Village Council. Then in 1927, a resolution was passed purchasing additional property lying north of River Street, fronting on Elk River, lying between Pine and Spruce Streets. This resolution passed by a margin of 4 to 1.

One of the first improvements was prior to 1931 when tennis courts were constructed and then in 1931 shuffleboard courts were built. In 1936 the beach was closed due to poor sanitary conditions and appears to remain closed until 1954 when it was reopened for public use. The park land continued to be used and in August of 1940 a crowd of over 1,000 people participated in the Antrim County Centennial. With crowds continuing to increase, park

benches, picnic tables, barbecue grills and trash containers were provided for seasonal activities. Then in the 1940s through the 1970s more facilities were made permanent. On June 14, 1951 Veterans Memorial was under construction. The original bathhouse was built in the mid 1950s and was later torn down in the late 1960s and early 1970s. In 1987 the shuffleboard court was replaced by basketball courts. The Corps of Engineers did some filling and leveling of the park grounds in 1971 – 1973. They also removed the Johnny Rock from the beach to its present location.

The installation of the school bell and a concrete picnic table were established as memorials in 1961 and 1962. In the early 1980s the park walkway was constructed. In 1989 the children's Mackinac Bridge playground was added. With the assistance of the Elk Rapids Rotary Club and the Elk Rapids Lion's Club, the automatic watering system was added in 1996 and a water fountain was donated and installed in 1997, located near the kid's playground and has since been removed. In 1998 an Eagle Scout project reconstructed the library bridge on the east end of the park.

Today the park continues to be maintained by the Elk Rapids Department of Public Works. Since 1996 there have been many improvements:

- 1996 – Tennis Court Construction (two rear courts)
- 1998 - Basketball Courts Renovated
- 2000 – Playground Frog and Truck Added
- 2002 – Noble St. Fence Added
- 2004 – Rotary Park Renovation
- 2005 – Blue and White Playground Equipment Added, Cedar St. Bathroom Renovated
- 2006 – Light Globes in Park and Downtown Added, Historical Marker Added on Ames St.
- 2007 - Tennis Courts Painted and Repaired
- 2008 – Park Restroom Added
- 2009 – Cedar St. Bathroom Roof Repaired
- 2011 – Beach Volleyball Net Added
- 2012 - One Rear Tennis Court was Redesigned into a Basketball Court and Children's Sport Court
- 2013 – Basketball Lights Added
- 2014 – Pickleball Striping to the Rear Tennis Court

Definitions

Passive Area(s): The term passive in recreation use is a relative term. Passive recreation emphasizes the open space aspect of a park and requires a low level of management and development. Passive activities in Memorial Park would include, but not be limited to: picnicking, sunbathing, walking, scenic viewing and reading.

Active Area(s): The term active means intensive development and a high level of management and development. Active area activities In Memorial Park would include, but not be limited to: basketball, tennis, volleyball, pickleball, Frisbee and playground activities.

Passive Areas: Two passive areas are identified.

West: The West area is located to the west of the Active area and north of River St. to the water's edge. The West area includes grass areas, beaches, benches, picnic tables, grills, paved walkways, shade trees and natural area that blends in on the northwest corner.

East: The East area is bounded by River St. to the south, Elk River outlet to the east, the beach to the north and an Active area to the west. The East area includes the Veteran's Memorial, a large grass area, shade trees and a paved walkway.

These areas should remain passive in use. Continue to use the West area for picnics and keep a moderate amount of shade trees. Portable traditional style picnic tables were installed in 2015.

Active Area: There is one active area identified.

This area includes two basketball courts, three tennis courts (one court is striped for pickleball), a parking lot, a playground, a paved walkway, bicycle racks, a restroom, a well house, a water treatment building, limited shade trees and a swimming beach. This area should remain active in use.

Swimming: The swimming area is located on the shoreline of Memorial Park.

Natural Area: The only Natural Area in Memorial Park is located between the paved walkway and the beach at the west end of the park. This Natural Area provides a buffer from wind and

sand erosion, so little sand removal is required in this area in the spring. This area also provides some seclusion for park users who like to get away from the more crowded east end of the beach. The Natural Area ends approximately 190' east of the green fire hydrant that is adjacent to the well head near River and Ash Streets. Village employees should continue to monitor this area as it is prone to poison ivy infestations. The Natural Area now includes four benches and it is recommended that this number not be increased. The general concensus from the public is this area should be allowed to remain natural.

Other Park Related Items

Erosion: Fluctuations in the level of Lake Michigan can greatly effect the shoreline of Memorial Park. Due to these fluctuations and storm activities the beach can change dramatically in very short periods of time. Adding to the beach configuration changes, is the effect of the breakwaters located to the east of the park. The general practice of the Harbor Commission to annually relocate dredged material from the harbor mouth to the beach, should continue. Additional erosion occurs due to blowing sand. Most of this erosion occurs during spring, fall and winter storms. The Elk Rapids Department of Public Works annually relocates as much of the sand as possible in the spring to its original beach location, and this practice should also be continued. To the far west of the park, where River St. curves, the Village has placed a large angular stone on the shore line. This protection was necessary to prevent the loss of River St. This stone revetment should be monitored at regular intervals to assure there is minimal beach erosion. Erosion along the beach in the Natural Area is a concern and should be monitored. Sand movement in the Court area is monitored annually.

Vehicle Use and Parking: Formal parking is located on a small parking lot between the basketball and tennis courts. Paved off road parking spaces are provided on the north side of River St. Informal parking exists on River St. east of the parking lot drive entrance and on the south side of River St. For most occasions parking is adequate. During special events, parking can become a premium as cars will park along side streets perpendicular to River St. At this time, there is no intention to add parking spaces.

Vegetation and Garden Planning: Memorial Park does not have any formal gardening spots and there does not appear to be a need to develop any. Vegetation should remain in its present condition. Spirea along the riverbank provides limited access to the river and provides river bank stability. Spirea or similar vegetation should remian. Trees in the park are to be considered as part of the Village annual pruning. The Village relies on the Beautification Commission recommendations for vegetative planning, maintenance and planting of all trees

and shrubs. The entrance garden to the library bridge is maintained by the Elk Rapids Garden Club.

Lighting: Lighting found in the park is along the paved walkway. Street style lampposts were installed in 1987 and updated with LED lighting and new globes in 2006. Basketball court lights were installed in 2013.

Zoning: Memorial Park is presently zoned “Public” and this plan strongly recommends it remain the same.

Signage: Signs are limited in the park to “rules”, “directional” and “educational” signs only. Signs should remain limited and small in size. The style and location of signs is the responsibility of Parks and Recreation Commission and the Village Council.

Conclusion

When working to create this plan, the Parks and Recreation Commission relied on comments at public meetings, comments from other Village commissions, Village Council and goals of the Village Master Plan. Master Plan “Goals” specific to this plan is attached. In general the public desires this park to remain physically similar to what it is today. While physical changes will be contemplated, they should be thoroughly reviewed before implementation so that the park maintains its present design.

This Management Plan should be reviewed and updated every five years by the Parks and Recreation Commission.

The following goals are presented here verbatim from the Village Collaborative Master Plan:

Natural Resources and Beautification

Goal 1. Natural resources will be protected and preserved.

Objectives

1. Encourage a land use pattern that is oriented to and respects the natural features and water resources of the area.
2. Evaluate the environmental impact of all new development.
3. Protect land resources and water quality related to our lakes, streams and wetlands.
4. Encourage the continued natural use of wetlands as groundwater recharge and storm water holding areas.
5. Identify and protect desirable open space and scenic vistas.
6. Establish regulations and standards necessary to protect shoreline and beach areas.
7. Establish regulations and standards necessary to protect and preserve the quality of the air from degradation due to fumes, odors, smoke, dust and other pollutants.
8. Establish regulations and standards to protect the community against high noise levels and exterior lighting glare.
9. Utilize Best Management Practices (BMP) to regulate and minimize direct storm water discharge into lakes and rivers.

Goal 2. Environmentally sensitive areas, open space and public garden will be maintained for the enjoyment of residents, visitors and future generations.

Objectives

1. Preserve and maintain our public gardens and natural areas.
2. Preserve environmentally sensitive lands for open space and passive recreational purposes.
3. Protect our most prized features, such as the public library grounds, public parks, beaches, gardens, natural areas, tree lined streets and open spaces.
4. Preserve and protect all healthy trees growing on public property and replace or add to the stock when needed.
5. Encourage creative design and planning techniques for all new development so as to produce visual harmony, preserve special features and protect vital natural resources.
6. Evaluate, periodically, the need for public acquisition of environmentally sensitive and available properties located within the Village.
7. Preserve and maintain existing active recreation areas.

Recreation, Parks and the Harbors

Goal 8. Maintain the high quality of both harbors for public use in perpetuity.

Objectives

1. Provide for public boat access, dockage, moorage and parking.
2. Recognize the lower harbor is to be available for refuge.
3. Continue to recognize that the harbor is under the jurisdiction of both State of Michigan and Village of Elk Rapids rules and regulations.
4. Harbor development projects should consider the overall needs of the harbor vicinity, protection of the surrounding natural features and its impact on the Village.

Goal 9. Recreational facilities will be enhanced and the amenity level will be expanded to meet the needs of residents and visitors.

Objectives

1. Continue efforts to provide seasonal outdoor recreational opportunities.
2. Maintain existing public access to lakes and waterways within the Village limits.
3. Support cooperative recreational planning and development with the surrounding townships and the schools.
4. Encourage the consideration of recreational facilities as an integral part of community development plans.
5. Include a community center, serving community needs for indoor recreation in the community development plans, possibly developed cooperatively with surrounding Townships and school (See #3 above).
6. Preserve and maintain existing recreation areas.
7. Construct modern restrooms within park facilities.
8. Add a dog park to the community.

CORRESPONDENCE

To:

Elk Rapids Parks & Recreation Commission

Date:

October 4, 2021

I am writing today to express an interest in expanding upon and improving the current pickleball court that is located at Memorial Park. I have been playing with a group, of varying numbers on a weekly basis all summer long and have noticed quite an increase in pickleball use. As a result of playing so often, the group I play with has mentioned some ideas that I think are worthy of consideration.

1. The Tennis Court that is currently striped for ONE pickleball court, could ideally become TWO courts, possibly three with the correct configuration. This would involve removing the tennis court netting, and making 2 courts side by side instead of only one.
2. If that idea appears too lofty right now, we ask that the light blue pickle ball lines be painted either orange or yellow, so that they stand out. The light blue lines on a dark blue court is VERY difficult to see. It causes lots of confusion b/c of the overlap of the white and light blue back lines.
3. A court squeegee affixed to any of the tennis courts that could be used following rain to better push the water off and allow play to commence, also saving the courts from undue water.

I'd be happy to meet with anyone to discuss this idea.

Here's a great link to look into the success Pickleball is having across the country and all age groups.

<https://usapickleball.org/about-us/organizational-docs/pickleball-fact-sheet/>

Sincerely,

Kellie Sergent

Village Resident/Pickleball Player