

**Town of Russell Parks Committee
Meeting Agenda
6-7pm, Jan 22, 2024 (make up meeting)
At town of Russell Town Hall**

- Notice of this meeting was posted in one public place and on the town website.
- Elise Schuler called the Town of Russell Parks Committee to order on January 22, 2024 at 6:05 p.m. at the Russell Town Hall. Present: Elise Schuler, Mary Huhta, Bridget Mitchell, Mary Jo Rajek, and Amy Hanneman.

- Member introductions
 - Members were introduced to each other, as this was the first meeting of the new Parks Committee.

- Committee purpose & goals
 - The committee reviewed the “Ordinance Number 1-2023 Establishment of a Park and Recreation Committee”, as set forth by the Town Board.
 - Upon reviewing the park list, the committee had questions regarding the location of Hottenstein Park. Elise will follow up with Town Board member to confirm where this park is.

- Committee position elections - 3 year term
 - Committee positions were elected and results are as follows:
 - Chair - Elise Schuler
 - Vice-Chair - Bridget Mitchell
 - Secretary/Treasurer - Mary Huhta
 - 2 citizen members - Mary Jo Rajek & Amy Hanneman

- Discuss and confirm future meeting schedule
 - It was decided that future Park Committee meetings would be held at 6PM on the first Wednesdays of the month, starting on February 7th.

- Other (Rice Park)
 - The Town of Russell has been awarded \$75,000 in grant money for its use in upgrading the Rice Park site.
 - The committee determined that the next step in the process is to obtain public input so that they can best determine what the community wants from a park space.
 - Mary Huhta will put together a survey to send out to Town of Russell residents.
 - This will be accessible in a number of ways:
 - Digitally
 - On the town website
 - Emailed out to residents who subscribe to the town newsletter

- Shared on social media among local small businesses
 - Hard Copy - Mailed out to the Town of Russell residents to return to the Town Hall
 - The committee would like to work with the Town Clerk to see how we can utilize the town website. It could be beneficial to have a page dedicated to the park development. This could showcase progress, inform the community of important dates within the development process, and post a list of items that the park will need in case community members would like to donate to the park.
 - Fundraising
 - The development of the park will more than likely cost more than the \$75,000 in county grant money. As such, alternative financial options were discussed.
 - Grants - Additional grants will be looked into. Specialty areas to look into: small town tourism, community garden initiatives, Trout Unlimited for the water/kayak access on the Prairie River. Amy has a contact at the Wisconsin Rapids Midstate that may be able to help get started with these.
 - Fundraising
 - Various ideas were discussed.
 - Memorials - benches, trees, pavers, etc.
 - Corporate donations - from local small businesses
- Misc.
 - As one of the other parks under the committee's responsibility, Echo Lake Park was discussed. Although this was not approved as part of the \$75,000 grant money, the committee discussed other ways that the Echo Lake Park could be worked on.
 - Volunteers - We could work to create a consistent group of volunteers to upkeep the grounds and facilities at the park.
 - Is there still a path that goes around part of the lake to a picnic clearing? Could this be brought back?
 - Sand for beach area

Meeting adjourned 7:15 p.m.

Next Park Committee meeting February 7th, 2024 at 6 p.m.

Submitted by:

Mary Huhta, Secretary/Treasurer