



BOARD OF PARK MANAGEMENT

A meeting of the Board of Park Management was held on **Monday, October 7, 2024, at 3:30 p.m.** in the **Community Hall Lobby Meeting Room** at the Rotary Complex

PRESENT: Chairman Hanly, Vice-Chair Kimberley Richardson, Maureen Cocksedge, Carolyn Cuerden, Craig Machan, Sheri Maguire, Councilor Beatty.

ABSENT WITH REGRETS: Councilor Henderson.

STAFF PRESENT: Quin Malott Parks, Forestry & Cemetery Manager.

MINUTES

2825. DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND THE GENERAL NATURE THEREOF:

The Municipal Conflict of Interest Act requires any member of a local Board of Council declaring a pecuniary interest and the general nature thereof, where the interest of a member has not been disclosed by reason of the member's absence from the meeting, to disclose the interest at the first open meeting attended by the member of The Board and to otherwise comply with the Act.

None declared.

2826. PRESENTATION: INVASIVE SPECIE PROGRAM:

Objective: Vanni Azzano UTRCA Community Liaison to discuss City of Stratford invasive species plan.

Staff Comments: This is a synopsis of the community information session scheduled for Wednesday, October 9, 2024 at Community Hall.

The program applies to City owned/public lands, but the information is applicable to privately owned lands. The 30-page plan was developed by the Invasive Species Centre with guidance from the City of Stratford Parks Division and Energy & Environment Committee. It deals with what is here, what is being managed and what we should be looking for. There are 26 species on the management list 5 of which are being managed at present [Buckthorn, Japanese Knotwood, Giant Hogweed, Dogwood and Phragmites] with 21 are on the watch list. The Invasive Species Plan will be available to review on the City of Stratford website. It was suggested that the website should also include invasive species photos to assist the public and property owners in identifying such species. Public awareness is an important part. Board members further

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suggested several opportunities to promote public awareness including The Stratford Public Library, Community Centre, Home Show, Earth Week and Communities in Bloom Spring Fling. Quin and Vanni are making a presentation at the community information session scheduled for October 9, 2024.

2827. PRESENTATION: ACCESSIBLE KAYAK LAUNCH:

Objective: Light Up the Night co-chairs David Price and Sue Clark presenting proposal seeking Board approval for future installation of an accessible kayak/canoe ramp. Proposed location is east end of river adjacent to parking without disruption to regular use and beside existing railing [121 Lakeside Drive N].

Background & Analysis: Stratford lacks accessible infrastructure for individuals with physical limitations rendering it difficult for residents and visitors to participate in kayaking and canoeing. An accessible launch will ensure equal opportunities for all individuals to safely enjoy the Avon River.

The launch would have to be removed from the water every winter and could be stored alongside the Razzamajazz at the Public Works Yard facility.

David Price and Sue Clark outlined the proposal for an accessible kayak launch at the east of Lake Victoria along the south shore immediately east of the Festival Bridge. The proposal is for an accessible dock from which both kayaks and canoes can be launched. The dock would have two launch areas, one with a sliding bench and a launch track to facilitate accessible access and one that facilitates non-accessible access. It would be similar to the accessible Kayak launches installed in the last couple of years in St. Marys and at Wildwood Conservation Area.

A cost estimate of \$69,522.00 from EZ Dock [the same company used for the St. Marys and Wildwood launches]. Such launches are of a modular design and can be expanded as needed in the future.

The Board had several questions/comments including: (i) suitability of the grassed/gravel approach area to the launch dock; (ii) longevity of such facilities before replacement is necessary; (iii) user fee [presenters opposed to user fees]; (iv) discussion with the City of Stratford and County Accessibility Committees; (v) funding sources; (vi) accessibility grants; (vii) smaller proposal with later expansion.

It was noted that the City of Stratford has not provided funding to recent proposals for privately initiated facilities, examples being the labyrinth and cricket pitch proposals. Further that the City's finances are stretched. It was suggested that the presenters



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should be in contact with the Accessibility Committees as soon as possible to explain their proposal and to see if grant funds are available for this type of accessibility facility. Applications for an Enabling Accessibility program are underway.

Staff Comments: Approval is required by Board of Park Management to facilitate analysis and advancement of this proposed project.

Resolution: THAT the Board of Park Management support in principle the proposal for an accessible kayak launch in the area on the south shore immediately east of the Festival Bridge provided suitable design and required funding are established.

Mover: K Richardson

Seconded: M. Cocksedge

Carried.

2828. MINUTES:

Objective: The minutes from the September 9, 2024 meeting provided for approval.

Resolution: THAT the minutes of the September 9, 2024, meeting be approved.

Correction required of Carolyn's last name in Item 2821 required.

Mover: K. Richardson

Seconded: C. Machan

Carried.

2829. ART-IN-THE-PARK:

Objective: Requesting Parks Board approval to add an additional day during the months of July and August for the 2025 season.

Background and Analysis: The AITP Association has followed the same schedule for decades. An additional day would provide artists with more flexibility and offer rain date opportunities. Proposing Thursday as a additional day.

Staff Comments: To permit the addition of a day during July/August 2024.

Resolution: That the Board of Park Management approve the request by AITP to add an additional day on Thursdays in the months of July and August for the 2025 season.

Mover: B. Beatty

Seconded: S. Maguire

Carried.



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2830. UPPER QUEENS PARK ACCESSIBILITY:

Objective: Victoria Trotter Council Committee Coordinator forwarded the following recommendations passed by the Accessibility Advisory Committee at the September 19, 2024 meeting:

THAT the Accessibility Advisory Committee recommends to Community Services and the Board of Park Management a proper accessible curb cut be completed in the north end of the parking lot adjacent to the Upper Queens playground and an accessible pathway be installed from the curb cut to the playground and picnic area.

THAT the Accessibility Advisory Committee recommends to Community Services and the Board of Park Management investigate adding additional accessible parking spots in both parking lots in Upper Queens Park.

Staff Comments: Current curb cut is located at the north end of the parking lot in Upper Queens Park. Opportunity to reconfigure for ease of access. An accessible pathway can be an addition to the work in conjunction with Accessibility Committee and budgeting.

Recommend Board review AAC implementations requests including addition of accessible parking spots in north and south areas of the playground.

Resolution: THAT the Board of Park Management approve the request for a proper curb cut with an accessible pathway to be installed at the north end of the playground parking lot at Upper Queens Park, and that accessible parking spaces be provided in both the north and south parking lots as per the required number/ratio.

Mover: C. Machan

Seconder: K. Richardson

Carried.

2831. COMMUNITIES IN BLOOM "FRIENDSHIP BENCH":

Objective: To replace the wooden friendship bench in Upper Queens Park with yellow CRP plastic bench or a yellow metal bench. Requested presented with suggestion of a different design than currently in place. Explanation by Councilor Beatty and K. Richardson.



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Staff Comments: To allow a unique design of bench to replace current wooden friendship bench.

Resolution: THAT the Board OF Park Management approve the request by Communities in Bloom for replacement friendship bench and sign board.

Mover: S. Maguire

Seconded: K. Richardson

Carried.

2832. SHAKESPEAREAN GARDENS WOODEN BRIDGE:

Objective: Nathan Bottema, Project Engineer, Infrastructure Services providing analysis regarding Shakespearean Garden inspection. Recommendations provided and feedback required from the Board of Park Management regarding bridge project.

Background and Analysis: BM Ross conducted an inspection of the Shakespearean Garden Bridge on July 24, 2024 in response to concerns raised in-house. Engineering department conducts regular bridge inspections as mandated. All bridges in Ontario are required to undergo general maintenance inspections at least twice a year and detailed inspections every two years¹. These inspections are conducted under the direction of a professional engineer using the Ministry's Ontario Structure Inspection Manual (OSIM). The Inspection Manual requires biennial inspections of all provincial and municipal bridges.

The recommendation that came back was to either reinforce or replace this bridge. Engineering is of the opinion that reinforcing this bridge again will be a temporary solution and would prefer to see this bridge replaced installed with prefabricated steel structure over a wooden bridge. The OSIM report from 2019 recommended replacement in 1-5 years. Access to the east approach is challenging and the bridge does not adhere to AODA standards. To make it AODA compliant, the approach and grade of the bridge would have to be significantly different.

Engineering sets funds aside to budget for bridge work but a design must be produced first as part of the process. Q. Malott to consult with Engineering staff regarding cost of project.

The bridge existing within parkland requires Board of Park Management input into the project. The question before the Board is whether to accept Engineering's recommendation to replace the bridge with steel as suggested endeavouring to ensure AODA accessibility and reflect historic aesthetics in design.

C. Cuernden to investigate if there is any historical significance to the bridge and island.

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K. Richardson will consult with families who have memorial benches on bridge regarding relocation if bridge is not replaced. Opportunity to establish a pollinator habitat undisturbed by human interference by being a viewing space only.

Staff Comments: Allow Infrastructure Services Department to design an AODA compliant bridge and return to the Board for review/approval. This is a continuation from September 9, 2024 meeting [Item #2821] at the request of Vice Chair Richardson.

Q. Malott advised cost estimates for an accessible bridge and ramp are in the \$110,000.00 plus range. Shakespearean Garden Island is accessed and used very little.

Chairman Hanly and Vice-Chair Richardson will approach the sponsors of two benches on the island to discover if they wish the benches to remain or be relocated should the decision be made to naturalize the area with no means of access.

The issue of the Shakespearean Gardens bridge will return for review on the November agenda.

2833. OTHER BUSINESS:

Winter Tennis: No update or further action at this time.

Labyrinth: Wrights are pursuing funding options.

Medicine Wheel: Kevin Bonnell, Manager of DEI reaching out to local Indigenous Thinkers for preferred location and concept.

Stratford Furniture: No update or further action at this time.

Cricket Pitch: Organizers seeking funding. Informal communication suggests installation fall 2024.

Outdoor Gym: Has been installed and well received.

Waste Containers North Shore: For discussion. Chairman Hanly suggested that additional waste containers along the north shore trail may assist in reduced garbage/waste along the trail and from entering the river. He enquired if the city had a small quad vehicle that could be used in the collection of such waste containers. Q. Malott to investigate.



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Upper Queens Park Concession Booth: Vice Chair Richardson requested status update. No developments currently. Opportunity for Director Wolfe to address at future meeting. Discussion with consensus of the Board being that the existing booth is outdated and in very poor shape. Required renovations will be extensive and very costly. The concession booth should be replaced with an open-air pavilion. It was noted that controlled food truck usage for several events in the interim have worked out well. Given the poor condition of the existing Upper Queens Park Concession Booth, extensive renovation and cost required to meet current standards, the Board of Park Management recommends to Community services Sub-committee that the Concession Booth be demolished and replaced with a suitable open-air pavilion.

Next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board is Monday, November 4, 2024 3:30pm.

Motion to adjourn by Councilor Beatty, seconded by C. Cuerden at 4:46pm.