

WAUPACA COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes – 3 March 2026
Fox Valley Technical College – Waupaca Regional Center, 1979 Godfrey Drive, Waupaca WI

Chair Bosquez called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and read the open meeting statement.

Roll Call: Chair Pete Bosquez, Supervisors John Miller and Jack Spierings were present. Also, present – Richard Luedke (Waupaca County Fair Manager), Steve Rawson (Citizen), Pete Taber and John Francis (Parks Department). Vice Chair Allen Kraeger and Supervisor Larry Eisentraut were excused.

Review and Approve Agenda: Motion by Spierings, seconded by Miller to approve the agenda. Motion carried without a negative vote.

Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting: Motion by Spierings, seconded by Miller to approve the 3 February 2026 minutes. Motion carried without a negative vote.

Public Comment/Correspondence: Bosquez opened the floor to public comment or correspondence, Steve Rawson stated that he empathized with the County Parks for having to maintain the same service levels with less funding. There was no correspondence.

2025 Fair Report – Richard Luedke – Fair Manager: Luedke gave a presentation on how the 2025 Fair turned out. He talked about the various costs and revenues that go into putting on a fair and pointed out some lessons learned. He also talked about what is changing for the 2026 Fair. He thanked the County for their continued support of the Waupaca County Fair.

¾ Ton Pickup Truck Purchase – Review Bids and Award: Francis went over the results of the 27 February 2026 bid opening, see below:

Bid Opening Results

February 27, 2026

Truck Bids - 3/4 Ton 4x4 with Service Body and Lift Gate - Budget = \$ 73,500.00 (capital funds)				
<u>Bidder</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>Truck</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Ewald Chevrolet, Buick	Oconomowoc, WI	Chevy Silverado 2500HD	\$65,044.00	
Ewald Buick, GMC	Oconomowoc, WI	GMC Sierra 2500HD	\$65,341.00	This is for a white truck, to get silver add \$451
Ewald's Hartford Ford	Hartford, WI	Ford F250 XL	\$65,357.00	
Petersen Automotive	Waupaca, WI	Ram 2500 Tradesman	\$66,559.22	
Ewald's Hartford Ford	Hartford, WI	Ford F250 XLT	\$68,279.00	
Plach Automotive	New London, WI	Chevy Silverado 2500HD	\$68,988.00	
Serra Chevrolet, Buick, GMC	Madison, TN	Chevy Silverado 2500HD	\$73,905.50	
L&S Truck Center	Appleton, WI	Ford F250 XLT	\$77,470.50	
Holz Motors Inc.	Hales Corners, WI	Chevy Silverado 2500HD	\$80,825.30	

*** Last truck ordered was in 2025 - same spec - cost was \$65,793.56 - Ram 2500 Tradesman*

Francis stated that he reached out to the low bidder to verify it met the specifications and that delivery was included in the price and it was. There was some discussion.

Motion by Spierings, seconded by Miller to go with the low bid from Ewald Chevrolet Buick for \$65,044.00 for a 2026 Chevy Silverado 2500HD. Motion carried without a negative vote.

Resolution No. 42 (2025-2026) – Municipal Dam Grant Participation – Keller Lake Dam Repairs:

Francis handed out copies of the resolution and explained that it is needed to allow us to apply for 50% funding of the needed dam repairs. He gave a brief overview of the proposed repair plans and the estimated cost. There was discussion about the project and if the currently assigned capital funds would be sufficient to complete the project. Francis stated that it is very likely we will need to ask for slightly more capital funding for our half of the project, but we will not know that number until the project is bid out. He will report back when we find out if a grant was awarded for the project.

Motion by Bosquez, seconded by Spierings to approve Resolution No. 42 and pass it on to Legislative Committee then County Board for further approvals. Motion passed without a negative vote.

2026/2027 Budget Review – Discuss ideas for reducing expenses and increasing revenues: Francis handed out a list of ideas to discuss for the 2027 budget, and each was discussed. The list is below:

Parks Department 2027 Budget Ideas

(Updated after 3 Feb 2026 Parks Meeting)

Revenues:

- Boat Launch Fees and Passes
 - Current rates are \$5 – daily, \$25 – in county annual, \$35 – out of county annual
 - Daily fees should remain the same at \$5 to keep customers from moving to other launch sites.
 - It was recommended to raise the in-county annual sticker to \$30 and the out-of-county sticker to \$45.
 - 1290 stickers sold in 2025 at \$25 each = \$32,250
 - Estimated 1290 stickers sold in 2027 at \$30 each = \$38,700
 - This would be an **increase of \$6,450** (not counting out-of-county sticker increase, so total should be more).
 - We should collect more daily fees and stickers this year with Knight Lane Access being enforced for the first time. In 2025 gave out a lot of warnings.

- Fairground Building Rentals
 - A small increase could be put in place and should not have impact on users too much.
 - A \$100/day increase on the current Pavillion rental fee of \$500/day would bring in about \$1,800 extra based on the number of events booked for 2026 so far.
 - A \$50/day increase on all the other building rentals would result in an extra \$650 based on the events booked for 2026 so far.
 - These increases would total a very conservative **\$2,450 increase**.

- Will need to account for taxes on certain events or add tax to customer bills, this was discussed briefly with the consensus that the taxes should be added to the customer's bill. This change will be spelled out in the contract the customer signs when booking an event.
- Fairgrounds Storage
 - The 3-year lease for the building spaces we rent out expires this spring. We need to bid this out soon. Should we go with a 5-year lease? Either way, our price per square foot should go up from current levels.
 - Our rates for the storage items we take in each year are slightly low.
 - Comparable rates were discussed and consensus was that the rates could be raised from \$10/foot to \$14/foot.
 - We brought in \$51,090 for 2025-26 storage. Divided by \$10/foot, that is 5,109' of storage items. $5,109' \times \$14/\text{ft} = \$71,526$ for a **\$20,436 increase** if the total storage items stayed the same.
 - Outside storage at the Fairgrounds was discussed. This would involve storing items on the track area in front of the grandstands to include parking items under the awning area. It was decided that we should start offering that for the 2026-2027 storage season. Staff was directed to look around for comparable services to come up with a proposed fee structure and bring it back to the next Parks meeting. There was discussion about how using this area for storage would eliminate the possibility of the track area being used for winter racing events.
- Campground Fees
 - \$15/night at Keller and \$25/night at the Fairgrounds
 - This still appears to be in the ballpark for places with similar amenities
 - The Fairgrounds camping area fees could be increased but it would only yield a small increase. Use of this campground varies greatly year by year.
- Winter Rec Trail Fees
 - \$5 daily or \$25 annual pass
 - This is probably appropriate for the limited trail system we have.
- Forestry Equipment Rentals
 - This equipment is rented out by the DNR foresters at Hartman Creek for people planting trees or other timber stand improvement projects.
 - Revenue from this varies year by year. Revenue in 2025 was \$651.
- ATV/UTV County Road Pass
 - Bosquez suggested the County investigate if a pass could be required to operate ATVs and UTVs on the roads in Waupaca County, much like a trail pass sticker is required to ride on state trails. There was discussion on this idea and Francis stated that he would reach out to our Corporation Counsel to find out if this was a possibility and report back at the next meeting.

Expense Reduction Ideas:

- Cut down to one seasonal Employee from two
 - Current Budget is for \$20,000 – can reduce by **\$10,000**
 - Last year we spent about \$15,000 for two seasonals
 - This will require a FT staff to work as part of the “mow crew”.
 - This may reduce some of the maintenance items that get done during summer months but is do-able.
 - It has been hard to find good seasonal workers and train them.
- Reduce our porta-potty costs (HC @ \$260/mo and Reg @ \$185/mo)
 - Placed May-September except as noted below.
 - White Lake – Stays the same at 1 HC
 - Sturgeon Trail – Had 1 HC + 2 Reg – going to 1 HC
 - Taylor Lake – Had 1 HC + 2 Reg – going to 1 HC + 1 Reg
 - Columbia Lake – Had 1 HC – eliminate and tell people to go to Oakwood
 - Fisherman’s Park – Had 1 HC + 2 Reg all season – staying the same April-May, then June-September going to 1 HC
 - Knight Lane – Had 1 HC + 1 Reg – going to 1 HC
 - (2025 cost = \$12,050) - (2026 cost = \$8,425) = Savings **\$3,625**
- Keller Campground
 - Planning to remove the two dumpsters at Keller and service ourselves with garbage and recycling cans. This will be done for 2026 to see if it is workable.
 - \$237.54/month for 1 garbage and 1 recycling dumpster
 - **\$1,900.32** total for 8 months service can be saved.
 - Does camping make cents? (pun intended)
 - Revenue for 2025 \$3,988
 - Operate May – October (6 months or 24 weeks)
 - Service visits 3 times per week
 - 2 hours staff time with travel each visit (\$100)
 - 40-mile round trip, 12mpg @ \$2.60/gal = (\$8.58)
 - \$108.58 x 3 visits/week = (\$325.74/week)
 - \$325.74 x 24 weeks = (\$7,817.76)
 - \$7,817.76 - \$3,988 = \$3,829.76 loss/year not counting dumpsters
 - Camping was discussed and it would make sense to shut it down for 2027.
- Marion Wayside/Other Parks
 - Do we look at selling park properties?
 - This was discussed and staff was directed to investigate deed restrictions on the Marion Wayside property and report back at the next meeting.

Getting to a 10% reduction of the 2026 budget for the 2027 budget

2026 Budget impact to tax levy: \$480,921

10% of that: **\$48,092**

Cost Reductions:

- Eliminate one seasonal: -\$10,000
- Reduce Porta-Potties: -\$3,625
- Keller Dumpster Delete: -\$1,900
- Shaw's Dumpster Delete: -\$1,218
- Total Reductions: **-\$16,743**

Revenue Increases:

- Increase boat launch revenue +\$10,000
- Increase Fairgrounds revenue +\$15,000
- Increase Season Pass Prices +\$6,450
- FG Building rental rate increase +\$2,450
- FG Storage rate increase +\$20,436
- Total revenue increases **+\$54,336**

Total tax levy reduction so far: **-\$71,079 (14.8%)**

Supervisor Report(s): Conference, Seminar, Convention, and/or Webinars: Bosquez asked if anyone had a report – There was nothing to report.

Projects Update: The following items were discussed:

- Tree and Brush Maintenance – Taber reported that he and the Parks staff have been doing a lot of tree work around the Parks properties.
- Marion Snowmobile Bridge Project – Francis reported that he is working on getting a permit for the bridge work. There was a brief discussion of what the project was and the timeline for grant applications.
- Courthouse Remodel – Bosquez gave a short update, below are some notes:
 - Taxpayer impact of the remodel project comes to an estimated \$0.38/\$1,000 of valuation annually for 20 years.
 - The project was timed so that debt service for the Sheriff's Department and Jail expired as this project started to have very little change to tax amounts in the County.
 - The geothermal wells are complete, and they will begin linking the wells and completing the underground infrastructure for that soon. This will allow that portion of the parking lot to be completed. They hope to switch from the old HVAC system to the new Geothermal system this summer (July).
 - The brick should start going up on the front of the building very soon.
 - The project is on budget and on schedule currently.
 - They will find out about the first ½ of the contingency money this Thursday. There was discussion about how the contingency works and what would happen with the money that comes back to the County.

Upcoming meetings: The next meeting is scheduled for 7 April 2026 at 9:00 am.

Adjournment: Motion by Miller to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 10:18 am.

Submitted by,

John D. Francis
Parks and Solid Waste Director

DRAFT