DECORAH PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
City Hall Council Chambers
Thursday, May 29, 2025 – 5:00 PM

Join Zoom Meeting
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84040338365?pwd=Ocbn4ayY7jbaQQSa9116r6f2FJ1KFz.1
Meeting ID: 840 4033 8365
Passcode: 568745

Welcome, Roll Call – Called Meeting to Order at 5:05 PM – *Gaard, Nichols, Fuhrmann and Kerndt* were in attendance. *Bakken* joined via Zoom. *Travis Goedken (City Manager)* and *Marc Holtey (Parks and Recreation Director)* were present along with 20+ members of the public in person and on Zoom.

Consider Approval to Recommend the Next Step for the Decorah Athletic Complex Bid Process – *Holtey* provided an overview of the options for the next step. *Fuhrmann* noted he would abstain from the vote and recommendation. *Nichols* noted that we have a good project plan. Construction costs have gone up and the bid was over the engineer's estimate. Removing the type of surface in the parking lot would be a good next step. Additional conversation related to code and removing the parking lot requirements will be needed. *Goedken* mentioned one of the biggest discussions is about the parking lot surface material. Will share his perspective with the City Council. Talked about unit pricing and provided examples. Commented that contractors are used to that format. Removes some of the risk for the contractor. Looking into base/alternate bids. *Kerndt* commented he is supportive of a rebid. *Goedken* acknowledged the time and effort Skyline put into the credits to find ways to reduce the cost of the project. *Bakken* shared she was in favor of re-bidding. *Gaard* agreed that re-bidding was the way to go. Allows more time for fundraising. *Nichols* shared that we should consider lighting and re-use of current field lighting. *Holtey* shared they could look into whether the lights could be used and retrofitted.
Kerndt made a motion to re-bid the Decorah Athletic Complex project. *Nichols* 2nd. Ayes: 4; Nays: 0; Abstention: 1.

Discuss and Consider Approval of the Equestrian Rules and Etiquette for Shared Use Trails
Holtey read through a draft of equestrian rules and etiquette. *Gaard* asked about current rules that reference equestrian use. *Fuhrmann* talked about parking at Van Peenen. Proposed the addition: *Horse parking should only be allowed in the designated parking area*. Spoke about limiting equestrian group size to a maximum of 4 horses. There are standards for limited numbers in group size for equestrian use. Suggested a special event permit. *Bakken* shared that a special event on the Trout Run Trail has special signage (i.e., Trail Closed Due to Special Events). The topic of not having a mucking facility was brought up. Mucking needs to be taken with and not left on site. It shouldn't be the responsibility of Decorah Parks and Recreation. *Gaard* asked for clarification on Fuhrmann's comment on limit of 4. *Nichols* brought up commercial use to consider. Language referencing that. Running a business to make money off a public asset. *Nichols* concurred with the policy on horse parking in designated areas. *Nichols* suggested that a group of more horses or more triggers an event permit. More than 4 horses trigger a special event permit. *Nichols* proposed the additional rule, *All mucking must be taken out or removed from the premises*. Anything that comes out on the trail or parking area (i.e., hay, horse poop, etc.). The park system doesn't have bins and infrastructure like other areas with horse use (i.e., Volga). *Nichols* also proposed *Commercial guiding, tour operating and outfitting in public parks is prohibited*. *Kerndt* asked about the Mountain Race and whether that would apply to commercial use or the trout guides. *Nichols* asked about the budget for equestrian shared use. *Holtey* shared that the Saddle Club could apply for funding through Backcountry Horseman as a 501c3. Nichols commented they are not a 501c3. (Winneshiek Saddle Club is a 501c7 non-profit). *Holtey* shared that the funds could come through Trail Maintenance fund, as well. *Fuhrmann* made a motion to approve the following rules and regulations. *Gaard* 2nd. Ayes: 4; Nays: 1.

City of Decorah Parks and Recreation Equestrian Use Rules and Regulations

- Equestrian trail use opens May 1 (If Weather and Trail Conditions Permit).

- Equestrian trail use is allowed from dawn to dust between the dates of May 1 and October 31 (If Weather and Trail Conditions Permit).
- Trail use is prohibited during rainy or snowy days and for a period of 24 hours after the rain or snow has ceased. “Muddy Day, Stay Away.”
- Horses are only allowed on designated shared use trails.
- Horses are not allowed to run at large or graze in parks or on trails.
- Horses are not to be hitched or tied to trees, shrubs or park amenities in a manner that will cause injury or damage to the plant or amenity.
- All riders are required to keep the trail clean of droppings from their horse.
- Horse trailer parking is only allowed in the designated parking area.
- No more than 4 Horses in a group (Groups larger than 4 horses must apply for a Special Event Permit)
- All Mucking must be taken out or removed from park premises.
- Commercial guiding, tour operating and outfitting in public parks is prohibited.

Adjourn – *Fuhrmann* made a motion to adjourn. *Bakken* 2nd. Ayes: 5; Nays: 0.

Respectfully submitted,

Parks and Recreation Director