

Chairperson: Louis Fortis, 276-2222  
Clerk: Carol Mueller, 278-4228  
Research Analyst: Julie Esch 278-4430

**Parks Advisory Commission**  
**Wednesday, October 24, 2007 - 3:00 P.M.**  
**Parks Administration Building**  
**9480 Watertown Plank Road**  
**M I N U T E S**

**PRESENT: John Gurda, Henry Hamilton III, Daniel Steininger and Louis Fortis (Chairperson)**

**ABSENT: Rafael Acevedo, Jr, F. William Haberman, Penelope Stewart,**

**EXCUSED:**

**Scheduled Items:**

1. Chairman's opening comments

The meeting was called to order at approximately 3:20 p.m. A quorum was present. The commission approved the minutes from the September 17, 2007 meeting.

2. Guest speaker Dan Diliberti on Milwaukee County Parks Task Forces

**Appearance:**

Daniel Diliberti, Milwaukee County Treasurer

Mr. Diliberti gave the highlights of the 1993 Task Force. (Report included in binders that were handed out.) The report included the methodology used to conduct the study. Numerous surveys, availability of services and service levels of major culture organizations in southeastern Wisconsin were done. The task force consisted of varied members of the community including Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine and Waukesha counties. Research was conducted by UW-Madison, Tourism and Research Center on perceptions, attitudes and attendance. This survey was conducted as a regional approach to recreation and culture. The report further discusses the quality of life, economic impact, impact on business, individuals and families and children and arts education. The final recommendation was to establish regional recreation and culture task forces, develop a regional plan, explore joint administration for similar facilities and programs to improve service and reduce costs and promote shared programs region wide.

Other issues at the time of the study that affected a regional cooperation were the sewer wars and light rail.

## SCHEDULED ITEMS (CONTINUED):

Additionally, Mr. Diliberti spoke briefly of the 2003 study that was overshadowed by the pension scandal. (Included in section 4 of the binder handout.) Currently the County funds most quality of life programs but overall arts and museums have relied on public support for the majority of their funding.

Today there are still some communities that have a park commission structure with an independent taxing authority. Governance is not the problem with Milwaukee County Parks, but finding a dedicated funding source is.

The State of Wisconsin currently has a freeze on property taxes that freezes the amount of tax, not the rate. The State also has limits on sales tax percentages for counties.

Mr. Fortis would like information on the stadium tax. How much does it generate annually and when is the sunset date?

3. Parks Director's comments with discussion on best practices.

### **Appearance:**

Sue Black, Director, Parks, Recreation and Culture

Ms. Black noted that in the spring of 2005 the fifty largest urban area parks met for the first time. Many are finding millions of dollars in Federal funding to upgrade and enhance their urban parks systems. Private funding tends to work better in wealthy areas than it does in the urban parks.

A handout listing the NRPA gold medal winners from 2004-2007 was included showing the type of financial support and management authority. Each listed a website for the parks included in the report.

The commission feels the need to have everything in place before we ask the citizens to get on board. It is felt that with the support of the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce and the Greater Milwaukee Committee this initiative would move forward. A review of a bill proposed by legislative representative Darling should be considered with the possibility of amendments with governance authority going to the Counties. Any taxation funding would need to be dedicated by enforcement through a state statute.

4. New business

Members feel that they should hear all the arguments to address the crisis we are facing. There is a definite need for more information. It will take a political will to move forward. To succeed, the recommendations must be promoted publicly. A report just won't do.

**SCHEDULED ITEMS (CONTINUED):**

5. Future Meeting Dates

The next meeting of the Parks Advisory Commission will be November 28, 2007 at 3 p.m. at the Parks Administration Building.

*If you can't attend for any reason, please call me at the number above by noon on the day of the meeting.*

(Distribution of information materials for background and future discussions)

Note: Any member not present at the meeting needs to contact Mr. Josh Fudge for these materials. Contact information, email: [jfudge.milwcnty.gov](mailto:jfudge.milwcnty.gov) or phone 257-4580

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Ms. Laura Schloesser, Parks Safety and Training Manager

Mr. Daniel Diliberti, Milwaukee County Treasurer

Ms. Sue Black, Director, Parks, Recreation and Culture

Mr. James Keegan, Parks, Chief of Planning, Policy and Partnerships

Mr. Josh Fudge, Parks, Budget Manager

Adjourned: 4:55 p.m.

Carol D. Mueller, Committee Clerk

*ADA accommodation requests should be filed with the Milwaukee County Office for Persons with Disabilities, 278-3932 (voice) or 278-3937 (TTY), upon receipt of this notice.*