

Parks, Energy and Environment Committee on 2021-09-14 9:00 AM - VIRTUAL MEETING

This meeting will be live-streamed on the County Legislative Information Center:

<https://milwaukeecounty.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>

Meeting Time: 09-14-21 09:00

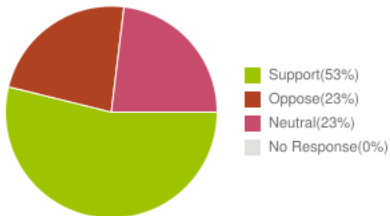
eComments Report

Meetings	Meeting Time	Agenda Items	Comments	Support	Oppose	Neutral
Parks, Energy and Environment Committee on 2021-09-14 9:00 AM - VIRTUAL MEETING This meeting will be live-streamed on the County Legislative Information Center: https://milwaukeecounty.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx	09-14-21 09:00	30	13	7	3	3

Sentiments for All Meetings

The following graphs display sentiments for comments that have location data. Only locations of users who have commented will be shown.

Overall Sentiment



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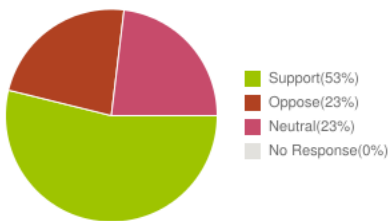
09-14-21 09:00

Agenda Name	Comments	Support	Oppose	Neutral
6 21-762 A resolution requesting the Director, Department of Parks, Recreation, and Culture provide an informational report to the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors detailing the short and long-term plans for Noyes Park, including plans for the golf course, driving range, indoor pool, nature area, trails, and other areas	5	3	0	2
10 21-745 A resolution/ordinance amending Chapter 47.08 of the Milwaukee County Code of General Ordinances to permit foraging for edible fruits, nuts, and mushrooms on designated Milwaukee County park land if it is for personal use and not for resale	7	4	3	0
11 21-772 Report from the Grants and Special Projects and Facilities Management Divisions, providing updates on securing grant funding for rehabilitation of the Domes and the approved structural testing and netting replacement projects at the Domes. (INFORMATIONAL ONLY UNLESS OTHERWISE DIRECTED BY THE COMMITTEE)	1	0	0	1

Sentiments for All Agenda Items

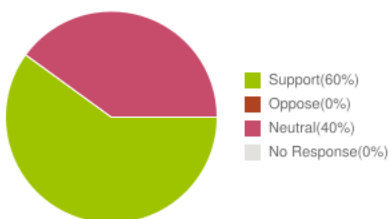
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Agenda Item: eComments for 6 21-762 A resolution requesting the Director, Department of Parks, Recreation, and Culture provide an informational report to the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors detailing the short and long-term plans for Noyes Park, including plans for the golf course, driving range, indoor pool, nature area, trails, and other areas

Overall Sentiment



Tracee Holifield

Location:

Submitted At: 10:56am 09-14-21

There definitely needs to be more consistent prioritization of recreation activities in the County Parks. The county parks in areas that are predominantly African American are suffering in that area. I agree with Supervisor Martin on that note. I also understand that there are other priorities for the parks' department. It's a tough spot to be in. However, I am not sure if Supervisor Martin is aware, but one organization she mentioned, Program the Parks. They are not a legitimate organization. In 2021, the Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions administratively dissolved the LLC for non-compliance of providing an annual report which is required under Wisconsin State Statute. I am also not going to get into the ongoing federal case that the leader of this organization is facing on instructed kids on making a molotov cocktail. On top of a superseded indictment, and the protected identities of 17 individuals who are fearful of going forward. I know it's innocent until proven guilty. However, I will say that as a county taxpayer, and us entrusting our tax dollars to elected leaders, there has to be more vetting and being careful with tax dollars. I would not advise such a contract with an administratively dissolved organization with a convicted felon as a leader. If that was ever on the table, I would vehemently oppose.

Abbie Hampton

Location:

Submitted At: 9:06am 09-14-21

First Tee at Noyes park has been a staple summer activity for our family. The First Tee program has cleaned up the club house and has brought more golfers to this county golf course as well as other county courses around the area. They have provided opportunities to teach children of all ages, race and income level the game of golf and all that the game brings. It teaches our young people how to have integrity, respect, responsibility, and honesty while playing the game and in life. They not only talk about how you need these characteristics to be a good golfer but how these character traits carry over into being a contributing member in the community. There are a lot of kids who would not normally interact with each other based on zip code, but First Tee gives kids and parents the opportunity to get to know people who live in a different area of town than you. This brings the community closer together and can help us close some of the racial gaps our city faces. First Tee can provide even more support to students from low-income neighborhoods and give them the opportunities to play golf around the city, state, and possibly even country as they get better. They can work on focus and self-control and how to overcome adversities presented in the life. Golf is a sport that teaches so many life skills and the more our city and county can support this program, the more opportunities we will have to provide kids a way to grow in many areas of life. The more kids that have this opportunity, the more golfers we will have on our courses. This can also provide an alternative to the less desirable ways to fill time during the summer and after school.

Chelsea Montague

Location:

Submitted At: 8:51am 09-14-21

Our three sons have attended First Tee of Southeastern Wisconsin classes for the past two summers and we are so thankful for this gem in our community! We would like to see further investment in making Noyes Park a first rate headquarters for First Tee of Southeastern Wisconsin. Coach Tom Gerke and his assistant coaching staff run an awesome program — where our children are learning life long skills. It's so disappointing to see the poor condition of the course (especially the greens), the neglected clubhouse (the women's bathroom trash wasn't emptied for the entire summer season), the dilapidated tennis courts, the bring your own ball driving range, and the temporary trailer headquarters for First Tee. We would love to see this facility elevated to the standard it deserves and to a status we can all be proud of. Noyes Park has the potential to be a year round youth and family golf destination for Milwaukee. We already have engaged and motivated individuals running a well-established National Junior Golf program, but the facilities are currently holding back long term potential.

Tom Gerke

Location:

Submitted At: 11:54am 09-13-21

Hello, I am the Program Director for First Tee Southeast Wisconsin as well as a Milwaukee County resident. For our chapter, Noyes Park is our home base where we see several hundred kids from our area every year. Many of our participants are unable to afford paying for a program, and we always let everyone in regardless of ability to pay. We never turn any child away. We also bring our groups from local organizations like Neighborhood House and Operations dream. We also host several high school golf teams for practice, play, and learning. Our

programming is a combination of learning the game of golf along with our nine core values (Honesty, Integrity, Sportsmanship, Respect, Confidence, Responsibility, Perseverance, Courtesy, and Judgment). We are working with the Parks Department to come up with a long term solution that allows us to keep serving the community while taking the financial burden off of Milwaukee County. We would like to keep nine holes open for the next year or two, giving our chapter and board to come up with a plan for the future. Thank you for considering my comments regarding Noyes Park.

Lastly, I will say that without par 3 golf courses, new to the game, beginners, and people in financial need would never take up the game which in the long run will hurt the golfer base of Milwaukee County.

David Cohn

Location:

Submitted At: 10:32am 09-13-21

Dear members of the Parks, Energy and Environment Committee,

Thank you for taking the time to discuss the future of golf at Noyes Park.

As you may know, we have partnered with Parks for over 20 years to help introduce kids to the game at Noyes, building character and instilling life-enhancing values that make meaningful impacts well beyond the golf course. We value our partnership with Parks and the ability it provides to positively impact kids in the community through the game of golf.

Noyes Park is our primary program location, and we are actively working with Parks to extend our use agreement. Our conversations have been productive and we are working on securing a short-term extension that will allow us to think big about the future of the golf course and our role there.

As an accessible nine-hole par 3 course, Noyes Park Golf Course provides Milwaukee County residents and the local community an easy and affordable place to learn and play the game. It is our request that the course remain a nine-hole course to provide a full course experience to all players and to allow First Tee — Southeast Wisconsin time to evaluate all options for long-term planning.

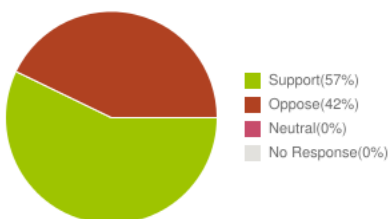
Our board of directors has convened a task force to evaluate all available options at Noyes, and our organization is committed to bringing our full resources to the table to support a thriving future for golf at Noyes and for the community. We understand the need for a long-term solution, and look forward to working with Parks to consider what golf at Noyes looks like for years to come.

Sincerely,

David Cohn
Executive Director
First Tee — Southeast Wisconsin

Agenda Item: eComments for 10 21-745 A resolution/ordinance amending Chapter 47.08 of the Milwaukee County Code of General Ordinances to permit foraging for edible fruits, nuts, and mushrooms on designated Milwaukee County park land if it is for personal use and not for resale

Overall Sentiment



Ian Canovi

Location:

Submitted At: 10:21am 09-14-21

This is a common-sense policy that is already in place in many other counties. People forage in the parks anyway because the prohibition is borderline unenforceable; the only people the law deters are rule-abiders like me. I regularly encounter people in the woods who are foraging, and as a big forager (but also a rule-follower) I usually inform them that it is illegal in Milwaukee County parkland and that I drive to other counties to do it. This has not stopped a single one of them. "Oh, I just do it occasionally." "Oh, I only take a little bit." And honestly, it's hard to argue with that.

There's also the equity issue: when the foraging rule is enforced, the enforcement action disproportionately falls on Hmong families who are simply trying to hold on to a part of their culture that is important to them. This is unacceptable.

Walter Ostrander

Location:

Submitted At: 10:15am 09-14-21

I implore the committee to vote yes on this resolution. From a cultural, economic, public health, and ecological standpoint, it will improve the lives of your constituents without any ill effect on those for whom it bears no relevance. Thank you!

Jan Uebelherr

Location:

Submitted At: 10:05am 09-14-21

Hello, I'm president of Lake Park Friends. While our full board has not had the opportunity to discuss this amendment, our Nature Committee has weighed in and shares the wellj-articulated concerns raised by Brian Russart, who oversees the natural areas of the parks. Thanks,
Jan Uebelherr

Mariah Rogers

Location:

Submitted At: 10:04am 09-14-21

Wisconsin Mycological Society supports this change and would do all we can to facilitate knowledge and abundance by the new rules and safety beyond the rules for foraging fungi. Fungi in particular are good food! High in micronutrients and a culinary replacement for many meats. They can also be used as dyes. Please do get in touch with us if you would like us to collaborate further on this change. We do intend to start leading foraging forays here in Milwaukee County as we do elsewhere in the state if it is passed. That is a great time to engage on why the law exists, why its boundaries exist, and that is exactly what fosters a positive lawmaking process between community and the law. People will follow boundaries if they know what they are, why they exist, and find it is for their safety and natural preservation and remediation. Indeed, many people will become engaged in their community in encouraging positive, limited foraging with good practices. Thank you! Mariah Rogers, WMS board member.

Brooke Gilley

Location:

Submitted At: 9:52am 09-14-21

Foragers going off trail to collect leading to:

- Erosion issues (Grant Park is a prime example of a park with huge erosion issues)
- Impacts the population of sensitive plants and other animals such as the federally endangered Rusty Patched Bumblebee.
- Ethics of individuals -are they taking more than the land can support?
- Overharvested plants become less and less common in an area (we have already seen this with Wild Leeks (Ramps) in areas of the county. I have also seen people with plastic grocery bags full of dug out ferns from a property with signage that states no collecting of plant material.

*Another ordinance that is difficult for staff to enforce (i.e. we already have rules regarding fishing, no dog walking,

having permits for professional photographers, that are a challenge to enforce). Hunting and Fishing licenses are regulated by the DNR. If this ruling passes will there be a permit for foragers? Who is enforcing the permits? Will there be repercussions for not following the rules of the said permit? How will these repercussions be enforced?

Opens the door on liability of the Milwaukee County Parks if a forager misidentifies a plant and or mushroom (there plants and mushrooms are toxic with the potential to cause death). Foraging (aka Wild Crafting) is becoming more popularized via social media influencers, some people who follow these folks may think they can simply go out and forage without knowledge, background, or the ethics to forage ethically and without poisoning themselves. Think of Chris McCandless from the true story "Into The Wild, where he misidentifies a plant via a field guide in Alaska which eventually leads to his death.

*Potential on profiteering off park land if foragers are selling product that they gathered on park property which is really profiting off the time of volunteer efforts plus the work of the Natural Areas Department team.

Holly Walz

Location:

Submitted At: 5:06pm 09-13-21

I oppose allowing foraging of edible fruit, nuts or mushrooms for personal use. My 5 top reasons: #1 How would the ordinance be enforced and policed to ensure that there was zero resale of the forage? I have taken herbalist courses with a local herbalist and he has taken plants from county land and advocates others do the same even though it is illegal. #2 Many of these edibles are difficult to identify and toxic! How much responsibility does Milwaukee County bear when someone dies from eating a poisonous mushroom? #3 Ethical foraging - some plants that are foraged can be decimated if taken incorrectly - like fern fiddleheads. I have witnessed entire communities of ferns on parkland disappear because of unethical collection. #4 It takes years for some populations of plants to recover from foraging - leeks take 7 - 8 YEARS to mature. Historical foraging was done by nomadic indigenous people who moved about the land and didn't overuse anything - for if they did they would starve. In my experience, foragers of our time are trained by social media and will not adhere to ethical techniques. #5 Think about the trails and how much vegetation will be trampled and ruined by people leaving trails to search for mushrooms and the like - and we have some of the most beautiful parks in the world! They are full of native plants and wildflowers. There will be nothing left for us to enjoy. Please do not permit foraging on Milwaukee County Park Land. It is a recipe for disaster. Thank you.

Jeremy Hooper

Location:

Submitted At: 8:09am 09-13-21

I'm reaching out as a citizen and resident of Milwaukee County, as well as a lover of our Parks, not as an employee of the County.

I recently discovered that foraging for mushrooms, fruits, nuts, and berries is not allowed in Milwaukee County Parks. I was surprised to learn this, as I know Dane County allows limited foraging for personal use in their parks and the state also allows it in Wisconsin State Parks.

Ironically, as the ordinance currently stands, I believe it prohibits the harvesting of fruit from the many fruit trees the County has planted for public benefit, such as the Urban Orchards in McGovern Park. It also appears to prohibit volunteer groups from assisting in the removal of invasive species such as buckthorn, cattails, and garlic mustard.

The pandemic has certainly inspired many people to move their recreation outdoors, including to our parks. I believe that allowing limited foraging of these items for personal use can help users of our parks to develop a greater appreciation of their beauty and a deeper understanding of how we are interconnected with nature.

As you likely know, some foraging already occurs in our parks. This ordinance change would help to outline what is responsible, ethical behavior, as well as empowering the Parks Director to set reasonable, common-sense limitations. Irresponsible behavior such as uprooting ramps or trampling wildflowers is currently prohibited and would remain prohibited after this ordinance change.

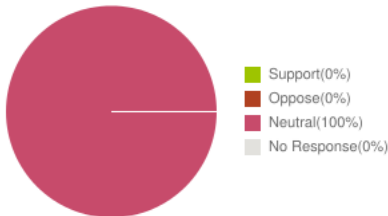
My particular area of interest is mushrooms. Many people may not be aware that a mushroom is actually the fruiting body of the fungus. The bulk of the organism resides in the substrate - soil, root system, leaf litter, or wood - from which the mushroom grows. Picking a mushroom does not damage the mycelium of the fungus in much the same way that picking an apple does not damage the apple tree.

In summary, I believe this proposed ordinance change will serve to further enhance and protect our amazing Milwaukee County Parks. I respectfully urge you to support it.

Thank you for your consideration.

Agenda Item: eComments for 11 21-772 Report from the Grants and Special Projects and Facilities Management Divisions, providing updates on securing grant funding for rehabilitation of the Domes and the approved structural testing and netting replacement projects at the Domes. (INFORMATIONAL ONLY UNLESS OTHERWISE DIRECTED BY THE COMMITTEE)

Overall Sentiment



Jeremy Ebersole

Location:

Submitted At: 9:21pm 09-13-21

On behalf of the Milwaukee Preservation Alliance, I would like to urge the Committee to move forward with confidence toward a long-term solution for the Domes that preserves this community landmark for decades to come. Our own outreach through the Save Our Domes campaign, along with every survey conducted with the public, shows that the people of Milwaukee County cherish the Domes and support a preservation solution. We urge the Board to seriously weigh the importance of the public voice in determining ways forward and to ensure that future decision-making processes are transparent and invite meaningful public participation.

We would also encourage the Board to give credence to the incredible work completed by the citizens of the Domes Task Force, which was commissioned by the County Board. The Task Force worked for 3 years, heavily engaging with the public and endeavoring to consider all possible ways forward for the Domes. Based on this exhaustive work, the Task Force developed a vision for a way forward that acknowledges the challenges while focusing on the possibilities. Their years of work determined that preservation is both feasible and beneficial and would produce an economically sustainable future for Mitchell Park that would enhance the Clarke Square neighborhood and the entire County. This vision would create 300 quality new jobs in a dense and incredibly diverse neighborhood and foster a culture of health and urban agriculture throughout the region by developing Mitchell Park into a new Learning, Wellness, and Horticultural campus. Moreover, public-private partnerships such as the Task Force recommends have been accomplished successfully and revitalized communities over and over again throughout the country

The Domes are an internationally unique treasure that provide health benefits year-round to all residents of the County. A long-term preservation solution at the Domes would be a meaningful step toward the County's stated goal of being the healthiest County in Wisconsin by achieving racial equity. We urge the Committee to seriously consider the health, environmental, economic, equity, and cultural benefits the long-term preservation of the Domes and development of the surrounding Mitchell Park can provide to the County for decades to come.