

Parks and Recreation Committee
Minutes
May 3, 2016
Owen City Hall

Called to order at 6:00 pm.

Roll call: Denny Lulloff, Kelly Knight, Bob Wilczek, Mike Renderman and Rick Nelson.
Also present was Tim Swiggum, CDC, who served as Secretary

Public Present: Cindy Cardinal (O-W Enterprise), Mary Lynn Kiviko, Mary Ellen Hughes, Allen Wagner, Nicole Shattuck (The Sentinel and Rural News), Linda Wyeth (The Sentinel and Rural News), Don Wyeth and John Mauel.

Goose Management:

Denny Lulloff gave a brief background of the problem. We have been trying to solve this problem in several ways over the last 10 years. Some things worked a little better than others such as the egg oiling but the goose population still is at a point of being a health hazard to park users.

Dewayne Snobl, USDA Representative, was introduced to explain the environmental impact a large population can have on an area and covered a lot of other solutions that other communities have tried. Each solution had its' pros and cons.

He also explained the difference between migratory and resident geese. Resident geese always return to where they learned to fly which is the ones that are here all summer.

Each goose leaves 1 lb. of dropping per day. 80 geese equals 80 lbs. per day. These dropping can cause a health and safety issue. Feeding the geese is counterproductive and we should shy away from letting people do that.

The round up would occur during the 3 week molting period between the middle of June and July 4th or so. Tools used are canoes, remote control devices and walls (barricades) to corral them.

All geese will be euthanized as relocation is not allowed by law. Adult geese that pass a lab test may be sent to processing for food pantries around the state. 10% or at least 5 birds must be tested.

There would be an immediate reduction in the population but we would still need to continue other reduction activities such as the egg oiling.

He counted 8 adults and 7 young on the Millpond but could hear many more to the north. It has been noted that in the past the geese would hatch their young elsewhere and bring them to the Millpond once they can walk around.

A question and answer period was held next:

The committee had a few questions regarding the round up.

Rick Nelson: What is the tolerance level of people regarding a project like this?

It depends on the community and where people put their priorities.

Can we cancel if there is not enough need for it as we move into Summer?

Yes. Can be canceled up to the day before it is scheduled.

Are the processing fees the responsibility of the City?

Yes. If we choose to send them to processing then the city would be responsible for the costs. The cost of processing can run from \$300 to \$500 depending on how many birds.

Mary Ellen Hughes: How much is the total cost of the round up?

- It could be as much as \$5,000 if no other community is doing one in the region. Trempeleau is interested and has been waiting for another community to step forward to lower their costs so the cost is estimated around \$3,000 at this time.
- M. E. Hughes: How are the geese euthanized?
They are euthanized by veterinarian standards with CO2 but that happens elsewhere.
- M. E. Hughes: What is the process to get them to the food pantry?
Adults are stored at the USDA until testing is complete, then they are transported to the processor. Once processed the food pantries are notified to pick them up.
- M. E. Hughes: How long is the permitting process?
Mike Jones of the USDA handles all the permitting and the State of Wisconsin DNR has streamlined the process to make the turnaround fairly fast.
- M. E. Hughes: Is the permit based on the number of geese to be round up?
The permit would be written for “up to X” number of geese.
- Bob Wilczek: Do the young ones go right into pet food?
Yes, there is not enough to them to try to process.
- Don Wyeth: Are the local businesses complaining about the geese?
No. Most of the complaints are from people wanting to use the park but don’t want their children covered in goose excrement.
- Don Wyeth: Are the goose droppings a health issue at Kerry Ingredients due to the fact that Kerry Ingredients is a food processor?
There was no formal discussion on this question as nobody rightly knew that answer. Kerry has made no comments to that effect as far as anyone knows.
- Cindy Cardinal: Can the meat be brought back here to our food pantry?
We would be able to pick up our geese to deliver to our food pantry if that is our wish. We would have to pick them up. Might not be cost effective.
- Denny Lulloff: What is the timeline for the whole process?
Once decided, we should track the number of geese up to the end of May or beginning of June. The crew will let us know their schedule but likely toward the end of June for the roundup. The council will decide at the May 10 meeting.
- M. E. Hughes: Comment- This has been very interesting. Question: Is this the only meeting?
This is the only public meeting for comments but the City Council will meet May 10.
- Don Wyeth: Is there any form of “birth control” that can be used to slow them down?
No. None that would make financial or logistical sense to try.
- Lulloff asked if there were any more questions and there were not. Time 7:18

Committee held a discussion regarding the need to have a safe and healthy atmosphere at our parks where families don’t have to worry about disease and bacteria. Discussion continued on the desire to ensure that the geese did not go to waste and should be processed for food pantries.

A Mike Renderman/Kelly Knight motion to recommend to the council to go ahead with the goose round up and send the adult geese to be processed for food pantries was approved unanimously.

A Wilczek/Nelson motion to adjourn at 7:20 pm passed unanimously.

Submitted by: Tim Swiggum