

Town of Exeter

Special Meeting and Public Hearing

Wednesday, June 10, 2015

6:30 PM

Public hearing for a proposed tubing business

Chair Fahey called the hearing to order and stated the hearing had been properly posted.

Present: Chair Fahey, Supervisors Gundlach and Zweifel and Clerk Christen.

Mark Rohloff, Green County Sheriff and Randy Caputo, WI DNR warden were present

General: 9 citizens

Chair Fahey gave the background as to what the intent of the proposed tubing business would be; the hearing was called to allow residents to voice concerns.

Bob Waldner was present representing Gene Heinman (ill/unable to attend). He gave a brief description of the proposed business and explained that the Village of Belleville encouraged Gene to go downstream versus dropping off in Paoli to establish the business.

Discussion-

- They do not envision there being a lot of canoes or tubes.
- No permitting process from the village, the village would like to see the business get started as soon as possible.
- Paddle boards have been ordered concessions have been discussed.
- Sheriff Rohloff here to address the legalities, Camp Minnehaha is near Brodhead, a number of concerns with the experience of the tubing business there. Things dealt with have been trespass, emergency medical issues, getting to injured people, illegal drug use and alcohol abuse and underage drinking. These things happen when people leave the business as well as at the start and the end of the campground.
- Chair Fahey stated the biggest problem is access to the river, private property is inaccessible.
- Bob Waldner noted the use would be self-limited by cold weather and storms, low water.
- Village of Albany permits the tubing business and the campground does run their own tubing business, a couple of other groups all add to the total numbers on the river.
- Warden Caputo stated that littering is a big problem, cannot get a boat into this water as, it does not allow a motorized boat, environmental concerns are debris floats downstream, high water pushes trash out into the fields.
- Supervisor Gundlach noted the water right of way is there, as soon as someone steps out of the water they are trespassing,

- Kent Brauer, on the Park Committee asked Sheriff Rohloff how often is the Sheriff's Department called to the river for problems. Sheriff Rohloff responded minimum 50-60 calls annually. The Department has placed markers on the river and tubers can use the markers as a point of reference for calls in to 911.
- He recommends that there be no sales of alcohol, it is the contributing factor to majority of problems, although he notes it is carried in by the people.
- Sheriff Rohloff was asked how many medical emergencies are called in, He stated weekly.
- Warden Caputto discussed the, put in/pulls out area, he noted the park here does not really have a pull out spot, a pier would help. The DNR would not really get involved unless a pier was installed.
- Chair Fahey asked if the park is being used as a family reunion, how the bus traffic will be handled.
- Ricky Kiesling, Park Committee stated that the majority of the park has been donated and volunteers maintain some of the things. She wondered where will the trash go and where will people go to the bathroom. The Park Committee is concerned about the interruptions of family events by a business.
- The disc golf is very popular; one disc golf hole is near the canoe landing.
- Mr. Waldner stated two shuttle buses would be used with a trailer to haul canoes. He noted that they have equipment to do a thirty day trial and this will be just a small part of Gene's overall business plan. .
- Brian Butenhoff-stated he has built a couple of businesses and is very surprised that the business is allowed the green light.
- Supervisor Gundlach asked if a tree falls into the river can these guys move it. Warden Caputo-they can cut the log, and allow the log to remain in the river as it is fish structure.
- Supervisor Gundlach asked if a homeowner is liable if someone is hurt on their tree overhanging. Warden Caputo stated that you would need a lawyer to answer that.
- Jim Schultz stated he had purchased his land for the habitat and peace and quiet. Now he may have to deal with the noise and trash.
- Chair Fahey asked if there is a plan B if the village plans to go ahead with their part of the business.
- Bob Waldner said maybe the tubing is too much and has too many liabilities, maybe canoes and kayaks would be nice but not tubes.
- Chair Fahey is concerned there is lack of public input, this operation is flying under the radar as the Village of Belleville Mayor does not seem to know anything about the operation.
- Chair Fahey asked if there is a timeline.
- Major concerns of those in attendance-trash, disruption to park and it's users, loitering, accommodations for people waiting for pick up, noise.
- Mr. Waldner noted that details are a necessary item and with Gene's health it probably is not going to happen this year.
- Jim Schulz stated for the record, money is, plain and simple what this is all about.
- Kent Brauer stated with the lack of information the proposed business should be tabled. The Park Committee does not support it at all.

MOTION (Kent Brauer) to table the use of the park by any business coming from Belleville for any use in 2015.

Jim Schulz asked if he could make an amendment to the motion to exclude all commercial use at the park completely. Chair Fahey stated that the motion is on the floor.

Discussion on the amendment, Kent Brauer was concerned that the amendment may shut the Park to other uses.

Approve the amendment, **MOTION (Jim Schulz/Fred Andree)**.

Chair Fahey asked for a roll call vote of the citizens, all those in favor of the amendment: 7 (seven) in favor, 2 (two) opposed to the amendment.

Chair Fahey stated the town electors of the public hearing held June 10, 2015, voted that there be no commercial use of the park.

7: 25 PM adjourned, **MOTION (Chair Fahey/Jim Schulz)**, all in favor, adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Candee J, Christen, Clerk.