

MEMORANDUM NO. M17-136

TO: Recreation Committee
FROM: Dean Bostrom, Executive Director
Craig Talsma, Deputy Director/Director of Admin & Finance
Michael R. Kies, Director of Recreation & Facilities
DATE: December 4, 2017
RE: Wings and Talons Agreement

Background:

The Park District had been working with the Northern Illinois Raptors Center (NIRC) since May of 2009, for which Vogelei Park has been their home base. The group NIRC has disbanded and been taken over by Wings and Talons. There is a new main contact person along with a majority of the same people from NIRC continuing to care for the raptors.

The purpose of the Wings and Talons organization, (a 501c3), is "To provide for the raptors in their care and those that live in the wild, by means of education, stewardship and conservation and to connect with other similar organizations to share knowledge and work together for the common cause of raptor conservation." Staff continues to work with Wings and Talons to add program, education and conservation opportunities to the community. Wings and Talons continues to participate in HEParks special events for our residents and guests.

Implications:

Upon having discussions with Wings and Talons about the opportunity for renewing the agreement, they brought to our attention their desire to change some of the operations and financial considerations going forward. Attached is a copy of the original agreement with changes and a final draft of the new agreement.

Those requested changes include:

- Moving their storage and food preparation area from the Vogelei House basement to the kitchen in upstairs of the Barn. This would be for easier access during the winter. The change would include relocating their freezer.
- They have no need for additional storage in the farmhouse basement.
- Wings and Talons stated that they do not need the office space in the upper level of the Vogelei Barn.
- Wings and Talons asked that the birds utilize the mews from April 1 – November 1. During the winter months they will be housed offsite at another location.
- They have asked for an adjustment in their annual payment. They expressed that based on the utilities and space utilization reductions they use, their costs are approximately \$130 per year. The previous agreement was for \$1,200 per year; They are recommending a fee of \$150 for the year to cover the cost of utilities associated with their operations.
- They have agreed to participate in a minimum of 4 special events per year and operate the open house times as stated in the agreement which were the same as last year. The only change would be the open house months would be from April 1 to November 1.

Staff has added the requirement that Wings and Talons must participate in 4 special events and three (3) programs per year. It is also required that Wings and Talons have at least four "open to the public" hours per week mutually agreeable to both parties TBD, where the mews will be open for residents and guests to view the birds. Wings and Talons will also have a designated contact person that will meet with Park District staff monthly and/or as needed.

Staff believes that with the reduction in utility costs, (i.e. electric and water), space utilization, some of the financial constraints the group has experienced since the changeover and the reduction in the duration of time the birds will be on site that a rate change is warranted. Staff believes the \$150 per year is a fair compensation rate, as the most important component of this whole agreement is the relationship that has been built with this group. Going forward in future years we will visit these cost proposals on an annual basis, so this number could change in the future.

The terms of the agreement shall be for one year with an automatic annual renewal unless either party provides at least 60 days written notice for cancellation prior to the renewal date.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Recreation Committee recommend to the full Board approval of the attached agreement between Wings and Talons and the Park District.