

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2008
RECREATION & PARKS ADVISORY COMMISSION

1. The Recreation & Parks Advisory Commission was called to order by Vice Chairperson, Mark Hanna.

Commission Members present:

James Brekke, At-Large
Matthew Cooklock, At-Large
Reubenna Cooley, At-Large
Deborah Everson, At-Large
Mark Hanna, At-Large
Paul Hartzell, At-Large
Jim Hubert, At-Large
Nicole Jechorek, Planning Commission Liaison
Jeanne Qualley, At-Large
Brian Rogers, At-Large

Absent:

James Driste, At-Large
Rich Gates, City Council Liaison
Rob Jacobs, At-Large
Andrew Reinhardt, At-Large

Staff Members present:

Jon Oyanagi, Recreation & Parks Director
Mary Pat Black, Parks & Facilities Manager
Jan Ficken, Recreation Programs & Services Manager
Barb Stewart, Secretary
Steve Gulenchyn, Program Supervisor
Pat Busch, Senior Coordinator
Mike Davis, Police Chief

Others:

Ivan Brown, Liberian Organization of Minnesota Representative

Introductions of members, staff and attendees were made.

2. APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 17, 2008 PRAC AGENDA

Motion, Mark Hanna; Second, Matthew Cooklock, to approve the September 17, 2008 PRAC agenda. Motion unanimously approved.

3. APPROVAL OF JULY 16, 2008 PRAC MEETING MINUTES

Motion, Jeanne Qualley; Second, Jim Hubert, to approve the July 16, 2008 PRAC minutes. Motion unanimously approved.

4. OLD BUSINESS

YMCA

Director, Jon Oyanagi provided an update on the YMCA proposal stating staff has held discussions with YMCA and architects to discuss concepts of a central location for an outdoor aquatics facility. Following staff's discussion with Ryan Companies, Target announced their decision to put any further development on hold for a minimum of four years which will directly affect moving forward with development of an aquatics facility. Staff will meet again in early October, 2008 to work on a Memorandum of Understanding and Jon will update Commissioners following that meeting.

CATERER UPDATE

Parks & Facilities Manager, Mary Pat Black, stated the contract for the current single caterer (Lookout Bar & Grill) for the Community Activity Center (CAC) will end April 30, 2009. Staff has discussed with the Commission the option of offering multiple caterers for the CAC and solicited RFP's for exclusive caterers in May, 2008. A total of 8 proposals were received and 7 of the 8 were interviewed. The catering finalists provided a taste testing for the selection committee made up of 4 City of Brooklyn Park staff, a Recreation & Parks Advisory Commissioner, the Mayor and a senior club representative. From the 7 the committee selected 3: Lookout Catering, Lancer Catering, and Town & Country Catering. Although all of the caterers have experience in preparing ethnic foods, the proposed contract will leave the door open for an additional selection of an ethnic caterer. The CAC will receive the following percentages from each of the 3 caterers:

Monday – Friday	6:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.	8% of all gross sales
Monday – Friday	5:00 p.m. to midnight	12% of all gross sales
Saturday/Sunday/Holidays	6:00 a.m. to midnight	12% of all gross sales
All additions and upgrades including corkage fees		3% of all gross sales
Alcoholic beverages including all bar sales		25% of all gross sales

Commissioner, Jeanne Qualley asked what the length of the contract is. Mary Pat stated five years and if all goes well, it could be extended two additional years.

Commissioner, James Brekke asked if rental fees are included in the contract. Mary Pat responded that rental fees are a separate charge that are collected directly from the customer.

Following no further discussion, a motion was entertained:

Motion, Jim Hubert; Second, Jeanne Qualley, to recommend to the City Council staff's proposal to accept, and enter into contract with, Lookout Grill, Lancer Catering, and Town and Country Catering as caterers for the CAC. Motion unanimously approved.

5. NEW BUSINESS

MONROE PARK SOCCER FIELD

Program Supervisor, Steve Gulenchyn presented a PowerPoint on the proposed development of a soccer field at Monroe Park, passed out an aerial map of the area and provided background information on soccer and field usage. Each year the soccer program has seen an increase in participants, practices and games. Reservations for soccer field usage in 2008 increased by 420 games over 2007 (total of 1,700 games). Currently the city has 16 fields; 9 at the Zane Sports Complex; 6 at the Noble Sports Complex and 1 at Northwoods Park. Staff

projects that the demand for additional soccer fields will continue to increase each year. Discussions have been held with the Organization of Liberians in Minnesota (OLM) regarding their potential funding of a new soccer field with the caveat that they would have priority use of the soccer fields.

Staff has researched possible locations for construction of a soccer field and has ascertained that Monroe Park is a perfect location due to its low usage and large open space area. The park currently has a baseball/softball field that is used very little and could be converted into a soccer field. The need for additional parking would be addressed with expanding the parking lot by 22 additional spaces which could be phased in for construction.

If Monroe Park is selected as the site there is the potential to partner with School District 11 for temporary parking and future development.

The estimated cost of \$141,000 to develop a soccer field at Monroe Park includes:

Grading, soil and seeding	\$50,000
Irrigation and hook up to pump house	\$29,000
Parking lot expansion	\$60,000
Goals and nets	\$ 2,000

Commissioner, Matthew Cooklock shared his support and agreement that there is a need for additional soccer fields. Matthew asked if other potential sites have been considered with larger parking spaces already developed. Steve stated staff has considered other sites and Monroe appears to be the best for several reasons including its close location to the school which also will assist in parking cars.

Commissioner, Paul Hartzell asked if the baseball diamond would be removed and if not, could it be used as a skating rink during the winter; and have any money been raised by the OLM yet. Steve stated the diamond will be removed and no outdoor rink will be at the Monroe site during the winter because it would kill the grass; this is just the starting point for the project so no funds have been raised yet.

Commissioner, Jim Hubert stated his support of Monroe Park as a perfect location for the plan and that \$60,000 for the parking lot expansion equates to \$3,000 a space which is a very good price.

Director, Jon Oyanagi introduced OLM Representative, Ivan Brown. Ivan has been in the United States for seven years and coaches and mentors youth to keep them involved in positive activities and off the street. Soccer is the main sport for the majority of ethnic groups including the Liberian community. Ivan sees soccer as a way to involve the many diverse groups within the city in a positive activity and environment. Ivan is responsible for the day to day responsibilities of the OLM and stated centralization of any additional soccer fields will be key for their community. It is difficult to monitor events when they are spread out across the city and one location aides in coaching, mentorship and keeping everything in one location. Ivan stated the OLM is a non profit organization and as such can reach out in the community for funding, apply for grants, and otherwise fundraise for needs of the Liberian community including construction of additional soccer fields.

Commissioner, Reubenna Cooley asked if one field will be enough for soccer events. Steve stated yes although there is the future possibility of developing two smaller soccer fields.

Commissioner, James Brekke asked who will be responsible for the upkeep and maintenance costs of the fields. Steve stated it will be the City's responsibility.

Motion, Paul Hartzell; Second, Jim Hubert, to recommend that staff pursue transforming Monroe Park into a soccer field. Motion unanimously approved.

🌲 POLICE DEPARTMENT-PARK/CRIME IMPLICATIONS – NAP

Director, Jon Oyanagi stated the Recreation & Parks and Police Department staff has worked on several cooperative efforts through the year. Jon introduced Police Chief, Michael Davis to provide an update on overall statistics of the city.

Police Chief, Michael Davis stated he is a 13 year resident of Brooklyn Park and previously worked in the Minneapolis Police Department before becoming the Police Chief for Brooklyn Park seven months ago.

Chief Davis provided an update on the City's parks and has been working diligently on three goals for his department; Continue reduction in crime within the city; Increase community involvement in crime reduction and; Create an environment for staff to do their best work.

Chief Davis stated the statistics bear out that the city parks are safe. Although there has been an increase in theft of auto and damage of property in 2008, there has been a 45% decrease in violent crime in parks from 2007. It is important to have a visible presence in the parks to keep crime down and in 2008, 334 spot checks have been made and CSO's have increased their presence in the parks.

Chief Davis stated the four main problem areas that have received the most attention and have generated the most spot calls; Zane Sports Complex, Norwood Park, Noble Sports Complex and Edinburgh USA.

Violent crime within the city has been down 12% from 2007 and 18% lower than 2006. The YTD calls the Police Department has received throughout the entire city is 6,499 with 98 of those relative to park concerns. 25% of violent crimes are attributed to youth and juvenile arrests are up 33% over 2007. In order to sustain a low juvenile crime level, it is important to engage youth at the front end with activities and programs and he stressed the importance of encouraging and engaging youth in positive activities while backing that up with Police enforcement. A perfect example is the Teen Zone program that is held at the Zanewood Recreation Center and works so well in offering positive activities and opportunities to the city's youth and teens. Teen Zone was open 4 days a week from 5-8 p.m. over the summer months and has the three requirements to make it successful; accessibility, safe environment and engages kids in a meaningful way. The program will continue 3 nights a week in the fall with the Police staff heading up the Teen Academy one night a week to educate teens on positive behavior through a variety of discussion topics.

The Police Department has held 11 neighborhood meetings throughout the city so far in 2008 and will continue to utilize and expand NAP. These meetings opened the door to discussion on many issues within the neighborhoods and is a good first step in engaging people.

Commissioner, Jeanne Qualley asked if increased lighting levels or emergency boxes could be placed in the city parks. Chief Davis agreed stating discussions on both have been held with consensus that if the parks don't look safe, the public doesn't feel safe.

Commissioner, Matthew Cooklock asked what the public can do to increase safety in the parks. Chief Davis stated the most important thing is to encourage people to use the park. When people are out and about, engaged, active and present a visible front in the parks, crime and vandalism is discouraged.

Commissioner, Brian Rogers asked if staff could provide an updated Crime Density Report. Chief Davis responded in the affirmative.

Following further discussion, Director Oyanagi thanked Chief Davis for attending this evening meeting and providing his update on the city's parks.

SENIOR/ADULT PROGRAMMING REPORT

Senior Coordinator, Pat Busch handed out the Activities + Adventures brochure and presented a PowerPoint on adult programming highlighting the following:

Senior Center programs and activities are designed to provide a sense of place, a sense of community and a sense of purpose. This is achieved in part by providing:

- Easy access and is open to all seniors
- Weekly activities and annual events are held
- Flu shot clinic
- Resource Fair
- Senior Safety Day
- Art Classes
- Defensive Driving Classes
- Holiday Luncheons and Entertainment
- Summer Concerts
- Field Trips/Day Trips/Extended Trips
- Host Site for:
 - Senior Federation
 - NWHHSC
 - Co-sponsor events for senior living facilities
- Resource Information for:
 - CEAP/Meals on Wheels
 - Senior Transportation
 - Senior Chores
 - Senior Linkage Line
 - Library
 - School District 271

7,104 seniors are members of the Seniors Club with an average age of mid 70's to mid 80's.

The new national fitness program, Silver Sneakers began on September 2. Program is offered Free to Medica and Human Insured adults 65 and older, and six class options are available.

Eight adult fitness classes offered: Hatha Yoga, Ashtanga Yoga, Energetics, Salsa Aerobics, Ballroom Dance, Latin Dance, Sunrise Fitness and Tai Chi.

500 Brooklyn Park participants joined in the Hennepin County 'Step To It Challenge'. 64 million steps were recorded.

Senior Center rooms have been renamed Grand Rooms 1, 2 and 3.

Vice Chairperson, Mark Hanna attends many of the adult programs and activities and commended Pat Busch on the fantastic job she does with the seniors and programming. Director, Jon Oyanagi agreed, stating Pat heads up many programs for the city's senior population and does a great job.

COMMUNITY GARDEN

Director, Jon Oyanagi, stated staff has received several requests from residents for a community garden wherein they could 'rent' individual garden plot. Staff took a survey of the surrounding cities currently offer community garden plots for their residents. The feedback received indicates the concept is working well within their communities and they actually have people on waiting lists. Community plots are typically easy to provide to residents and require low maintenance at a minimal cost. Staff researched the concept and ascertained that the Eidem Homestead site is ideal for a community garden and works well within the historical look of the farm.

Jon provided a handout with three possible location sites for a community garden:

- #1 – Could fit 30-32 garden plots
- #2 – Could fit 40 plots
- #3 – Could fit 10 plots

Jon stated the City could put in place several rules to assist in managing the plots and he exemplified some of those as follows:

- A \$50 rental fee would be charged for each plot rented
- It would be the city's responsibility to till the plots in the spring, delineate plots, Provide water, construct a fence, and plow the gardens under in the fall (These maintenance costs would be covered through the rental fees charged)
- It would be the renters responsibility to actively maintain their garden to avoid a weed filled garden, and clear out any structures in the fall (braces, stakes, compost, etc.)
- Brooklyn Park residents would receive first priority to bid for garden plots

Commissioner, James Brekke stated this is an excellent idea especially for townhome owners who have very limited, if any, space to grow a vegetable garden. Commissioner, Jim Hubert stated this is a great idea and good location. Jim asked if Three Rivers Park District is still considering taking over responsibility for the Historical Farm as previously discussed. Jon stated staff is still in the discussion phase with Three Rivers staff and a community garden concept would not interfere with a future joint agreement. Recreation Programs & Services Manager, Jan Ficken stated Three Rivers staff wants to become more involved in the agricultural aspect of the farm and a community garden fits perfectly into that plan.

If the concept is approved by the City Council, plans could begin this fall to prepare the garden plots, install water lines, and install fencing. This would ready the gardens for planting mid-May, 2009.

Following further discussion, the following motion was entertained:

Motion, James Brekke; Second, Matthew Cooklock, to present a community garden concept located at the Eidem Homestead site to the City Council for their approval. Motion unanimously approved.

PARK PROJECTS UPDATE

Parks & Facilities Manager, Mary Pat Black provided an update on the city's park projects.

Willowstone Park -

Installation of brick, concrete pad, air conditioner, new windows and connection to city water/sewer has been completed.

Sunkist Park –

Installation of new playground equipment has been completed.

Maitland Park –

Installation of new playground equipment has been completed.

Central Park –

Phase 3 has begun with construction of new restroom facility, two full basketball courts, parking lot rehab, new irrigation well installed, new benches at the Executive Nine Golf course and new signage.

Shingle Creek –

A student group from Brooklyn Junior High School succeeded in a fundraising effort and applied those funds towards several service projects including painting the dam in Shingle Creek (located across the street from the high school), installation of a bench and will be completing some landscaping.

Zane Sports Park –

Replaced irrigation.

Noble Sports Park –

Installed new scoreboards for softball fields.

Edinburgh USA Golf Course –

A new sign with electronic message board was installed.

Greenhaven Park –

New parking lot installed.

Commissioner, Brian Rogers asked if Central Park restrooms can only be opened by a key. Mary Pat stated the restrooms are open to the public from Memorial Day through Labor Day each year and may be opened by key only from Labor Day through Memorial Day.

Vice Chairperson, Mark Hanna commended Mary Pat on doing a superb job for the City and he considers it a privilege to work with her.

PROPOSED BUDGET REVIEW

Director, Jon Oyanagi provided an update on the 2009 City budget. The City Council members set the city's 2009 preliminary tax levy at their September 2, 2008, meeting. Included in that levy is \$3,014,847 allocated to the Recreation & Parks Department budget which constitutes a \$216,482 increase from 2008. This increase includes salaries, health insurance, cost of living increase, increase to internal service charges, and one fulltime addition in staff to operate the Zanewood Recreation Center. In an effort in reaching out to the

city's southern area and make the Zanewood Recreation Center a true community center, a staff person is needed to maintain regular hours to keep the center an open, welcoming and safe environment. In addition, a fulltime Police liaison would assist at the center.

Jon stated the department will continue to 'hold the line' on everything else within the department budget and staff will present the budget proposal at the Monday, October 6 City Council meeting.

Commissioner, James Brekke asked how much of an increase this is over 2007. Jon stated this is a 7% increase.

Commissioner, Jim Hubert asked if the department continues to receive pressure to increase fees and are revenues projected to remain the same in 2009. Jon stated staff and City Council are always looking at cost recovery on programs. Certain areas/programs will be able to cover their costs and more while other areas/programs will never be able to cover their costs. Staff is looking at increases to fees in the Enterprise Fund.

Jon stated over the next month each city department will present their proposed budget to the City Council with final approval to the budget made in December.

6. **DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW**

N/A

7. **OTHER ITEMS BY COMMISSION**

◆ Marketing Plan

Director, Jon Oyanagi stated Recreation Programs & Services Manager, Jan Ficken will lead a team to set up a marketing plan for the Recreation and Parks Department. The team will include a combination of staff and community members. Those serving will commit to meet together in November, January and February. Jon stated that Commissioner, Matthew Cooklock has volunteered to serve on the team and asked if any other Commissioners are interested in serving. Commissioner, James Brekke offered to volunteer. Jan thanked both Matthew and James and stated they would be contacted in the near future regarding the first meeting date, time and location.

◆ City Wide Garage Sale

Commissioner, Jeanne Qualley asked if the city has ever considered holding a citywide garage sale. Jan stated the city has not held one in the past but is a great idea and she will propose it to Special Events Coordinator, Denise Wollenberg.

◆ Hockey – Fundraiser

Commissioner, Jeanne Qualley asked if the city has ever considered holding a hockey puck wall fundraiser. Mary Pat Black stated it has not and she would research a possible location in the Community Activity Center for a hockey puck wall.

◆ Damage Deposit

Commissioner, Jeanne Qualley asked what kind of feedback from the public staff has received on instituting a damage deposit for picnic facility rentals. Mary Pat Black stated Commissioners discussed the need for a picnic pavilion and park building damage deposit and approved instituting one at their May 21, 2008 meeting. Subsequently, the City Council approved it at their June 16, 2008 meeting. Staff implemented the damage deposit late in the

season and has not received any complaints about the deposit, nor has retained any of the deposits.

◆ Contact Telephone Number in Parks

Commissioner, Brian Rogers asked if a contact telephone number could be posted at the park pavilions for people to call and contact someone when questions or concerns arise while visiting the parks. Mary Pat Black stated that is a good suggestion and she will research having that done.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Motion, Paul Hartzel; Second, Jim Hubert, to adjourn. Motion unanimously approved.