

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2009
RECREATION & PARKS ADVISORY COMMISSION

1. The Recreation & Parks Advisory Commission was called to order by Chair Person, Andrew Reinhardt.

Commission Members present:

Matthew Cooklock, At-Large
Reubenna Cooley, At-Large
James Driste, At-Large
Paul Hartzell, At-Large
Dean Heng, City Council Liaison
John Holm, Planning Commission Liaison
Rob Jacobs, At-Large
Seyon Nyanwleh, At-Large
Andrew Reinhardt, At-Large
Brian Rogers, At-Large
Kimberley Sundry, At-Large

Commission Members absent:

James Brekke, At-Large
Deborah Everson, At-Large
Jeanne Qualley, At-Large
Snoti Jappah, Student Representative

Others present:

Steve Trueman, Clear Wireless Representative

Staff Members present:

Jon Oyanagi, Recreation & Parks Director
Mary Pat Black, Parks & Facilities Manager
Jan Ficken, Recreation & Programs Manager
Don Berry, Golf Manager
Tom Fischer, Greens Superintendent
Dale Reed, Parks Superintendent
Barb Stewart, Secretary

2. **APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 16, 2009 RPAC AGENDA**

Motion, Matthew Cooklock; Second, Kimberley Sundry, to approve the December 16, 2009 RPAC agenda. Motion unanimously approved.

3. **APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 18, 2009 RPAC MEETING MINUTES**

Motion, James Driste; Second, Matthew Cooklock, to approve the November 18, 2009 RPAC minutes amended as follows:

Commissioner, Seyon Nyanwleh stated the City should cover the costs of the dog park rather than residents or individuals accessing the park. **Motion unanimously approved.**

4. **NEW BUSINESS**

GOLF REPORT

Golf Manager, Don Berry attended this evening's meeting to provide an update on the 2009 golf season at both the Edinburgh USA and Brookland Executive Nine golf courses.

Golf rounds - sold in 2009 were 33,000 compared to 35,000 in 2008. The golf business as a whole is economically driven and is down 7-10 percent this year. In addition, the weather was not quite as good this year as last year with July temps recorded as the coldest in 50 years. On the other hand, November weather was great which balanced sales of golf rounds out over the season.

Golf outings - were down 50% compared to 2008 with the negative economy making a major impact. In addition, although outing fees have not been raised for 10-12 years, Edinburgh Golf Course outing fees remain on the high end compared to surrounding golf courses while the golf industry as a whole has lowered their outing fees. Staff is researching dropping the fees from \$125 to \$100 per player to allow us to be more competitive in the field.

In addition, in past years we have restricted golf outings to one day a week on Mondays which is not a great golfing day for many industries. We will be offering Tuesdays next year and have already booked two outings for Tuesday.

PGA Golf Cards – are a big part of the golf business and in 2009, we gave away 2,200 free rounds through the purchase of PGA golf cards which offer two for one rounds.

We have added a Monday rate: \$34 with a cart and sold 2,200 rounds; and a Tuesday rate: \$49 with cart and have sold 1,522 rounds.

Edinburgh USA Jr. Classic Invitational – First year for this one day youth tournament and had a goal to sign up 45 players. We surpassed that goal with 69 players registered.

Marketing - A new easily navigated website was introduced. A professional photographer supplied superb photos making the site professional and a great marketing tool for years to come.

Edinburgh Golf Course is now on Facebook with 40 fans signed up.

Junior Golf Pass – was added this year. We had a goal to sell 1-12 and surpassed that goal with sales of 19 passes.

Junior Golf Rounds – increased from 1,540 in 2008 to 2,142 in 2009.

Group lessons – registered 341 participants which is the same number as in 2008.

Discount Card New for 2010 – are selling for \$35 on our website and at the Pro Shop counter. The \$35 charge entitles you to a free round of golf along with several other discounted offers at both Edinburgh and Brookland. The goal is to sell 1,000 cards in 2010.

Golf Course Superintendent, Tom Fischer provided an update on golf course maintenance in 2009:

The maintenance crew lost one full time employee in 2009 which stretched staff duties while saving in expenses.

The decision was made to reduce mowing on the golf course to save on labor and fuel costs. Although successful in many areas on the course, those areas abutting up to residential properties was less successful. Following complaints the mowing schedules on those areas returned to their original schedule.

The water table on the 17th hole is virtually non-existent. One solution is to install a plastic liner in the ponds as we did on the front nine a few years ago.

After 15 years of use the planks have rotted on the bridge over 17 and were replaced. These planks should hold up for 20 years.

The hedge behind the driving range was unsightly and needed a plant replacement. New perennial grasses were planted to provide a buffer between the main driveway and the tee area.

To save on water costs, the decision was made to decrease watering on the natural areas that do not grow. A recommendation has been made to install a weather station. Temperature, wind speed and evaporation rates would be monitored and all of the sprinklers on the course would be automatically adjusted accordingly providing a cost savings to the course.

Brookland Executive Nine Golf Course booked 16,265 rounds in 2009 compared to 16,698 in 2008. This number is impressive in view of the fact that 5% of all par three golf courses have closed down nationwide.

Brookland Executive Nine Golf Course – is a great course for beginning golfers, from youth through seniors. The course is perfect for adults with time or cost constraints. Two night tournaments were hosted this year. Cost was \$16 including equipment. Participants enjoy these night events and they will continue to be offered in 2010.

Disc Golf – will be incorporated at the course in 2010. Central Park has seen a high demand for this popular sport.

Don opened the floor to questions.

Chairperson, Andrew Reinhardt stated that at one point, Councilman Lunde attempted to spearhead a group to bring back an LPGA tournament to Edinburgh USA. Is that still being considered as an option? Don stated although we are very interested in bringing an LPGA tournament back to Edinburgh, the probability in doing so is low due to the negative economy which has directly impacted the LPGA. Contact has been made with the LPGA and they know we are interested but the responsibility in garnering a sponsor lies directly on us. Target Corporation would be the logical sponsor for a tournament but discussion has not reached that point yet.

Andrew asked if the Edinburgh Golf Course is a part of the General Fund. Parks & Facilities Manager, Mary Pat Black stated both city golf courses are Enterprise funds.

Council Liaison, Dean Heng complimented Tom on developing the maintenance standards for the golf course. Dean suggested staff continue to place emphasis on the importance in water conservation and decrease the use of chemicals while increasing the use of organic materials. Tom replied that the standards put in place were designed to keep the Edinburgh Golf Course rated as one of the top courses in the state.

Vice Chairperson, Brian Rogers asked if the water in the pond has completely dried out and has that created an eyesore. Tom stated the pond would normally be 8 feet deep and now it is virtually dry which does create an eyesore. Brian asked what the cost of lining the pond would be. Tom stated approximately \$500,000.

Councilmember, Seyon Nyanwleh asked why there will be a reduction in corporate outing fees next year. Don stated a reduction is necessary if the golf course is to stay in competition with surrounding golf courses. For example, Bunker Hills charges \$70 to play while Edinburgh charges \$125. Although Edinburgh provides a better product, to be that much higher in price is defeating the purpose and turning corporate outings away. In the past we have booked up to 60 outings a year while this year we booked 18. Those outings need to be brought up to 30 – 40 bookings.

Councilmember, Matthew Cooklock asked why the \$100 price was chosen for corporate golf outings and whether that price could be lowered. Don stated Bunker Hills charges \$70 without food. To compete with that, we offer a package that includes a round of golf, cart and \$10 coupon for the Girvan Grill for a package cost of \$100.

Seyon asked how junior golfers are reached. Don stated marketing towards junior golfers is accomplished via the website, advertisement in junior golf magazines, flyers and a lesson brochure placed on our website. Athletic directors and golf coaches are targeted to receive marketing materials and flyers that are then passed out to their junior players.

Director, Jon Oyanagi announced that Don Berry was recently inducted into the Minnesota Professional Golf Association Hall of Fame. This prestigious award is a direct tribute to the incredible talent, caliber and professionalism that Don possesses and passes on in his role at the Edinburgh Golf Course. In addition, Tom Fischer is one of the top golf course superintendents in Minnesota. We are very fortunate to have both of them on board representing the city as employees at Edinburgh USA.

Seyon asked how young people become involved in golf. Don stated Edinburgh does have a Junior Golf League with 187 junior golfers registered in 2009. Every Monday and Wednesday young golfers play all day at the Executive Nine Golf Course. Next year the ages will be expanded to include youth 5-17 year of age. In addition, this year we had a local resident who passed away and his family started a golf scholarship program that they have contributed to. This program will provide scholarships to both youth and adults.

GOLF COURSE MAINTENANCE STANDARDS

Director, Jon Oyanagi reiterated that Edinburgh USA is a top level public golf course requiring establishment of maintenance standards to keep the course at that level. Greens

Superintendent, Tom Fischer thanked Parks & Facilities Manager, Mary Pat Black for assisting in the development of those standards.

Commissioner, Seyon Nyanwleh stated although standards are important it is his understanding that the golf courses are a part of the Recreation and Parks Department budget and funded by the City. Jon stated the golf courses are not funded by the City; are not supported by the taxpayers; that they are Enterprise funds which are not a part of the Recreation and Parks budget. Seyon asked if the standards can be changed if something imminent needed to be adjusted. Jon stated these standards will remain in place until there is a need to change them. For example as new products come on the market, new methods are developed or recommended, etc.

Planning Commission Liaison, John Holm asked if the residents with homes surrounding the golf course pay any additional fees to be on the golf course. Parks & Facilities Manager, Mary Pat stated they do not.

Following further input and discussion, the following motion was entertained:

Motion, Brian Rogers; Second, Kimberley Sunday to approve and adopt the Edinburgh and Executive Nine golf course maintenance standards. Motion passed (8-1). Seyon Nyanwleh opposed.

COMMISSIONER STATUS

Director, Jon Oyanagi stated terms for four Commissioners will end April 1, 2010; James Brekke, Reubenna Cooley, Paul Hartzell and Rob Jacobs. All four Commissioners are eligible to apply for a second term on the RPAC. Applications can be found on the City's website under Government/Commissions/Committees or contact Barb at 763-493-8367 for an application. Applications are due January 29, 2010.

5. OLD BUSINESS

WORK PLAN 2010

Director, Jon Oyanagi stated Commissioners reviewed a draft of the 2010 Work Plan at the November RPAC meeting. Following recommendation from Commissioners some adjustments to the plan have been made including removal of some of the staff reports; addition of a monthly update by the City Council and Planning Commission liaisons; and addition of a monthly review of 5-6 different parks. Commissioners will have time to visit the parks, note their assessments and come prepared to discuss them. Jon reminded Commissioners they may request staff reports at any point during the year.

Motion, Paul Hartzell; Second, Seyon Nyanwleh to approve the RPAC 2010 Work Plan. Motion passed unanimously.

OFF-LEASH DOG EXERCISE AREA UPDATE

Director, Jon Oyanagi stated staff has reviewed the surveys collected in August and October at the off-leash dog park. Those surveys included many people expressing an interest in serving on a Dog Park Focus Group. Invitations and agendas were sent out to those people interested to attend a Dog Park Focus Group meeting at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, January 12, at the CAC. In addition, the public was invited to attend the meeting via local newspaper, community television, and city website. Input, feedback, suggestions, and ideas from participants will be

gathered and recommendations brought back to the RPAC prior to presenting them to the City Council.

2010 BUDGET UPDATE

Director, Jon Oyanagi stated the City Council approved the 2010 and 2011 General Fund budget, Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and Capital Equipment Plan (CEP) at their December 7, 2009 meeting. The budget does reflect a 5% increase due to increased charge backs. The Recreation and Parks Department is expected to bring in \$1.1 million in revenue, with expenses just over \$3 million for both 2010 and 2011.

The Enterprise Fund is expected to bring in \$2.2 million in revenue, with \$2.4 million in expenses.

The Ice arena Fund is expected to bring in \$800,000 in revenue, with \$800,000 in expenses.

Commissioner, Matthew Cooklock asked if the refrigeration unit on Rink I will be replaced this year. Jon stated the unit will be replaced and this item will be presented to the City Council in January for approval.

The CIP includes construction of new playgrounds at Norwood and Striefel parks, trail improvements at Brookdale Park, parking lot rehab at Willowstone Park, new rest room at River Park, water and sewer connection at the East Farm, improvements to the Skate Park, mechanical repairs at the Edinburgh Clubhouse and a new refrigeration system for Rink I at the Ice Arena.

Vice Chairperson, Brian Rogers asked what is included in the \$50,000 allocated for the Skate Park. Jon stated approximately half of the current equipment at the park could be purchased with \$50,000. Parks & Facilities Manager, Mary Pat Black stated staff has begun organizing a Skate Park Focus Group.

Commissioner, James Driste asked when the rest room at River Park will be constructed. Jon stated that building is slated for construction in 2010.

6. CITY COUNCIL UPDATE

City Council Liaison, Dean Heng highlighted recent City Council discussions including:

- ▶ Consideration of several projects throughout the city including construction of a shelter at Noble Sports Park. At this point Council Members have not approved any of the projects and a great deal of discussion remains while they review the list of projects and identify those that can be included in a five year project list.
- ▶ Council Member, Jeanette Meyer stated Hennepin County recently appraised some tax forfeiture property located along the Corridor and Zane Avenue at \$4.5 million. That appraisal opened discussion on the value of the land that the Noble Sports Park is constructed on. Parks & Facilities Manager, Mary Pat Black asked if the City Council has determined another site in which to relocate the Noble Sports Park if they do decide to sell that land. Dean stated they have not but that the Noble Sports Park is located in a prime location within in the city.
- ▶ Request for program costs used in developing the Recreation & Parks Department budget.

- ▶ Some comments made included the city has too many parks; a recommendation was made to sell some of the parks; the parks are being mowed too often; and a recommendation to allow the smaller parks to return to a natural prairie state.
- ▶ The City Council is looking at programs along with their costs, participation numbers, and the possible elimination of programs that do not generate revenue or register enough participants.
- ▶ The City Council is excited about the city energy savings project. The company, McKinstry, will tell us exactly what the savings will be and if the city does not realize those savings, the company will reimburse the city the difference in costs. The project cost is \$6 million but through awarded grants that amount will decrease \$2 million. Bonds and energy savings will cover the remaining cost.
- ▶ Commissioner, Seyon Nyanwleh asked Dean to convey his thanks to the Council Members stating they are moving the city in the direction he thinks it should be going. Seyon stated it is prudent that city staff and residents know where their tax dollars are going. Seyon stressed that staff should design, provide and invest in useful programs rather than spend money just to spend it. Seyon asked if Council Members mentioned any particular programs they considering eliminating. Dean replied there has been no discussion identifying any particular program.

7. DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW

MILLS FLEET FARM

Director, Jon Oyanagi provided background information on the Mills Fleet Farm proposal. Due to traffic concerns, Mills Fleet Farm proposed to the City Council the rerouting of Lakeland Drive with Mills Fleet Farm contributing \$1.3 million to the project. The City Council approved that rerouting. The new road configuration necessitated replatting of the property and at that time, Mills Fleet Farm was informed that because the property had not previously been platted, they were now responsible to pay the required park dedication fee on the property in the amount of \$349,676. Following discussion and compromise by both parties, the city and Mills Fleet Farm reached an agreement to waive the fees on two small parcels (lot 3, block 2) amounting to \$37,848; delay fees on two other parcels; and delay fees for the parcel where the store resides. In addition, Mills Fleet Farm would remain responsible for paying all park dedication fees on future plats and subdivisions.

Council Liaison, Dean Heng stated had Mills Fleet Farm known prior to the construction of the road that the city would be charging them for park dedication fees, Mills Fleet Farm would have asked the city for their assistance in building the road. Dean stated that typically development plans go before the RPAC for discussion and recommendation before going to the Planning Commission for further discussion. In this case, the plans went to the Planning Commission first.

Commissioner, James Driste asked who negotiated the waiver. Jon responded that the City Manager and Planning Division negotiated the waiver.

Commissioner, Seyon Nyanwleh asked what the justification was for the waiver. Jon stated the justification is Mills Fleet Farm \$1.3 million donation for the road project. Seyon asked why this was not brought up and discussed at the Planning Commission. Jon stated it should have been and that question would have to be directed to the Planning Commission.

Commissioner, Paul Hartzell stated it is his understanding that it is not the Planning Commission's role to accept or deny park dedication fees. Jon confirmed that stating it is the RPAC's recommendation to make but, oftentimes the Planning Commission does include discussion of park dedication fees in their resolution.

Following further lengthy discussion and input from staff and commissioners, the following motion was entertained:

Motion, Seyon Nyanwleh; Second, Paul Hartzell to approve the Planning Commission recommendation regarding Mills Fleet Farm. Motion unanimously approved.

 **CLEAR WIRELESS LCC – BASS CREEK PARK**

Director, Jon Oyanagi provided Commissioners with a cell tower site plan and introduced Clear Wireless representative, Steve Trueman to provide background information on the cell tower proposed for installation in Bass Creek Park. The proposed tower is located just east of the water tank and would be installed on a slope and should not interfere with winter outdoor activities. The proposal calls for an 80 foot tower.

Council Liaison, Dean Heng asked how often the cell tower would be maintained by Clear Wireless. Steve stated a representative would visit the tower every six weeks. Dean asked if the equipment could be installed on top of the water tank. Parks Superintendent, Dale Reed stated the water tank is actually a ground reservoir. Dean asked if another communication could mount equipment on to the proposed tower. Steve stated they could not. Dean asked what the required distance is between tenants. Steve stated it is typically 10 feet. Dean asked if the contract would include the City Council's requirement that Clear Wireless set aside funds to remove the tower, and/or, equipment at a future time. Steve stated it could. Dean asked if lights could be mounted on the tower to provide lighting on the sliding hills at night. Jon Oyanagi stated possibly but that would necessitate installing additional lighting on the other side of the hill also.

Chairperson, Andrew Reinhardt asked if installation of the cell tower hampers or interferes with use of the park. Steve stated it should not impinge on any park activity.

Commissioner, Seyon Nyanwleh asked if residents would be notified of the proposed cell tower; a meeting scheduled; and residents invited to attend. Steve stated 130 meeting notices were previously sent out to surrounding residents and five people attended that meeting.

Motion, James Driste; Second, Brian Rogers to recommend to the City Council the approval of the recommended location site for the proposed cell tower in Bass Creek Park. Motion unanimously approved.

CLEAR WIRELESS LCC – SUNNYLANE PARK

Director, Jon Oyanagi provided background information on the proposed cell tower installation at Sunnyslane Park. There is an existing cell tower at the park and this proposal includes adding an antenna onto that existing tower. Clear Wireless representative, Steve Turman stated they are proposing to square off the existing enclosure and Jon Oyanagi stated the Recreation & Parks Department has requested that the existing sidewalk be extended.

Motion, Matthew Cooklock; Second, Brian Rogers to recommend to the City Council the approval of the recommended addition to the existing cell tower in Sunnyslane Park. Motion unanimously approved.

CLEAR WIRELESS LCC – NORTHWOODS PARK

Director, Jon Oyanagi provided background information on the proposed installation of a communications tower at Northwoods Park. A motion was entered and approved at the October, 2009 RPAC meeting to approve Clear Wireless to construct a communications tower on the SW corner of the existing hockey rink.

Planning Liaison, John Holm stated at their December 9, 2009 meeting, the Planning Commission recommended the NE corner of the park as the best location for the proposed cell tower. This recommendation was arrived at because a citizen owns property directly to the west of the site that will be subdivided and installation of a 120 foot pole next to his property will create an eyesore.

Director Oyanagi stated the Recreation & Parks Department has recommended the SW corner of the park as the best location for the proposed communications tower because that location provides better access; never crosses an active area in the park; and does not interfere with the a possible redesign as it will if located on the NE corner of the rink.

John stated the City Ordinance mandates that a tower has to be located 200 feet from the property line. Installing it in the SW corner would require a 100 foot variance to that ordinance rather than the 40 foot variance required if it is located in the NE corner of the hockey rink. Jon stated the reasoning for recommendation of the SW location is that the pole already exists there and is least obtrusive to residents and the park. If the tower has to be located in the NE corner, Jon's recommendation would be to not install it in Northwoods Park and that Clear Wireless research a different location for the communications tower.

Following lengthy discussion and input from Commissioners and staff, the following motion was entertained:

Motion, Brian Rogers; Second, Kimberley Sundy to recommend to the City Council the original approval of the recommended communications tower in Northwoods Park, on the SW corner of the hockey rink. Motion unanimously approved.

PLANNING COMMISSION UPDATE

N/A

8. **UPCOMING EVENTS**

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Director, Jon Oyanagi provided Commissioners with a calendar of upcoming events for December, 2009 and January, 2010.

9. **OTHER ITEMS BY COMMISSION**

Blue Jean Ball

Parks & Facilities Manager, Mary Pat Black invited Commissioners to attend the Blue Jean Ball at 7 p.m. on Friday, January 22 at the Embassy Suites in Brooklyn Center. All of the city departments will be putting together baskets to auction off and if RPAC Commissioners are interested in doing the same, please contact Jan Ficken at 763-493-8340. This worthy and well attended event will be fund raising to purchase a van for youth transportation.

January RPAC Meeting

Director, Jon Oyanagi reminded Commissioners that the next RPAC meeting will be held on January 20, 2010 at the Edinburgh Clubhouse. Those Commissioners and staff who wish to can meet for dinner in the Girvan Grille at 5:45 p.m. before the meeting. Please RSVP to Barb at 763-493-8367 if you will or will not be able to attend.

Hennepin Youth Sports Program

Director, Jon Oyanagi the Recreation & Parks Department staff applied for five projects and was awarded funding for two of those projects via the Hennepin Youth Sports Program grant; installation of soccer fields at the Zanewood and Edinbrook school athletic fields. Work on both fields will be in the summer 2010. Opportunities to apply for the grants will continue with a funding cycle in place and staff will submit grant requests for selected projects.

ASSA Basketball Exhibition

Commissioner, Seyon Nyanwleh invited staff and Commissioners to attend the first Amon-nue Sports and Social Association (ASSA) Basketball Exhibition to express their support for the children playing. Games begin at 3 p.m. at the Zanewood Recreation Center on Sunday, December 20.

Outdoor Skating Rinks

Director, Jon Oyanagi stated outdoor ice rinks are scheduled to open on Saturday, December 19 as weather conditions allow.

10. **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion, Paul Hartzell; Second, Brian Rogers, to adjourn. Motion unanimously approved.