

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2010
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
Deborah Everson, At-Large
Paul Hartzell, At-Large
Dean Heng, City Council Liaison
John Holm, Planning Commission Liaison
Rob Jacobs, At-Large
Snoti Jappah, Student Representative
Seyon Nyanwleh, At-Large
Jeanne Qualley, At-Large
Andrew Reinhardt, At-Large
Brian Rogers, At-Large
Kimberley Sundy, At-Large

Commission Members absent:

James Brekke, At-Large
James Driste, At-Large

Staff Members present:

Jon Oyanagi, Recreation & Parks Director
Mary Pat Black, Parks & Facilities Manager
Jan Ficken, Recreation & Programs Manager
Dale Reed, Parks Superintendent
Barb Stewart, Secretary

2. **APPROVAL OF JANUARY 20, 2010 RPAC AGENDA**

Motion, Jeanne Qualley; Second, Matthew Cooklock, to approve the January 20, 2010 RPAC agenda. Motion unanimously approved.

3. **APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 16, 2009 RPAC MEETING MINUTES**

Motion, Paul Hartzell; Second, Kimberley Sundy, to approve the December 16, 2009 RPAC minutes. Motion unanimously approved.

4. **CLUBHOUSE TOUR**

Lancer Catering General Manager, Dean Dutko, guided Commissioners and staff on a tour of Edinburgh USA Clubhouse and Girvan Grille. The City and Lancer Catering work closely in partnership to offer the public quality golfing, dining and catering experiences. Dean provided background information on Lancer Catering. Edinburgh is home to the St. Andrews Club, a private member golf club. Dean asked that he be contacted with any questions Commissioners may have.

5. OLD BUSINESS

▲ OFF-LEASH DOG EXERCISE AREA

Director, Jon Oyanagi stated it was suggested at the December, 2009 RPAC meeting to contact those people expressing an interest in serving on a Dog Park Focus Group and hold a meeting to gather input, suggestions, ideas, and feedback on the park. Staff sent out invitations and agendas to those people indicating their interest on the surveys previously collected. The meeting was held at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, January 12, at the CAC and 13 people attended including Parks & Facilities Manager, Mary Pat Black and Council Liaison, Dean Heng. Jon provided the following input and general consensus gathered at that meeting:

- Make the Dog Park a permanent amenity
- Make the Dog Park accessible year round
- Fence the entire area including installation of two double gates
- Install extra picnic tables
- Install extra trash receptacles
- Lay wood chips in wear areas
- Install a light pole
- Charge an annual user fee in the \$20-\$25 range
- Increase advertising of the Dog Park

In addition, one attendee volunteered to clean up the Dog Park area on a weekly basis.

Jon stated at this evenings meeting Commissioners will make their recommendations on whether to make the Dog Park a permanent site or not; should a fee be initiated and if so, for what amount; and if a fence, water or lights are installed, how will those be paid for.

City Council Liaison, Dean Heng stated the Dog Park Focus Group meeting was good with a lot of input and discussion from the entire group. There were several people who felt the entire area would have to be fenced in if a user fee were to be charged.

Vice Chairperson, Brian Rogers stated that the meeting provided a good opportunity to gather feedback, meet some great people who are excited about the Dog Park, and talk with people from both inside and outside the community. Brian stated there is a lot of wildlife in Brookdale Park creating some interaction between wildlife and dogs in the Park resulting in one fox and dog fight. In addition, having the sliding hill and the Dog Park area in one spot is not working well and there is a need to define the Dog Park area during the winter.

Commissioner, Paul Hartzell suggested separating the hills by fencing the area at the top of the hill so that sliders could use one side and dogs could use the other side.

Commissioner, Seyon Nyanwleh asked if discussion was held at the meeting regarding who is responsible if a dog is attacked by wildlife. Brian stated that was discussed at the meeting and was an important point taken in considering installing fencing in order to separate and protect the dogs from wildlife.

Planning Liaison, John Holm asked what the maintenance costs would be following installation of fencing.

Jon stated Operation & Maintenance crews already mow the area so the maintenance costs would be minimal. There would be some minimal water and electricity costs.

John Holm stated if 100 people pay \$25/year, then realistically, the Dog Park would be self sustaining.

Paul suggested charging the Dog Park user fee at the same time owners have their dogs licensed. A different color tag could be issued to display that they have paid the fee. User fee information could also be displayed in the park.

Commissioner, Jeanne Qualley asked if the fence would be chain link; and suggested fencing a smaller portion of the area to save on costs. Jon stated it would be a woven wire fence; Commissioners general consensus was to fence the entire area.

Following lengthy and in-depth discussion, the following motion was entertained:

Motion, Matthew Cooklock; Second, Brian Rogers to adopt the resolution that the Dog Park should have fencing installed; a fee structure established; and the Dog Park established as a permanent amenity. Motion passed (10-1). Jeanne Qualley opposed.

Post Meeting Note: The Recreation and Parks Director has decided to bring back more detailed options to the Commission at the February meeting in order to recommend a more complete description for the City Council.

COMMUNICATION TOWERS

Director, Jon Oyanagi stated at their January 19 meeting the City Council reviewed the policy on communication towers installed within the city limits. City Council Liaison, Dean Heng stated the general consensus was that the city maintains the policy as is and consider installation of each tower on its own merit. The City Council Members main concern is that the ordinance states towers should have the capability to hold three contacts and the communication companies cannot guarantee that can be accomplished. Dean suggested that the policy mandate a specific height to guarantee that all towers have the capability in holding three contacts.

6. NEW BUSINESS

ELECTIONS

Director, Jon Oyanagi, stated the annual elections for RPAC Chairperson and Vice Chairperson are typically held in January. The current terms will end, and new terms begin, April 1, 2010.

Jon stated terms for four Commissioners will end April 1, 2010; James Brekke, Reubenna Cooley, Paul Hartzell and Rob Jacobs. Reubenna will reapply and interview with the City Council for a second term. James, Paul and Rob will not be reapplying for second terms.

Chairperson, Andrew Reinhardt opened the floor to nominations and following discussion and input from Commissioners, the following motions were brought forward:

Motion, Deb Everson; Second, Matthew Cooklock to appoint Brian Rogers to the position as Chairperson of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Commission, effective April 1, 2010. Motion unanimously approved.

Motion, Kim Sundy; Second, Deb Everson to appoint Matthew Cooklock to the position of Vice Chairperson of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Commission, effective April 1, 2010. Motion unanimously approved.

Jon stated that the City Council annually selects members to serve as liaisons on all of the city boards and commissions. Mayor, Steve Lampi will serve as City Council Liaison to the RPAC for 2010. On behalf of the RPAC, Commissioner, Kim Sundry thanked City Council Liaison, Dean Heng for serving in 2009.

ALCOHOL IN THE PARKS

Parks & Facilities Manager, Mary Pat Black provided background information on allowing alcohol consumption in the city parks. On June 22, 2002, the City Council approved a new park ordinance. That ordinance states under Section .03A Drug & Alcohol Use; It shall be unlawful for any person to:

1. Use, possess or sell any alcoholic beverage in violation of state statutes or City Code Chapter 112.047 and **unless expressly approved by City permit or license.**

The Brooklyn Park City Code states under Chapter 112.047:

The drinking of liquor and/or 3.2 percent malt liquor on the public streets, public parking lots, public property, or in public areas within the City is prohibited **except in designated picnic areas approved by the City Council.** The drinking of intoxicating liquor and/or 3.2 percent malt liquor in automobiles, on the public streets, public parking lots, or other public property within the city is prohibited.

On January 28, 1985, the City Council approved alcohol consumption in Central, Oak Grove, River, Willowstone, and Northwoods parks along with the Zane Athletic Complex.

Since then staff has eliminated consumption at both the Zane Athletic Complex and Northwoods Park because these areas are essentially youth oriented rather than adult oriented. Currently 3.2 alcohol consumption is allowed at Central, Oak Grove, River and Willowstone parks and has been allowed at Noble Sports Park by special permit from the City Council.

Staff recommends allowing 3.2 alcohol consumption at Central, Oak Grove and River parks, the Noble Sports Complex and the Edinburgh USA Golf Course. Elimination of alcohol consumption at Willowstone Park is recommended due to the high volume of youth activities and programming.

Mary Pat reviewed the park ordinances in place at surrounding cities.

City Council Liaison, Dean Heng stated he has been contacted by a citizen residing near Hartkopf Park. He sees, on a nightly basis, young males parking and drinking alcohol while playing hockey. The citizen has contacted the police at least four times about the alcohol consumption and remaining in the park after 10 p.m. Dean asked Chief Davis to check into this report. The police did go out to the park, informed the males that the park closes at 10 p.m. and did not ticket them for alcohol consumption. Dean suggested posting new signage in the park stating no alcohol is allowed.

Dean stated he thought the Noble Sports Complex was built for youth activities and it now looks like adults are allowed to drink there. Mary Pat stated that all of the adult softball leagues are held at the Noble Sports Complex and cannot be held at any of the other parks. In addition, alcohol consumption is allowed during the Tater Daze functions which are held at the

Noble Sports Complex. Jon stated allowing alcohol consumption during the softball tournaments greatly benefits the tournaments.

Chairperson, Andrew Reinhardt asked if alcohol is allowed in the entire park area without a permit within the four parks selected. Mary Pat stated drinking is allowed in the pavilion area only without a permit. Recreation Services Manager, Jan Ficken suggested stressing alcohol is allowed only in the pavilion area when permitted out for picnics, showers, family gatherings, etc.

Following further input from Commissioners and staff the following motion was entertained:

Motion, Kim Sundy; Second, Matthew Cooklock to recommend that Central, Oak Grove and River parks, the Noble Sports Complex and the Edinburgh USA Golf Course allow alcohol consumption in their picnic areas. Motion unanimously approved.

RECREATION & PARKS DEPARTMENT WORK PLAN

Director, Jon Oyanagi stated Recreation Services Manager, Jan Ficken and Parks & Facilities Manager, Mary Pat Black have prepared and will present the Recreation and Parks Department 2009 Accomplishments and 2010 Work Plan. Even though the department budget was frozen quite a bit has been accomplished and staff continues striving towards new goals.

Jan highlighted the 2009 Recreation Services Accomplishments:

Increased focus on communication with residents including launching Facebook, using Twitter, creation of a monthly E-Newsletter and design of a youth website. The E-Newsletter is an important communication tool that is sent out to 8,000 costumers each month. The youth website has been helpful in getting the word out to youth and for using broadcast text messaging to notify them of upcoming events for teens.

Successful funding of teen programming and programs for at-risk youth.

The 21st Century Learning Center grant and the McKnight Foundation has provided needed funding for after school program for teens.

The Zanewood Recreation Center was launched.

Expanded the health and fitness program with the addition of the SilverSneakers program. This successful collaboration with Humana Insurance brings many seniors to the CAC every day to participate in fitness classes. Over 300 adults attend SilverSneaker fitness classes each month. The city receives a \$3 reimbursement each time a senior attends a class.

Staff worked closely with the Three Rivers Park District in programming activities at the Coon Rapids Dam in outdoor education.

Jan highlighted the 2010 Recreation Services Goals:

Continue working in partnership with The Zanewood Recreation Center and Police Department on Youth Violence Prevention Initiative.

Develop a pilot transportation program this summer to transport young people to various programs. Funding will be provided through the 21st Century Learning grant.

Develop creative arts and dance programs through the 21st Century Learning grant.

Expand usage and programming at the CAC. Work in collaboration with the Brooklyn Park Library to provide summer programs and open the CAC to older youth to participate in drop-in programs.

City Council Liaison, Dean Heng asked what unmet goal was most disappointing. Jan stated she had hoped we were getting ahead with programming at the Eidem Homestead. Although there were significant reductions in the budget, we were able to hire an experienced and knowledgeable coordinator at the Homestead. Unfortunately, we couldn't offer a solid enough position to retain him and when he was offered another position, he accepted it and left our staff. Staff has learned a lot and will retool the program basically trying to hold programs at the Homestead on a smaller scale and with reduced funds. A new addition to the Homestead in 2009 was the Community Garden which helped a great deal in exposing the Homestead to the community.

Mary Pat highlighted the 2009 Parks & Facilities Accomplishments:

The new Community Garden was very successful and something the entire community can be proud of. Parks Superintendent, Dale Reed and his crew did a great job in setting it up.

Adopted a GEO cache policy in the parks. Thirty geocachers have registered throughout 13 city parks.

New playground equipment at Bass Creek Park and process in choosing it with RPAC and neighbors.

Opened the new Dog Park. This initiative has been very successful and an amenity many residents in our community has requested.

Mary Pat highlighted the 2010 Parks & Facilities Goals:

Install a new refrigeration plant (Geo Thermal) at the CAC in Ice Rink I. This state of the art system will tap into city water plant across street making the system cost efficient.

Complete some upgrading in Ice Rink II.

Replace one-third of the irrigation heads at Edinburgh USA Golf Course.

Expand the Community Garden to Fair Oaks Park.

Implement the two Hennepin County MASC grants we received; expansion of the fields behind Edinbrook School and at the Zanewood Athletic Complex.

Commissioner, Seyon Nyanwleh stated he has been contacted by both the Star & Tribune and someone in Washington D.C. regarding the use of Hennepin County MASC grants for soccer fields. Seyon asked if a public meeting will be held to gather input and suggestions from the residents on where the grant monies should be allocated and plans for renovating the fields. Jon stated plans to change the playing fields to soccer fields are straight forward requiring no need for a public meeting. Prior to applying for the grants staff received letters of support from

the BPAA. In addition, application for the grants and future funding use for the soccer fields was brought to, discussed at, and approved at both the RPAC and the City Council.

Seyon stated discussion of the Dog Park was not restricted to just the RPAC and City Council. The public was notified and invited to discuss the Dog Park before it was constructed and Seyon asked how that differs from construction of soccer fields. Chairperson, Andrew Reinhardt stated when we change the use of land such as we did with the Dog Park, then it is appropriate to ask for resident input. In this case the playing fields are simply being exchanged for soccer fields.

Planning Liaison, John Holm stated the Hennepin County grant information and soccer field plans were posted in the city newspaper (Sun Post) and the Star and Tribune ran an article on it. The project has been approved and it is now after the fact and not appropriate to invite residents to a meeting to discuss and gather their input.

Commissioner, Jeanne Qualley explained that when the city applies for grant money and prior to receiving it, plans for that money is spelled out specific to how it will be used. That mechanism purposely leaves little room to change it after the grant is approved. To invite the public now to discuss would give them a false expectation with a limited amount of grant funding and little, if any, room to change the plans.

Commissioner, Rob Jacobs stated an opportunity arose to apply for some grant funding and the timeline to apply for those grants was very short. The decision had to be made on what the funds should be used for and staff is well qualified to make those decisions.

Recreation Services Manager, Jan Ficken asked what Seyon felt could be accomplished if a meeting was held now. Seyon stated the RPAC would be more useful if they contact the people who will be using the fields. He asked if those people will have the opportunity to provide input and have questions answered on what they can expect at the soccer fields.

Jan asked Seyon if a meeting had been held earlier did he feel the outcome would have been different. Seyon stated perhaps it may have changed the writing of the grants and more money may have been granted. Seyon expressed his hope that the soccer field will be accessible to everyone. Jon stated use of the fields is a totally different issue than funding for the fields. It is not too late to talk about who will use the fields and how they will be used.

SUMMER PROGRAM IDEAS

Recreation Services Manager, Jan Ficken included in the RPAC packet a program overview of what staff is working on for the summer 2010 recreation programs.

Summer Day Camps at the park buildings. Previously the camps were offered to 3 & 4 year olds which were difficult and expensive to run. This summer a shorter Tiny Tot program in the morning will be added and Summer Day Camps will be open to children ages 5–13 years of age.

Staff is working with Three Rivers Park District on outdoor programming. The goal is to bring teens out to the Coon Rapids Dam and do some river rafting and outdoor education programming.

The CAC will be more open and accessible to the older teens through drop-in activities such as basketball.

Commissioner, Matthew Cooklock, asked if programming in the Armory gym will run in conflict with the Armory schedule. Jan stated the Armory schedules two drills a month on weekends and the Recreation & Parks Department enjoys a good, flexible working relationship with them. Use of the space can be coordinated together to ensure both organizations needs are met.

The Day Camp program will promote junior leaders working with the younger children. Commissioner, Jeanne Qualley asked if they will receive CPR training. Jan stated they will be included in the same extensive training that the regular summer staff attends, which includes basic first aid training.

Commissioner, Kim Sundy suggested staff consider offering more youth golf noting that the numbers are so good in those program offerings.

Vice Chairperson, Brian Rogers asked if mini golf or croquet could be offered at the Summer Camps. Parks & Facilities Manager, Mary Pat Black stated that Snag Golf is offered for the younger children. This program uses oversized clubs to promote a successful experience for children. The camps staff incorporate a variety of games into the daily schedule.

Commissioner, Jeanne Qualley asked if a football program is offered through the Recreation and Parks Department. Jan stated a weeklong football camp is offered in the summer but the official football organization is the BPAA. Also the Champlin-Dayton Athletic Association offers football for youth.

Matthew asked if Frisbee Golf Leagues are offered. Mary Pat stated there is a large demand for Disc Golf and there is a league at Central Park coordinated through the Brookland Golf Course.

Vice Chairperson, Brian Rogers asked if we offer tennis and if so, what the numbers are. Jan stated tennis is offered year round and continues to be in demand.

Commissioner, Rob Jacobs suggested holding a 'Camp Hollywood' this summer for kids interested in UTube.

Planning Liaison, John Holm asked what nature activities are offered at the Coon Rapids Dam. Jan stated a weeklong camp will be held in August with a lot of river activity, birds of prey watching, nature hikes, etc. Additionally, Recreation Supervisor, Michelle Margo will work on bringing at-risk teens to do river rafting and photography.

PARK REVIEW

Director, Jon Oyanagi stated this is the first discussion in a monthly series reviewing the city's parks. Different parks will be selected each month with the intention that Commissioners will get out and visit the parks listed, and talk to residents to get their ideas and input. The Commissioners will then bring back that information, feedback, suggestions and ideas for discussion at the next RPAC meeting.

Commissioner, Matthew Cooklock asked if this agenda item could be tabled until the February RPAC meeting and be placed first on the agenda.

Commissioner, Seyon Nyanwleh asked if transportation would be available to visit the parks in the same manner as the annual summer park tour. Jon stated Commissioners are asked to schedule time to visit the parks on their own.

Commissioner, Jeanne Qualley stated there is not enough time to visit the parks prior to the next month meeting and asked if the list of parks could be provided to Commissioners further in advance. Jon stated the parks are listed on the RPAC work plan and suggested seeing how this goes. If visiting five or six parks a month is too much, that number can be cut back.

Commissioner, Deb Everson stated the boat landing at River Park is in disrepair and needs to be replaced. In addition, there is a plywood shed that has been constructed and just left there creating an eyesore. Parks Superintendent, Dale Reed stated residents playing cricket have asked for permission to leave the shed temporarily but, it does look bad and needs to be removed.

Vice Chairperson, Brian Rogers asked if there is a master plan for River Park that Commissioners could review. Jon stated there are plans in place and replacement of the shelter was slated to be completed three years ago. That work was placed on hold due to resistance from the Brooklyn Park Lions. Dale offered to bring back to the Commissioners the completed master plan for their review and suggestions. Parks & Facilities Manager, Mary Pat Black stated it doesn't make sense to make changes to the master plan when the city has already hired and paid architects for those plans.

Brian asked if there is any way possible to use the Zanewood Recreation Center for indoor skateboarding opportunities. Jan stated it is not possible without adding on to the building.

7. CITY COUNCIL UPDATE

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

- ▶ Held a legislative discussion with Melissa Hortman, State Representative; Mike Opat, Hennepin County Commissioner; and Linda Scheid, State Senator.
- ▶ Developed a legislative project.
- ▶ Heard about plans for constructing a library at the North Hennepin Community College.
- ▶ Three Rivers Park District has offered the Coon Rapids Dam to the city at no cost. If accepted, the city would have to make costly repairs to the dam. Possible elimination of the dam was discussed. Commissioner, Jeanne Qualley asked what the DNR's response is to this. Dean stated if the state takes the dam back, Three Rivers Parks will remain responsible for repairs to the dam. Director, Jon Oyanagi stated the City Manager will be recommending that a task force be formed to research alternatives and make recommendations.

8. DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW

N/A

PLANNING COMMISSION UPDATE

Planning Commission Liaison, John Holm highlighted recent Planning Commission discussions including:

- ▶ Lazarus Auto Detail has requested a Conditional Use Permit. The Planning Commission recommends denial because the use does not fit the location. The parking area

is too small for the number of vehicles they service. They require space in a church lot which raises issues with neighboring businesses.

9. **UPCOMING EVENTS**

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Recreation Services Manager, Jan Ficken provided Commissioners with a calendar of upcoming events for January and February, 2010.

10. **OTHER ITEMS BY COMMISSION**

RPAC Meetings

Commissioner, Matthew Cooklock suggested moving the RPAC meetings from 7:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. In addition, putting an 8:30 p.m. end time to the meetings. Commissioner, Rob Jacobs agreed with Matthew stating the meetings require some discipline in how agenda items are reviewed. Director, Jon Oyanagi stated he would check with Administration to make sure changes in times can be made. City Council Liaison, Dean Heng stated that all city commissions can set their own meeting days, start and end times. Vice Chairperson, Brian Rogers stated he would have a difficult time making it to a 6:30 p.m. meeting time.

Blue Jean Ball

Recreation Services Manager, Jan Ficken invited Commissioners to attend the Blue Jean Ball at 7 p.m. on Friday, January 22 at the Embassy Suites in Brooklyn Center. Over 50 silent auction items have been donated. In addition, the Rotary Club is generously donating \$10,000 towards the purchase of a van for teen transportation.

Winter Fun Day

Recreation Services Manager, Jan Ficken invited Commissioners to attend the Winter Fun Day on Saturday, January 23 from Noon-2 p.m. This is a free family event held at the Eidem Homestead.

Facebook

Recreation Services Manager, Jan Ficken encouraged Commissioners, friends and family members to sign up on Facebook and become a friend of the Recreation and Parks Department to receive updates on program happenings.

11. **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion, Matthew Cooklock; Second, Seyon Nyanwleh, to adjourn. Motion unanimously approved.