

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17, 2010
RECREATION & PARKS ADVISORY COMMISSION

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

Commission Members present:

James Brekke, At-Large
Matthew Cooklock, At-Large
Reubenna Cooley, At-Large
James Driste, At-Large
Deborah Everson, At-Large
Rob Jacobs, At-Large
Steve Lampi, City Council Liaison
Seyon Nyanwleh, At-Large
Terry Parks, At-Large
Jeanne Qualley, At-Large
Andrew Reinhardt, At-Large
Brian Rogers, At-Large
Kimberley Sundy, At-Large

Commission Members absent:

Paul Hartzell, At-Large
Snoti Jappah, Student Representative

Staff Members present:

Jon Oyanagi, Recreation & Parks Director
Mary Pat Black, Parks & Facilities Manager
Barb Stewart, Secretary

Others:

Nicole Rogers, Resident

2. **APPROVAL OF MARCH 17, 2010 RPAC AGENDA**

Motion, Andrew Reinhardt; Second, James Driste, to approve the March 17, 2010 RPAC agenda. Motion unanimously approved.

3. **APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 17, 2010 RPAC MEETING MINUTES**

Motion, Andrew Reinhardt; Second, Matthew Cooklock, to approve the February 17, 2010 RPAC minutes. Motion unanimously approved.

4. **OLD BUSINESS**

 **OFF-LEASH DOG EXERCISE AREA**

Director, Jon Oyanagi stated at the February, 2010 RPAC meeting, the concept for a permanent dog park located in Brookdale Park was approved. This agenda item is being brought back to the RPAC this

evening for additional detailed options in order to recommend a more complete description for City Council.

Jon requested that Commissioners and staff discuss and arrive at an agreement on the fees and necessary changes to the current rules and ordinances. Jon presented a PowerPoint depicting a survey of a variety of dog park fees charged by cities in the surrounding metropolitan area and reviewed their license fees and charges.

Commissioner, Rob Jacobs asked if staff is suggesting that a portion of the dog licensing fees be delegated towards upkeep of the dog park. Rob stated he supports the idea that all parks should be free to the public to use and if a fee is charged it should be a part of the license fee itself. Jon stated that is one suggestion. Tonight's discussion should decide if there should be a separate fee, incorporate a fee into the license, or charge no fee at all.

Commissioner, Kimberly Sundy stated other cities charge a \$2 fee along with their rabies vaccination fee. The charges are made at the same time making it easy for people to complete the transaction and assures dog owners that all dogs using the dog park are up to date on their vaccines.

Commissioner, Matthew Cooklock stated he does not see a problem with raising the license fee for use of the dog park.

Vice Chairperson, Brian Rogers stated he would like to see the fees and licensing process be kept simple and charge just one fee of \$20 per year.

Chairperson, Andrew Reinhardt stated he would like to see the dog park maintained and paid for by the dog owners or a donation via Home Depot rather than by the taxpayer.

Rob asked how Minneapolis charges \$35 per year. Kim stated there is signage in the dog park stating dogs have to be licensed and adherence to the rules is heavily enforced. If the City isn't going to have anyone enforcing it, there is no incentive to owners to purchase a license or pay a fee.

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

Motion, Matthew Cooklock; Second, James Driste to propose an increase of the current dog license fee to \$15 per year for sterilized dogs. Create a two-year sterilize license fee of \$25. Increase the annual license fee for non-sterilized dogs to \$30 and create a two-year sterilized license of \$40. Add a daily permit fee of \$3 to be placed in an envelope drop box in the dog park. A portion of all of the license fees to be allocated to the maintenance of the dog park in Brookdale Park. Motion unanimously approved.

Discussion continued regarding ordinance changes. Currently the ordinance states that all dogs must be on a leash. The City Attorney has reviewed the ordinance and to ensure a change to it, an amendment stating dogs are allowed off leash in the dog park area is required. In addition, the ordinance should include a permit fee; required licensing for all dogs; the rules must be adhered to; and the \$3 daily fee included.

Motion, Brian Rogers; Second, James Driste to recommend the following ordinance changes as discussed. Motion unanimously approved.

Discussion continued regarding changes to the current dog park rules. The rules should include the need for dogs to be properly vaccinated and removal of the annual permit verbiage.

Motion, Matthew Cooklock; Second, Brian Rogers to recommend the dog park rules be changed as discussed. Motion unanimously approved.

Jon stated staff will bring the dog park discussion, along with tonight's comments and input from Commissioners, to a City Council meeting in April.

WILLOWSTONE PARK

Director, Jon Oyanagi stated Commissioners were asked to visit Willowstone Park and provide input on their review of the park. The parking lot located in the northern area of the park was disrupted when the water and sew lines were run to the shelter building. The parking lot is slotted for replacement in 2010.

Vice Chairperson, Brian Rogers asked if the tennis courts are used. Parks & Facilities Manager, Mary Pat Black stated the tennis courts are in good condition and tennis lessons are held on them in the spring, summer and fall. Brian asked if the courts are lit. Mary Pat stated they are not.

Jon stated Willowstone Park is a year-round park with both a hockey and pleasure rink up and running in the winter. The rinks are not getting much use in the winter and staff is monitoring that. The ballfields are used for games and practices. The green space is used for lacrosse practice and a camp is held during the summer months. The Riverview United Methodist Church also hosts a preschool and utilizes the park. A group has adopted the park and cleans it up every year.

Mary Pat stated the roof on the shelter building was replaced less than five years ago.

Chairperson, Andrew Reinhardt stated although the neighborhood surrounding Willowstone Park is an older neighborhood with homes constructed in the 1950's and 1960's, the park is unique in that it continues to be highly used. Andrew suggested monitoring the use of the park on the northern diamond and if not in high demand, it could be used for lacrosse or soccer play.

Brian asked staff for their recommendation for the park. Mary Pat stated there is a need for improved parking. There is a problem with parking during games and people have to park on the streets. That issue will be corrected this year with construction of a new parking lot. Brian asked if it would help to have move access points to the park. Jon stated there is currently adequate access. Brian asked if there is signage directing people to the park. Jon stated there is a sign on West River Road that helps direct people to the park.

COMMUNICATION TOWERS UPDATE

Director, Jon Oyanagi provided Commissioners with a status of the communication towers. At their Monday, February 22 meeting, the City Council approved the recommended cell tower locations at Bass Creek and Northwoods parks. On Monday, March 22, the City Council will consider a \$20,000 annual lease agreement for Bass Creek Park. This lease includes a ten-year guarantee that the City will

not request removal of the tower. The City Council will also consider an amendment to the lease at Sunnyside Park allowing for the addition of Clear Wireless and the associated charges to the block enclosure.

ENERGY CONSERVATION IMPROVEMENTS-MCKINSTRY (jon/MP)

Parks & Facilities Manager, Mary Pat Black provided an update on the energy improvement project stating that the McKinstry Company has created a performance contract detailing an energy study with the City to make its buildings more energy efficient. The biggest improvement will be made at the Community Activity Center Ice Arena. Work has begun with energy efficient plumbing devices installed, weather stripping installed on all doors, and an envelope test performed followed by patching any air leaks found. Both rinks I and II will be worked on over the spring and summer months. Rink II will be closed beginning March 28.

Currently Rink I operates with a Freon system and Rink II operates with an ammonia refrigeration system. Both rinks will be renovated using an ammonia system. This system will use City raw water as the source resulting in a higher efficiency with respect to heating or cooling. This is the first time geothermal is being done in this fashion and the project is expected to reduce the City energy costs by \$60,000 a year. The contract with McKinstry guarantees the annual energy savings to the City and if those savings are not met, McKinstry will pay the difference. The end result is updated energy efficient ice rinks with long lifespan. Funding for the project will come from an Energy Conservation Block Grant, bond sales, heritage infrastructure fund and utility rebates. Currently the project is running under budget by \$182,000.

Commissioner, Deborah Everson asked how McKinstry can guarantee annual savings in the amount of \$60,000. Jon stated that McKinstry knows the numbers and would not enter a guaranteed contract without being certain the improvements will generate the savings.

Vice Chairperson, Brian Rogers stated he is excited about this project and asked staff how the City can get the word out to the public. Parks & Facilities Manager, Mary Pat Black stated a portion of the McKinstry contract includes a community educational project. In addition Operations & Maintenance Superintendent, Steve Lawrence and Mayor, Steve Lampi has been interviewed by the news media regarding the project. Informational signage will be put up at the CAC and additional information will be released as the work continues. Brian asked if there will be a point when the public can tour the project. Mary Pat responded in the affirmative and stated the National Recreation & Parks Association (NRPA) annual conference will be held in Minneapolis in October, 2010 making perfect timing for those in the recreation field throughout the nation to tour the project.

Commissioner, Kimberly Sundry stated she is impressed with the McKinstry project and encouraged staff to get the word out to the public that this energy efficient project will save the City thousands of dollars a year and that the project is coming in under budget.

NORWOOD PARK PLAYGROUND

Parks & Facilities Manager, Mary Pat Black provided an update on the Norwood Park playground plans. At the February RPAC meeting, the top 4 playground proposals were selected from the 11 proposals displayed. On March 15 a neighborhood meeting was held at the Palmer Lake VFW where the 4 selected playground proposals were displayed. Seventeen residents including seven children attended the meeting. Mary Pat displayed the selected playground designed by GameTime. Purchase of the

playground equipment was approved at the March 22 City Council meeting. GameTime will place the order for the playground equipment and work on the installation of the equipment will begin upon its arrival.

5. NEW BUSINESS

OUTGOING COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS

Chairperson, Andrew Reinhardt announced the appointment of three new RPAC Commissioners; Mark Hanna, Wanda Muhammad and Terry Parks. In addition, Commissioner, Reubenna Cooley has been reappointed to serve a second term. Commissioners Mark Hanna and Terry Parks are in attendance this evening. These three-year terms officially begin on April 1, 2010. The newly elected Chairperson, Brian Rogers and Vice Chairperson, Matthew Cooklock will begin their one-year terms at the April 21, 2010 RPAC meeting.

Andrew thanked outgoing Commissioners; Rob Jacobs, James Brekke and Paul Hartzell for their years of service and commitment to the City and the RPAC in particular.

Commissioner, Rob Jacobs thanked Commissioners and staff for their kindness, courtesy and the opportunity to serve on the Commission. Rob stated it is has been an honor to stand as a Commissioner and learn how the City process is undertaken.

Commissioner, James Brekke stated he originally applied to serve on the RPAC because of his background in city government and felt he could bring something to the Commission. He has found that true over the years but now that he is once again working full time, he has less time to volunteer. James stated the economy has shifted from three years ago when the Commission could do a lot of things for the City. With the current lack of funding it is much harder to make decisions for the park system and City as a whole. James anticipates Director Oyanagi will bring back good recommendations for the community through his involvement with the MRPA and provide solid leadership for the Recreation and Parks Department. James is looking forward to seeing the trail along Shingle Creek paved in the near future. Parks & Facilities Manager, Mary Pat Black stated that work is slated to be completed this year.

CLEAN UP THE PARK REVIEW

Parks & Facilities Manager, Mary Pat Black provided Commissioners with the Clean Up the Park flyer. This annual event will be held on April 24, 2010 in conjunction with the Shingle Creek Clean Up event. The event has been advertised throughout the community and five groups have already signed up. Mary Pat encouraged Commissioners to volunteer and asked that they invite those groups or individuals interested in volunteering in the City. Those interested should contact Mary Pat Black at 763-493-8344 or e-mail at marypat.black@brooklynpark.org.

SECRET SHOPPER PROGRAM PARTICIPANT RESERVATIONS

Director, Jon Oyanagi stated the Secret Shopper program idea is one that staff has discussed in the past and has been put into place by other agencies. The City is involved in high performance organization discussions and part of that involves gathering input from citizens. Commissioners, or a family member, are being asked to become involved by joining a program or service and following up with an evaluation on their total experience. This follow-up tells us how we performed, evaluates the experience, and provides feedback on how staff can make things better or improve a service.

Commissioners have a variety of program choices including signing up for a class, activity, rental of a park pavilion; visit a facility or park, etc. Another option involves adopting a park. Commissioners would select a specific park, or parks, to monitor throughout their term and make regular visits throughout the year to get a true picture of how the park is utilized year-round.

Jon asked for input and feedback from Commissioners on the idea of initiating a Secret Shopper program.

Vice Chairperson, Brian Rogers stated he has personally been doing this since he has resided in the City. Brian stated he absolutely has had no problems, or negative feedback to share, about any of the departments he has dealt with in the City.

Commissioner, Kimberly Sundy stated this is a good opportunity to provide good and positive feedback along with any problems encountered. Kimberly suggested it would be helpful to have an evaluation sheet to fill out. Jon stated staff will prepare a structured evaluation sheet that can easily be filled out by participants.

City Council Liaison, Steve Lampi stated he has been involved in Secret Shopper programs in the past. He has found the most effective thing about the program is to catch staff doing things right and then reinforce that with staff. In addition it is important to remember that this is just a snapshot of one experience.

Commissioner, Terry Parks stated he resides near Monroe Park and feels the park has been going downhill for some time now. He expressed concern that the skating rinks have been removed. Terry stated he would like to gather feedback from others and provide an evaluation on Monroe Park.

Commissioner, Seyon Nyanwleh asked for definition of a 'program'. Jon provided the yoga class as an example of a program. The person would register for the yoga class and evaluate their experience from first contact through completion of the class.

Chairperson, Andrew Reinhardt asked if staff wanted Commissioners commitment to the program this evening or if something will be prepared for a future meeting. Jon stated staff will put together additional program details and bring them back to the Commissioners at a future meeting for further discussion and commitment to signing on.

EDINBURGH USA POND – 17TH HOLE

Director, Jon Oyanagi stated that discussion regarding the Edinburgh pond on the 17th hole will be held at the City Council meeting on Monday, March 22. This pond has been low for the past three years culminating in an extremely low point in August, 2009. The 17th hole is considered the signature hole at Edinburgh USA and without adequate water, the aesthetic view of the hole is greatly diminished. In the past, the front nine ponds were lined and have held water since those repairs were made. The 17th hole has seven residents who have lots that extend into the pond itself. Staff has met with the residents twice and all are in agreement that they would like to see a normal water level in the pond. Discussion was held on the various options to line the pond in order to retain the water. Agreement was reached that because of the success achieved on the front nine, a plastic liner is the correct solution for the 17th hole. The cost to line the pond is approximately \$500,000. Possible funding solutions were discussed including; the EDA designating up to \$300,000 to fund the clubhouse

renovations, freeing up that amount from the Recreation Fund for lining the pond. The remaining \$200,000 needs to be covered. One option is to designate funds through the OSLAD fund which also funded the lining of the front nine ponds. The OSLAD currently has \$950,000 in it and does bring in some revenue from the lease payments via the cell towers. Another option is a loan from the Heritage Fund which the golf course would have to pay back. Some donation ideas were considered including asking golfers to contribute per round and installing a donation box on the 17th tee.

Commissioner, Terry Parks asked what the life of a plastic liner is. Jon stated approximately 20 years.

Commissioner, Deborah Everson asked what the value of a body of water is to the City. Jon stated the pond affects the playability on the golf course. The repair of the pond is no different than if the fairway was diseased and in need of a repair. The repair would be made because it affects the playability of the course. Deborah asked why the pond is drying up. Jon stated because the pond bottom is sandy clay coupled with dry conditions. Deborah asked if the pond could be watered by the reuse of the Clubhouse dirty water. Jon stated the Clubhouse is located too far away to be feasible.

Commissioner, Kim Sundy asked if this is a Robert Trent Jones course. Jon responded in the affirmative.

Vice Chairperson, Brian Rogers stated he does not think the residents should pay a fee to repair this pond and that the repair is no different than any other repair needed to any of the City facilities. City Council Liaison, Steve Lampi stated he attended the first meeting with the residents and in this case, the residents recognize that there is a value to having the pond repaired and they are willing to contribute some funding towards it. Parks & Facilities Manager, Mary Pat Black stated another option to save costs is that the City repair the portion of the pond it owns and leave dry the remaining portion owned by the residents.

Commissioner, Seyon Nyanwleh asked why the pond is so important to the City. Jon stated the 17th hole is a unique layout designed by Robert Trent Jones as the golf course signature hole. It is a challenge to hit something surrounded by water on three sides such as the 17th hole and what the golfers remember and identify Edinburgh Golf Course with.

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

Motion, Brian Rogers; Second, Kimberly Sundy, to recommend that the 17th signature hole pond be lined with plastic to keep the original golf course design intact. Motion unanimously approved.

Jon stated staff will discuss this with the City Council and if a recommendation is made, staff will bring it back to Commissioners for further discussion.

Seyon asked how many golf courses there are in the Twin Cities area. Jon stated he doesn't know off hand but that the golf course industry is very competitive. There are several courses going out of business and more courses being closed than being opened.

Kim asked if the golf course breaks even. Mary Pat stated it does.

SHINGLE CREEK CORRIDOR STUDY

Director, Jon Oyanagi provided an update on the Shingle Creek Corridor Study stating the study included the Village Creek Development and area east towards Parks Center High School. The City's

Community Development staff has worked cooperatively with Hennepin County to study alternatives for creek restoration. The outcome of the study includes ten recommendations, with the top recommendation to preserve Shingle Creek in its current route and not disrupt the current development. Jon asked that Commissioners be aware of this study as further development occurs in this area. Commissioner, James Brekke expressed his approval of the plan stating it is detailed and provides a good long range plan for the City.

6. **CITY COUNCIL UPDATE**

N/A

7. **DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW**

N/A

 **PLANNING COMMISSION UPDATE**

Planning Commission Liaison, John Holm reported that although development projects have slowed down considerably, he anticipates increased activity during the upcoming summer months. In addition, the 610 Corridor Development should pick up once again this summer.

8. **UPCOMING EVENTS**

 **CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

Parks & Facilities Manager, Mary Pat Black provided Commissioners with a calendar of upcoming events for March and April, 2010.

- The Egg Hunt will be held on Saturday, March 20 from 10 a.m. to Noon. Commissioners and their families are encouraged to attend.
- The annual Skate with the Bunny event will be held on Saturday, March 27 from 2:15-3:45 p.m. and Sunday, March 28 from 3:30-5:00 p.m.
- The Annual Ice Show is March 26 and 27 on Rink I at the CAC Ice Arena.
- The Zanewood Open House will be held on Tuesday, March 23, from 4-7 p.m. Program Supervisor, Michelle Margo has done a great job at the Zanewood Recreation Center and has initiated many new and exciting changes to the program.
- All Commissioners are invited to attend the Volunteer Appreciation Event to be held on Thursday, April 1, from 6-8:30 p.m. at the Community Activity Center. Watch for your invitation to arrive.
- The Brookland Executive Nine Golf Course will open for the golf season at Noon on Thursday, March 18.

9. **OTHER ITEMS BY COMMISSION**

 **A-Mon-Nue (ASSA) Motivational Spelling Bee**

Commissioner, Seyon Nyanwleh stated the ASSA Motivational Spelling Bee was held on Wednesday, February 24, 4:30 – 6:00 p.m. at the Zanewood Recreation Center (ZRC). A public spelling bee, introduced by Minnesota Viking Visanthe Shiancoe, will be held May 15 at the ZRC. Seyon expressed his thanks to Program Supervisor, Michelle Margo; Communications Coordinator, Mary Tan; and RPAC Commissioner, Reubenna Cooley for their support and assistance with the contests.

An article entitled 'United They Spell' was published on March 16 in the Star and Tribune Newspaper. Seyon stated the academic component is nice, but the ultimate goal of the A-Mon-Nue organization is to build connections between kids of disparate backgrounds, from white, to African-American, to Liberian. Seyon stated he will keep Commissioners informed on upcoming ASSA events.

Mural Painting

Vice Chairperson, Brian Rogers stated last year students from Brooklyn Junior High School who were involved in the CLIMB program painted a mural on the weir in Shingle Creek. This project made a positive impact on the students and Brian suggested painting of murals throughout the City continue on an annual basis. Director, Jon Oyanagi stated staff could approach the Youth Opportunities Coalition to see if teens would be interested in continuing an annual mural painting project.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Motion, James Brekke; Second, Rob Jacobs, to adjourn. Motion unanimously approved.