

Minutes
Minnetonka Community Commission
Meeting of July 25, 2011

1. Roll Call

Present: Paul Ansolabehere, Priscille Biehlmann, Betty Johnson, Michael Kelly, Jay Mega, Jr., Heather Odland (chair), Naomi Stock, Lucie Taylor (vice-chair)

Absent: Marli Komarek, Tammy Nelson, Bruce Gefvert

Staff: Jacque Larson

Chair Odland called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m.

2. Discussion Items

A. Approval of minutes

Mega asked about the Sister City program. At the last meeting discussion was tabled in favor of focusing on other priorities. Staff clarified that the city does not have the resources to pursue the Sister City program. Mega should feel free to pursue it with community groups outside of the city.

Ansolabahere moved, Taylor seconded, all moved to approve meeting minutes of April and May 2011.

B. Event feedback

Ansolabehere attended the ice cream social and thought it was great. He observed everyone seemed to be having a good time. He said Music in the Park has been “sweaty” due to high temperatures and humidity. His friends feel the farmers’ market is very welcoming and friendly. However, they said finding it was difficult, since they don’t know the area well.

Mega said the Williston Center is beautiful, and the new renovations really enhanced it. Taylor commented on the nice article about the Williston Center in the local newspaper.

Stock went to see “Anything Goes” at Minnetonka Theatre. Shesaid it was wonderful and encouraged everyone to go see it.

Odland asked, does everyone see a way to support those events and call them out to the residents.

Stock suggested that Night for Neighbors on August 2 is a great opportunity to get out and talk about city events at neighborhood events.

Johnson said sometimes she goes to events, and sometimes not, depending on neighborhood. She thought it leads to people being willing to talk to each other all year long.

Ansolabehere said the police and fire do a great job getting around to all the parties and the kids enjoy that.

Staff reported about 150 parties registered so far this year. Odland asked if that was up or down from last year – staff said slightly down but not by much.

Odland said her neighborhood is too busy. Taylor said no one in her neighborhood was willing to organize.

Ansolabehere talked about different parties in his neighborhood, one for children and one for adults.

Taylor suggested some brochures to encourage people to participate in Night for Neighbors. Odland suggested merging the parties so adults and kids mingle.

C. Minnetonka Reads update

Taylor reported that she had no exact dates with the Ridgedale Library because June and July programs have been wild. She wanted them to get through those and then they can talk about next summer. The Minnetonka Library is hesitant due to small parking lot. Taylor is waiting to talk with staff from that library. Joanne Robinson at the YMCA is interested and Barnes and Noble may provide books at a discounted rate.

As far as music, Taylor has contacted a music teacher who knows musicians and will give names. The teacher needs more details: professional or college age musician, how long to play and when, how much we are willing to pay.

Staff reported that Steve Pieh has been contacted and is on board with the Cuban band for 2012 Music in the Park.

Odland suggested additional parking at neighboring businesses for the Minnetonka Library. Other expressed concern at a long walk to the library, or having to cross County Road 101.

Staff suggested that Minnetonka Library might visit Minnetonka Heights versus hosting an event. The children's librarian at the Minnetonka Library is new.

Stock did not follow up on the international institute at the university. She will do some follow-up in August. Taylor suggested waiting until after Labor Day.

Staff suggested having a flyer to tease this at the October 11 Open House. Group liked this idea.

Taylor said the author would be willing to do a Skype interview rather than in-person interview.

D. Photo Contest

Stock asked if a professional photographer would come in to judge. A professional photographer from WCCO could come in and judge to give some promotion. Stock suggested a news article. Staff suggested letting Minnetonka Patch know.

Mega suggested having past winners help judge, perhaps the top three winners.

Odland said people's choice is a popular thing and a great way to draw people in to the commission booth at Open House.

Taylor asked what the judging criteria is. Johnson said it's really about what photos speak to us, and that's what makes the photo contest special.

E. Discuss meeting schedule for commission

Taylor moves, Stock seconded motion to approve cancelling August meeting. Commission will not meet in June, July, August, November or December. Next meeting is September. The commission always reserve the right to increase or decrease meetings, with required public notice.

Commission had a discussion about how to recognize employees by citizens. Ansolabehere mentioned a time that fire department reported to fires and gathered neighborhood children to educate about what the fire department was doing. He thought it was great customer service.

Johnson suggested that it's best if the compliments come from the grassroots level rather than the city publicizing opportunities for compliments.

F. Next meeting date

Next meeting is September 26, 2011.

3. Adjourn

Kelly moved, Mega seconded a motion to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m.