

**MINUTES OF THE
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD
April 16, 2003**

1. Roll Call

Park Board Members Jim Calkins, Freinde Mills, Lanise Stufft, Steve Watkins and Sue Woodrich were present. Attending staff were Geralyn Barone, Dave Johnson, Kathy Magrew, Craig Sinclair and Perry Vetter. Vice-Chair Watkins called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes – March 5, 2003

Stufft moved and Calkins seconded a motion to approve the meeting minutes of March 5, 2003 as submitted. All voted “Yes”. Motion carried.

3. Business Items

A. Review of Burwell Historic Site and Mills Park Master Plan

Vetter provided an overview of the item noting that significant enhancements to the Burwell Site are proposed to include signage for both a self-guided tour with historical markers and also park regulations; the addition of a water fountain, added electrical capacity and storage, improvements to the canoe landing, herb and flower gardens, and the addition of benches, tables and a bike rack on the grounds.

Vetter then reviewed recommendations to incorporate “green paving” on the site for tour guide parking. Vetter explained that “green paving” provided reinforcement to a turf area allowing the area to remain natural while increasing durability for vehicle parking.

Vetter distributed a draft Burwell Site Sign Package developed for consideration.

Watkins asked if the interpretive signage would be consistent with signs currently in other parks. Vetter responded that there are several options to consider.

Stufft inquired about the season for guided tours. Magrew answered that tours are offered from May thru September.

Vetter noted that suggestions had been made by the Historical Society to make the Burwell Site “smoke-free”, and asked for Park Board input.

Woodrich suggested to the Board that all park areas be considered for smoke-free designation. She added that it would be beneficial to see what other cities are doing with respect to smoking in parks.

Watkins responded that while the Burwell Site may be a possible smoke-free park, it would be difficult to enact a smoke-free policy throughout the park system. Watkins then questioned why Burwell should be considered separately from other parks. Magrew responded that reasons include the age of the Burwell

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House, the past fire that occurred, and the sensitivity of the fire detection equipment now installed in the house.

Watkins questioned if a no smoking perimeter could be established around the house and suggested 100'. Both Woodrich and Calkins indicated support for a 100' perimeter. Watkins suggested that staff define the distance and suggested input from the fire department in making the determination.

Calkins questioned if consideration had ever been given for placing a windmill at the Burwell Site. Magrew responded that past consideration had been given and that at the time, an estimate of \$75,000 was developed for placing a windmill.

Watkins asked if trees on the Burwell property would be impacted by the proposed improvements. Magrew indicated there would be no impact.

Watkins questioned whether the Burwell park renewal process was being handled any differently than other park renewal projects. Vetter added that there were differences, noting the historical significance and considerable work done by the Community Resources Commission.

Calkins noted his concerns regarding erosion along the creek banks, noting that the banks needed restoration. Sinclair suggested the development of a buffer to reduce future erosion. Watkins suggested that this work be considered when the homes acquired by the City along the creek are removed.

Vetter noted that the possibility of constructing a walking bridge over the creek at the west end of the Burwell property exists as a future option and could also be considered when the homes are removed.

Watkins summarized the significant aspects of the plan as follows:

- Historical signage
- Park regulation sign
- Drinking fountains - both Burwell and Mills
- Improvements to the canoe landing
- Electrical upgrades to the Burwell buildings

Woodrich indicated that she was pleased that the plan meets the Community Resources Commission's approval.

Stuftt moved and Woodrich seconded a motion to approve plans for the Burwell Historical Site and Mills Park as presented by staff and address future upgrades to the site including creek buffering and restoration, and the possibility of a bridge crossing at a future time. All voted "Yes". Motion passed.

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B. First review of Park system pesticide use policy

Sinclair provided staff's initial draft of a pesticide use policy for park property. Sinclair noted that over the past several years, residents have expressed conflicting views as to whether weeds in parks should be treated or not.

The draft policy recommends that dedicated athletic areas be treated on an annual basis, non-dedicated athletic areas bi-annually, informal play fields every third year and general turf areas every fourth year. Sinclair provided a schedule outlining the draft policy that included total acreage.

Woodrich questioned if the application of pesticides would result in restricted use of the park. Sinclair responded that the property is useable as soon as the pesticide application has dried, approximately two hours.

Calkins asked if dedicated fields receive additional treatment. Sinclair responded that those fields are also fertilized. Calkins noted that poor turf would increase weed growth, most notably, dandelions. He added that herbicide use should be conducted with a developed overall turf management plan. Calkins stated that he did not have a concern with proper pesticide use but strongly encouraged an overall management plan.

Watkins stated that he was comfortable with pesticide use on athletic fields, but was not concerned about dandelion growth in other maintained areas of the park system.

Stufft indicated support for the plan presented by staff. She added that pesticide use in the general areas was not as high of priority as athletic field use, but still supported the 4-year plan proposed by staff for general area applications.

Woodrich supported as little chemical use as possible, noting she was not concerned about dandelion growth.

Sinclair noted that the schedule provided in the policy was intended to be used only as a guideline for application. He added that parks scheduled for any given year would be evaluated to determine if the need to apply pesticides existed.

Mills questioned whether constant use of athletic fields reduces the amount of weed growth. Sinclair responded that it did not.

Watkins reviewed discussion points for the item and asked if members agreed with the plan.

Woodrich reiterated that she supported as little application as possible.

Calkins requested that a turf management plan be combined with regular mowing.

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Watkins agreed that a turf management plan was needed. He requested that years of application be spread out as far as possible and added that maintained turf areas be reduced or eliminated where possible.

Staff reported that revisions to the policy and the development of a Turf Management Plan will be completed and brought back to the Board for review.

C. Review of Headwaters Park City Council discussion

Barone noted that the City Council reviewed and approved the Park Board's recommendation for a two-phase approach to improvements at Headwaters Park. She informed the Board that the Council requested that staff consider adding permanent restrooms to the site.

D. Review of itinerary for annual Park Board tour

The Park Board approved the itinerary for the May 21, 2003 annual tour. A tour of the new Public Works facility was added at 5:15 p.m. for those who wished to attend.

4. Park Board Member Reports

None provided.

5. Information Items

No additional items were added to the information included in the Park Board packet.

6. Upcoming Park Board Agenda Items

Watkins noted that a second review of the pesticide use policy needed to be added to the upcoming meeting schedule.

Barone noted that a Civic Center Master Plan review will also be added.

Johnson requested that members explore alternative dates for the July 2, 2003 meeting due to the holiday.

7. Adjournment

Calkins moved and Mills seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:28 p.m. All voted "Yes". Motion carried.