

**MINUTES OF THE
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD
October 1, 2003**

1. Roll Call

Park Board Members Bruce Gefvert, Paul Lehman, Freinde Mills, Lanise Stufft, Steve Watkins and Sue Woodrich were present. Attending staff were Geralyn Barone, Dave Johnson, Craig Sinclair and Perry Vetter.

Chair Lehman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes – September 3, 2003

Mills noted that her name had been mis-spelled. Noting this correction, Watkins moved and Stufft seconded a motion to approve the Minutes of September 3, 2003 as submitted. All voted “yes”. Motion carried.

3. Citizens wishing to discuss items not on the agenda

No one appeared.

4. Business Items

A. Request for Community bocce ball courts

In attendance, resident Neil Albert requested the Park Board’s consideration to develop bocce ball courts within the Minnetonka park system. Albert described six courts maintained by the City of Eden Prairie and noted that use of those courts for league play fills to capacity each year. Albert described the game of bocce ball as a sport for residents of all ages but extremely popular for elderly individuals.

Lehman asked what the dimensions of a court are. Albert indicated that the size is not uniform, however 12’ x 72’ is common.

Gefvert inquired about the maintenance requirements. Albert indicated that the quality of court surfaces range from sand to maintained grass. He went on to recommend a gravel surface similar to ballfield rock which is what Eden Prairie provides. Johnson added that with this surface, maintenance would be minimal and require only an occasional dragging of the surface taking about 15 minutes per week. Johnson further noted that the courts would require spraying for weeds 1-2 times annually. Johnson estimated the cost to construct up to four courts at less than \$2,500.

Responding to a question from the Board, Albert indicated that in addition to the courts, benches and garbage receptacles would be nice to provide but not required. He added that a shady location is also desired if possible. Albert noted that he had toured the Civic Center campus with staff and had a desired location.

Stufft inquired about the difference of yard bocce vs. the game played on a court. Albert responded that when played on a court, the game is more strategic and provides a level playing field for participants.

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Calkins asked what the desired season was for bocce. Albert responded that the best season is from late May through mid-September.

Calkins requested that staff conduct research where possible to determine what the community interest is for the addition of bocce courts.

Gefvert indicated support for the addition of bocce courts noting that the risk is minimal. Gefvert added that often residents don't know what they are looking for in the way of recreational amenities until they see it.

Calkins added that if the courts are provided, they should be constructed in a quality fashion.

Lehman directed staff to report back to the Board at a later date with possible locations, cost estimates, and any possible information collected by staff to note resident interest for bocce courts.

B. Progress report – 2003 Athletic Field Needs Study Update

Johnson provided an update of information collected to date. He reviewed participation numbers collected from organizations using community fields, noting that participation had actually declined 3.2% since 1989. Johnson noted that sports showing an increase in activity included soccer, football, and baseball organizations serving ages 13 and over.

Johnson noted that the information provided at the meeting will be included in the final update prepared by staff. Johnson requested that the Board provide him with any additional detail they desire to have provided in the final report.

Calkins requested that population statistics, by age, be provided in the final report if possible. Johnson noted that enrollment projections provided by both school districts 270 and 276 include this information.

Lehman questioned what alternative sports, if any, participants were going to in the areas where participation had declined. Johnson responded that adult sports go through patterns of fluctuation, with adults rotating from sport to sport. Johnson noted that youth soccer organizations have implemented fall soccer programs that have impacted the Recreation Services program.

Stufft requested that the field summary include clarification of dedicated and multi-purpose fields.

Mills requested that Lacrosse fields be added to the field inventory.

Johnson indicated that the final report will be completed by February 1, 2004.

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C. Receipt of a Petition Requesting a New Park in Neighborhood Park Service Area #12

Johnson provided background regarding the petition and informed the Board that an initial verbal request asked for consideration of a new park or sidewalk access along Williston Road to McKenzie Park.

Watkins asked if staff had any suggested locations for a park in the requested neighborhood. Sinclair responded that the location suggested in the petition was not suitable for construction of a park due to the contour. Sinclair added that staff was unaware of any additional available properties.

Watkins indicated that similar requests for a park in this area have come to the Park Board previously during his tenure and that property was never able to be identified for a park.

At staff's request, the Board forwarded the petition to the staff trails team for consideration.

D. Planning discussion for a City Open House Park Board booth

The Park Board discussed options for presenting park and trails information at the October 7 Open House. A decision was made to provide a Park Renewal booth with available staff and Park Board members.

5. Park Board Member Reports

None provided

6. Information Items

Vetter noted that the Council approved concept plans for Libb's Lake and McKenzie Parks at the September 15 meeting. He added that the project bid for Meadow Park was also approved.

Sinclair noted that construction of Meadow Park has started. Barone added that the Meadow Park play equipment will be moved to the Civic Center for temporary use until the Civic Center Master Plan is complete.

Calkins asked when the Park Board will review a cost/expense update on the Park Renewal program. Barone responded that a staff prepared audit is being prepared for the open space projects and will be included on the December agenda. Vetter added that a Park Renewal update will be included in the November meeting packet.

Johnson noted that the Council approved the acquisition of the Shady Oak Lake Cemetery at the September 29 meeting. He added that the Ice Arena "B" project is now completed and the facility is in use.

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7. Upcoming Park Board Agenda Items

The Board reviewed the 6-month meeting schedule included in the meeting packet. No changes were made.

8. Adjournment

Calkins moved and Watkins seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:53 p.m. All voted "Yes". Motion carried.