

**MINUTES OF THE  
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD  
April 21, 2004**

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**1. Roll Call**

Park board members Jim Calkins, Andrea Fiterman, Bruce Gefvert, Tim Goodyear, Paul Lehman, Freinde Mills, and Sue Woodrich were present. Attending staff was Geralyn Barone, Dave Johnson (8:20 p.m.), Pat Kehr, and Perry Vetter. Chair Lehman called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

**2. Approval of Minutes**

There were no meeting minutes to approve.

**3. Citizens wishing to discuss items not on the agenda**

Andrew Kelley, 413 Cottage Downs, Hopkins, introduced himself as a Boy Scout in Troup 207, and in need of completing an Eagle Scout Project.

Kelley's proposal to the park board was to complete a landscaping project at Lone Lake Park in areas of the Frisbee golf course damaged by this activity. He proposed to add dirt, seed and fertilize damaged areas on holes #1, #6, #7, #8 and #9. Kelley indicated the work could begin in late September 2004 and that the areas would be fenced off to protect them from further damage.

Woodrich asked if Kelley had met with city staff to review his proposal. Kelley responded that he has talked several times with Craig Sinclair, from Public Works and added that Sinclair had actually proposed the project to him.

Mills asked Kelley whom he would use to help with the proposed project. Kelley responded that all the help would come from volunteers from Troup 207. He noted that he has approximately 25 volunteers for each shift.

Gefvert voiced support for the project, noting that erosion has become a real concern on the Frisbee golf course. Gefvert asked who would determine when the protective fencing would come down, and the restored areas are available for use. Kelley responded that the City would make that decision and he would help with removal of the fence. Gefvert asked how the locations of the temporary tee boxes would be determined. Kelley responded that he would work with the city on this as well.

Gefvert moved and Woodrich seconded a motion to approve the proposed Eagle Scout project presented by Andrew Kelley from Troup 207 for restoration work on the Lone Lake Park frisbee golf course. All voted "Yes." Motion carried.

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**4. Business Items**

**A. Park Renewal plan reviews**

**1. Elmwood Park**

Vetter introduced the item and informed the park board that the planning of this park resulted in two neighborhood meetings held on February 17, 2004 and March 10, 2004. Vetter reported that based on the first meeting and 60 survey responses received from residents, two concept plans were developed and reviewed at the March 10, 2004 meeting.

Vetter reviewed the Master Plan approved by residents. He described the target improvements to the play equipment (both for ages 2-5 and 5-12), the provision of shaded seating, improved buffering, installation of tetherball for teen use, and retaining a games table and bench swing previously donated to the park.

Lehman asked what could prevent vehicles from driving on the access path through the southern portion of the park. Vetter responded that the path has intentionally been placed north of the adjacent streets so that they do not align.

Mills commented that the play area was flooded when she visited the site and asked if grading of the site would occur. Vetter responded that there was no grading proposed for the park, however drain tile could be an option.

Gefvert asked if a drinking fountain would be available at the park. Vetter indicated that the plan did not include one, and one is not currently located at the park.

Gefvert asked how tetherball entered into the plan, noting that he did not see a request for this activity in the survey summary. Vetter responded by crediting the input received by teens that attended the meetings. He added that the size of the park was a limiting factor for basketball activities and the teens in attendance suggested tetherball as an attractive option. Gefvert noted the location of the tetherball pole might be of concern for those using the informal green space for activities. Vetter responded by stating he could move the tetherball location further to the north.

Calkins noted that parking seemed to be an issue at the first meeting, but not the second, and asked if different people attended. Vetter responded that attendance at both meetings was similar, noting that those in

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attendance at the second meeting decided that parking was not a strong need.

Calkins commented that regarding storm water management, it is better to infiltrate on the site than to direct water to the storm sewer.

Lehman opened the floor to public comments and received none.

Mills moved and Calkins seconded a motion to approve the Master Plan for Elmwood Park as presented by staff. All voted "Yes." Motion carried.

## **2. Jidana Park**

Vetter provided a background summary of the park renewal planning process noting two neighborhood meetings resulted on February 17, 2004 and March 10, 2004.

Vetter reviewed the master plan noting that all in attendance at the meetings unanimously favored keeping the park protected as a preserve with minimal changes. Vetter reviewed the targeted park improvements that included reducing the number of fire pits from seven to two, repairs to the stair access leading down to the canoe landing, and general improvements to the park entrance including a new access gate.

Lehman opened the floor to park board member comments.

Gefvert asked if the fire pits recommended for elimination are also campsites. Vetter responded that by ordinance, camping is not allowed unless by permit. He added that at one time, all seven areas might have been campsites but they are not all needed now.

Woodrich asked if grills would be available for use at the park. Vetter responded that fire pit style grills would remain in place and provide a flip-over grill for cooking over firewood.

Woodrich asked about the high interest expressed in the survey for cross-country ski trails. Vetter reminded the board of previous discussions involving a creek corridor ski trail loop that could incorporate various distances and locations including Jidana Park.

Calkins commented that he uses Jidana frequently on a year-round basis and feels it is unclear as to where the park boundaries are. Vetter responded that the aerial map included in the post plan is not accurate

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and he would provide an improved map at the next meeting. Calkins asked if The Marsh Health Club had an agreement with the city to post their snowshoe trail from their property to Jidana Park. Barone and Vetter indicated that they did not know of any formal agreement.

Calkins felt the road leading to the park needs repairs beyond just filling potholes. He added that he felt re-grading would be required. Calkins stated that buckthorn removal has improved the character of the park and asked if it was staff's intention to revegetate trails leading to the campsites eliminated or leave them as trails. Vetter responded that the goal would be to revegetate these informal trails. The park board discussed the trails and agreed the need was not there.

Calkins described the existing roadway/trail leading to the canoe landing. He noted that erosion was occurring, and suggested it be repaired.

Calkins asked if the neighborhood meetings included any discussion regarding the future trail connection from the Civic Center to Jidana. Vetter replied that two neighbors from the Timberhill neighborhood did not like the plan, while two other residents spoke in favor of it.

Gefvert asked if need dictates, could more fire pits be added. Vetter responded that they could.

Gefvert moved and Fiterman seconded a motion to approve the plan for Jidana Park as presented. All voted "Yes." Motion carried.

### **3. Minnehaha Creek Headwater**

Vetter provided background information regarding the project and detailed the meeting history. He reminded the board that phase I of improvements have already been approved and completed, adding that a neighborhood meeting for phase II was conducted on April 6 and held in conjunction with the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD).

Vetter described target improvements for the park including the provision of seating and viewing locations on both sides of the dam; construction of an enclosure for the existing portable restroom; improved educational signage; and working with the MCWD to coordinate aesthetic improvements to the dam and restoration of the shoreline.

Vetter opened the floor to any park board member questions or comments.

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Lehman asked if the lake side of the dam would have a dock. Vetter responded that a dock had previously not been provided and was not proposed in the phase II concept.

Goodyear asked what the status of the dam was pertaining to access to both sides of the creek. Vetter replied that the MCWD has changed their plan from a proposed roof structure to a deck structure. This structure will improve both the accessibility and aesthetics of the dam.

Lehman opened the floor to public comments.

Chris Veland, 16535 Gray's Bay Boulevard, said he was pleased to hear that the portable restroom would be enclosed. Veland indicated that he had attended the April 6, 2004, neighborhood meeting with the MCWD and noted that the MCWD had indicated that they would incorporate boulders and fencing on the site in an attempt to deter snowmobile traffic. He added that snowmobiles are a problem, especially on the creek side of the dam.

Veland noted that a small triangle at the entryway to the parking lot was filled with asphalt and suggested that a flowerbed be an option for this location considering its visibility. He suggested a monument or plaque as other options.

Veland closed by stating there were neighborhood concerns regarding the possibility of a trail. He indicated that several residents were concerned and confused over the issue. He added that the process does not appear to have followed the park renewal process used for other parks. Hearing no further requests, Lehman closed the floor to public comments.

Calkins indicated that drainage at the entry point to the park is a problem, noting that water often sits on the road and adjacent swale. Veland responded that corrections have been attempted in the past but have been unsuccessful.

Vetter responded to the paved area in the triangle. He indicated that the area was most likely paved for maintenance purposes. He added that the area could be planted with flowers, however it is small.

Fiterman indicated that she favored the idea of posting a sign and planting flowers at this site.

Barone provided some history with respect to the Headwaters Park improvements noting that this park was one phase of a three-phase plan,

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the other phases being development of the Marina and improvements to the causeway. Barone indicated that funding for the park improvements will be provided through the park renewal board referendum with MCWD improvements funded by the district.

Barone explained that the process of planning improvements for all three locations included the work of the Gray's Bay Task Force, several residents, and various agencies including the DNR and Hennepin County. She noted that in the cases of the Marina and Headwaters projects, decisions were made separate from the park board process, noting the example of no survey being distributed.

Regarding a future trail, Barone explained that the council recently approved a development project northeast of the Headwaters that included a trail easement. Barone added that options for how it would link to the Headwaters and further south have not been approved. She explained that the process of securing trail easements as part of the development process is common. Barone noted that the trail section from Crosby Road to the south remains as an unfounded project, however it is envisioned that the trail would go on the street, not homeowner's front yards.

Calkins explained that issues involving the trail, along with plans for the site by both the city and MCWD seem to be common concerns each time the Headwaters site is discussed. He expressed his desire to have improvements proposed by the city and MCWD reviewed and discussed at the same time. He added that aspects have been left out of the detail he has seen in both plans and expressed a strong desire for the city to review and comment on the MCWD's proposal before it is approved and completed.

Barone noted that the Master Plan is currently in the concept phase and that contact between the city and MCWD is ongoing. Vetter added that he has been working with the MCWD staff.

Barone indicated that issues involving the proposed trail are also ongoing. She noted that the overall trail plan is optimistic and as each new segment is considered, funding and planning are considered. She concluded that the CIP represents the city's most recent planning of projects, noting that the city is aware that the neighborhood does not want traffic from outside of the neighborhood; however, Headwaters Park is considered a community-wide resource.

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Calkins responded that his concerns were related to the influences the trail has regarding any discussions that occur related to the Headwaters and cited the April 6 meeting as an example.

Calkins summarized his observations as follows:

- The need exists for a portage from Gray's Bay to the creek.
- Snowmobiling is a problem, however some enhancements planned by the MCWD will help.
- The area designated for floodplain mitigation needs to be improved.
- Together he would like city and MCWD staff work to bring a single plan to the park board and council.

Woodrich stated that she felt input received at the meeting was incorporated into the plan and asked Calkins to explain what was missing. Calkins used the shoreline restoration improvements as an example, stating that the city should view what is being planned. Woodrich indicated that she felt the level of detail, down to the types of plantings, was not needed in her opinion, adding that this would be consistent with the park renewal process.

Barone reminded the park board that the purpose of this review was to receive feedback from members regarding the concept plan.

Lehman indicated that he felt the northern portion of the park needed more planning and lacked amenities. He added his support for a dock structure to be placed on the Gray's Bay side of the dam.

Gefvert indicated that he viewed the Headwaters as a community benefit. He realizes that the neighborhood is opposed to increased use, but felt the community should be able to access the site and supported the trail. Gefvert noted that he shared Calkins' concerns regarding the dam aesthetics and shoreline restoration.

Goodyear supported an adequate width across the dam for safe access.

Mills supported the plan presented and asked if added amenities such as tables and benches would need to be reviewed by neighbors who attended previous meetings. Vetter responded that the updated plan would be forwarded to those who are interested.

Lehman moved and Woodrich seconded a motion to approve the plan as presented with the addition of a canoe/kayak dock or landing to Gray's Bay, adequate trail width across the dam, added picnic tables on the north side of the creek, and a city review of shoreline and mitigation

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improvements prior to final approval of the plan. All voted "Yes." Motion carried.

**4B. Review of Boards and Commissions Workshop**

Barone provided an overview of the work completed by the park board at the March 17, 2004 workshop.

Gefvert and Woodrich agreed with the Best Practices summary prepared by those in attendance at the workshop.

Lehman recommended adding the document to the park board's action steps.

Calkins noted that he was not in attendance at the workshop. He requested two changes for consideration.

1. We prioritize taxpayer needs
2. We are committed to maintaining and preserving park and recreation amenities on a contemporaneous basis.

Barone asked if Calkins would approve of incorporating some of his suggestions into the park board's goals and objectives. Calkins responded that this would be fine.

Lehman asked if a revised Best Practices document could be included in the June meeting packet. Barone indicated that it would.

**4C. Review of itinerary for annual Park Board Tour**

The park board finalized stop sites for the May 12, 2004 park board tour of facilities.

**5. Park Board Member Reports**

Woodrich noted that a fallen tree limb still remained over the rail at Hilloway Park and asked if staff could have it removed.

**6. Information Items**

Barone reported that an outside consultant had completed the 2004 community survey and asked if the park board would like the executive summary sent to them. Members responded that they would.

**7. Upcoming Park Board Agenda Items**

No changes requested.

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**8. Adjournment**

Goodyear moved and Gefvert seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:02 p.m. All voted "Yes." Motion carried.