

**MINUTES OF THE  
JOINT MINNETONKA PARK BOARD AND CITY COUNCIL  
November 3, 2004**

**1. Roll Call**

City council members Mayor Karen Anderson, Janis Callison, Robert Ellingson, Terry Schneider, Al Thomas, Tony Wagner and Brad Wiersum were present. Park board members Jim Calkins, Bruce Gefvert, Tim Goodyear, Paul Lehman, Freinde Mills, and Sue Woodrich were present. Attending staff GERALYN BARONE, John Gunyou, Dave Johnson, Mark Simenson, Craig Sinclair and Perry Vetter.

Chair Lehman called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. He thanked council members for the opportunity to jointly meet with the park board for the second year in a row.

**2. Business Items**

**A-1) Board referendum project status report – Parks Renewal**

Barone opened by noting that the purpose of the bond referendum discussion was to provide a status report on work completed to date.

Gunyou reported that financially, the park renewal process is in excellent shape. He commended both the park board and staff for their management of the process and added that favorable bids have been received in most cases.

Barone noted that by combining multiple projects into a single bid package, better outcomes have occurred.

Vetter reported that most of the difficult projects are now completed or through the planning stage.

Schneider asked how the community play lot, currently included in the CIP, will be funded. Gunyou responded that funding is provided by a variety of sources including the park fund. He added that the community play lot is one of the aspects reviewed in the Minnehaha Creek Visioning Plan process.

Thomas requested that staff add a column on the Budget and Expenditure Summary page that would allow for explanations on why projects are either under or over budget.

Anderson noted that the project reports that are submitted periodically have been beneficial. She requested that these updates continue.

Barone provided an update of the approved trail section at Headwaters Park and points north and south. She described the plan in place to construct a permanent boardwalk parallel to the weir with completion planned for spring 2006. Callison inquired about the cost for constructing the boardwalk. Barone estimated the cost

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at \$130,000. She added that the spillway bridge is estimated to cost \$120,000 and the continental bridge an additional \$106,000.

Sinclair noted that the current plan will also allow for year-round use of the trail, adding that it won't be contingent upon water levels. Anderson asked if that meant the trail would be plowed. Sinclair replied that it would not be plowed, but available for public use during the winter time.

**A-2) Bond referendum project status report – Open Space**

Barone introduced the item and noted that the project's highlight has been the purchase of the Cullen-Smith property.

Thomas suggested that the city be creative in getting information about the neighborhood match program out to residents interested in protecting smaller parcels of open space available within their neighborhoods. Barone reported that she has received calls about the program and will explore other options for getting the information out to perspective neighborhoods. Thomas suggested several possibilities including the Eco-Fair, Open House, Website, Minnetonka Memo, and planning project information. Gunyoun added that the city's communication manager would review options for disseminating the information.

**B) Discussion regarding boulevard and gateway beautification**

Lehman provided an overview of this item, explaining that the park board began reviewing potential options to beautifying gateways and boulevards in recent months and was now asking for council input on what the park board's role should be. Johnson added that the park board included a discussion of gateways and boulevards as an action step in their strategic plan based on the council's encouragement at last year's joint meeting for the board to be proactive in looking at "non-traditional" improvements to the park system.

Johnson noted that the park board was not interested in providing large monument signs at the city's gateways, but was more interested in improving the primary boulevards and making the gateways more aesthetically pleasing. He added that the board suggested the development of a theme that could be incorporated into future roadway improvements.

Callison expressed support for the review, dependent upon the cost. She added that a rural theme could present concerns.

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Wagner noted that maintenance needs and related expenses need to be considered. He expressed concern that the cost of maintenance could be restrictive, causing the appearance to decline.

Callison commented that vegetation used in any improvements must be easy to control and maintain. She added that boulevards, such as those now in place on Williston Road and Lake Street Extension, would also need to be maintained.

Thomas agreed with Callison, noting that dependant upon the property owner the appearance of the boulevard along Williston Road fluctuates. Thomas added that he would support a common theme at the primary gateway entrances and was not totally opposed to the use of monument signs.

Anderson commented that she likes the development of a common theme but would require it to be somewhat flexible. She noted the quality of the Carlson Parkway and the high cost to maintain it. She added that a goal to provide an aesthetically pleasing boulevard for the Highway 62 improvements several years ago did not work.

Wagner asked if opportunities exist for improvements to the 494 corridor. Gunyou responded that the city has minimal input in the project but would act on any possibilities that may come to us.

**C) Minnehaha Creek Visioning Plan**

Barone distributed the draft Request For Proposal (RFP) developed by staff for the Minnehaha Creek Visioning Plan. She added that staff is excited about the process and eager to move ahead.

Gunyou noted that the process began with the last CIP discussion. He commented that several projects that impact the creek corridor are currently in place or planned for the near future. Gunyou noted that the creek is a common theme for the city and provides the city with an identity, adding that it is "what we are".

Callison agreed and requested that the concept of creating a focal point be incorporated into the RFP and emphasized to interested consultants.

Wagner added that this concept should be expanded beyond the creek to areas that feed off of the creek. Gunyou agreed and noted that 80% of the property now on the creek is city-owned.

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Wiersum voiced his excitement over the project, noting that Minnetonka's uniqueness with the creek will add to the project's potential.

Anderson commented that this project is the single most important far reaching initiative the city has undertaken in several years. She requested that the process be reviewed periodically and suggested that a council member be appointed to the task force. Anderson then questioned if more than one park board member should be represented on the task force. Barone noted that once a consultant is selected, they would help define the public process.

Anderson asked about the project's timing. Barone replied that the deadline for submittals would be in late January or early February.

### **3. Information Items**

Sinclair reviewed the Park Maintenance Cost Comparisons that have been developed for each park. He noted that these comparisons would help both the park board and council in future park renewal concept plan reviews.

In reviewing the park board's Strategic Plan, Wagner requested that improved signage and trail markings be incorporated into the system. He suggested an updated trail map also be considered. Barone noted that signage would be incorporated into the new Gray's Bay segment and suggested that a new logo for the trail system be considered.

Schneider requested that concepts such as the signage at Shady Oak Beach be considered when the trail signage theme is considered.

### **4. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:47 p.m. so that the park board members could convene for their regular meeting.