

**MINUTES OF THE  
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD  
March 1, 2006**

**1. Roll Call**

Park Board members Jahn Anderson, Bruce Gefvert, Denny Lambert, Paul Lehman, Freinde Mills, and Cathy Rude were present. Attending staff were Geralyn Barone, Jo Colleran, Dean Elstad, Dave Johnson and Perry Vetter.

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

**2. Approval of Minutes – February 1, 2006**

Mills requested that a reference be made in the Minutes to reflect the desire of Minnetonka Youth Hockey parents to volunteer with outdoor ice rink maintenance however the city deems appropriate.

Lambert moved and Rude seconded a motion to approve the meeting Minutes of February 1, 2006 as amended. All voted "Yes." Motion carried.

**3. Citizens Wishing to Discuss Items Not on the Agenda**

None.

**4. Business Items**

**A. Presentation of proposed athletic field project by the Minnetonka Diamond Club**

Johnson introduced the item and provided a historical background of the athletic field improvements and partnerships the city has participated in since 1989.

Johnson noted that the Minnetonka Diamond Club (MDC) had approached the park board regarding desired improvements to athletic fields at Minnetonka High School in January of 2005. As a result of the January presentation and another MDC presentation in February of 2005 highlighting improvements planned for Bennett Family Park, Johnson reminded the board that \$350,000 was placed in the 2006-2010 CIP to pursue athletic field improvement partnerships.

Johnson introduced Jon Guy of the MDC who presented an overview of the Minnetonka High School field improvement proposal. Guy identified the following improvements:

Baseball:

- Add lights for increased use
- Artificial turf for extended play and quality
- Stadium seating for 600

Football:

- Overlay of two fields on baseball field
- Lights for increased use

**MINUTES OF THE  
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD  
March 1, 2006**

Soccer:

- Relocated to existing football field
- Eliminate mixed use with football for improved turf conditions

Softball:

- Improved turf conditions
- Dedicated field for softball use

Guy explained that these improvements are planned as “Phase 1” of an overall plan for the high school site. He estimated the cost of Phase 1 to be \$3,000,000, of which \$500,000 would come from the school district and the rest from private donations, fundraising activities, and city contributions. Guy explained that the MDC intends to develop Phase 2 of the project at a later time.

Guy introduced Roger Linahan who spoke on behalf of the Tonka Football Association. Linahan explained the association’s field shortage concerns, noting that program enrollment has grown from 250–650 over the past four years.

Guy informed the board that since the proposed project was initially presented in January of 2005, the Tonka Football Association was added as a partner. Guy explained that fundraising efforts have improved due to this partnership, and the field use needs between baseball and football compliment each other well.

Guy introduced Roy Anderson, project architect, who provided a detailed summary of the project conceptual plan.

Mills asked what the timing for the Phase 1 work would be. Anderson indicated that the project would take approximately four months to complete, adding that the plan is to begin construction in June of this year and complete improvements by mid-October.

Rude asked what the time frame would be for use of the lights. Guy indicated that the district and MDC are considering a restriction that no inning could begin after 10:00 p.m., noting that this policy would be even more restrictive than the policy in place by the city for Big Willow Park.

Anderson reviewed the lighting specifications, noting that new technology allows for direct lighting to the field with minimal spill, along with hooded fixtures to significantly reduce glare.

**MINUTES OF THE  
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD  
March 1, 2006**

Anderson questioned the length of the baseball season. Guy responded that play could begin in the spring once the snow is gone and temperatures allow, and last through August 15. Guy added that football could then begin essentially the following day (August 16) and run as long as weather permits. Guy noted that due to the artificial turf, there would no longer be a need to "rest" the field to accommodate turf growth thus allowing for extended play.

Lambert asked if user fees would be the primary method for fundraising for the planned improvements. Guy indicated that it is the MDC desire to keep user fees at a minimum. He noted that donation pledges received to date are from private donors.

Lehman asked how the planned project would be of benefit to all Minnetonka residents. Guy responded that the improvements will enhance facilities for baseball, soccer, football and softball and not just a single sport. Johnson added that, if completed, the new facility will take considerable pressure off of the baseball and soccer fields at Big Willow Park. Johnson added that the improved baseball field at Minnetonka High School would serve as the primary field for organizations in the Minnetonka School District, thus opening up additional time at Big Willow Park for other organizations throughout the city.

Lehman asked if a decision point has been reached by the district and MDC regarding the project. Guy responded that the project will move forward, assuming all City requirements are met, however, a city contribution towards the project is needed.

Tim Boise, representing girl's softball spoke in favor of the project. He indicated that girl's softball fields continue to be in great demand.

Johnson recommended that a funding decision on the proposal be delayed to the subsequent discussion item on Capital Improvement Program funding. The board agreed with this recommendation and tabled the discussion.

**B. Consideration of Park and Trail Projects for the 2007-2011 Capital Improvement Program**

Vetter provided an overview of the item and explained each of the 29 projects identified in the staff report. Vetter noted that all projects as requested leave the Park Dedication Fund with a \$328,554 deficit in 2011. Vetter requested feedback from the board on ways to bring the fund back into a positive balance.

Gefvert asked if funding for the gateway's project currently under review by the board should be included for funding. Johnson responded, saying he did not include funding for the gateway's project at this time due to a lack of knowledge

**MINUTES OF THE  
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD  
March 1, 2006**

regarding the project's scope and uncertainty whether the Park Dedication Fund was the appropriate fund.

Gefvert followed up by inquiring about park renewal project funding. Vetter explained that park renewal projects were funded out of the bond funds and not the park fund.

Lehman asked if staff had received any recent requests for alternative skate park locations. Vetter replied that new portable equipment will be rotated this summer and should help to gauge interest in skateboarding around the community. He added that no recent requests for city/school district partnerships had been received.

Elstad provided a review of trail related projects included in the plan, and Colleran provided a review of the Natural Resources Stewardship Program (NRSP). Anderson asked how much follow-up NRSP work is completed by city crews. Colleran replied that this work still utilizes contractual providers however, she is working on establishing a volunteer network to complete appropriate projects.

Mills inquired which park allocated funds for tennis court rehabilitation in 2006. Vetter responded the funding was for Reich Park.

Lambert questioned what the direction of the board should be in trying to reduce the CIP budget to an acceptable level. He asked if a straight 10% across the board was a possibility. Barone suggested that a 10% cut of all items might not be possible and presented some options staff had considered to the board. Barone added that while increased funding was a slight possibility, the board should assume that will not be the case.

Subsequent to discussion on each item, the park board developed the following adjustments to the 2007-2011 CIP Park Dedication Fund budget:

- Removal of \$70,000 for painting of the Burwell House
- Elimination of \$150,000 allocated to 2011 unidentified loop trail projects
- A reduction in miscellaneous loop trail projects totaling \$10,000 over five years
- Capping the natural resources management plan costs at \$150,000 per year resulting in a reduction of \$40,000
- Allocation of the Gatewood warming house replacement project to an unfunded status, a reduction of \$50,000

Vetter noted that by making these changes, the allocation of \$125,000 for new park development could be moved from 2009 to 2007. Vetter reviewed a previous request that was presented to the board in February for a new park to

**MINUTES OF THE  
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD  
March 1, 2006**

be developed off of Spring Lake Road in Park Service Area #13. The board directed staff to meet with the State to determine if the property is obtainable before pursuing the project further.

The park board proceeded to adopt three motions related to the 2007-2011 CIP related to park, trails and open space projects.

Lambert moved and Gefvert seconded a motion to approve \$320,000 in adjustments to the Park Dedication Fund portion of the 2007-2011 Capital Improvement Program, contingent upon the inability to receive additional revenues to fund these projects. All voted "Yes." Motion carried.

Lehman moved and Rude seconded a motion to direct staff to seek acquisition of property at 13608 Spring Lake Road from the State of Minnesota to be used for a public purpose to be determined by the park board and city council at a future date. All voted "Yes." Motion carried.

Gefvert moved and Anderson seconded a motion to recommend to the city council the allocation of \$250,000 in the 2007-2011 Capital Improvements Program for the purpose of a joint partnership with the Minnetonka School District, to improve athletic fields at Minnetonka High School for baseball, football, soccer and softball. The allocation of these funds will be placed in 2008 (\$100,000) 2009 (\$100,000) and 2010 (\$50,000) and distributed contingent upon the development of an operations agreement approved by both parties, and the distribution of bonds for the project by the school district totaling \$2.5 million. All voted "Yes." Motion carried.

**C. Review of the 2006 Trail Map**

Elstad provided an overview to the item, noting that the loop trail map format has changed little since 1990. Elstad noted that the time has come to redesign the map due to the City's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration this summer,

Elstad summarized the following significant changes:

- New Parks & Trails logo replaces the previous "Loop Trail" logo
- Layout and design completed by a graphic designer
- Trail surfaces will be coded, along with designations for on-road and off-road segments
- Historical areas in Minnetonka will be highlighted
- Improved graphics and park amenity information

Elstad opened the floor to park board comments.

Lehman noted that Holiday Lake is listed twice at its location.

**MINUTES OF THE  
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD  
March 1, 2006**

Mills noted that the new map seems to indicate that the trail system is not connected and asked if this was the intent. Vetter responded that in several locations the trail system is not continuous and users need to be aware of this.

Lehman suggested that significant locations on the map appear to be open space and are not, should be labeled. He cited the Glen Lake Golf Course and Ridgedale as examples.

Bruce questioned if canoe access points on Minnehaha Creek should be marked. Elstad noted that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District prints a creek map that provides this type of information however, he will review options to include it on the city's parks & trail map.

Lehman indicated that he felt the new map was aesthetically more pleasing and thanked staff for the work done to date.

**5. Park Board Member Reports**

None

**6. Information Items**

The board reviewed a park renewal status report and was provided an update of Kids' Fest that occurred on February 12.

Barone provided an informational update on the Glen Lake redevelopment project. Barone reported that the city will provide property north of Glen Lake Park for relocation of the Alano facility. This project will require amendment of the Glen Lake Park Renewal concept due to a change in parking configurations. Barone explained that an expanded parking lot area will be used for park related activities, with shared use by Alanon during specific days and times.

Elstad reminded the board that the annual Eco-Fair will be held at the Minnetonka Community Center on Saturday, March 18.

**7. Upcoming Park Board Agenda Items**

The board requested that neighborhood meeting dates for Big Willow and Guillian Park renewal projects be added once determined.

**8. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:37 p.m.