

**MINUTES OF THE
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD
June 7, 2006**

1. Roll Call

Chair Lehman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Park board members Bruce Gefvert, Denny Lambert, Paul Lehman, Freinde Mills and Cathy Rude were present. Attending staff were Geralyn Barone, Dave Johnson and Perry Vetter.

2. Approval of Minutes – April 5, 2006

Gefvert moved and Rude seconded a motion to approve the meeting Minutes of April 5, 2006 as submitted. All voted “Yes.” Motion carried.

3. Citizens Wishing to Discuss Items Not on the Agenda

None.

4. Business Items

A. Review of Gateway Concepts

Johnson introduced Jason Amberg and Amanda Prosser of Brauer & Associates, Ltd. Johnson reviewed the process Brauer & Associates, Ltd. has taken to date in response to the park board’s request to assist in developing a gateway concept for the City of Minnetonka.

Since they attended the park board meeting on January 4, 2006, Amberg and Prosser have developed concepts to illustrate possible themes expressed by the board at the meeting. Prosser presented three options for review, with each of the options superimposed over existing photos of the northeast intersection of County Road 62 and Baker Road. The options presented included:

Option #1

A two-pillar design with a center identification panel reading “Minnetonka.” The pillars were fabricated using fieldstone and native grasses and coniferous trees where shown as supportive landscaping.

Option #2

Included a fieldstone base with a fabricated metal panel reading “Welcome to Minnetonka” setting on top. This design is similar to the Civic Center sign design theme. As in Option #1, coniferous trees and native grasses were used in the landscaping theme.

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Option #3

This concept utilized a large boulder showing “Minnetonka” on the face. Coniferous trees and little bluestem ornamental grasses were used in the landscape theme.

Prosser reviewed several options for landscaping, providing examples for deciduous trees, coniferous trees, shrubs, ornamental forbs and perennials, ornamental grasses, construction materials and lettering.

Prosser opened the floor to park board feedback.

Rude questioned how tall tamarack trees could grow, noting concern that they might be too large to consider in a gateway concept. Prosser agreed, stating that tamarack trees can grow to be 50’ to 60’ in height.

Johnson provided the board with comments he received from Jo Colleran, Natural Resources Division manager. Johnson noted that Colleran had no immediate concerns with any of the plant materials proposed by Brauer & Associates, Ltd. Johnson added that Colleran also offered to provide assistance to the park board in selecting specific plant types that would be visually appealing and require lower levels of maintenance.

For the record, Johnson also provided comments on behalf of park board member Tim Goodyear. Johnson noted that Goodyear preferred leaving the plant materials to the staff’s discretion due to their professional knowledge of the working conditions of each plant. As for a monument theme, Goodyear preferred Options #1 or #3. Johnson noted that Goodyear expressed to him that Option #3 was his preferred option, however, the print font needed to be changed.

Rude agreed with Goodyear’s comments regarding using staff to develop planting recommendations. She indicated that the appearance plants have during different seasons should be taken into consideration. Rude indicated support for Options #1 or #2 noting that she liked the fieldstone look.

Lehman supported flexibility in the final plan that would allow for prominent and less prominent locations to be designed differently.

Lambert indicated that he liked Option #3, noting its natural and unique appearance. Both Lambert and Mills agreed with Lehman restating that options need to remain available.

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Gefvert indicated support for Option #3, stating a preference for a different font type and enhanced plantings. He also suggested the possibility of incorporating a creek theme into the design.

Vetter suggested that staff develop a “short” list of acceptable plants. Johnson added that staff would take the park board’s input and develop the next series of options for review by the board.

The board expressed an interest in using up-lighting at locations that are deemed appropriate.

The board mentioned they would like to have a recommendation developed in time to present to the city council at the annual joint meeting in October and November.

B. Consideration of Revisions to the Park Renewal Project Schedule

Vetter provided the history of the park renewal program and a summary of projects to date.

Vetter distributed a summary comparing the initial 2001 adopted park renewal schedule, along with new projects that have been developed by the city since the inception of the park renewal program.

Vetter presented two alternative schedules for park renewal years 2006-2009, which combined the park renewal projects yet to be completed along with new projects that have been planned. In addition, Vetter included plans to incorporate Best Manages Practices (BMP) and a Maintenance Management System (MMS) into annual operations to more efficiently address work loads of the Parks, Trails and Recycling Division of Public Works.

Vetter opened the floor to park board member comments and questions.

Gefvert noted that Lone Lake Park was initially scheduled for 2005 and under the alternative schedule is now proposed for 2007 – 2008. He asked if the use of Lone Lake Park for soccer justified the need to move the project up on the schedule. Vetter replied that Tonka United Soccer is now indicating a need for an eight-field complex and has not expressed a strong desire to financially support Lone Lake Park improvements.

Rude questioned if Lone Lake Park should be completed in conjunction with the county’s re-design of Shady Oak Road. Vetter indicated that the road project should not conflict with the Lone Lake Park renewal project and added that he did not see a financial benefit in doing the projects at the same time.

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Vetter added that access to the park will remain available throughout the road project.

Rude suggested keeping Lone Lake in the 2007 schedule along with Guillian and Big Willow Parks which were scheduled in 2007 on both of Vetter's alternative schedules.

Gefvert noted that the trail system evaluation was scheduled for 2006 on alternative schedule #1 and for 2007/2008 on alternative schedule #2. Gefvert indicated support for 2006 noting that the trails receive significant use.

Lambert expressed support for Rude's recommendation that Guillian and Big Willow be scheduled in 2007.

Rude requested an update on the Glen Lake project. Vetter indicated that the Glen Lake pedestrian study is in progress and improvements to Glen Lake Station are a priority of his division. He added that plans to replace the warminghouse at Glen Lake School have also been approved.

Vetter noted that Oberlin and Mayflower Parks are considered high visibility parks and suggested keeping them on the schedule. Rude requested that park board members review the parks yet to be completed prior to the next park board meeting.

Vetter indicated that he would use the park board's input to develop a revised schedule for the August meeting.

5. Park Board Member Reports

Rude mentioned to staff that a bench located in the gazebo at Mills Park was in need of replacement. Vetter indicated that a new bench has been ordered.

Mills mentioned that the City of Eagan has a program which allows residents to purchase trees from the city. She questioned if this was a program Minnetonka might be interested in. Johnson requested that she forward him any information she had. Vetter noted that this might be a program that the Natural Resources Division might be interested in.

6. Information Items

In addition to the items included in the meeting packet, Barone informed the board that a ribbon cutting event for the new Civic Center to Jidana Park trail will be held at 6:00 p.m. on June 24 as part of the Summer Festival activities.

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7. Upcoming Meeting Schedule

The Board decided to cancel the July 6, 2006 meeting.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:42 p.m.