

**MINUTES OF THE  
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD  
June 6, 2007**

**1. Roll Call**

Chair Goodyear called the meeting to order at 7:00p.m. Board members present included Jahn Anderson, Kyle Gallagher, Bruce Gefvert, Tim Goodyear, Amber Greves, Denny Lambert and Cathy Rude. Attending staff included Geralyn Barone, Jo Colleran, Dave Johnson and Perry Vetter.

**2. Approval of Minutes – May 2, 2007**

Lambert moved and Rude seconded a motion to approve the meeting Minutes of May 2, 2007 as submitted. All voted “Yes”. Motion carried.

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

None.

**4. Business Items**

**A. Consideration of park renewal plans for Kinsel Park**

Vetter introduced the item and provided a review of proposed improvements to Kinsel Park including:

- Five designated natural resources restoration areas
- Resurfacing of trail paths
- The potential for a lake overlook boardwalk
- The potential for a boardwalk connecting trails on the east and west sides of the park

Vetter explained that the recommendations were based on input received from residents at neighborhood meetings conducted on February 8 and March 8, 2007.

Goodyear opened the floor to resident comments and questions.

B.J. Novotny, 14319 Stewart Lane, #107, voiced concerns regarding the existing storm water ponds that are not protected by fencing. Novotny felt that the ponds were dangerous and could be a drowning hazard. He indicated that he had been told that city policy is to not fence such ponds, primarily because fencing hampers rescue efforts if someone was to enter the ponds by accident. Novotny felt that any rescue personnel should be able to scale a safety fence.

Novotny continued with concerns related to cattails encroaching on Glen Lake and the fact that no one seems concerned about this change.

**MINUTES OF THE  
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD  
June 6, 2007**

Tom Wartman, Glen Lake redevelopment project manager, complimented staff on the concept plan presented and thanked the park board for their commitment to Kinsel Park. He expressed his appreciation for the native plantings, trail connections, boardwalk and repair of the gazebo that are being considered. Wartman agreed that control of the cattails in the lake, if possible, would be beneficial.

Hearing no further requests for comments, Goodyear closed the floor to public comments and asked staff to respond to Novotny's concerns.

Vetter indicated that over 87 ponds are located within the park system, and added that the City's insurance trust and best management practices recommend that these ponds not be fenced for safety reasons.

Colleran commented on the increase of cattails on Glen Lake. She noted that the City does not have an aquatic plant management program. She added that the engineering department does manage water resources within the City and is in the process of exploring options for managing aquatic plants within the system.

Colleran added that on other occasions, neighborhoods have formed associations to deal with similar concerns. She used Wing Lake as an example. Colleran offered to assist any neighbors interested in forming an association for Glen Lake.

Goodyear asked for park board questions or comments.

Greves asked if Glen Lake was a shallow lake, causing the larger amount of cattails growth. Colleran responded that the lake is generally shallow; however there are areas of the lake that are 30' deep. Overall, she estimated the average depth at 20'.

Lambert asked if buckthorn removal would be completed by staff or use of an outside contractor. Vetter responded that the City would likely use one of the internal work crews available. He noted that past use of these crews has resulted in savings financially.

Rude asked if staff was comfortable with the amount of parking provided at the park. Vetter responded that the existing level of parking serves the park well, adding that foot traffic from the surrounding neighborhoods is the primary method of getting to the park.

Gefvert asked what the trail surfaces are proposed to be. Vetter responded that no changes are proposed for the aggregate trails currently in place. Vetter added that an asphalt trail surface would only be used in cases where maintenance is an issue.

**MINUTES OF THE  
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD  
June 6, 2007**

Gefvert noted that he attended the neighborhood meetings and recalled access to the lake being discussed. He asked if there was any consideration given to lake access when the recommended concept was developed.

Vetter responded that lake access was discussed as a possible desired option, however a feasible location was not found. He added that the current levels of cattails also makes access to the lake difficult. Vetter noted that the boardwalk proposed for the park would add a visual access to the lake.

Goodyear asked Gefvert if he felt the plan presented met the neighborhood desires expressed at the neighborhood meeting level. Gefvert responded that he felt those in attendance at the neighborhood meetings would be pleased with the end result.

Gefvert moved and Rude seconded a motion to approve the Park Renewal plan for Kinsel Park as submitted by staff and forward it to the city council for consideration. All voted "Yes". Motion carried.

**B. Consideration of Park Renewal Plans – Lone Lake Park**

Vetter introduced the item and noted that resident input was received at two neighborhood meetings conducted on February 8 and March 8, 2007.

Vetter reviewed the plan and described target improvements recommended for Lone Lake Park including:

- Trail surfaces
- Improve and relocate the play equipment, basketball court and picnic shelters
- Realignment of the existing park entrance from Shady Oak Road to be completed in conjunction with a planned road improvement project
- The possible addition of an emergency call box
- Improved signage
- The potential of an off-leash dog park and park access from Dominick Drive

Goodyear opened the floor to the public comments and questions. Hearing no requests to speak, Goodyear closed the floor to public comments and asked for park board feedback on the recommended plan.

Anderson asked what impacts ADA accessibility on the trails presented. Vetter responded that ADA trail accessibility requests are increasing and gaining accessibility where possible, has been a primary focus of the park renewal process over the past six years. Vetter added that steep slopes create obvious obstacles, however slight re-routing of trails or resurfacing of trails can often times provide significant improvements.

**MINUTES OF THE  
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD  
June 6, 2007**

Gefvert noted that Vetter indicated that moving the basketball courts was a desired change and asked if that would improve cleaning and moisture control. Vetter responded that having no fencing or vegetation in the immediate area will help keep the courts clean, and park attendants will be available to help as well during summer months.

Gefvert noted that he appreciates staff's consideration of an access to the park from Dominick Drive.

Gefvert asked for an explanation of proposed sign improvements. Vetter responded that it is staff's desire to limit signs as much as possible, and added that improvements would be in the form of more concise information on existing signs, improved locations for placing signs, and trail distance signage. Vetter reaffirmed that the goal was not to increase, but to improve signs within the park.

Lambert asked about the recommendation to add emergency call boxes and asked if this is something other cities and doing. Vetter responded that Minneapolis and St. Paul have used such boxes and that Bloomington and Edina are considering adding. Vetter indicated that abuse or misuse of these boxes is a concern, however adding that the lone existing box within the park system at the Glen Lake Skate Park and Activity Center has not been misused.

Greves noted that the desire for security lighting seemed to be rated high in the survey and asked if it had been addressed. Vetter responded that recreationally, the addition of lights to the tennis courts would be a desired improvement. He added that lighting on the trails or portions of the park is not a practice used by the City, and only directs unwanted activities (if any) to other portions of the park not lit. Other than park building soffit lighting, Vetter indicated that the plan did not include any additional lighting.

Goodyear asked about athletic field improvements, specifically what was planned, when it would be completed and how much it would cost. Vetter indicated that the primary improvement to the existing soccer field area would include the addition of irrigation at a cost of \$12,000 - \$15,000. Vetter suggested that the addition of irrigation might require the field to be unavailable for up to half of a season. Goodyear asked if lighting of the field was a consideration. Vetter responded that soccer organizations seem to be more in need of practice space than game space. He noted that lighting of the Civic Center fields might be a better option in the future.

Lambert questioned the need for the soccer field to be shut down for an extended period of time, noting that on a smaller scale, residential irrigation can be in place in a matter of a day or two. Vetter responded that the size of the field and need for zones, feedlines and turf restoration would result in the delay.

**MINUTES OF THE  
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD  
June 6, 2007**

Gefvert noted that the plan did not include disc golf and asked why that recommendation was made. Vetter responded that the initial course at Lone Lake was one of the first to be installed. As a result, the course was well used and created significant damage such as erosion. Vetter indicated that several new courses have been developed in the area providing disc golfers other options.

Johnson noted that the original course was a difficult one to design in such a defined and restricted area. He noted that of the 100+ acres in Lone Lake Park, approximately 30 are maintained acres. Of the maintained acres, Johnson noted that half of this space is allocated for parking, athletic fields and play courts (tennis/basketball). As a result, he estimated that 15 acres are available for nine disc golf holes that also compete with picnic areas, road traffic, walkers and other park users. Johnson concluded that the available space does not meet the needs of a well planned disc golf course.

Gallagher asked if restrooms were available for the athletic fields and other park use areas. Vetter indicated that the park facility on the lower level provided restrooms, and added that portable restrooms are provided in two additional locations.

Rude moved and Greves seconded a motion to recommend the park renewal plan for Lone Lake Park as prepared by staff to the City Council for consideration. All voted "Yes". Motion carried.

**C. Review of draft agreement with School District 276 for softball improvements at Minnetonka High School**

Johnson introduced the item and reviewed the terms and conditions of an agreement with the Minnetonka School District for the development of a new softball field complex at Minnetonka High School. Johnson reviewed information contained in the agreement related to the purpose for the new complex, design and construction, maintenance, City contribution and scheduling of the fields.

Johnson noted that the cost of the facility is estimated to be \$1.2 million, with the City providing \$95,000 in funding to the district for the project in 2009.

Gefvert moved and Rude seconded a motion to approve the draft agreement for the development of new softball fields with the Minnetonka School District and forward to the City Council and Minnetonka School Board for consideration. All voted "Yes". Motion carried.

**MINUTES OF THE  
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD  
June 6, 2007**

**D. Discussion regarding the feasibility of adding an off-leash dog park within the park system**

Vetter introduced the item and asked the park board for direction to study the feasibility of providing an off-leash park within the park system. Vetter noted the resident survey recently completed indicating that one-third of resident households have dogs with a significant percentage responding that they would be willing to pay a fee to support an off-leash area.

Vetter reviewed issues of concern related to dogs in the park system including conflicts between dogs, dogs disrupting other park users, and damage to the natural resources within the natural areas.

Vetter reviewed potential locations for a dog park including Lone Lake, Jidana, Mooney and Oberlin Parks, the former Hedberg dump site, the Kelly garden location and the tax forfeited land acquired by the City east of Hopkins High School.

Goodyear noted that there appeared to be people in the audience interested in this item and asked if anyone had comments or questions for the park board.

Karen Gillespie, 18801 South Lane, indicated that she had been to several dog parks in the area and found some to be good and others to be poor. Her concern is that Minnetonka not develop a park that will not be used. Gillespie indicated that she felt there were two reasons why people use dog parks, for exercise and socialization. She recommended that the park have a fenced-in area, path systems, large open space, shaded areas and water.

Roy Hudrutler, 6200 Birch Lane (Mound), suggested that a large area be provided, shade, water and open space.

Eric Moreira, 5554 Nantucket Place, asked who the City contact would be for residents who have suggestions or comments about an off-leash dog park. Goodyear suggested that he contact Perry Vetter. Moreira suggested that Jidana seemed to be the most appropriate option available in the city for a dog park due to the available space. He closed by noting that he understands and is sympathetic to general public concerns related to dog fighting at a designated off-leash area.

Andrei Zakhartsev, 6142 Creekview Trail, was under the impression that Purgatory Park was already a dog park and was concerned that the City was considering changing or removing this designation. He noted that adequate space was the primary factor needed for a successful park.

**MINUTES OF THE  
MINNETONKA PARK BOARD  
June 6, 2007**

Hearing no additional requests for comment, Goodyear closed the floor to public comments.

Jo Colleran explained the potential impacts of an off-leash park on the natural areas of any potential site. Concerns included the trampling of vegetation, owners not picking up after their pets, and water quality issues. Regarding Purgatory Park, Colleran indicated that any off-leash park at this site would need to be in the upland portion of the park.

Vetter closed by mentioning that there are currently no off-leash dog parks in the City, a fact that many park users do not realize. He explained park regulations related to dog and pet control in the park system noting that several problems have been reported.

The park board directed staff to complete a feasibility study to determine the potential for an off-leash area in the City. They requested that considerations be given to information received tonight related to walking paths, green space, adequate park size, water, shade and environmental impacts. They further directed staff to develop recommendations for regulating and monitoring a potential park.

#### **5. Park Board Member Reports**

Rude reported that she had heard concerns from residents regarding weed growth in Orchard Park. Vetter indicated that converted natural areas often take a period of time to mature, resulting in weed growth. He will inspect the park and report back to the board.

#### **6. Information Items**

No additional informational items were discussed.

#### **7. Upcoming Park Board Agenda Items**

Johnson reminded the board of the Minnetonka Summer Festival to be held on Saturday, June 23, and the park board's tour of park amenities scheduled for Wednesday, July 11.

#### **8. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:07 p.m.