

**Item 2B - Minutes of the Joint Meeting of the Park Board and City Council  
November 7, 2007**

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**1. Roll Call**

Park Board Chair Goodyear called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m. City council members in attendance included Mayor Jan Callison, Dick Allendorf, Bob Ellingson, Terry Schneider, Tony Wagner and Brad Wiersum. Park board members in attendance included Jahn Anderson, Kyle Gallagher, Bruce Gefvert, Tim Goodyear, Amber Greves, Tess Komarek, Denny Lambert and Linda Witte. Attending staff were Geralyn Barone, Jo Colleran, Dean Elstad, John Gunyou, Dave Johnson, Janet Larson and Perry Vetter.

**2. Report from the Park Board Chair**

Chair Goodyear thanked all in attendance and noted that the intent of this meeting was to provide the city council with an update on 2007 Park Board related activities and to receive direction from the council on future requests of the Park Board.

**3. Discussion Items**

**A-(1) Bond Referendum Project Status Report – Park Renewal**

Perry Vetter, Parks and Trails Division Manager, provided an update on the status of the Park Renewal program and progress made in 2007. Vetter reported that Reich Park and Westwood Park projects were completed in 2007, and Glen Lake Park construction is underway. Vetter provided a status report of all 41 parks included in the Park Renewal process, noting that four parks (Guilliam, Big Willow, Lone Lake and Kinsel) are projects in process. Vetter closed by indicating that three parks are scheduled for completion in 2008 and 2009 (Oberlin, Mayflower and Lake Rose) and three more are unscheduled (Lake Charlotte, Green Circle and Mooney).

Goodyear asked the council for questions and feedback.

Wagner noted that the council recently approved the concept plan for Oakhaven Park to address a new park to fill an area of the city that is deficient of parks. He asked if there are other areas of the city also deemed to be deficient, citing the Minnetonka Boulevard/Highway169 area as a possible example. Barone responded that the issue of park access to all areas of the city will be reviewed as part of the Comprehensive Plan update process currently underway. She added that an update of the POST plan is also scheduled to be completed, which will also identify deficient areas.

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City Manager John Gunyou noted that Council Member Al Thomas was unable to attend the meeting and asked that the park board add canoe access to Glen Lake as a future discussion item.

**A(2) Bond Referendum Project Status Report – Open Space**

Assistant City Manager Geralyn Barone provided a status report on open space referendum projects. She provided an update of properties along Minnehaha Creek, including one that has been purchased since the referendum and four others that are owned and will be incorporated into the development of a new park along the creek between the Burwell House and 494.

Barone noted that in 2004, the city entered into a purchase agreement with an option to acquire 30 acres of property owned by Ann Cullen-Smith.

Allendorf asked how the issuances of bonds were progressing. Barone responded that according to projections and detailed summaries managed by staff, the status of all 2001 referendum expenditures are within budget. Gunyou added that while the initial intension of the Park Renewal and Open Space referendum was for a 5-year program, there were no requirements for when bonds must be issued, only requirements for the terms they must be used by once issued.

Barone informed the council that staff is in the process of administering a Living Legacy Program that would provide options for residents, with two or more acres of land, an option to protect the property through conservation easements through a city-sponsored program. She added that the park board is scheduled to review this program later in the evening at their regular meeting.

Schneider asked if the Living Legacy Program would have a cost to the city. Callison noted that the estimated cost would be approximately \$10,000 per property. Natural Resources Division Manager Jo Colleran, provided an update of the initial five properties the city contacted regarding the Living Legacy Program, noting that while negotiations continue, no agreements have been reached to date.

Schneider asked if the previous program which provided neighborhoods an option to receive matching grants to protect open space parcels was still available. Barone responded that it was. Schneider noted that the neighborhood grant program was provided a \$500,000 budget and suggested that an established amount be assigned to the Living Legacy Program. Schneider provided \$100,000 as an example.

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Wagner asked how the lot sizes for targeted projects related to the Living Legacy Program were determined. Colleran explained that initially two acre parcels were identified, however combined properties totaling two or more acres now qualify as well.

**B. Trail Revitalization Planning (Missing Segments, Signage Plan)**

Vetter provided an update on trail rehabilitation efforts, missing link planning and trail signage plans.

With respect to plans for new trail signage, Vetter presented a template of wayfinding signs planned for installation at the five community parks. Gunyou added that the purpose for new signs is to assist those trail users who do not have a strong knowledge of the trail system. The goal is to make the trail system easier to navigate.

Schneider commented that the addition of wayfinding signs is a good addition, and challenged staff to provide a creative sign design that was not necessarily state park-like in appearance. He noted the unique sign plan that was used at Shady Oak Beach during the renovation as an example.

Vetter presented a dog rule sign that staff has developed as an example of creative signage.

In a review of missing links, Vetter noted that staff has started using GIS to capture missing links and mapping their locations. He added that this mapping and identification will be incorporated CIP planning process.

Wagner encouraged staff to work with development projects as a tool to expand the trail system into needed areas of the city. Gunyou agreed, citing the Glen Lake redevelopment project as an example of an opportunity to expand trail access.

Allendorf noted that several years back, identification of planned trail addition locations caused concern to many residents about the impact of planned additions to their property. He questioned if the publication of future plans would cause the same concerns. Schneider agreed, noting that residents in the northwest portion of the city still have concerns related to previous plans.

Callison asked if plans to eliminate missing segments would include on-road additions. Gunyou's response was no, noting that all additional segments would be off-road.

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**C. 2007 Park Board Project Status Report**

Goodyear provided a presentation detailing progress made to date on the 2007 Park Board Strategic Plan. He reviewed 19 projects or actions taken by the board that related to the park board's four established goals.

Goodyear cited an ongoing review of the city's park regulations, most notably the leash law, as a continuing challenge that will require considerable board time to develop recommendations. He noted that several park board members have toured our park system with Police Department Community Service officers to see first hand the problems and challenges that exist related to off-leash dogs in parks.

Goodyear noted the park board's stance on the use of Gray's Bay Marina boat slip fees to cover the cost of LMCD fees charged to the city. He expressed the park board's concerns that requiring the Marina to fund too high of a percentage of the fees will result in operational deficiencies at the Marina. Goodyear noted that the \$55,000 fee charge to the city in 2007 is covered in the amount of \$11,000, or 20% from slip fees. An increase to 40%, or \$22,000 was deemed too high for 2008, resulting in a park board recommendation not to exceed 30%, or \$16,500.

Schneider asked how existing slip rates compare to other facilities on the lake. Johnson replied that the 2007 rate of \$3,524 was on the lower end of private facilities and considerably higher than any municipal slips on the lake. Johnson noted that comparisons to municipal slips are difficult due to the services and amenities provided at Gray's Bay Marina. Johnson noted however that Gray's Bay Marina does not provide all the services that private facilities do such as parking, mechanical needs, etc., making a comparison to private slips difficult as well. Johnson noted that an increase to cover 30% of the LMCD rate will result in slip increases from \$3,524 in 2007 to 3,700 in 2008. He expressed concern that the market will allow for any added increase, noting that most private facilities reported net increases of 1-2% in 2007, compared to a 20% increase to slip rates at Gray's Bay Marina.

Wiersum expressed support for future slip fee increases to be adjusted to what the market will allow.

Lastly, Goodyear indicated that the park board's desire to provide a community cross-county ski trail at the Glen Lake Golf Course is under consideration. Johnson reported that staff is in the process of preparing an agreement that will be forwarded to the council later this month. Johnson provided a description of the basics of the agreement including hours, costs, staffing and maintenance. Wiersum expressed appreciation to the park board for developing the ski trail concept.

**D. Minnehaha Creek Project Update**

Gunyou provided a progress report on the Minnehaha Creek project. He noted that council members Wagner and Wiersum serve on the Steering Committee overseeing the project that includes the City, Three Rivers Park District, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District and Hennepin County. He provided copies of a new brochure titled "Upper Minnehaha Creek Corridor – Implementing a Shared Vision" that defined the scope of potential improvements along the creek through Minnetonka.

Gunyou described the project priorities to plan a "Minnetonka Mills" Park from 494 east to the Burwell House; waterway improvements including canoe access and landings, and parking upgrades and transportation services.

Gefvert noted that he and Komarek attended the joint meeting held on September 17, 2007 and was impressed with the energy of the partners.

Gunyou noted that MCWD is interested in re-locating their offices within the Creek Corridor and is in the process of conducting a space needs study.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.