

1. Roll Call

Park Board members in attendance included, Patty Acomb, Kyle Gallagher, Denny Lambert, Marvin Puspoki and Patrick Robben. Staff members in attendance included Geralyn Barone, Nicole Gorman, Dave Johnson, Mike Pavelka and Perry Vetter.

Chair Robben called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes

Gallagher moved and Acomb seconded a motion to approve the meeting Minutes of September 8, 2010. All voted "Yes." Motion carried.

3. Citizens Wishing to Discuss Items Not on the Agenda

Cole Feagler presented his plan for his Eagle Scout project. He indicated that he was a sophomore at Hopkins High School and a member of Scout Troup 3208. Feagler informed the board that he developed a plan to protect native plantings in Victoria-Evergreen Park while working with Janet Larson of the city's Natural Resources Division.

Feagler indicated that his plan involves protecting existing plant with the use of casings and truck sleeves; and in addition, removing and treating invasive species of plants that threaten the park. He indicated that the benefits of his project will include increased biodiversity, an increase in native plantings and animals, and reduced invasive species of plants within the park. Feagler noted that funding would be provided by the city of Minnetonka and added that he would be responsible for providing the necessary labor for the project.

Robben thanked Feagler on behalf of the park board and requested that he return to provide a report once his project is complete.

4. Business Items

A. Summer Joint Recreation programming report

Ann Davy, Programming Division Manager in Recreation Services, provided a programming report and summary for the summer 2010 season. She provided a summary of programs in 19 different categories that totaled 11,237 registrations generating \$459,534 in program registration fees. Davy noted that larger participation programs include aquatics (511), the department's free summer playground program (1,415), and the youth fall soccer program registrations (617) that are processed in the summer. Davy added that the park board's approved Kid's Corner program was again successful in its second year with a full class of 33 participants. Davy informed the board that the department began

accepting summer program registrations in early March, and explained that programs for all ages took place beginning in April and running through August.

Davy noted that in addition to tracking overall participation, Recreation Services began calculating resident participation in program offerings in 2008 based on a formula developed by a graduate study group from the University of St. Thomas. Davy indicated that the students conducted an analysis of the Recreation Services Department in April of 2008, and in their final report, recommended utilizing community participation as a metric for measuring organizational success. To do so, they created a formula for calculating resident participation in programs. Davy reported that staff has implemented this process for determining community participation and for 2009 reported a 42% participation for Minnetonka and Hopkins residents.

Davy asked the park board for their comments and questions.

Robben asked if the Programming Division knows the ages where the most/least programming opportunities exist. Davy responded that the greatest potential is in the area of senior services, adding that while youth programming numbers are on the decline, most programs remain healthy in participation numbers. Robben asked if the increase in senior programming is a result of more people falling into that category; or seniors being more active. Davy responded that both reasons play a part in the increase.

Acomb commented that it appears kids are less committed to formal programming and looking for less structure and asked if that seemed to hold true for city programs. Davy agreed noting that new programs such as the Rink Rat Hockey program remain strong with children participating who are not looking for the demands of traveling hockey.

Puspoki asked if the collected revenue amount of \$459,000 is a gross or net figure. Davy indicated that the revenue amounts are gross figures, noting that the Recreation Services Department has an overall goal of covering 67% of expenditures with revenues. She noted that all programs provided, with the exception of designated free programs such as outdoor ice rink operations and summer playground programs for children, cover 100% of their costs. She added that for several programs, mainly adult programs, an additional "assessment" fee is added to help support the cost of non-revenue producing programs.

Lambert closed by thanking Davy for her work, noting that she has proven to be a strong asset to the city through the work and organization she provides.

B. Review of the Natural Resources Division's Adopt-A-Spot program

Janet Larson, Natural Resources Specialist in the Public Works Department, reported that the natural resource division has been working with volunteers on habitat restoration projects over the past five years. Larson reported that volunteer projects are prioritized and organized when the need for volunteers is great (i.e., pulling garlic mustard), or when a volunteer comes forth with a particular interest.

Larson indicated that all volunteer events are overseen by city staff, adding that some individuals have expressed their desire to volunteer on their own, outside of the organized volunteer event. She noted that staff sees value in harnessing this volunteer energy and promoting local, natural resource stewardship. Individuals who receive appropriate training are allowed to work independently on specific city projects. Larson provided examples that include Boy Scout, Eagle projects and the Prospect Trail buckthorn and garlic mustard removal.

Larson explained that to improve project efficiency with regard to productivity, record keeping, and communications with volunteers, a new "Adopt-A-Spot" volunteer program began this past year on a trial basis. She reported that volunteers perform specific manual tasks that improve native plant habitat and diversity, while learning about native and invasive plants in the park they appreciate. Larson explained that "Spot" volunteers are given a yellow volunteer ID card with their photo to verify their city approval to any inquiring party.

Larson provided specific examples of work completed as a result of the trial "Adopt-A-Spot" program that included:

- Garlic mustard pulling in high value wildflower and park areas (May and June);
- Manual control of invasive weeds throughout the growing season;
- Control of buckthorn re-growth in high-value restoration areas (July to April);
- Deadhead burdock plants in fall and winter; and
- Prune cherry black knot disease from wild cherries and plums (winter).

Larson explained that benefits and components of the "Adopt-A-Spot" program include cost efficiency, improving the overall park experience, creation of small approachable restoration areas for individuals to improve, and ensuring that volunteers are knowledgeable.

Larson reviewed prototype signage that has been developed by staff for display in the parks and other locations including the Community Center, and Purgatory and Jidana parks.

Larson asked if there were any questions or recommended changes to the program that park board members had.

Acomb voiced support for the program as described, and indicated that the program seems like a great opportunity for youth to get involved in the parks. Larson agreed, noting that Hopkins West Junior High has been actively involved. She noted that the one drawback is that additional supervision is required when youth are involved.

Robben asked if there might be corporate opportunities to become involved. Larson indicated that corporate involvement would be a good fit, noting that the United Health Group is currently involved in Lone Lake Park.

Assistant City Manager Geralyn Barone suggested that groups and individuals be thanked through recognition in the Minnetonka Memo and asked if there were too many people involved in the various park related "adoption" groups to do so. Larson indicated that she felt there were not too many.

Puppoki suggested a possible connection to the Community Commission in an attempt to generate volunteers.

Hearing no further questions, Robben thanked Larson for her work on establishing the program, noting that the program seems to be going great and volunteer hours increasing.

5. Park Board Member Reports

None.

6. Information Items

Barone provided a brief update on joint efforts between the city and Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) to develop a facility on property owned by the city that borders the creek. She indicated that the concept is to provide both MCWD office and administrative space; as well as space for community benefit. Barone indicated that the process is currently in the feasibility phase and that future updates will be provided to the park board.

Natural Resources Division Manager Jo Colleran reported controlled burns to manage invasive vegetation are planned for the Burwell property as well as the new Minnetonka Mills Park. Acomb asked who supervises the controlled burns. Larson indicated that the city contracts with Prairie Restoration for implementation and supervision.

Barone reported that a group including Mayor Schneider, City Manager John Gunyou, Assistant Public Works Director Perry Vetter, and herself, recently toured areas of the city for the possible location of a dog park amenity. She noted

that a determination needs to be made on the status of a dog park prior to the city council's review of park board recommended changes to park regulations.

The park board asked for an update on the status of play equipment replacement at Big Willow Park. Staff indicated that an update would be provided at the November meeting.

7. Upcoming Park Board Agenda Items

Barone noted that the November meeting will include a joint meeting with the city council. The board reviewed their upcoming 6-month schedule and requested the addition of a tour of the Glen Lake Ski Trail at the February 2, 2011 meeting.

8. Adjournment

Lambert moved and Gallagher seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:24 p.m. All voted "Yes." Motion carried.