

1. Roll Call

Park Board members in attendance included Patty Acomb, Tim Goodyear, Denny Lambert, Tom O'Reilly, Marvin Puspoki and Madeline Seveland. Also in attendance Mayor Terry Schneider and staff members Geralyn Barone, Dave Johnson, Perry Vetter and Jo Colleran.

Chair Lambert called the official meeting to order at 7p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes

Goodyear moved and Puspoki seconded a motion to approve the meeting Minutes of August 3, 2011 as submitted. All voted "Yes." Motion carried.

3. Citizens Wishing to Discuss Items Not on the Agenda

Pickleball Request

Tim Temple, a Minnetonka resident attended the meeting to request park board's consideration of adding Pickleball stripping to existing tennis courts in the city. He informed the board that Pickleball is the fastest growing sport among senior citizens in the United States, noting that 130 Minnetonka residents are currently registered in the national organization for this sport.

Temple described the sport, noting that the cities of Eden Prairie and Bloomington have added stripping to the tennis courts in their park systems which allows the sport to be played by residents and others. He added that several Minnetonka residents travel to these two cities to play regularly.

Dave Johnson, Recreation Services Director, noted that he went to the program held at Eden Prairie and witnessed the popularity of the sport first hand. Johnson indicated that staff could look at costs and possible locations and report back to the park board in October.

Gold Award

Johnson introduced Girl Scout Lena Gvozdetska, a Minnetonka resident who presented the results of her recently completed Gold Award project. She described her gardening project which included the use of two 20' x 20' garden plots at the city of Minnetonka's Kelly Park. She instructed area youth residents from Minnetonka Heights techniques on how to grow vegetables which they later harvested for personal use.

Goodyear asked Ms. Gvozdetska to explain the Gold Award, noting that this was the park board's first experience. Gvozdetska responded that the Gold Award is the highest leadership award given through the Girl Scouts of America.

Goodyear asked if there were plans to continue the program in future years. Gvozdetska indicated that plans are to continue the project, adding that she also completed a survey with the youth that was very positive; and that she has assembled all of her project information in a binder for future use.

Acomb asked about the age of the youth involved. Gvozdetska indicated that the participant's ages ranged from 7 to 13. She added that there were typically 10 kids involved in each session.

O'Reilly asked how much time Gvozdetska devoted to the program. Gvozdetska indicated that the commitment was approximately 1.5 hours per week from early June through August. She added that a final pizza party is planned with the youth using vegetables grown in making their pizzas.

The board thanked Gvozdetska for her time and efforts with the project.

Eagle Scout Project

Perry Vetter, Assistant Public Works Director, introduced Boy Scout Nick Pashina who recently completed a park project to earn his Eagle Scout Award. Pashina described his project to the board that included building and installing five park benches in Big Willow Park.

Acomb indicated that she visits Big Willow Park often and has seen the benches. She complimented Pashina on the quality of the benches constructed.

Goodyear asked Pashina how many volunteers and work hours were spent on the project. Pashina responded that approximately 25 people were involved and over 140 work hours volunteered. Goodyear asked if any fundraising was required. Pashina responded that the city of Minnetonka provided the lumber needed to construct the benches; and he solicited donations for the hardware needed, including a benefit sponsored by Davanni's.

The board thanked Pashina for his project and the improvements made to Big Willow Park. Pashina thanked the city, especially Perry Vetter and Bob Hill for their support and guidance.

4. Business Items

A. Consideration of potential off-leash dog park locations

Vetter introduced the item and noted that the designation of an off — leash area for dogs has long been an interest by Minnetonka residents. He explained that historically, Minnetonka has had a very open leash ordinance with many residents not understanding the requirements of having a dog under voice command in non — maintained areas.

Vetter explained that during the review of the park regulations and specifically, the work that has gone into developing a “voice and sight command” requirement within Minnetonka Parks, the need for a designated off – leash area became stronger for those dog owners who did not have the control needed of their dogs to be in voice and sight command areas. He noted that if developed, an off – leash dog park area would work in conjunction with the off – leash voice and sight command areas that have been designated at Purgatory, Big Willow, Jidana and Victoria – Evergreen Parks.

Vetter began a review of potential locations by noting that the park board, at their June 6, 2011 meeting, directed staff to evaluate three potential areas for an off – leash dog area, including Kelly, Big Willow and Crane Lake Park locations. He added that the study of all of these sites has been completed and was included in their meeting packet.

Vetter provided a review of each site with the following highlighted information:

Kelly Park

- City gardens on site would require relocation (possibly Lone Lake nursery site)
- Concerns related to the negative impact on the natural areas of the site and Purgatory Creek adjacent to the site
- Lack of parking is a concern
- \$7,410 estimate to complete improvements needed for this location

Vetter requested questions or comments from the park board members.

Puspoki asked if the cost to develop the Lone Lake nursery would be substantial, Vetter indicated that it would not. He added that essentially the work currently being done on the community garden plots at Kelly Park would be transferred to the Lone Lake site. Vetter indicated that the lack of water and parking at Lone Lake would be a larger concern.

O’Reilly asked if parking at Kelly Park could be benefitted by the proximity of the library and/or Purgatory Park to Kelly Park. Vetter responded that he felt most would use the Library lot and that would be a concern.

Puspoki asked if barking would be a concern, and if so the close proximity to the Library would be a problem. Vetter responded that dogs are involved more in play and there are less problems with barking than one would think.

Hearing no further questions or comments, Vetter continued his review.

Big Willow Park

- Located in far NW portion of the park off of Plymouth Road and the railway tracks to the north

- Major concerns are parking and access to the site
- Most affordable proposal with an estimated cost of \$5,408.50
- Adequate sized area
- Trail access to the site is 800'

Vetter requested questions or comments from the park board members.

Lambert mentioned the potential benefit of this location is the proposed joint facility with the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) may be developed south of the creek. He noted that both parking and access could be improved. Vetter noted that while the trail access would be convenient, parking would still be a challenge due to the spaces that would be required for operation of the building and special events that would be held there.

Crane Lake

- Two locations identified as Site A (SW portion of property) and Site B (NE portion).
- Most expensive alternatives with the cost for Site A estimated at \$12,850; Site B at \$15,100.
- Adequate size; two parcels could be utilized for different sized dogs.
- Cost higher due to fencing needs.
- Parking challenges; however the potential for cooperative agreements parking exists with area businesses.
- Buckthorn and other natural resource management techniques would be needed.
- Staff questions if a better need for the site exists or may be developed.

Vetter included in his presentation a cost comparison slide for park related amenities. The data showed how cost effective the development of an off – leash area is when compared to other park related amenities such as play equipment, hockey rinks, athletic fields and tennis courts

Vetter concluded by indicating that staff was recommending the Crane Lake location be included in the CIP for construction at a later date although, the previously noted concern of an unknown need for the property still exists and resident demand for a dog park has been reduced over the past several months.

Lambert asked how the staff knows the demand has been reduced. Vetter responded that his contact with those who were initially involved in the process has diminished.

Lambert asked Vetter to provide some historical perspective as to why the initial Lone Lake Park location was eliminated. Vetter indicated that it was due to both neighborhood opposition and the close proximity to an existing off – leash park in Bryant Lake Park managed by Three Rivers Park District. Goodyear concurred with Vetter's summary.

Goodyear indicated that he agreed with the staff recommendation and reasoning outlined by Vetter.

Lambert asked Mayor Terry Schneider for his perspective on the options outlined by Vetter. The Mayor indicated that the need for a dog park is not a pressing priority for the city council; however it is his thought that a community of 50,000 residents should be able to offer an amenity like this to its residents without relying on neighboring communities to do so. He added that he agreed with the Crane Lake recommendation and liked the options for larger and smaller dogs in the two areas proposed. The mayor indicated that he favored moving ahead sooner rather than later, noting that if another use is identified at a later date the park could be reconsidered. He felt that if an alternative use had not yet been developed, the city should not sit and wait for one to develop. He closed by noting that the park would be located on the northern edge of the city opposite Bryant Lake Park.

Lambert asked the Mayor if he would be open to the park board opening up Lone Lake as a possibility. The Mayor indicated he would if a cooperative arrangement could be made with Three Rivers Park District to add a facility that compliments the one currently available and offers different amenities.

Seveland asked if a community survey had ever been done to determine resident use of an off – leash area. Vetter indicated that in 2008, 44% of residents indicated that they would use the facility on a weekly basis.

Hearing no further comments or suggestions, the park board directed staff to include funding in the 2013 – 2017 CIP for the development of an off – leash area on the Crane Lake sites (A & B) identified by staff.

Goodyear suggested that the park board keep the option of developing a smaller area in Purgatory Park as a possibility at a later time. The board concurred.

Seveland recommended that funding for additional native shrubs be included for the Crane Lake site.

5. Park Board Member Reports

Jo Collieran, Natural Resources Manager, reported on the upcoming Clean Water Summit on September 8, 2011 sponsored by the University of Minnesota.

Geralyn Barone, Assistant City Manager, provided an update on the selection process for an architectural consultant for the proposed joint City – MCWD facility. She noted that 26 firms had submitted letters of interest and four have been selected for interviews for schematic design phase of the project.

6. Information Items

No additional items were reviewed outside of the information included in the meeting packet.

7. Upcoming Park Board Agenda Items

The board reviewed the upcoming 6 – month meeting schedule and made no changes.

8. Adjournment

Lambert adjourned the meeting at 8:37p.m.