

1. Roll Call

Park Board members in attendance included Patty Acomb, Tim Goodyear, Tom O'Reilly, and Elise Raarup. Staff members in attendance included Geralyn Barone, Jo Colleran, Dave Jonson and Janet Larson.

Vice Chair Patty Acomb called the meeting to order at 7p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes

Goodyear moved and O'Reilly seconded a motion to approve the meeting Minutes of September 7, 2011 as submitted. All voted "Yes." Motion carried.

3. Citizens Wishing to Discuss Items Not on the Agenda

None

4. Business Items

A. Receive Natural Resources Division Updates

Jo Colleran and Janet Larson of the Public Works Natural Resources Division were in attendance to provide a presentation and year to date accomplishments in the areas of restoration stewardship, volunteerism, water quality improvements, and conservation monitoring.

Colleran noted that the initial stewardship program began with a study completed in 1996, and was initiated from 1997 to 2003. Colleran went on to explain that following development of the 2001 POST plan and 2004 Minnesota Land Cover Classification and Natural Resources Inventory (MLCCS), a restoration plan was developed that continues today and is reviewed by the park board periodically.

Colleran explained the restoration criteria and project types, and noted that restoration efforts are currently taking place in 13 parks and over 300 managed acres. Colleran concluded by reviewing all projects and detailing the challenge involved in restoration including invasive species seed banks in the soil, weeds, animal damage and fluctuating volunteer interest.

Larson provided a presentation on volunteer efforts that included random individuals, those involved in the "Adopt-A-Spot" program, Eagle Scouts and various groups and organizations. She noted that the use of volunteers benefits the city because residents value natural resources (according to the city's resident survey), people connect to parks, and volunteers are generally enthusiastic and want to serve. Larson noted that volunteer hours peaked in 2010 with over 1,500 hours donated; an estimated annual savings of \$30,000 to the city. She provided a detailed review of the projects completed.

Larson explained that there are challenges related to the use of volunteers including inconsistent turnout, intensive amount of time required for training, monitoring, tracking, and thank you letters.

Larson reviewed four Adopt-A-Spot projects currently underway in 2011; and reviewed the volunteer groups who have participated including Hopkins High School, Legion Baseball, United Health Group, and church groups. She added that three Eagle Scout projects were completed as well.

Colleran reviewed water quality improvement projects completed, including the Civic Center campus, Gray's Bay Marina, Lone Lake Park and the Williston Center. She provided a review of rain gardens and detailed the reasons they are important including pre-treating storm water prior to discharge, Federal, State and local watershed requirements, to protect and enhance our water quality, to minimize the number of degraded low quality waters, and finally to limit the number of Minnetonka waters that are impaired. She provided a review of storm water enhancements and how they are impacted by impervious surfaces.

Colleran closed by providing a review of the city's Conservation Easement Monitoring Program. She noted that conservation easements are utilized for the following reasons:

1. To protect and enhance remaining natural resources while balancing growth
2. To maintain the existing character and integrity of our neighborhoods, and:
3. To minimize the impact of development

Colleran explained that the use of conservation easements is consistent with the city council's 2011 strategic profile as it relates to growth and development; and closed with a review of the goals for monitoring the program.

The board thanked both Colleran and Larson for their excellent work to protect and enhance our natural resources.

5. Park Board Member Reports

O'Reilly reported he was involved in a 3-wheel bike-ride fundraiser to benefit Parkinson's disease. He recognized the physical benefits associated with the use of 3-wheel bikes and an increased interest in the bikes by users with Parkinson's disease. He inquired if there might opportunities for the bikes to be stored at park locations and available for use by those interested. O'Reilly indicated that the bikes would be donated by others. Staff suggested contacting Three River's Park District due to the availability of facilities and staff within many of their parks.

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

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