

PARKS & RECREATION  
ADVISORY BOARD  
MEETING NOTES – UNOFFICIAL MEETING

*January 21, 2020 5:30 pm  
City Hall Council Chambers  
221 East Clark Street*

**Members Present:**

Jodi Hartman  
Steve Ball, Acting Chair  
Rich Yost  
Jason Howland (Ex-officio)

**Members Absent:**

Jennifer Vogt-Erickson  
Wah Paw

**Staff in Attendance:**

Bob Furland, Recreation Manager  
Joe Grossman, Superintendent of Parks  
Jerry Gabrielatos, Assistant City Manager  
Afton Wacholz, Recreation Administrative Assistant

**Others in Attendance:**

**Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Acting Chair Steve Ball. The meeting was declared an unofficial meeting due to no quorum.

**Approval of the Minutes:**

**Approval of Agenda:**

**Public Items:**

**Action/Discussion Items:**

The present board members agreed to move the vote to elect a new chairperson to the February meeting due to no quorum and the addition of two new board members to replace Anne Sternhagen and Mark Calderon.

**Old Business:**

**Recreation:** Report given by Bob Furland as follows;

- Women's and Co-Ed winter adult volleyball has started their season. The 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Volleyball Tournament will be held on February 29<sup>th</sup>.
- Outdoor Rinks and Warming Houses have been open and are going well.
- The spring flyer will be finalized in the next two week and will be going out mid-February.
- February 21<sup>st</sup> is the new rescheduled date for the Outdoor Rock On Ice event from 6-8pm at Hayek Park. DJ, hot chocolate, snacks and games for all!
- Parks and Rec will participate in the Community Connect event on January 25<sup>th</sup> at First Lutheran Church.

- Jenny will be attending a Park Naturalist Conference January 27-31. This will be an additional resource for the recent partnership with the State Park. Collaborative programming is planned for the future: Candlelight Walk February, 15, 2020, day trips to State Park for Play Parks, etc.
- 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Community Health and Wellness Fair was a success. Over 25 vendors and roughly 80-100 attendees. Staff will be looking to evaluate the time and location in hopes to increase attendance next year.
- Jerry Gabrielatos discussed the future of Esports in Albert Lea. The library will be trying out a gaming event with Nintendo Switches. There are possibilities of hosting tournaments, game nights, etc.
- Parks and Recreation will begin looking at operating as a “hub” for community events, youth sports, etc. This will help new community members go to one location to find out about community offerings and ease the difficulties or searching in many locations.

**Parks:** Report given by Joe Grossman as follows;

- Staff are staying busy with outdoor skating rinks and snow removal.
- Christmas decorations are starting to come down.
- Continued work on tree/brush removal.
- There are two laborer positions (mechanics) that need to be filled.
- The Snyder Field project has been narrowed down from 12 possible sites to 3. Further discussion will take place at the upcoming Council Retreat. Staff will bring further discussion back to the Advisory Board.
- Downtown banners will be replaced with new Blue Zone and Main Street designation. Blue Zone will be displayed south of Main St and Main Street will be displayed from Main St to Fountain St. There is discussion that new banners will be put along Bridge St south of Hammer Road.
- Staff presented the board with a proposal to move the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meetings to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month to allow for City Engineer and Public Works Director to attend (conflict with Airport Board meeting on the same night) as well as arena and recreation staff due to higher volume of work events on Tuesdays. This will be put on the agenda as an action item for the February meeting.

**City Arena:** Report given by Bob Furland as follows;

- Albert Lea Hockey Day will be Saturday January 25<sup>th</sup>. Big day for the arena!
- The ADA new front doors were installed and in full operation now. We have had several positive comments already, even from the youth!
- Lon is working on spring and summer scheduling of ice and facility rentals. Staff is brainstorming on creative ways to draw in spectators through social media, mascot, etc.
- The arena now has Live Barn, which is a live streaming of both sheets of ice. The community is able to purchase a subscription to view city arena activities from anywhere on their devices. The City Arena will earn revenue off of purchased subscriptions.

**Senior Center:** Report given by Jerry Gabrielatos as follows;

- Discussion has begun with the Senior Center Board to look at the future of the Senior Center due the upcoming lease agreement coming up for renewal. Two options were discussed: Finding a new location to house the Senior Center or look to do a full rebranding (i.e. Skyline Social Club – to attract younger community members).

**Board Member Items:**

- Jason Howland –
  - Community member reached out to discuss the possibility of opening up Edgewater Park during the winter to allow for better/easier access to the lake for

ice fishing. There was discussion that there is parking and access by the southeast entrance to the park by the fishing pier as well as the Hwy 13 boat landing. Joe Grossman discussed the issues for park access during the winter would be the increased need for additional snow removal as well as the possibility of vandalism. Community member was directed to contact the Parks and Recreation office to request to be put on the board agenda to present at a meeting.

- Rich Yost –
  - Discussed the access that Parks and Recreation could have to school district gym facilities to hold open gyms on the weekends. Gym space is something that Parks and Recreation does not have as a city facility. Rich stated that programs such as baseball, softball and others could benefit from open gyms on weekends as there is very limited space available during the week.

**Adjournment:**

Respectfully submitted,

---

Afton Wacholz  
Acting Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Secretary

Approved:

---

Park & Recreation Advisory Board Chairman