

PARKS & RECREATION
ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

*November 20, 2018 5:30 pm
City Hall Council Chambers
221 East Clark Street*

Members Present:

Vern Rasmussen, Sr.-Chair
Mark Calderon- Vice Chair
Anne Sternhagen
Brian Hensley
Dan Borland
Jason Howland (Ex-officio)

Members Absent:

Tristian Pectorious
Jennifer Vogt-Erickson

Staff in Attendance:

Jerry Gabrielatos, Assistant City Manager
Phil Wacholz, Assistant Director of Public Works
Joe Grossman, Parks Superintendent
Bob Furland, Recreation Manager
Jennifer Nelson, Recreation Administrative Assistant

Others in Attendance:

Gary Hagen, 501 Albert Lea St

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chairman Vern Rasmussen, Sr.

Approval of Agenda:

Mark Calderon made a motion to approve the agenda for this evenings meeting and Brian Hensley seconded the motion. The agenda was approved on a 5-0 voice vote.

Approval of Minutes:

Dan Borland made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 16, 2018 meeting and Anne Sternhagen seconded the motion. The minutes were approved on a 5-0 voice vote.

Public Items:

Gary Hagen asked Vern Rasmussen, Sr. how much has been raised and is currently in the Christmas lights fund. Rasmussen last heard the group had raised funds into the mid \$30,000 range. The biggest hold up has been the City installing the posts on the corners. Grossman and Wacholz advised the foundation is in and the posts are ready to be installed although the posts have not arrived. Howland advised they moved the grand lighting ceremony from November 24 to December 1st. Grossman advised they had been waiting on banners as well which just arrived today.

Action/Discussion Items:

Consider canceling the December 18th board meeting as this is a busy time during the holiday season for people and families. Anne Sternhagen, Mark Calderon and Jason Howland advised they would not be able to attend the December meeting.

Mark Calderon made a motion to cancel the December 18, 2018 Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meeting and Anne Sternhagen seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a 5-0 voice vote.

Old Business: None

Report given by Bob Furland as follows;

Senior Center:

- A trip is planned November 27th to the DayTrippers Dinner Theatre in Bloomington to see the musical "Aint Retirement Grand".
- December 7th is the Annual Meeting and Christmas Party.
- A December 19th casino trip to Jackpot Junction is planned.

Report given by Joe Grossman as follows;

Parks:

- Wrapping up fall clean-up, cleaning up picnic tables, fall leaf clean-up is just about done
- Beach shelter probably won't be completed until Spring
- Working on setting up holiday decorations
- Working on shutting down buildings and facilities for the winter months

Report given by Phil Wacholz on Snyder Field:

The lease agreement for Snyder Field is between the City and MNSCU (Minnesota State Colleges and Universities) Wacholz will refer to this as "Riverland". The City has been able to use the land for a baseball facility, this has been the standing order for the past 30-40 years. Riverland is currently in the middle of a facilities plan which includes the Albert Lea, Owatonna and Austin Campuses. With the old agreement with the City expiring a couple of years ago they would like to get an interim lease in place now. This one to two year interim lease would include a written agreement on improvements the city would like to make.

The major Improvements may include the following;

- Signage on the corner, could be a shared sign with Riverland and Snyder Field possibly electronic
- Drainage to improve playing surfaces of the fields
- Parking lot improvements
- Lighting (current lighting is 30 years old)
- Pavilion, Concessions and Restrooms (\$250,000- \$400,000)
- Playpark equipment
- Covered dug outs

Wacholz also suggested the other option would be to wipe the slate clean and construct a marquee facility at new location. Although this would leave the city without ball fields for over one year and have a much larger price tag. The Riverland property has served the needs of the community.

The proposed CIP (Capital Improvement Plan) for 2019 will go in front of the council in December with a staged project plan for Snyder Field including the above items. The first step would be to get the interim plan lease in place and hopefully in a year or two get a longer agreement in place before moving forward with any major improvements. The current agreement requires any improvements need to be approved by the state.

Rasmussen agrees improvements are drastically needed and recalled conversations with the previous Parks and Recreation Director. Rasmussen advised the group had some money to do some things and he was turned flat down at the time. Rasmussen has received comments from visitors from other communities how bad the conditions are especially the restrooms and a visiting youth baseball coach commented to him he didn't even want to bring his kids back to this field. Wacholz advised back in 2008

improvements were very close to being executed including shifting and adding fields and then the economic climate took a down turn and these improvements were left by the way side.

Rasmussen asked who would be using these facilities, Wacholz advised the facility would continue to serve the needs of adult and youth softball and youth baseball.

Howland inquired about the lease and use of the land, Wacholz advised the city leases the land from Riverland for possibly one dollar a year or a very minimal cost.

Riverland has discussed some initiatives they would like to bring to Albert Lea that may include housing, future academic buildings and athletic fields. This is an exciting time and they have great ambitions, just not sure what will come to fruition that would require use of the land in question.

Hensley asked if we would have an alternative location to start from scratch that would meet the size requirement. What happens if the City puts several dollars into the Riverland location and the agreement is only good for ten years. Wacholz advised the agreement is very much written in favor of the state as they own the land. Wacholz advised Riverland has been a very good community partner, the city needs to weigh the cost risk of making these improvements.

Rasmussen inquired if Park and Rec will be using any of the facilities being upgraded by the high school.

Wacholz advised the city staff met with the school district last month and discussed use of city athletic fields during the interim. Wacholz advised they will be fine for spring sports although after softball season the high school fields will be wiped out as well as the soccer and football practice fields. The high school will use Troy Hammer, Memorial and Lakeview Parks for soccer, Southwest and Brookside for football and possibly the Grizzly field (old waste water treatment plant location). The stadium is supposed to be completed by the time the football season starts, although this will depend on construction and the weather. The city is planning on accommodating high school fall 2019 and spring 2020 sports.

A new aerator has been installed in Edgewater Bay and after some fine tuning should be a very efficient system.

Report given by Bob Furland as follows;

City Arena:

- Girls high school hockey has had two home games and boys high school hockey starts Thursday.
- The arena hosted an A Bantam tournament this last weekend (November 17-18th).
- Waldorf played two games this last weekend.
- Arena counts, 11/16 (Fri.) 889, 11/17 (Sat.) 1,748, and 11/18 (Sun.) 1,240 = 3,877 total people through the doors last weekend.
- Upcoming tournaments include B Bantam Dec. 7th weekend and Dec. 14th will be a 16 team PeeWee tournament which is one of the largest of the year.
- The arena attendance is up 13,972 people went through the doors in October and 12,302 so far in November.

Rasmussen believes people don't realize all the games and events held at the arena. He believes we should reach out more to the public to let them know of all the events occurring at the arena such as the Waldorf hockey games. Furland advised the Waldorf game schedule could be added to the city calendar. Rasmussen advised publishing the arena schedule in the paper, possibly in the sports section, may reach a demographic that is not on social media. Furland advised Waldorf's hockey schedule is posted on their website and KATE radio has been willing to air the information if coaches call in to advertise the games.

Recreation:

- Winter flyers have been distributed.
- There was a free movie at the Marion Ross Performing Arts Center Sunday, 30 people attended.
- Will be hiring warming house attendance in mid December and hoping to open the end of December.
- Fall Volleyball had 13 teams, Winter Volleyball sign-ups are coming up.
- Working on evaluating summer programs including costs, data and participation.
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Board Member Items:

Bob Furland advised new carpet is being installed at the Marion Ross Performing Arts Center and encouraged them to stop in and take a look.

Dan Borland inquired if the Waldorf hockey team televised their games on the internet. Furland advised they do for some of the games.

Brian Hensley advised Rich Yost expressed interest in becoming a board member. Hensley encouraged him to contact the city offices to find out how the appointment process works.

Jason Howland inquired on the attendance of board member Tristian Pestorious, Jerry Gabrielatos advised he would reach out to her.

Adjournment: Brian Hensley made a motion to adjourn the Park Board meeting at 6:01pm, and Dan Borland seconded the motion. Adjournment was approved on a 5-0 voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Nelson
Acting Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Secretary

Approved:

Vern Rasmussen Sr.
Park & Recreation Advisory Board Vice Chairman