

PARKS & RECREATION
ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

*February 18, 2020 5:30 pm
City Hall Council Chambers
221 East Clark Street*

Members Present:

Steve Ball, Chair (left at 6:03pm)
Jodi Hartman
Jennifer Vogt-Erickson (arrived at 5:55pm)
Cody Brownlee
Whitney Sauer
Jason Howland (Ex-officio)

Members Absent:

Rich Yost
Wah Paw

Staff in Attendance:

Jerry Gabrielatos, Assistant City Manager
Steve Jahnke, Director of Public Works and City Engineer
Philip Wacholz, Assistant Director of Public Works
Afton Wacholz, Recreation Administrative Assistant

Others in Attendance:

Gary Hagen

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 p.m. by Chairman Steve Ball.

Approval of the Minutes:

Due to no quorum, there were no official minutes from the January 21, 2020 meeting.

Approval of Agenda:

Jodi Hartman made the motion to approve the agenda for tonight's meeting and Whitney Sauer seconded the motion. Motion approved. Jennifer Vogt-Erickson was absent for the vote.

Public Items:

No public items shared.

Action/Discussion Items:

Steve Ball made a motion to nominate himself as the new chair of the Advisory Board. Cody Brownlee seconded the motion. Voice vote passed unanimously. Jennifer Vogt-Erickson was absent for the vote. Motion passed.

Discussion was continued regarding moving the Advisory Board meetings to the third Monday of the month to accommodate the schedules of the board and city staff. There was also discussion to move the start time from 5:30pm to 5:45pm to ensure members are in attendance for the start of the meeting.

Jodi Hartman made a motion to move the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meetings to the third Monday of the month at 5:45pm. Whitney Sauer seconded the motion. Voice vote passed unanimously. Jennifer Vogt-Erickson was absent for the vote. Motion passed.

Afton Wacholz from the Albert Lea Youth Softball Association spoke on behalf of the Youth Baseball and Softball programs regarding a proposal to ask for support in a fundraiser to benefit the Snyder Field

Improvement Project. The scope of the project includes soliciting sponsorships in the form of monetary donations for ads to be placed on outfield fences at each of the five fields at Snyder Complex. Local businesses would also have the opportunity to sponsor a field (naming rights) for a larger donation. The board discussion was positive and supportive. Steve Jahnke suggested that the fundraising be kept to a short-term commitment at this time due to the unknown timeline of the current Snyder Field Project status and what the future fundraising efforts will be. Jason Howland stated his support of these groups putting forth the commitment to being a part of the efforts to raise funds for this project. All money raised would go toward the project and not the individual youth programs general budget needs. No formal action was taken on this subject by the board.

Old Business:

No old business was reviewed at this time.

Recreation: Report given by Jerry Gabrielatos/Afton Wacholz as follows;

- Jerry discussed the role board members have for the Parks and Recreation. We want to think bigger, better, long-term, all-inclusive ideas to move Recreation to the next level. Feedback and recommendations for ideas is what we need and welcome. The role of board members is not just to sit at meetings. We promote bigger roles.
- The library will be holding a Nintendo Switch night to kick off a fun new activity to target a specific demographic in gamers.
- Recreation is in a transition as we moved from winter to spring/summer. Spring flyer is now out to the schools. Outdoor Rock on Ice is this Friday.
- Arena activity is slowing down. High school is wrapping up their season as we host a boys hockey section game coming up.

Parks: Report given by Phil Wacholz as follows;

- Snow removal and outdoor rinks continue to be priority for staff. The outdoor rinks are nearing the end of the season as the intense sun is causing the ice to deteriorate fast.
- There has been some additional funds raised by the Holiday Decorating Committee. There are plans to put icicle lights on Fountain Lake Gazebo as well as garland. The plan is to leave the lights up year round but the garland will be put up and taken down seasonally.
- Snyder Field Project continues to move forward. Presentation was made to the council and a follow-up presentation will be made at the upcoming council work session. Discussion still remains on whether the project will involve renovation of the current site or a complete rebuild at the current site or an off-site location.
- The Parks department is currently considering the fate of the Bancroft Bay outlook structure. The structure is old and in poor shape but still serves a purpose. The integrity is questionable but has been deemed safe for right now but is leading city staff to discuss whether to fix, remove or build new. Staff has asked the board to consider these options and to visit the site if they are able to provide feedback at the next board meeting.

City Arena: Report given with Recreation update.

Senior Center: No report available.

Board Member Items:

- Jason Howland –
 - Discussed looking into an opportunity for high school students to participate in an acting class put on by George Favell. George has recently moved to Albert Lea and is looking forward to playing a role in the opportunities we have in theater.
- Jennifer Vogt-Erickson –
 - Jennifer opened discussion about creating a “destination place” such as an indoor playground for not only our community members but a place that would attract

surrounding community members to come. This would help benefit the economic impact of visitors “dropping money” locally.

Adjournment: Jennifer Vogt-Erickson made a motion to adjourn the Park Board meeting at 6:42pm, and Cody Brownlee seconded the motion. Adjournment was unanimously approved. Steve Ball was absent for vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Afton Wacholz
Acting Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Secretary

Approved:

Steve Ball
Park & Recreation Advisory Board Chairman