

PARKS & RECREATION
ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

*July 18th, 2017 5:30 pm
Pioneer Park Pavilion
100 Hawthorne St.*

Members Present:

Anne Sterhagen
Mark Calderon
Dan Borland
Chris Utz, Chairman
Jane Grund
Vern Rasmussen, Sr.
Brian Hensley
Jason Howland (Ex-officio)

Members Absent:

Staff in Attendance:

Jerry Gabrielatos, Assistant City Manager
Bob Furland, Recreation Manager
Joe Grossman, Parks Interim Director
Jennifer Nelson, Office Assistant

Others in Attendance:

Gary Hagen, 501 Albert Lea St., Albert Lea
Laura Davis, 210 3rd Ave S
Rene Martinez, 102 4th Ave N

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:36 p.m. by Chairman Chris Utz.

Approval of Agenda:

The Agenda was approved on a 7-0 voice vote.

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes from May 16, 2017 meeting were approved on a 7-0 voice vote.

Action/Discussion Items:

Removal of Hayek Park Play Equipment

Rene Martinez and Laura Davis are unhappy the play equipment was removed and disappointed no notice was given to the neighborhood this was occurring. Both families live in close proximity to the playground and their children played at this park often. Her children mill around with nowhere to go now.

Joe Grossman advised the equipment was removed because this area is not safe as baseballs have been hit into the playground area. Grossman advised sometimes balls even hit the nearby houses. Grossman stated some of the play equipment no longer passed inspection. The equipment was outdated and they could no longer find parts to make repairs.

Davis was surprised to hear this equipment was deemed unsafe, as this is the perfect playground especially with low to the ground features perfect for smaller children. Davis questioned if any investigation was done to see if the park could be protected by installing a net or fencing. Grossman

advised netting or a fence may be possible although would be expensive. The decision to remove the equipment was based on safety and expense. The next closest park would be Morin Park or Lakeview Park.

Davis advised this was a very busy park and she thought for sure the equipment would be replaced. She inquired if it would do any good to start a petition to receive support from the neighborhood for replacement equipment.

Chris Utz advised Davis other groups have worked to organize and fundraise for projects like this one. Utz gave examples of projects such as the splash pad, basketball court on Park Avenue and the dog park at Brookside. Service groups have partnered with community groups to raise money for projects. Utz explained once some money is raised she could approach the Parks and Recreation Board and City Council with a proposal. This would be her best option.

Joe Grossman advised the decision is not up to staff, this would be up to the city council.

Vern Rasmussen advised Tiger Hills also fundraised for their neighborhood park.

Jason Howland advised Davis the City Council will support the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board recommendations. Howland also advised fundraising for this project could be a viable option.

Old Business: None

Update Items:

Bob Furland updated the board on proposed CIP projects; (has not gone to council for approval)

- New ADA doors at the arena, install electric doors.
- Replacing the piping at the arena, cooling system \$35,000
- Concrete pad for dehumidifier, \$20,000
- Arena Roofs are 20 years old, \$450,000
- Replacement of bleacher do to new codes, 2nd half of Nystrom arena and section of Colstrup arena.
- Pool roof needs to be done soon, \$40,000
- Bathhouse boiler, \$14,000
- Feature pool filters, \$30,000
- Pool vacuum,
- 147 N Broadway, MRPAC, Curtains, \$10,000
- 147 N Broadway, Flat Roof, \$70,000
- Recreation Software, \$13,000
- Vehicle replacement of CRV eventually
- Senior Center commercial dishwasher replacement

Discussion:

Brian Hensley inquired how to get items on this list, especially for groups who come forward with proposals or requests. Such as park equipment, pavilions, boat dock marinas as examples. How to get items on a list and brought before the board to be recommended to the council. Bob Furland has worked with user groups and gave a recent example of working with the local figure skating club to get a new sound system. The club will assist with some of the costs. Furland advised every year he updates his list then goes through the budgeting process. Budgets are completed in the summer. Furland keeps a running list of updates needed.

Joe Grossman advised he would review his budget at the next meeting as he has a separate budget. Hensley inquired on strategic planning and asked how it's decided if a piece of land is to be purchased to be used as a park. The example of the Lake Chapeau Subdivision was given that some residents have

requested a park. Sternhagen also brought up that it would be nice to have a park close to the City Arena for kids to play during events and games being held at the arena. Grossman advised the council has to prioritize and take into consideration the maintenance of existing parks. Rasmussen advised these groups could bring a proposal to the board or speak to board members individually.

Senior Center: Business as usual.

Parks: Regular maintenance such as mowing and painting and working on the budget and preparing for the 4th of July celebrations. Working on the new maintenance building at Hayek Park. New sign was installed at Dress Island, donated by George Dress with the design of an old park sign. Utz had received a call regarding filling the sandboxes. Grossman returned a phone call regarding the Oakwood Park sandbox and believes the request has been taken care of.

Recreation: A baseball tournament was held at Snyder Field this last weekend and was well attended. The summer carnival was held Wednesday July 12th and was attended by over 400 people. H2Whoa! event had over 100 people. Thursdays on the Fountain had approximately 380 people attend, this has been well attended weekly event and is planned to continue next year. Furland also advised he will be working on new programming for the playparks as attendance has not been as high as anticipated. The pool attendance has been good so far this summer. Furland advised the Parks & Recreation Department niche may be special events and more structured programming at the playparks next year.

Arena: Chapel Con is coming up July 22nd –July 23rd, this event will use both arenas. Furland advised the A/C project has been completed. New dasher boards have been delivered and installation has begun. AKC Dog show is coming up at the end of August.

Work Plan Items: Furland advised the Recreation Department has been keeping track of attendance to see what types of programming is working and what needs to be adjusted. Gabrielatos asked the board if they know of any community members who use the Parks & Recreation Department facilities or programs to let him know. He would like to invite them to participate in a group discussion and would be interested in any feedback for future programming ideas. Gabrielatos used the City of Redwing as an example as they have a website that functions well all and all departments within the city are able to use. This would take collaboration with all departments and will continue to be a work in progress.

Nelson advised community picnics are coming up at the end of August and please let us know if you would like to volunteer to assist with any of these picnics. Picnics are from 5:30-7:30pm

August 21st- Shoreland

August 22nd-Wedgewood

August 23rd-Frank Hall

Board Member Items:

Dan Borland brought up the idea of using the former Farmland Site to be used as an event area or for festivals such as the Big Island Rendezvous.

Utz advised he received several complaints regarding the filter being broken at the pool that there was not enough notice the big pool was down. Utz suggested next time to put out a big sign before people pay the entry fee to make them aware of the closure.

Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 6:32 pm on a 7-0 voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Nelson
Acting Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Secretary

Approved:

Chris Utz
Park & Recreation Advisory Board Chairman