

**CITY OF ISANTI
PARKS, RECREATION, AND CULTURE BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
June 23, 2015**

1. Meeting Opening.

A. Call to Order.

Zdon called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

B. Pledge of Allegiance.

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Roll Call.

Members Present: Jennifer Garvey, Mayor Wimmer, Lynn True and Aaron Zdon.

Members Absent: Maddie Anderson (gave prior notice) and Jamie Bergwick (gave prior notice)

Staff Present: Josi Wood, Community Events Manager and Parks Coordinator.

D. Agenda Modifications.

Zdon asked if there were any.

Wimmer stated he would like to add to the agenda discussion and possible recommendation from the Park Board on the possible purchase of a City lot next to the 38-acre parcel [Owner: Jason Lee, PID161110010].

Zdon stated this would be 7a. to discuss the lot next to the 38-acre parcel.

Garvey stated she would like to update the Board on the Aquatics Task Force in Cambridge.

Zdon stated 7b. would be Aquatics Task Force.

Motion to approve the agenda by Wimmer. Second by True. Vote was unanimously approved.

2. Approval of Minutes from May 26, 2015 Park, Recreation and Culture Board Meeting.

Motion by Wimmer. Second by True. Vote was unanimously approved.

3. Public Hearing

None.

4. Trees in Bluebird Park

Wood stated during the Annual Park Tour it was stated that there were a lot of trees missing from the Park. Wood stated she has created a map layout of where the trees currently stand in dark green and where the trees were in the original park plan in light green. Wood stated some trees had not been planted which were outlined in the original plan while others were broken or died. Wood stated she wanted to bring this up to the Board for discussion or recommendation on how to proceed with planting new trees in the Park. Wood stated she did have some recommendations such as larger trees versus smaller which do come at a higher cost but have overall more benefits such as more apt to survive. Wood asked if trees are something we want to phase in half a dozen or so per year going forward.

Wimmer stated that he thought we were going to use the trees from the DNR to put in there.

Wood asked if we wanted to wait for those to grow up. There are some Ash trees that would be ready to go, but they would take special treatment applications which we would need someone in PW to get licensed. If we want to use the donated trees from the Isanti County SWCD, it would take at least five years for them to be ready.

Wimmer stated we should not use the Ash trees. Wimmer asked how many trees did we plant?

Wood stated there were 15 Red Maple and 15 Birch. [Wood mis-spoke during the meeting. There are 25 of each species].

Wimmer stated for those who were not on the Board previously, we had a plan to put in 10-15 trees per year. We had a couple years of that and then had some individuals who snapped a lot in half. I agree that we would want some thicker ones. Wimmer stated it would be nice to have some trees going in every year even if those cost a little bit more.

Garvey mentioned that her City [Minnetonka] does a tree sale yearly and it helps residents get trees at a very affordable price. She was unable to remember what company they came from at this time.

There was discussion on some possible places for staff to check into as to where to purchase trees at a discount.

Garvey stated that we should have a variety of trees due to the unknown bug that will potentially infect.

Wimmer stated that it is in our ordinance to diversify the tree species.

Garvey stated she liked the idea staff had to potentially go with a University student to help create a tree plan.

Wimmer stated yes, we want to do a tree plan next year and want the best deal on the biggest trees.

Zdon stated let's start small and we can build.

Wood asked if we wanted it to be a specific number such as half dozen or a dozen trees.

Wimmer stated it depended on cost. Zdon agreed.

Garvey stated the other thing she wanted to mention was the amount of trees. The layout looked like there were a lot of trees. Garvey stated as we begin to plant trees, that they be placed in areas where shade is needed.

Wimmer stated that the original plan was to have tree lined walk-ways.

Wood stated we do not need to follow this exactly. We could look at a different plan before we begin to plant.

There was some further discussion on where trees should be planted.

Motion by Wimmer to move forward with a tree plan and to contact a college student or arborist to assist in creating the plan. Second by True. Motion was unanimously approved.

5. Future of the Hockey Rink and Skate Park

Wood stated it has been brought up many times about the dasher boards in need of replacing at the hockey rink. Also, some stated during the Annual Park Tour that they would like to see Skate Park be larger. Wood stated Mayor Wimmer brought up a good point of discussion for the Board to consider; potentially having a second skate park. A potential area could be the hockey rink. Wood stated it may be more feasible to do one thing well versus two half way. Wood stated she would like discussion on whether we should put money into the hockey rink or consider removing it to give make room for a new skate park.

Wimmer stated the issue is that the boards are going to need to be replaced, not only the dasher panels but the actual sections. Wimmer stated the original agreement with the hockey association was that they were going to do minor repairs and they didn't do any minor repairs so they all became major repairs. Wimmer stated there will probably be some significant costs, although he didn't know what they would be. Wimmer reiterated the by phrase used by Wood, we can either do one thing really well or try to do both. Wimmer stated if we take out the hockey rink it will be perceived that we hate hockey. He asked if we put the money into it, would we get the usage we would like to see. Wimmer stated we also do have the pleasure rink. Wimmer stated the only reason we have the hockey rink was because of the agreement between the youth hockey association and the city that they would not only help put it together but pay 50% of the costs. Wimmer stated the City ended up paying about 70%. He stated the association was also supposed to be doing the maintaining. Wimmer stated they haven't been a part of it since the last year or more so it is all ours.

True stated that she thought that the association had moved to Cambridge and then they lost the agreement to be with the School and that they had considered coming back [to Isanti]. True asked what had happened with that.

Wimmer stated that they were not going to come back. Wimmer stated that his understanding was that the rink is still there, it hasn't been taken away. Wimmer stated that Cambridge was considering putting up one if not two refrigerated rinks. The theory was that one would go away and be replaced by the new two. Wimmer stated that hasn't been approved by the Cambridge Council although they have built the parking lot by it without approving the rinks.

More discussion regarding Cambridge's potential rinks followed.

True asked if there was a pleasure rink.

Wimmer stated yes, right next to the hockey rink.

Garvey stated you are not able to use sticks on the pleasure rink. Garvey commented on what she had heard regarding the Cambridge rinks which included she was told via email that the new rink would be coming in 2016.

Wimmer stated they haven't voted on it, so not sure what information was being told.

Zdon stated it was a grey area.

Garvey stated she would not like to see the hockey rink go away. She stated that there should not be an agreement with the hockey association and it should be solely of the City's responsibility going forward to continue it as a hockey rink. Garvey stated yes the dasher boards would need to be replaced.

Wimmer stated that there are some boards that are just hanging there. Wimmer stated that Wood should find out what costs would be associated with fixing them.

Wood stated that she got numbers from Nick, PW Director, who she believed had Josh collect numbers on how much to repair the boards last Fall. That is where the \$5000 came from. Wood stated there were not necessarily complaints but people questioning the condition of the boards last Fall. Wood stated she believed the number was not getting them second hand as was previously done which is why there is the contrasting comparison of numbers [\$5000 to repair vs. \$7500 when they were all purchased used]. Wood stated the \$5000 was purchasing not all the boards but the ones that were in dire need.

Wimmer stated it wouldn't be able to get done until 2016 if it was budgeted by the Council. Wimmer stated he also wanted to bring up the skate park. He said most everyone would probably agree that that gets wildly more use.

Zdon stated that it does get a lot of use. He also stated he would hate to see the hockey rink go away because it did get quite a bit of use this year because the weather cooperated. Zdon stated that it is an asset and perhaps it can be used for dual purposes. Maybe there could be a skate park set up in the summers but then it would be City staff labor to move the equipment and then where would we put it and store it. Zdon stated maybe it could be put next to the other skate park during the winter. Zdon spoke with his son who is an avid skate boarder to get his opinion. The dasher boards hold the water in and it creates a pool in the hockey rink.

Wimmer stated so does the skate park.

Zdon agreed but stated it doesn't have to be. There is a low spot in the tar.

Wimmer stated what maybe should happen is what was started with Bergwick a year or two ago. Wimmer stated he would like to see the Board attempt to go through all our parks and all the equipment and list what is a priority and what is not a priority. Also determine what should have money spent on and not spent on. Then a cohesive plan can go before the Council as to what is a priority and allow the public to speak up for what they think is important. Wimmer stated the City just held two public meetings that no one attended where the City is going to spend almost \$10 million. Wimmer stated he did not know if this would get a more passionate response or not. The public should get the chance to say what is important to them. Wimmer stated he did think there would be some fundamental things that the City will not be able to afford.

Garvey asked if we have considered doing a survey out to the residents.

Wimmer stated that we could certainly do a survey. The last outreach was for Whisper Ridge area and one or two people replied. Wood agreed.

Garvey asked if that was paper.

Wood stated yes it was a mailed out survey.

Garvey stated that she would not do a paper survey but rather a web based survey.

Wimmer stated it would only be for Isanti Residents. How would we control who responds.

Wood stated it wouldn't be able to be anonymous. You would have to ask for their address to filter out where they lived.

Wimmer stated he wouldn't mind doing an online survey as long as we could control that it was Isanti residents with a name and address.

There was more discussion on the potential and logistics of doing an online survey.

True stated that one thing she remembered being talking about was the potential for getting park funds for a new skate park so there would be one for the little kids. That was one idea tossed around.

Wood stated as was referenced in the memo, there is the ability to use park dedication funds to establish a new skate park but it can't be where the existing is. We wouldn't be able to build onto or replace anything on the existing skate park. Wood stated in a hypothetical situation of wanting to put new skate park equipment on the concrete of the hockey rink, you would be able to use park dedication funds for such a scenario.

Wimmer stated and there is only \$23,000 in our park dedication fund currently. Wimmer stated this again is where we need to go through and find out what is a priority. A survey in the Isantian is a great way to get the word out and do it but there is going to be a lot of voice; it will be interesting.

Zdon asked if the next Isantian is Fall.

Wood stated yes.

Wimmer stated maybe the way to do it is to set aside "X" amount of dollars in the City budget for PRC equipment which is what we pretty much already do but it will need to be a larger number. And then determine by Spring though this process how it will be spent.

Garvey stated when we go through the Annual park tour we list the parks individually and that would be helpful. Garvey stated that some parks may not be of interest to those who do not use or live by. Those who live near them would be good to get their input because that is the park they know. Garvey stated if you word it in that way where each park is listed and not leave it up to what just should be replaced would be helpful. Giving them some guidance and listing 1-3.

Wood stated you do not want to give too much false hope that every request will be met.

True stated there is an art to writing an effective survey.

Zdon asked when it would need to be put in as part of the budget.

Wimmer stated he could see maybe \$20,000-30,000 being pretty significant for the City.

Zdon asked for timeframe for the budget process.

Wimmer stated we would put in a pot of money which would run through the process and be determined how it would be allocated next Spring.

Zdon stated he would be willing to work on it with Wimmer this time. Look at safety first and then go through the line.

Garvey asked when would the deadline be to get the priority list to Council.

There was some discussion on clarifying when the priority list should be done.

Wimmer stated he thought February or March would be a good time line to be in front of Council to get adopted and have time to order items. That would be an ideal timeline.

True stated she would be interested in being involved in that process.

Zdon asked if we needed a motion.

Wimmer stated whoever wants to do it can take it on, that he did not have to be on it. Wimmer stated either way. He volunteered last time since it wasn't able to be taken on by others at that time. Wimmer stated he thought Garvey had good knowledge that would be helpful but he couldn't speak for anyone. It depends on who has the time to do it.

Garvey stated she would love to but she would be stretched on time. She asked how many people would need to be on a subcommittee.

Wimmer stated you cannot have more than two otherwise it would be a quorum.

Zdon stated True and he would do it.

Motion by Wimmer to appoint Chair Zdon and member True to PRC subcommittee to prioritize park apparatus. Second by Garvey. Motion was unanimously approved.

6. Tot Lot Park Playground Equipment

Wood stated that this should be on the list to be prioritized. Wood stated there may be some safety concerns with the equipment.

Discussion was held regarding the equipment and how to address a safety concern of playground equipment.

7. Updates and Announcements

C-I Bike Trail crossing with the soccer parking lot

Wood stated staff is working to stripe the path of the bike walk trail where it crosses the exits of the soccer complex. Staff has worked with the engineers and public works and what we have stencils for is a crosswalk which should be sufficient and will get done as public works is able. Wood stated if the Board would like something different than a cross walk, we would need to get stenciling for that. Wood stated it would get put on the list after the priority streets are done.

Zdon stated that it may need to get moved up in priority. He stated that he coaches a soccer team and they have let all the parents know but there were some near misses last week.

True stated there were two police reports last week.

Zdon stated it is a huge congestion area. He stated that perhaps the bikers need a sign to stop but something else should be done.

Wood stated there is a caution sign for bikers as they approach the area. She stated she was not aware of police reports.

Wimmer stated it is the drivers responsibility just like a crosswalk that a pedestrian is walking through, we receive lots of reports on those because cars do not stop. Wimmer stated it is an education piece that the soccer club needs to handle. We could do ten thousand bells and whistles and we will do whatever we can that is reasonable but people are not paying attention as they go through there. Wimmer stated there is a certain cycle out there similar to what is at the primary school. He stated the police chief stands out there on a lot of mornings. Wimmer stated until we ticket a couple people and word gets around.

Zdon stated the coaches of the soccer club were told to let their parents know again.

Wimmer stated it is a yearly thing as parents change, coaches change and bikers change. It is unfortunate but he has seen it many times in the city.

Zdon stated that it is great that it will get marked as a cross walk.

38-acre park parcel

Wood stated that they had met with the DNR and they had some suggestions and modifications to make to the report before it gets sent to the Commissioner. Wood stated she would be working with Bolten & Menk, Inc. to make those changes and send it on. She was hopeful that this would be a good next step forward to being able to develop the park.

Storm water control at the Isanti Indoor Arena

Wood stated on June 16 Council approved to move forward with designing a proposal of a rain garden.

Farmers' Market

Wood stated the market is going really well. She stated there have been between 11-13 vendors and she's been receiving a lot of great feedback from vendors and customers.

Street dance and legacy park program

Wood stated the first street dance of the season and Legacy Park program will be Saturday June 27.

Zdon stated there will also be the Kohls cup tournament at the soccer complex.

7a. Discussion and Possible Recommendation to Purchase Lot Next to 38-acre Parcel

Wimmer stated as you look at the map there are three things that the DNR is not allowing us to do: the pavilion, fishing pier or disc golf. The shown paved lot is one that the City already owns and if you look to the North you will see a lot that the homeowner owns. Wimmer stated he has it listed for \$30,000 but will sell it to the City for \$19,000. Wimmer stated lots are now going again between \$25,000-45,000. Since we cannot put the pavilion next to the community garden which we are looking to expand since the land has agricultural rights, the city could plant all in corn if they wanted to, we could put it on the lot the City already owns. Wimmer stated if we do that, it will really shrink the parking availability. Wimmer stated we may want to consider the other lot which the pavilion could be placed on it or it could be more parking however the layout works best. Wimmer stated he thought there was between \$23,000-24,000 in the park dedication funds that could be used to purchase this lot that would allow us to do this. Wimmer stated for us to develop the park with that structure, which the homeowner liked the idea perhaps because we are buying the lot from him. Wimmer stated the homeowner likes the idea that there would be a quite park on both sides of him. Wimmer stated that is where we are at; the DNR will not let us put on any permanent structures in the area.

Garvey asked if they are okay with the pavilion.

Wimmer clarified what the DNR will not allow which includes a pavilion. A pavilion would need to go into one of those lots. Wimmer stated that the DNR did seem somewhat receptive to putting a fishing pier at Martin's Landing if we brought the trail up there.

Wood stated she thought the person they discussed the idea with would be in support but it would also need the support of the others in the DNR.

Wimmer stated that the pavilion would give shelter and have water supplied to it so people could wash their vegetables and clean up. We could also have a temporary water line or spigot out to the garden. Wimmer stated it comes down to whether or not the Board wants to purchase the land. Wimmer stated the homeowner is willing to sell it to us for \$19,000. Wimmer stated if the Board is in favor then to have a recommendation to the Council and then the Council would make the final decision and if in favor there would be formal negotiations from there. Wimmer stated it is not cheap or what we expected. Wimmer stated we got the 38 acres for free. Wimmer stated he was not anticipating this cost. He stated we could put the pavilion on the lot we already own but then we are eliminating almost all of the parking with the exception of a couple handicap stalls.

Garvey asked how many stalls that lot would accommodate.

Both Wimmer and Wood thought the number was nine.

Wimmer stated the lot on the North side that we are considering is larger so it is anticipated to have more. Wimmer stated the lot we own is more like an access; it is not a full city lot.

Garvey asked about how much that north lot would hold for parking spaces.

Wimmer stated the estimate he received was about 15-18. Zdon agreed that that looked about right. Wimmer stated that it was not engineered out though.

Zdon stated we would need to determine in the future where the pavilion would go.

True asked if it made sense to use the smaller lot for the pavilion and use what remaining area was left for handicap stalls and then use the other lot for all parking.

Wimmer and Zdon both agreed that would make sense.

Wimmer stated that it was not an expense that we expected but it does make the area more usable.

Zdon stated that he thought the City was getting that north lot.

Wimmer stated no, but that the lot the City does own is just more of an access to get to the property.

Wimmer stated that again it was not anticipated but in the grand scheme it makes the land more usable but we have to spend \$19,000. He stated he is in favor of it but doesn't want to do it.

Discussion regarding what the DNR would allow on the easement area and if there were funds to help make the area better occurred.

Zdon asked if the park dedication money was already there and if it was to be spent on anything else.

Wimmer stated yes, it was in the fund already and at this point it was not allocated to anything specific.

Zdon stated it is not enough to do a park.

Wimmer agreed. He stated we have some things in the hopper to help fund this project but we do not have that yet.

Garvey asked to be sure if the park dedication funds could be used to purchase this land.

Wimmer stated yes.

Zdon asked if this would affect the City's budget at all or not because the money is already there.

Wimmer stated the money is already there and it would not affect the replacement money we spoke about earlier.

Motion by Garvey to recommend to Council to purchase the parcel [PID 161110010]. Second by Wimmer. Motion was unanimously approved.

7b. Cambridge Aquatics Task Force Update

Garvey stated that she had been going to the meetings in Cambridge. The City approved the feasibility study for an indoor aquatics facility. Garvey stated it would be a swimming pool and aquatics area. There will also be a couple meeting rooms. Garvey stated the feasibility study is approved and the next step would be a survey for all of Isanti County. Cambridge residents will need to vote on it but the biggest thing will be the funding.

Wimmer stated that the funding source would be a sales tax.

Garvey stated yes a sales tax.

Zdon asked if it was for just the City of Cambridge.

Garvey and Wimmer stated yes.

Wimmer stated the Council would need to approve to put it on the ballot and then the residents would need to approve it. Then it would need to go to the legislature for final approval. Wimmer stated they are looking to bundle it with the library. Wimmer thought they were looking to raise \$900,000.

More discussion by Garvey on the steps the task force was making.

8. Adjournment

Motion by Wimmer, second by Garvey to adjourn the June 23, 2015 meeting of the Parks, Recreation, and Culture Board. Motion was approved.

The meeting adjourned at 6:48 p.m.

Dated at Isanti, Minnesota this 23rd day of June 2015.

Respectfully submitted,

Josi Wood, Community Events and Parks Coordinator