

**CITY OF ISANTI
PARKS, RECREATION, AND CULTURE BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
July 26, 2016
City Council Chambers**

1. Meeting Opening.

A. Call to Order.

Zdon called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

B. Pledge of Allegiance.

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Roll Call.

Members Present: Jennifer Garvey, James Witte, and Aaron Zdon

Members Absent: Mayor Wimmer (Gave Prior Notice)

Staff Present: Katie Everett, Community Events and Parks Coordinator

D. Agenda Modifications.

Zdon asked to have an update of the BMX association added to the Parks Updates.

Garvey asked to have an update about Legacy Park added to Parks Updates

Motion by Garvey, second by Zdon to approve the July 26th 2016 Parks, Recreation, and Culture Board Agenda. Motion was unanimously approved.

Everett asked James Witte to read the Oath of Office given to him prior to the meeting. Witte read the oath as written.

2. Approval of Minutes from May 24, 2016 Parks, Recreation and Culture Board Meeting.

Motion by Garvey. Second by Witte. Vote was unanimously approved.

3. Arts and Science Academy Park

Everett explained that the Arts and Science Academy approached the City in the past about expanding their enrollment, and that the City of Isanti owns a lot adjoining to the school's property. This became an opportunity for a park to be constructed here; city staff wanted the park to have a draw to get people to visit it – there are not currently many people who can walk there, so it would need something more to get people to go. Exercise equipment seemed like a good fit considering the businesses already in the area, and it is an amenity not offered elsewhere in the city. Right now, the city is working on writing up agreements with the school. Construction is not expected to start at the school this calendar year, and there is no set timeline for construction on the city parcel.

Zdon asked if this would be funded from the Park Dedication Fund; Everett responded that typically that is how this type of project is funded, but there is also grant potential with this type of park. Members indicated that they thought the park was a good idea; there was some discussion about what kinds of equipment would eventually be installed – obstacle course types of equipment, exercise machines, etc. The specifics of the park design will be discussed at a future date.

4. Future Dog Park

Everett explained that the city has been receiving requests for a dog park for a long time and residents are looking for a place where their dogs can be off leash. The city has determined that the grassy lot next to the Indoor Arena (BMX facility) is a good location for a future dog park. According to the proposed plan, the dog park would happen in two phases. Because there are storage buildings on the lot that are needed; the first phase would fence in a small portion of the park. Then, as funds allow, the buildings would be relocated and the fence moved all the way to the southern boundary of the lot.

Zdon stated that he liked the idea of the dog park and this location makes sense, the buildings are past their prime so it would make sense to have them relocated to more convenient places and designed for their intended use; he also thought that the extended parking would be useful for not only the dog park but for BMX events as well. Zdon raised the concern that if the fence were to extend all the way to the back of the lot, there would be a considerable impact on event parking especially during larger BMX events like nationals and state races.

Witte asked if the plan would include just three pieces of agility equipment; Everett explained that this is just an early proposal so that may change in the future. Then Witte also asked if there were any plans to have a water spigot or hose at the site. Everett explained that she did look into it, however “doggie drinking fountains” are about \$3000 and the water service would still need to be brought in. Zdon stated that he believed that the water service ended at the BMX facility, so it may be a large cost.

Everett explained that city staff have also discussed that none of our parks have drinking fountains, but it may be nice at some point in the future to provide them, especially at places like Bluebird where there is a heavily used pavilion.

5. Skate Park Update

Everett explained that the hockey rink boards have been removed and sold. The current plan is to have Public Works remove all of the equipment this fall and make repairs during the winter. The equipment would be replaced in the spring onto the cement slab. The timeline of this may be affected by spring weather because the boards need to be hot so they are flexible when they are installed. The funds for the necessary panels have been included in the preliminary 2017 budget and are on track to be approved.

Zdon asked if moving the equipment to the cement slab would affect our ability to use Park Dedication Fund money to purchase additional equipment in the future. Everett explained that she has asked the finance department for an answer on this, and the current understanding is that moving the equipment would not affect the way funds would be allocated. Additionally, because both the pavement and cement slab are in Bluebird Park, there would not be a “new” park constructed, so moving the equipment should not matter. Garvey agreed that moving the equipment should not affect future funding opportunities. Everett explained that the exact placement of the equipment on the cement can be discussed at a later date.

6. School Use of Mattson Tennis Courts

Everett stated that contract with the school was up for their use of Mattson tennis courts. The courts do need to be surfaced. Witte asked if this would be done this year; Everett indicated that the timeline would be very tight because the school will start using the courts again on August 29th. Garvey indicated that they will likely want to be out again as soon as the snow melts, so the best time may end up being after the spring season ends. Everett spoke with their athletic director and they will need the courts for 31 days this season starting on August 29. The past agreements had been good for two years and increased by \$25. If the fee was increased to \$400, they would be paying \$12.90/day; if it was increased to \$425 they would be paying \$13.71/day. Zdon indicated that neither fee would be able to cover the costs of resurfacing.

Garvey made a motion to recommend that the fee be raised to \$400 per season, and would be valid

for two years. Witte seconded the motion; it was unanimously approved.

7. Tot Lot Naming Contest

Everett explained that she has drafted a form for the Tot Lot renaming contest from past contests and those from other places; essentially the rules are that entrants need to be residents and the names need to be relevant. Garvey stated that the form makes sense and the examples of potential names should be helpful. Zdon asked if it would be included in the next Isantian; Everett responded that the whole form will probably not be included, but a blurb can be included to inform people about the contest. Everett explained that she can also advertise at the Farmer's Market which runs through September 30th. Garvey asked if there were any deadlines established for the contest. Everett explained that she left a space for the date, but the Park Board could determine this. There is not a meeting in December. The group determined that the October 24 meeting would give people enough time to send in entries. With this as the date, Everett asked if we should also determine a deadline for entries; the group decided that October 10th at 4:30 would be appropriate to organize entries and prepare them for the meeting. Garvey made a motion for Park Board to authorize the renaming contest for Isanti Tot Lot, with names to be discussed at the October 24th meeting and an entry deadline of October 10, 2016, and to have staff move forward with promoting the contest. Witte seconded the motion; it was unanimously approved.

8. Parks Updates – Prioritized List

Everett explained that the list was created by the Park Board members last year to start making necessary repairs to parks, and was further prioritized by them. Staff have been working hard to get through the list. Everett explained that Public Services Director Wood has done a great job getting everyone organized and ordering the necessary parts. Zdon stated that the repainted tables look great.

Everett stated that the parts of the list that have not been completed are in the works and will be done as soon as possible. She has contacted GameTime to begin getting estimates for refurbishing the parks. This would be powder coating the metal elements and replacing the plastic pieces. This process is likely to be expensive, and the board should begin to consider how much money should be spent on parks like Tot Lot where we know that there are already pieces that can't be replaced. The best place to start for now will be to get some prices and move from there.

Everett asked the board to discuss whether or not it would be appropriate to replace the Whisper Ridge tennis net. Garvey stated that with the current condition of the court surface it may not even be safe to play tennis on the courts, so we should consider taking down the net altogether so as not to prompt people to play tennis there. Garvey asked Everett if she had received any calls about the condition of the courts, and Everett stated that she had not and if other staff had she has not heard about them, however that information does generally get forwarded to her. Garvey stated that removing the net may be a way to determine if the courts are being used – people may call in if the nets are gone and they are using the courts. Everett stated that she is not sure that many people beyond those living in the houses bordering the courts even knew it was there. Additionally, there have been discussions in the past about connecting Whisper Ridge with trails into downtown and at this point a larger project would probably take place with the courts. Garvey made a motion to recommend that the Whisper Ridge Nets not be replaced and that the city consider removing the net. Witte seconded; the motion was unanimously approved.

9. Parks Updates – Programming

Everett shared that the community garden is growing well – weeds especially have taken off this year, so keeping up with them has been interesting. Early in the year, the garden was really dry being in full sun, and then we have gotten so much rain that it was too wet for a while, so it has been kind of an experiment in the first year. Staff have received many complements on the garden and gardeners seem very pleased. The school's section looks fantastic; they weren't able to bring students out at the end of the school year because it was too muddy, but they planted right after school got out and have been maintaining it really

well. Their plan is to bring students out to harvest once school starts again. Everett indicated that the acre that the Minnesota Center will be using for their experiment has regrown, so she will be in touch with them once they're back in session about their plans for that area. The lower portion of the park did flood when the river came back up, but Public Works was able to get out on Monday to begin clean up. The bridge is still there and seems undamaged. There had been some fallen trees used to block ATVs from accessing the park from Martin's Landing which are now gone, so they are working to block that off again a different way.

There is a StoryWalk scheduled at the park for August 6 from 1:00-3:00pm. The pages from a children's story (Bear's New Friend) will be posted along the trail and families will be able to read the story as they walk. The flyer has been distributed to daycares, Heavenly Sunshine, ECFE, and posted to Facebook. Hopefully this event will get some new people in to the park as well.

The Farmer's Market is picking up again. The first four markets of the season had rain and limited produce, but a lot of new produce is coming in. The market has a lot of repeat customers who come every week, but there are always also new people who didn't know the market was there that come each week.

The Two Cities, One Community event is happening again this year. Everett stated that staff are working to get businesses for the wellness fair, and if any of the members knew of groups or organizations that may want to come they are also welcome. The activities for the event include a 5K and bike ride. The first 50 participants of both the bike ride and the 5K run/walk will receive free goodie bags (100 total will be given out). After the 5K, will be the wellness fair. This year, the first clue of the medallion hunt will be announced. Hopefully the medallion hunt will get people out and about in town. After the wellness fair there will be a magician in Cambridge as well as free hot dogs and ice cream.

Additional items:

Zdon stated that he would like to update the Park Board on the changes in the BMX association. Everett stated that she has an updated list of board members; Kevin is no longer the president of the organization but is still the track operator. Zdon stated that Kevin had a lot on his plate so this was a good move for everyone. Everett stated that Andy Strom has been the new contact and things seem to be improving. Zdon indicated that the city has also received the financials that they needed.

Garvey asked for an update on the Legacy Park road block. She indicated that they have been seeing traffic at the park again. Everett stated that staff were still waiting for official approval from the bank board to be able to install anything on site. Everett stated that we can always ask PD to go out again and that usually helps, and she will try to get an update on that progress.

Garvey also stated that she would like to receive an update on replacing the outdoor ice rink at the next meeting. She stated that Cambridge has approved two refrigerated outdoor rinks that should be ready this year. Everett stated that as far as she knew, the city was still planning to put the rink closer to the IIA, but it was not currently in the budget. She will look into it more for the next meeting.

10. Adjournment

Motion by Garvey, second by Witte to adjourn the July 26, 2016 meeting of the Parks, Recreation, and Culture Board. Motion was approved.

The meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Dated at Isanti, Minnesota this 26th day of July, 2016.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Katie Everett".

Katie Everett
Community Events and Parks Coordinator