

**City of Isanti
Park & Recreation Board
Regular Meeting Minutes
September 28, 2010
Isanti City Hall**

A. Call To Order

Wimmer called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

B. Pledge of Allegiance

Park Board members rose and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Roll Call

Wimmer stated that Mr. Zdon had called to let him know he would not be attending. Wimmer questioned if Mrs. Wilson had heard from Mr. Bone.

Wilson stated that she had heard from Mr. Bone, as he was unsure if he would be back from an appointment he had in the Cities.

Members Present: Board Chairman Wimmer, Yvonne Kennedy, Keith Koehler, Bridgette Parker, and Student Representative Chloe Sunde

Members Absent: Clell Bone (gave prior notice) and Aaron Zdon (gave prior notice)

Staff Present: Lisa Wilson, City Planner, AICP

D. Agenda Modifications

Wimmer questioned if there were any modifications to the agenda.

Wilson stated that there were none.

Motion by Kennedy, second by Parker to adopt the September 28th, 2010 Park and Recreation Board Agenda. Motion was unanimously approved.

E. Approve Minutes from the August 24, 2010 Park Board Meetings

Wimmer questioned if there were any changes to the minutes.

Motion by Parker, second by Koehler to approve the meeting minutes from August 24th. Motion was unanimously approved.

F. Emerald Ash Borer / Tree Inspection Discussion (*Sam Klocksien & Kameron Kytonen*)

Wimmer stated that the City's resident tree experts were present.

Klocksien questioned if Andover had an Ordinance or a plan in place.

Kytonen stated that they do not have a management plan or an ordinance in place. Kytonen stated that they are in the fairly early stages of planning. Kytonen stated that last year he had presented to the Council and gave them an update on Emerald Ash Borer. Kytonen stated that they have done

education for the public in the City newsletter. Kytonen stated that he held a meeting with neighboring communities to see where they were at on planning. Kytonen stated that there were a couple of issues raised. Kytonen stated that one is the disposal issue; and where people can take the trees that have been removed or have died due to Emerald Ash Borer.

Kytonen stated that they are working with Anoka County, as they may have a spot where multiple cities can bring debris. Kytonen stated that the other issue will be enforcement or inspection on private property. Kytonen stated that Emerald Ash Borer differs from other tree diseases in how it affects a tree and how long it takes to spread. Kytonen stated that he did not see the City requiring every Ash tree to be removed; it would be more a case by case basis. Kytonen stated that on public property, they do have quite a bit of Ash. Kytonen stated that the City is discussing chemical injections. Kytonen stated that there is a lot they have to talk about. Kytonen stated that they have not determined a budget yet.

Kytonen stated that they were surprised that it had not been discovered in the suburbs yet. Kytonen stated that many thought it would have shown up in the northern suburbs. Kytonen asked if there were any questions.

Klocksien stated that he could present information as well.

Wimmer questioned if he was still working and coordinating with Isanti County.

Klocksien stated that currently Isanti County does not have any programs in place for Oak Wilt or other invasive tree species. Klocksien stated that the program was eliminated in 2009. Klocksien stated that it is up to the individual land owner to do so. Klocksien stated that he still fields questions; as his name is still on the website. Klocksien stated that he had taken around 8 inquiries and around 6 property owners did decide to move forward with some action. Klocksien stated that there is the motivation to do something. Klocksien stated that the program did have even more motivation because there was a cost share. Klocksien stated that the County would reimburse the property owner, of which the money came from the DNR.

Wimmer questioned if there was still money from the DNR.

Klocksien stated no. Klocksien stated that the DNR had received its money from the Feds. Klocksien stated that most of the focus has now gone towards Emerald Ash Borer and Gypsy Moth.

Wimmer stated that down in Anoka County it is mostly City after City, with very few townships. Wimmer stated that in Isanti County, there are still a large number of townships. Wimmer stated that he thought the County would have a more integral role to play in Isanti County.

Klocksien stated that there are a number of townships that have an Oakwilt problem. Klocksien stated that the townships could enact an Ordinance, if they wanted to and set aside funds to help with the issue. Klocksien stated he did not know if they were just sick of dealing with the issue.

Wimmer questioned if the Ash Borer does make it here, where is the County at and other communities at to be able to handle it.

Klocksien stated that it is a little bit different here. Klocksien stated that we do not have boulevard trees in public right-of-way. Klocksien stated that many cities are focused on preparing and handling the public property issue and less on the private property issue. Klocksien stated that for the private property issue, it is more like Mr. Kytonen stated; where to dispose, treat, etc.

Klocksien stated that this is one of those things that it is here in the state. Klocksien stated that if it follows what it has done in Michigan, Illinois, and New York; eventually it will affect most of the Ash trees. Klocksien stated that we do have a diverse tree population, but we have enough that we will see an impact.

Klocksien stated that he lives in Isanti and he works for the City of Columbus as well as Little Canada; as a certified forester. Klocksien stated that in both communities they have an Ordinance, but are now looking at how the Emerald Ash Borer will affect their community. Klocksien stated that the first thing to figure out is if you have Ash trees, which we know we do. Klocksien stated that the second thing is to find out how many are on public property. Klocksien stated that cutting ahead of the insect is a question that a number of communities are facing. Klocksien stated that a need assessment is needed and an inventory should be considered. Klocksien stated that the next thing needed would be for someone to be able to go out and inspect the tree to determine if it has Emerald Ash Borer.

Kennedy questioned what the symptoms were.

Klocksien stated that there is canopy die-back. Klocksien stated that a lot of times the central leader on the canopy or stem of tree will split.

Kytonen stated that there would be "D" shaped exit holes at the base of the tree. Kytonen stated that by the time you find the "D" shaped exit holes at the base, the tree has probably been infected for 4 or 5 years. Kytonen stated that it generally starts at the top of the tree.

Klocksien passed around some examples for Park Board review.

Koehler stated that he expected the holes to be bigger. Koehler questioned the cost and time period for chemical treatments.

Kytonen stated that there are a number of options, but he wouldn't go into detail over all of them. Kytonen stated that there is a soil drench. Kytonen stated that there are tree injections, some of which last a year and other last up to 2-3 years. Kytonen stated that when you are looking at \$100 to \$200 or more per treatment, this can be very costly for a property owner, depending upon the number of trees being treated. Kytonen stated that there are some treatments the property owner can do themselves; however, most require a certified pesticide applicator to do so.

Klocksien stated that he didn't want to categorize trees as being higher or lower in value than others. Klocksien stated on a landscape level that if a property has two trees, this may be a situation when treatment may work. Klocksien stated that on a City level, this is debatable. Klocksien stated that from a budget standpoint, this could be costly. Klocksien stated that it is not just one and done. Klocksien stated that treatments would be necessary until the threat is gone.

Koehler questioned when the tree should be treated.

Klocksien stated that once it has been discovered within 15 miles, then treatment can be given for prevention.

Kytonen stated that some trees can be treated after being infected. Kytonen stated that if more than 15% of the crown is dead, then it is not worth it anymore.

Klocksien stated that they have a map showing the location of where they have been found.

Kytonen stated that there are cities that have started to remove healthy trees and replace with different species. Kytonen stated that the City of Blaine had received a grant last year and they are starting to implement this policy in the City. Kytonen stated that some might find this extreme.

Klocksien stated that with any tree disease, you are trying to cut ahead. Klocksien stated that many feel if it is inevitable; then get ahead of the situation.

Wimmer stated that both Mr. Klocksien and Mr. Kytonen had the opportunity to see what the City has in place. Wimmer questioned from a long-term standpoint and with limited resources, how do we compare to other communities. Wimmer stated that we are trying to have a diversified tree population. Wimmer questioned where we fit in the jigsaw puzzle with other communities and what do we need to do to improve it.

Klocksien stated that Mr. Kytonen is the closest community to us that is looking at doing something. Klocksien questioned if Andover had an Ordinance.

Kytonen stated that they are working towards an Ordinance. Kytonen stated they will be putting together a plan.

Klocksien stated that we have the first thing, which is an Ordinance. Klocksien stated that the next step would be to determine how much is on our property and how it will affect our public spaces.

Wimmer questioned how much an inventory would cost.

Klocksien stated that he is working on one for Little Canada and their population is around 10,000 people. Klocksien stated that their previous forester was going to do their Emerald Ash Borer project. Klocksien stated that the inventory cost was around \$3,000. Klocksien stated that they are a bigger community. Klocksien stated that having the Ordinance in place is a good start. Klocksien stated that the City of Oakdale has a good website and an example plan in place.

Kennedy questioned who had released a bug or something to eat the Emerald Ash Borer.

Kytonen stated that was in Minneapolis. Kytonen stated that it was too early to know the results of that. Kytonen stated that with regards to the inventory, it should be considered. Kytonen stated that there might be other grant opportunities available through the Minnesota Department of Agriculture. Kytonen stated that he thought it could be up to \$5,000 to \$6,000 for an inventory.

Koehler questioned the late start to the Ash Trees this spring.

Klocksien stated that was due to the late frost that occurred in May.

Wimmer questioned if the Board had anything additional for the presenters.

Klocksien stated that the City is on the right track with the Ordinance. Klocksien stated that we do have Ash on our public property and having it looked is a good step. Klocksien stated that this is a green, wooded community. Klocksien stated that having a plan in place is a good idea. Klocksien stated that if it gets closer, we should be aware of where it is at.

Kytonen stated that if something could be put in the City newsletter that would be a good idea. Kytonen stated that this would help make residents become aware.

Wimmer questioned if they would draft something.

Kytonen and Klocksien both agreed to do so.

Wimmer thanked the speakers for coming in to discuss this issue with the Board.

Wimmer stated that if it starts to spread a bit, then we need to really look at a plan. Wimmer stated that the City should look into an inventory, especially if there would be grant dollars available.

G. Athletic Elements Reservation Policy - Amendments

Wilson presented the staff memo and outlined the issues. Krause stated that City staff was looking for some direction from the Park Board on how to proceed with this item.

Wimmer stated that we are giving this a try for the Fall and Spring. Wimmer stated that by next Spring, the City needed to take a look at the true costs of maintaining the facilities. Wimmer stated that the \$250 number was pulled out, to make another entity aware of the fact that if they use City facilities they will pay for it. Wimmer stated that there was a loop-hole in the current policy, in which each parent could have called and made a reservation. Wimmer stated that this is a settlement to get through this school year. Wimmer stated this is to try to get to an understanding that if the school does use City property, they need to help pay the cost to maintain or they will be closed to the school.

Koehler stated that the City keeps accommodating the school district.

Wimmer stated that nothing we are going to do will fit every situation or circumstance. Wimmer stated that what he wants to get in the policy; is what are the relevant costs. Wimmer questioned what the cost is of using the courts and other City facilities. Wimmer questioned if we take the capital costs and amortize that out. Wimmer stated that there is a lot of different ways to determine the cost. Wimmer stated that unfortunately, this results in either a really high number or a really low number. Wimmer stated that is the course we are on at this point.

Wimmer questioned if the Board members had comments. Wimmer stated that we could back with some numbers.

Koehler stated that he did not know the cost to play tennis. Koehler questioned if the student representative had an idea.

Sunde stated that she did not play tennis but she had friends that did. Sunde stated that she thought it was just the average sports fees, which is \$150 for the first sport. Sunde stated that is at the high school; she was not sure if that carried over to the middle school. Sunde stated that the high school uses the courts that they have on site.

Wimmer stated that this is just the middle school. Wimmer stated that this is an on-going battle, as the school used to host the community ice rink. Wimmer stated that the school closed the rink and kicked the community out of there, so residents question why they can kick the community out and not the other way around. Wimmer stated that the only benefit is that they are paying for it. Wimmer stated that he did not know if that was the right number, but it did break a barrier.

Koehler stated the parents calling should volunteer so that the kids could be supervised at Whisper Ridge. Koehler stated that he is of the opinion that this is a public park and it should be made available for the public to use.

Wimmer stated that was the basic premise that we had went on, with the issue with the one coach. Wimmer questioned if we were responsible for providing for this. Wimmer stated we are not responsible, but he was hard pressed to figure out a way to have enough votes to make that realistic. Wimmer stated that he would like to find out the cost of putting in another tennis court at Whisper Ridge.

Koehler stated that we are not in the business to make money off of this. Koehler stated that this is to provide a public service.

Wimmer stated that he believed it would have gone to where they could use the courts regardless. Wimmer stated that he would like to look at Whisper Ridge to have the two courts, and get the school to share the cost for that.

Koehler stated that the residents may like to have the extra foot traffic in the area, as the park is underused. Koehler stated that there are some illegal activities that take place back there.

Wimmer stated that if we could find out the cost for the second court at Whisper Ridge and bring that back to the Board.

H. Bluebird Park Sign Changes

Wilson presented the staff memo.

Wimmer stated that he did not see an issue.

Koehler explained his understanding of the proposal.

Wilson stated that she thought that was what they were proposing.

Koehler stated that he did not have an issue.

The Park Board members agreed.

I. Updates

Wilson stated that the bike-walk trail did have its ground breaking and construction has started.

Wilson stated that staff was notified that the project was awarded \$40,000 in Local Trail Connection Program Grant dollars.

Wilson stated that there may be a change to the location of the snowmobile trail that comes along County Road 5 and down County Road 23.

Wimmer stated that they want to go along the river. Wimmer stated that City Ordinance allows for them to do so, providing the private property owners sign-off on the location. Wimmer stated that it will not cross City property. Wimmer stated that they want the blessing of the City. Wimmer stated that he doesn't want to touch the item, as if the City "approves" then suddenly everyone thinks it is a City trail; which it is not. Wimmer stated that his advice would be to get easement for the trail, as if the property owner changes, then you may lose your trail. Wimmer does not see a benefit to getting City approval.

J. Adjournment

Motion by Parker, second by Kennedy to adjourn the September 28th, 2010 Park and Recreation Board meeting. Motion was unanimously approved.

Meeting ended at 5:37 p.m.

Dated at Isanti, Minnesota this 26th day of October 2010.

Respectively submitted,

Lisa M. Wilson, AICP
City Planner / Parks Coordinator