

**Meeting Minutes
New Prague Park Board
Tuesday, June 12, 2007
6:30 PM**

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:36 PM with the start of the park tour. Members present were Dominic McConnell, Kay Wilcox, Amy Jirik, Kristin Guerrette, Ryan Hauser, and J.C. Ingebrand. Absent was Teri Hodapp. Staff present was Ken Ondich – City Planner, Calliguri – Parks Maintenance Supervisor.

2. Annual Park Tour –

1. Foundry Hill Park
2. Sliding Hill Skate Park
3. Heritage Park
4. Northside Park

The Park Board took its annual tour of four of the city's parks.

At Foundry Hill Park the Park Board reviewed possible new colors to paint the picnic shelter, the possible location of a walking path to lead to Raven Stream Village and the wooded area of the park, and finally a possible location of a dog park.

At Sliding Hill Skate Park the Park Board reviewed the possible addition of more skate park equipment, the trees that have died and been replaced and finally the location of the permanent park sign.

At Heritage Park the Park Board reviewed the sidewalk surround that was recently poured for the playground equipment, the park boundaries and the location of future land to be added to the park.

At Northside Park the Park Board reviewed the requested field fences for the ball field and also noted that the grill at the park needs replacement.

3. Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by McConnell, seconded by Ingebrand to approve the April 10, 2007 meeting minutes, which passed unanimously (6-0, Hodapp Absent).

4. Review Financial Reports

Planner Ondich presented the financial reports to the Park Board. He noted that in April an additional \$4,018.54 was added to the Park Equipment Fund as well as an additional \$4,000 which was a donation from the New Prague Sportsmen's Club for an archery

range. He noted that in May an additional \$2,934.43 was added to the Park Equipment Fund.

A motion was made by Wilcox, seconded by McConnell to accept the financial reports as presented, which passed unanimously (6-0).

5. Annual Softball and Baseball League Fees –

Planner Ondich stated that the annual team fees collected for Men's and Women's softball and adult Men's baseball helps pay for the utility costs, general field maintenance and having park staff drag the fields before games and pick up trash after the games. He stated that the operation costs for the season at the D.R.S. baseball field are \$5,054.80 and at the softball fields are \$5,319. He stated that the last time fees were calculated annually for the softball fields they were about \$3,320 for the season. He stated that the fees were last adjusted on January 1, 2004 and have not changed since that time but the operation costs have increased over the same time period. He stated that men's softball and baseball teams pay \$210 per year and women's softball pays \$177 per year. He stated that staff would like input on whether a new fee should be established for co-ed teams if they were to form and play in New Prague as there currently is not a fee for such teams. He noted that the softball team fees pay for the field operational costs, but the baseball team fees do not pay for the operational costs on that field because only one team currently pays the annual fee.

Jim Calliguri noted that in addition to the Orioles adult baseball team there are a few other youth teams that use the baseball field including the high school. He stated that the Orioles and the Robins, an over 35 adult team which didn't play this year, have been putting a lot of efforts into maintaining the field as in kind assistance. He stated that they have volunteered their time this year to put new roofs on the dugouts and concession stand.

Ryan Hauser stated that he is in favor of keeping the team fees as low as possible. He stated that people involved in such activities in the community tend to be more civic minded people.

Kristin Guerrette stated that her husband plays softball and the fees were much higher than \$210 per team.

Planner Ondich stated that the \$210 is just the team fee paid to the city.

Kay Wilcox stated that she had calculated the fees each team would have to pay to break even on the maintenance and said that the men's teams would have to pay \$190 and the women's teams would have to pay \$130 which shows that the softball fees are paying for the operational costs.

Ryan Hauser asked what the purpose of raising the fees would be if the City is already collecting more than the operational costs for a season.

Kristin Guerrette noted that the batter's boxes at the Memorial Park softball fields are low.

The Park Board noted that the current men's and women's softball team fees are paying for the operational costs and did not see the need to raise the fees at this time.

Kay Wilcox noted that it seems as though the baseball teams are stepping up to help the city with the work at the D.R.S. field.

Kristin Guerrette stated that it makes sense to charge softball teams by the number of times they play a week and not whether they are men's or women's teams.

A motion was made by Guerrette, seconded by Jirik, to charge \$210 per softball team that plays two times a week and to charge \$177 per softball team that plays one time a week instead of differentiating between Men's and Women's fees, which passed unanimously (6-0).

6. Settlers Park Basketball Hoop in Parking Lot -

Planner Ondich stated that at the April Park Board Meeting it was decided to install a basketball hoop in the Settlers Park parking lot. He stated that since the meeting staff began to have reservations about installing the hoop in the parking lot and asked the League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust for thoughts or concerns. He stated that some liability concerns identified by the League were restricting vehicles from the areas where basketball is allowed, a possible tripping hazard by the curb, putting up warning signs, and who would monitor the lot when cars and kids using the hoop are both present. He noted that the Public Works Director feels the hoop would allow and promote playing in the parking lots. He noted that there is a hoop in the parking lot at Southside Park but that no curb existed and the lot is not striped so there is no expectation for parking in that area.

The Park Board decided to put the installation of a basketball hoop on hold for now at Settlers Park in the parking lot.

7. Picnic Shelters – Color Change -

The Park Board had earlier reviewed some possible color choices for repainting the picnic shelters. They recommended that staff start with painting the Foundry Hill Park shelter. They suggested painting the bottom and brick area of the shelter Lafayette Green (HC 135) and the trim and posts with Decatur Buff (HC 38). They asked that staff let the park board know when it has been painted so they can review the colors before deciding if other shelters should be painted the same way.

8. Youth Center Update -

Kristin Guerrette provided an update on the status of a youth center in New Prague. She stated that there is a meeting with HERO and the YMCA at Wednesday June 13 at 6:30 PM at the School Board Meeting Room to discuss a possible YMCA for New Prague. She stated that YMCA representatives would be at the meeting to discuss a facility in New Prague. She stated that with the YMCA name there is more access to federal grants. She stated that the YMCA would not be a chain but would be run locally. She stated that this is where the group is heading at this time.

Kay Wilcox made the suggestion that the Armory building could be used as a base for Community Education for recreation related activities.

9. Discuss Planning of Grand Opening for Sliding Hill Skate Park -

Planner Ondich stated that the Park Board had discussed the idea of having a grand opening celebration last fall but decided to wait until the trees were planted and the final detail work on the park was completed. He stated that the park should be looking pretty nice sometime during the summer or early fall. He stated that he would like to discuss if a grand opening celebration is needed and what could be involved in the open house for activities.

Kristin Guerrette stated that she has spoken with many kids in her neighborhood that would be interested in doing a skate demo or skate show during the open house. She stated that it might be possible to have a part of the show available for different age groups.

The Park Board felt that a time in August during the middle of the week would probably provide the best opportunity for families to show up.

The Park Board decided that Wednesday, August 8th at 6:00 to 8:00 PM would be the appropriate time for the Grand Opening of the Skate Park. They asked if Park Board Budget funds could be used to pay for food and other items for the opening. They suggested that hot dogs, chips and beverages could be served. It was suggested that if power was available they could simply cook the hot dogs in roasters on site. They also suggested setting aside the time from 6:00 to 6:30 for a skate park show or demo. They suggested that the newspaper be informed of the grand opening and that the mayor should be invited. They stated that they would need picnic tables brought to the site for the event.

Kristin Guerrette stated that she would put together a schedule of events.

10. Trees for Sliding Hill Skate Park -

Planner Ondich stated that since the October tree planting at the Sliding Hill Skate Park some of the trees have died. He stated that all the techny arborvitae dies along with six of

the austrian pine. He stated that the techny arborvitae were replaced free of charge based on a guarantee we had for them, but such a guarantee was not available on the Austrian pine. He stated that the price for the six austrian pines was \$35 a piece which was a reduced price. He stated that the bill for the trees should be paid out of the 2007 Park Board budget.

Jim Calliguri noted that approximately 6 to 8 more Austrian Pine have died as well but staff is unsure of where to purchase those trees.

A motion was made by Guerrette, seconded by Hauser to authorize purchase of the 6 Austrian Pine from Minnesota at a cost of \$223.65 from the 2007 Park Board Budget, which passed unanimously (6-0).

11. Miscellaneous

- A. Letter from Brad Busch – New Prague Youth Baseball Association** – Planner Ondich stated he included a letter in the packet from Brad Busch of the New Prague Baseball Association. He stated that in the letter they are requesting that field fences be installed along the 1st and 3rd baselines for safety purposes. He stated that this is the same request that the park board has reviewed and discussed two previous times and both times decided to delay installation of the fence.

After reviewing the park and the field earlier during the park tour the park board suggested putting off the request for the fences until a later date in order to complete other park projects first.

Kay Wilcox noted that a fence may only be needed along the base line along Lexington Ave. N.

The Park Board decided to revisit the request again in 2008.

- B. Letter from Matthew Lasch** – Planner Ondich stated that he included a letter in the packet from Matthew Lasch who is a New Prague area resident. He stated that in the letter Mr. Lasch states that he works for a broad based ecological restoration company and that New Prague should pay more attention to existing natural resources such as wetlands and prairie. He noted that the letter states that many of the city's parks would be a good start for certain wetland or prairie land restoration projects. He noted that Philipps Park will eventually be converted to native plantings in the future.

Ryan Hauser stated that he likes to keep the parks mowed and not in native plantings.

Kay Wilcox stated that she would like to hear Mr. Lasch's presentation and to set up a time for this sometime in October or November.

12. Adjournment

A motion was made by Jirik, seconded by McConnell, to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 P.M., which passed unanimously (6-0).

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ken Ondich". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "K" and "O".

Ken Ondich
City Planner