

Meeting Minutes
New Prague Park Board
Tuesday, June 9 2009
6:30 PM

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 PM by Vice Chair Allen Mahowald. Members present were Kay Wilcox, Mike Slavik, Allen Mahowald, Katie Leaver and Amy Jirik (arrived during 4th agenda item). Absent were Dominic McConnell and youth members Kaitlyn O'Neill and Karynn Lehne. Staff present was Ken Ondich – Planning Director and Jim Calliguri – Parks Maintenance Supervisor.

2. Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Wilcox, seconded by Slavik to approve the April 14, 2009 meeting minutes, which passed unanimously (4-0, Jirik and McConnell absent).

3. Review Financial Reports

Planning Director Ondich presented the financial reports to the Park Board, noting that during the month of May an additional \$854.60 was added to the Park Equipment Fund from residential and commercial permits and that two new single family homes were included in the total.

A motion was made by Wilcox, seconded by Slavik to accept the financial reports as presented, which passed unanimously (4-0).

4. Warming House at Sliding Hill Skate Park – Update -

Planning Director Ondich stated that City staff has met once again with local contractor Jim Kratochvil to discuss the plans for a warming house in Sliding Hill Skate Park and to try to reduce costs enough that a project can move forward in 2009. He stated that the initial estimate for the completion of the building, including paid labor was \$78,800 for the warming house and storage area. He stated that one of the suggestions to help reduce initial costs for the warming house is to not construct the portion of the building to be used as storage. He stated that staff has also had contact with Dave Edberg at the high school about a class project to assist with the construction of the warming house and that Mr. Edberg told staff that his classes cannot do any brick work which essentially rules out their use for the project. He stated that staff is now looking at using City Staff and possibly Mr. Kratochvil as a coordinator of the project – particularly for the brick work. He stated that as of the beginning of June, the Park Equipment Fund has \$66,334.14 available (depending on what is done with the hockey boards in the next agenda item).

Mike Slavik asked staff what percentage of savings would be made off the total cost of the building if the storage area is not constructed at this time.

Jim Calliguri stated that staff had not figured the percentage of savings from the total project cost. He stated that it might be a little less than half.

Katie Leaver asked where maintenance items for the hockey rink are stored currently.

Jim Calliguri stated that they are stored off-site currently.

It was a consensus of the Park Board to complete construction of the entire building at this point due to the need for the storage area immediately.

Jim Calliguri also noted that other ideas to reduce costs included removing the in-floor heating system and going to an electric furnace.

Mike Slavik stated that the in-floor heat would be vandal proof and questioned if the furnace would be prone to vandalism.

Planning Director Ondich stated that a warming house attendant would be required at all times when the shelter would be open for use.

Kay Wilcox asked about solar heat for the building.

Amy Jirik stated that the New Prague Hockey Association could be contacted to see if they might be interested in providing volunteers for the project.

The Park Board recommended that staff continue to speak with Jim Kratochvil to cut costs on the construction of the warming house and storage area.

5. Hockey Boards at Sliding Hill Skate Park – Update -

Planning Director Ondich stated that there have been some issues with broken hockey boards at the Sliding Hill Skate Park hockey rink and that specifically nine panels have cracked or broken during the winter. He stated that the boards were installed in the summer of 2008 and this was the first winter they were used. He stated that at the April Park Board meeting the Park Board made the following motion: "A motion was made by Wilcox, seconded by Slavik, to request from Becker Arena Products, Inc. a full replacement of the Prowall dasher board system to the upgraded "cross link resin" material due to the inferior product received and installed which does not stand up to the Minnesota cold weather climate, which passed unanimously (4-0)." He stated that Becker Arena Products had until Thursday, April 30, 2009 to reply to respond to a letter requesting the full board system replacement free of charge and that Becker did not change their offer to the City which was reviewed at the March meeting and three options are still available for consideration. While it would be possible to engage the City Attorney at this point to pursue our intent to obtain a free upgraded set of boards, staff believes it would cost more in legal fees than the cost of upgrade of the boards. Staff recommends the Park Board approve Option 2 to upgrade the complete system to the "cross link" resin board material as outlined in the March 31, 2009 letter. The cost would

be \$3,825 plus tax for the boards which would be taken from the Park Equipment Fund. This is a discount from the original \$9,000 cost had we purchased this option from the start. The proposal with the three options is attached to the packet. He added that staff had spoken with other cities with the “cross link resin boards” and they did not experience the breakage issues that we did over the winter.

A motion was made by Slavik, seconded by Wilcox, to recommend approval of the Becker Arena Products, Inc. “Option 2 - Upgrade Complete System to Cross Link Resin” as outlined in the March 31, 2009 proposal at a cost of \$3,825.00 plus tax to be paid from the Park Equipment Fund, which passed unanimously (5-0).

6. Green Meadow Woodchip Trail -

Planning Director Ondich stated that at last month’s unofficial meeting it was suggested that staff bring back discussion to the Park Board regarding the idea for a woodchip trail at Settlers Park in the “Green Meadow” area of the park on the west side. He stated that the idea is that the woodchip trail will give park users a better delineation that the west side of the park is in fact part of the park and that the woodchip trail would easily identify that the area is intended for passive park use (walking, hiking, etc.). He added that city staff has a possible idea to utilize some of the branches and limbs at the City’s Yard Waste Site for mulch but that the Park Board would have to pay to have the wood mulched and this could be used for the woodchip trail establishment. He noted that the cost of \$2,700 for the mulching of the entire pile was not budgeted for.

Mike Slavik asked what the cost of the woodchips would be for the entire length of the woodchip trail if purchased and how much woodchips would be needed overall.

Staff stated that they would add the woodchip trail to the 2010 goals listing along with the lineal feet needed to complete it.

7. Memorial Park “Digger Area” Discussion -

Planning Director Ondich stated that during last month’s park tour it was suggested that staff look into replacement equipment for the “digger area” at Memorial Park. He stated that the “digger area” is a roughly 16’ x 18’ area of the playground area separated by a sidewalk surround which contained sand and the diggers. He added that the diggers have continually been vandalized since they were installed in the fall of 2005 and city staff has not replaced them due to the continual vandalism that was occurring to them. He stated that he handed out some examples of equipment that would fit in the area, as provided by Flanagan Sales.

Katie Leaver stated that she though the area should be for younger kids.

Amy Jirik stated that she had found an idea for a “play cabin”. She stated she also likes the idea of an activity center which has something like tic-tac-toe. She also mentioned a possible adult exercise station for the parents.

Katie Leaver stated that she does not like activity centers as an additional piece of equipment because she would rather see children being more active. She also stated that she does not want to see another plastic “animal climber” which seem to be a many other parks in the City.

Amy Jirik stated that she liked the “play vehicle” idea that was provided by Flanagan Sales.

The Park Board consensus was for staff to obtain a quote for the “play vehicle” and to add the project and cost to the 2010 goals listing for future consideration.

8. Miscellaneous

A. Teri Hodapp Resignation – Planning Director Ondich stated that attached to the packet is a resignation e-mail from Teri Hodapp. He stated the City Council authorized re-advertising for the seat vacated by Teri and that it is possible a new appointment will be made at the Monday June 15th City Council meeting. He stated that the vacated seat’s term runs through December 31, 2010 so it is not a full term and that the new member should be in attendance at the July Park Board meeting. He stated that 4 applications were received by the deadline.

B. “No Motorized Vehicles” Signs on Trail Segments – Planning Director Ondich stated that staff would like input from the Park Board regarding the future placement of “No Motorized Vehicles” signs on trail segments. He stated that there are some trails which have these signs in place (along County Road 29 in Tikalsky Acres for example) and they do not seem to be effective, particularly during winter months when snowmobile users often utilize the walking trails as places to ride. He stated that the signs can be costly and contribute to a cluttered look along trails.

The Park Board recommended that staff and the Police Department research if signs need to be up for enforcement or if City Code alone is enough for enforcement.

C. Sliding Hill Skate Park Parking Lot: Student Use – Planning Director Ondich stated that during the 2008/2009 school year, students from New Prague High School have been utilizing the Sliding Hill Skate Park Parking lot instead of paying the fee to park in the schools parking lot. He stated that as the Park Board has discussed in the past, there is little in the way of regulations that can be enforced to keep students out of the lot because it is a public parking lot. He stated that the idea of “Park Users Only” signage was brought up, but would be unenforceable as it would be difficult to tell who is using the park or the trail system and parking in the lot versus who are students parking in the lot. He stated that he had spoken with Tim Rybak from the school district regarding the matter and he said they are not sure of the best solution and that it may get worse due to the fact that the student parking pass fee will be going up for the 2009/2010 school year. He stated that Mr. Rybak did suggest that a 4 hour parking time limit

be posted in the parking lot which would help prevent students from parking there all day. He stated that the Police department would have to mark tires and conduct follow up checks to ensure compliance, but that a big concern with a 4 hour parking time limit would be if a true park user is in the park for more than 4 hours if that is fair considering there is no parking time limit at other parks.

Amy Jirik suggested a 3 hour parking time limit instead of 4 hours so that students would not make it until lunch time which might provide them time to move their vehicle.

The Park Board indicated that a 3 hour time limit would be restrictive for those park users who would like to stay longer than 3 hours. The Park Board suggested a 3 hour time limit for weekdays during school hours.

Planning Director Ondich stated that he would discuss the idea further with the Police Department and School District and bring information forward at a future Park Board meeting.

D. Historic Bricks – Use in Parks – Planning Director Ondich stated that enclosed with the packet is a picture of a building that was recently demolished on the ConAgra Mill Property along 2nd Ave. SW. He stated that city staff managed to acquire a couple of bricks with permission of ConAgra to pass along to the Historical Society, but that a larger question that came up was if the Park Board may wish to take a more active role in utilizing historical items such as bricks from buildings that might be demolished to be utilized in future park beautification projects. He stated that the biggest issue is storage of such items, but the idea is that once historic items are gone, they are gone for good and if some property owners are willing to give them away it might be worth saving them.

Mike Slavik stated that he thought it was important for the City to watch out for future opportunities to preserve historic materials and possible re-use of them.

Allen Mahowald stated that the drinking fountain in Memorial Park near the Park Ballroom was actually created out of re-used brick from the former State Bank building along Main Street and was completed when he was on the park board many years ago.

E. Cedar Lake Regional Park Grand Opening – Planning Director Ondich stated that he had handed out flyers for the grand opening of Cedar Lake Regional Park on Saturday June 13th, 2009 and welcomed all the Park Board members to attend.

9. Adjournment

A motion was made by Mahowald seconded by Leaver, to adjourn the meeting at 7:42 P.M., which passed unanimously (5-0).

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
Planning Director