

**Meeting Minutes
New Prague Park Board
Tuesday, August 12, 2008
6:30 PM**

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:31 PM by Teri Hodapp. Members present were, Allen Mahowald (arrived after 3rd agenda item), Dominic McConnell, Amy Jirik, J.C. Ingebrand, Teri Hodapp and Kay Wilcox. Members absent were Mark Remfert. Staff present was Mike Johnson – City Administrator, Ken Ondich – Planning Director, Ryan Streff – Planning Intern, and Jim Calliguri – Parks Maintenance Supervisor.

2. Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Wilcox, seconded by Ingebrand to approve the July 8, 2008 meeting minutes, which passed unanimously (5-0).

3. Review Financial Reports

Planner Ondich presented the financial reports to the Park Board, noting that during the month of July an additional \$262.97 was added to the Park Equipment Fund from residential and commercial permits.

A motion was made by Ingebrand, seconded by McConnell to accept the financial reports as presented, which passed unanimously (5-0).

**4. 301 Lexington Ave. S. (Armory) - Hymnus Use Proposal
- Teen Center User Proposal**

Planner Ondich provided the background on the scoreboard assessment. He stated since last months meeting staff received two written proposals for groups that would like to utilize the old Armory Building at 301 Lexington Ave. S. He stated that one proposal was received from Mary Zard on behalf of “Hymnus, Inc.” which is a non-profit organization. He stated the other proposal was received from Wade Brod on behalf of a “New Prague Teen Center” group. He stated that Wade Brod is in attendance tonight to provide a brief overview of their plan.

“Teen Center” Discussion

Wade Brod stated that he proposed to the City Council the use of the Armory as a Teen Center. He stated Teen Center would be community based adult/youth facilitation. He stated that this type of use would be a safe environment for teens to go after school or sporting events. He stated that it is not faith based and is for high school kids. He stated

that Burnsville has a teen center like this called “The Garage” which New Prague teens drive to for certain events. He stated he would like to have a place like this for New Prague teens. He stated that there would be a youth board along with an adult board to over see the operations.

Hodapp asked what is going to happen when middle school kids try to get in.

Brod stated that they would offer them the opportunities to come and use the facility at certain times.

Wilcox asked if he had looked at the limitations of the building.

Brod stated that he has never been in the building.

Jirik asked if there are limitations on what can be changed in the building.

Ondich stated that the government is not specific on the layout of the building but is specific on the type of uses that can occupy the building. He stated that the Federal Government and the City Council have to approve the use.

Mahowald asked if this type of use would be permitted in the Armory.

Wilcox stated that at one time the idea of a Senior Center was brought up.

Mahowald asked where the operation funds would come from.

Wilcox stated that sometime the Armory would be a great location of the Park and Rec. office.

Ingebrand asked if the building could be used as a multi-use facility that could have BINGO during the day and a youth event at night.

Jirik asked if “Gods Barn” was still coming into town and if New Prague could support two teen centers.

Brod stated that he did not think that two similar centers like this could be supported in the city at this time.

Ondich stated that they are no longer looking exclusively at the barn and have decided to look at an office type outreach center location in downtown.

Wilcox stated that if the Park Board decides to lease the building the lawn around the Armory should still be able to be used by the city if needed.

Ondich stated that because of the water treatment building adjacent to the site some shifting of parking might need to be done so that security fencing could be installed.

Jirik asked how long the lease with the Department of the Interior was for.

Ondich stated that it is a 99 year lease with the Department of the Interior.

Brod stated that his next step is to secure a building for the Teen Center.

Ingebrand stated that he should go and look at the building and make sure it can be modified to fit his needs.

Brod stated that he will go and look at the building and get the numbers on what it will take to rehab the building. He stated that work on the building would be done by volunteers.

Brod stated they are looking at different grant applications for funding.

Hodapp asked if there is a projected date for the Teen Center.

Brod stated that he would like to have the center up and running in 2-4 months after he finds a location.

Hymnus Discussion

Wilcox asked if any other member know if Hymnus has ever approached the school for a room to use. She stated that we need to decide on a group that is the best use for the building and decide what group serves the highest number of people in the community.

Jirik asked if the plans for the building need to be approved by the government and the city.

Ondich stated that Hymnus has a Board of Directors and has experience running as a non-profit organization.

Jirik stated that Hymnus should look at the building and see what it will take to make the building functional for them.

Mahowald asked how many days a week Hymnus needs to use the building.

Wilcox stated that the Teen Center will benefit the community the most because Hymnus does not have a public purpose that will benefit the community. She stated that she is looking for the best use for the Armory building.

Ingebrand stated that Hymnus needs to find out if the building is feasible for them.

No motion was needed on this item. It was for discussion purposes only.

5. Recreational Facility Use Policy – July 2008 Draft

Planner Ondich provided the background on the Recreational Facility Use Policy draft. He stated at the June and July Park Board meetings the Park Board discussed the request by the New Prague Baseball Association for a new scoreboard. He stated at the May

Park Board meeting the New Prague Youth Baseball Association asked for field boxes to be placed at various fields. He stated the Park Board decided to fund \$1,000 towards the construction of field boxes if able to be used by all users of the fields, but regarding the scoreboard it was noted that no money was available from the Park Board. He stated it was during this time that he and former City Administrator Jerry Bohnsack drafted up a "Recreational Facility Use Policy". He stated the idea behind this policy would be that the City provides "basic" recreational facilities for all segments of the community and that anything beyond this and used for competition would be the responsibility of the competitive sponsors or the participants. He stated this policy basically supports the past decisions the Park Board has made regarding amenities and maintenance for competitive sports teams.

Hodapp asked what basic facilities are and what degree of expenses does this cover.

McConnell stated that it seems more like a maintenance policy.

Wilcox stated that it seems like a funding policy.

Hodapp stated that the Park Board needs to decide what is going to be considered basic and what is going to be considered extraordinary.

Johnson stated that finding ways to enter financial partnerships can enable the City to do a number of different projects that might not be able to be done if they had to be funded 100% by one group.

Hodapp stated that groups that come to the Park Board for funding or other items are all very organized/unorganized in their own way.

Johnson stated that this forces the organization to get together and decided what is in their best interest.

Hodapp stated that the Park Board needs to set criteria/standards for the organizations. She stated that the Park Board needs to be subjective but not overly objective so that it leaves organizations/people out.

Wilcox asked if the policy is to limiting.

Ingebrand stated the policy can be amended as needed.

Hodapp stated that staff should add the changes and develop the list of criteria/standards for organizations.

No motion was needed on this item. It was for discussion purposes only.

6. 2009 Park Board Budget/Goals Draft

Planner Ondich provided the background on the 2009 Park Board Budget/Goals Draft. He stated that he is open for comments or suggestions for the list. He stated that more specific costs will be available at next months meeting to ensure that the goals fit within

the budget constraints. He stated that the Park Board can expect another \$20,000 for the 2009 Park Board Budget and about \$60,000 of Park Equipment Funds as we start 2009.

Hodapp stated that bike racks should be added to the goal list. She asked if the cost for the bike racks could be taken out of the Park Equipment fund.

Wilcox asked how many bikes a \$250 bike rack could hold.

Jirik asked where the bike racks should be placed and if every park needs one.

Wilcox stated that the bike racks should be placed in areas where playgrounds and ball fields are located.

Ingebrand stated that the Park Board should find a bike rack that is liked and see if the City can build them.

Hodapp stated that trash cans for the trails should be added to the list.

Ingebrand asked if the trash cans should be placed at the ends of the trail or in the middle.

Wilcox stated that a prairie garden should be added to the green meadow by Settler's Park.

Wilcox stated that she contacted the teacher of the Construction Trades Class at the high school and asked if a warming house for Sliding Hill Skate Park could be built by the construction class.

Ingebrand asked what the cost would be for a warming house.

Hodapp stated that trash cans should be added to key points on the trails.

Wilcox stated that seasonal trash cans placed on the trail system could be an option.

Jirik asked where sand volleyball courts are needed.

Wilcox stated that a sand volleyball court could be added to Foundry Hill Park.

Hodapp stated that she would attend Dozinky Days to promote the park system on behalf of the Park Board.

Wilcox stated that a built in buffet type table could be added to park shelters. She stated that they are mounted to a pole in the shelter and made from decking material. She stated that a table like this adds a needed convenience to a park shelter.

Ingebrand stated that the Park Board needs to prioritize the goal list.

Wilcox asked if the Future Athletic Complex should continue to be on the Park Board goal list.

Jirik asked if there is a better location for the placement of an amphitheater. She stated that parks are not only for sports. She stated that they can be used for other events like the arts as well.

No motion was needed on this item. It was for discussion purposes only.

7. Miscellaneous

A. Mowing Wetland Areas

Planner Ondich provided the background on the wetland area. He stated at past Park Board meetings the issue of wetlands being mowed within City Limits has been raised and whether this is permitted or not. He stated that he has contacted the City Wetland Engineer Ben Meyer and Soil and Water Conservation District staff person Pete Beckius about mowing wetlands and they have provided the responses below. He stated the City does have an ordinance (that took effect in July 2008) that prohibits mowing in wetland areas and buffer areas to wetlands that are shown on new plats and which wetlands are covered by conservation easements. He stated that wetland buffer signs will be installed in the future. He stated this ordinance does not apply, however, to past platted or existing wetland areas.

Hodapp asked if there are fines for mowing these areas.

Ondich stated that Public Works likes to mow these areas so that weeds, particularly thistle, do not grow.

Wilcox stated that there is a lot of wildlife in these areas.

Calliguri stated that these areas should be mowed so that weeds do grow in these areas.

B. Park Fees Collected: 2001 to End of Second Quarter 2008

Planner Ondich provided the background on the park fees. He stated that these fees are based on Building Permit fees the City brings in. He stated that currently the fees being brought in are much lower than they have been in the past.

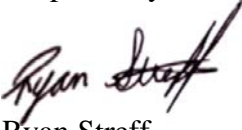
C. Damaged park sign

Wilcox stated that there is a tilted park sign on Columbus Ave. N.

8. Adjournment

A motion was made by Jirik, seconded by Dominic, to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 P.M., which passed unanimously (6-0).

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ryan Streff". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent flourish at the end.

Ryan Streff
Planning Intern