

**Meeting Minutes
New Prague Park Board
Tuesday, October 8th, 2024
6:00 PM**

1. Call Meeting to Order

The regular meeting was called to order at City Hall at 6:00 PM by Chair Joe Barten. Members present were Joe Barten, Christine Wolf, Jessica Dohm, Debra Tharaldson, Maggie Bass, Shannon Sticha, Matt Becka, and Youth Representative Jacob Bisek. Staff present were Ken Ondich – Planning / Community Development Director and Kyra Chapman – Planner.

**2. Approve Previous Meeting Minutes
September 10, 2024 Regular Meeting**

A motion was made by Wolf, seconded by Sticha, to approve September 10, 2024, regular meeting minutes. Motion carried (5-0-2). Bass and Becka abstained.

3. Review Financial Reports

Planning / Community Development Director Ondich presented the September financial report. Two new residential home permits were issued in September for a total of seven this year, contributing to roughly \$2,200 towards the Park Equipment Fund. The city has not received final bills for the Heritage Park lighting/electrical improvements.

A motion was made by Barten, seconded by Bass, to approve the financial reports. Motion carried (7-0).

4. Large Assembly Permit: Easter Egg Hunt – April 19, 2025

Alex Buresh from 705 Main St E inquired how soon in advance they can apply for a large assembly permit for the Easter Egg Hunt. Having an event date solidified helps them prepare for their advertising means.

Planning / Community Development Director Ondich explained that they could apply as soon as a year in advance.

Buresh explained that at their 2024 Easter Egg Hunt event it was difficult for the crowd to hear their verbal instructions. She asked if a megaphone could be utilized for providing instructions. No music would be played.

Staff and the Park Board did not have an issue with this. Staff recommended that at least a week prior to the event that Bring the Light Electric should notify neighbors that are abutting Southside Park.

Becka asked how many people came to the Easter Egg Hunt in the spring.

Jeff Buresh from 705 Main St E stated that they had close to 250 to 300 people there. More people will likely come next year.

A motion was made by Bass, seconded by Tharaldson to recommend approval to the city council for the 2025 Easter Egg Hunt with staff's recommended conditions below:

1. The City of New Prague shall be named as additional insured for the event since it is taking place in Southside Park and shall also be provided a copy of the Certificate of Insurance. The City shall be held harmless for any injuries or damages occurring during the event.
2. All of Southside Park shall be reserved for the event from 6am to 12pm on April 19th, 2025.
3. Bring the Light Electric shall provide notification of the event and associated activities to residential properties adjacent to Southside Park at least one week prior to the event.
4. The City will provide one portable restroom at Southside Park during the event.
5. The City of New Prague has the right to close off access to the baseball fields if they are wet, snowy, or frosty.

Motion carried (7-0).

5. Large Assembly Permit: NPAAC Summer Concert Series

Planner Chapman explained that the New Prague Area Arts Council (NPAAC) is proposing to host a summer concert series in 2025 on every other Wednesday in Memorial Park. In previous years, NPAAC has hosted their summer concert series at the Broz. In 2025, they will have their summer concerts on June 11th, Jun 25th, July 9th, July 23rd, and August 7th (Thurs) and potentially August 13th. Live music will occur under the shelter or on the concrete area near the shelter. They expect over 300 attendees. In addition to live music, there will be art projects at a table for youth and possibly free massage. Attendees will use the parking lot at Memorial Park, the golf course, or the Park Ballroom. Bathrooms at Memorial Park and the existing trash cans will be utilized.

Sandi Loxton, who is a member of the NPAAC, explained that they were advised to have the summer concert series at a different location. In the past, they've used Memorial Park for Czech Out New Prague. The POPS facility will hopefully be up in 2025. In 2024, there were 8 concerts. In 2025, they anticipate 5 concerts with a variety of bands such as a children's band.

Barten asked if people could utilize the ballfield during the concerts.

Planning/Community Development Director Ondich said that people could utilize the field for practice but staff would strongly discourage organized games since that would be a conflict of noise.

A motion was made by Dohm, seconded by Sticha to recommend approval to the city council for the NPAAC summer concert series with staff's recommended conditions below:

1. The City of New Prague shall be named as additional insured for the event since it is taking place in Memorial Park and shall also be provided a copy of the Certificate of Insurance. The City shall be held harmless for any injuries or damages occurring during the event.
2. All of Memorial Park shall be reserved for the event from 1pm to 10pm on June 11th, June 25th, July 9th, July 23rd, and August 7th, and potentially August 13th.
3. NPAAC shall provide notification of the event and associated activities to residential properties adjacent to Memorial Park at least one week prior to the event.
4. Electrical provisions in the park and shelter areas are limited. Events that require large amounts of electricity may require temporary service connections or a portable generator. All temporary electrical connections or portable generators will be required to be inspected by the state electrical inspector. Event holders should contact the New Prague utilities to review the event requirements and any cost that may be incurred.
5. NPAAC shall provide for their own set up of the stage, crowd control and parking attendance.
6. Live or recorded music must cease at 10pm or earlier.

Motion carried (7-0).

6. Move Batting Cage at Memorial Baseball Stadium

Public Works Director Rynda explained that New Prague Orioles requested to move the batting cage along the 1st base line side of Memorial Baseball Stadium to the area next to the bullpen area along the 3rd base line. Moving the batting cage would provide space to add a second "Czech deck" seating area. This would be at no cost to the City but the city could provide labor towards the project. In 2018, when there was a state tournament, they set a record attendance as well as this year by a couple thousand in Jordan and Shakopee. Amateur baseball has grown in popularity. Staff would not be surprised if record attendance increased next year. Nice amateur baseball fields usually have a batting cage on both sides of the field for home and away. Staff recommends the moving of the batting cages. Any damage to the existing field would be paid through the Memorial Park Funds. Rakes, shovels, clay all come from that fund. They have raised about \$30,000 from the state tournament. Multiple improvements have been made to the field such as the addition of new fencing around the bullpen. The future plans would be to concrete the

fenced area on the left field side. If there were enough funds, all the plans for the site could have been executed but for the time being, it's been piecemealed. There are no plans to expand past the north Czech deck.

Becka inquired if there was a capacity issue, current attendance, and the work the city would be taking on.

Rynda clarified that a second Czech deck would be added to the site. Average capacity with current seating is adequate. Fox-9's Town Ball Tour and state tournament in 2018 were packed. The city would contribute labor to move the Czech deck. It would be 4 employees for 3 to 4 days for labor and setting posts.

Becka asked if the field is locked.

Rynda replied that the batting cages are not locked and open to the public, but the field and seating area are locked. The batting cages were part of a donation by the Fire Department. There is frequent use of the batting cages. Temporary bleachers are brought in for state tournaments.

Planning / Community Development Director Ondich stated that when the city spoke with the State's office of accessibility for one Czech deck, they thought it was a good idea to create a similar Czech deck that also meets individual's accessibility needs. Furthermore, it would provide separate seating for home and away teams.

Rynda said that the city wants to make continued improvements to the Memorial Park Baseball Stadium. The city wants the field to be great, not good. The second Czech deck may not be needed every day but will be used. Moving the batting cage and adding a second Czech deck will not add labor to staff right now.

Dohm said that the field provides a good reputation for New Prague and could draw people to the area, which could lead to more shopping or getting something to eat in town.

Tharaldson mentioned that if parking is full at the stadium, they park a few blocks away. After walking to get to the stadium, people will want to sit down.

A motion was made by Dohm, seconded by Sticha to recommend approval to move the batting cage to the third base line near the bullpen. Motion carried (7-0).

7. Miscellaneous

- a. 2025 Budget and Future Projects Discussion** – Planning / Community Development Director Ondich mentioned that at the previous meeting there were discussions on the Soleris Sunshade structures at Central Plaza for temporary shade. It's about \$5,600 per umbrella. The umbrellas are static to meet wind and snow loads. SEH who created the Central Plaza plans recommended installing five total. Three could go near the tables and two near the benches to the north.

The city would be able to install umbrellas. There is \$35,000 in the budget but the city could take \$5,000 from that total towards the portable pickleball nets at the Middle School Tennis Court. The pickleball nets cost anywhere between \$400-\$1,500. The school district would be okay with the donation if the city decided to purchase them.

Bisek suggested that the umbrellas could be relocated to other parks if they are not needed after a period of time.

Dohm inquired on the longevity of the umbrellas.

Planning / Community Development Director Ondich stated that staff will look into that information. The umbrellas are new amenities, therefore, there is not enough known about their lifespan.

Barten suggested that the city should purchase 4 pickleball nets, preferably the higher quality nets.

A motion was made by Barten, second by Becka to amend the 2025 budget to include the Soleris Sunshade structures at Central Plaza and portable pickleball nets at the Middle School.

- b. Disc Golf Course Improvements** – Planner Chapman explained that the disc golf course grand opening occurred on Friday, September 13th at 10:00am. The New Prague Chamber of Commerce helped facilitate the ribbon cutting ceremony and advertise the event. Improvements to the course were paid for through city cash match and the Small Town Grant by Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF). The project improvements were under budget so staff reached out to SMIF to determine if the funds should be returned or use the remaining budget. If the city can use the remainder of the grant funds, it could pay for arrows that are affixed to baskets or potentially par signs on the existing signposts.

Becka noted that there has been more traffic on the course and the course has some added difficulties.

- c. Dog Park Update**– Planner Chapman stated that an article about the off-leash dog park was featured in the September 26th edition of the New Prague Times. The purpose of the article was to increase public knowledge about the park so that it would be further utilized.
- d. Comprehensive Plan Update / Small Area Plan Update**–Planning / Community Development Director Ondich stated that the Comprehensive Plan is being brought to City Council for final approval on October 21st. There was a public hearing at the Planning Commission meeting on September 25th. The City had received comments from Scott County and Helena Township. Most comments were not major. Scott County supported New Prague’s plan to create a trail

connection to Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park. Scott County would be willing to provide funding if New Prague can lead the project. Once the Comprehensive Plan is adopted, the city can start working on the Park Plan. In terms of the Small Area Plan, there is potential for grading to occur this fall at the location of the stage. The city is getting proposals for grading the whole area that is gravel and putting seed and topsoil. The POPS committee has hired an engineer and an architect for the structure of the stage.

- e. **POPS Newsletter** – Planner Chapman introduced the most recent POPS newsletter. The POPS Gala II occurred on October 4th from 6-9pm in the Park Ballroom featuring live music, and an online silent auction. At the last Gala, about \$6,500 were raised in the auction. As of September 1st, they have \$850,000 in pledges. They hope to reach their \$1 million goal by the end of 2024.
- f. **2025 Tree Giveaway Event** – Planner Chapman explained that SWCD recently got back to the city regarding their stock of 3’-4’ tall trees. Staff decided to order 50 Hazel Nut (2 bundles of 25) because staff thought it would be a popular species with residents and it would increase tree diversity in the community. The Tree Giveaway will likely occur again in April 2025.
- g. **Creek Clean Up** – The Park Board requested to start discussions again about the Creek Clean Up for 2025 at the next meeting.

8. Adjournment

Chair Barten adjourned the meeting at 7:05pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Kyra J. Chapman
Planner