

**Meeting Minutes
New Prague Park Board
Tuesday, January 12, 2021
6:00 PM**

1. Call Meeting to Order

The regular meeting was called to order at 6:01 PM by Vice Chair Anthony Anderson. Members present were Maggie Bass, Joe Barten, and Steve Roesner. Absent was Chair Amanda Judd (arrived at 6:08PM). Staff present was Ken Ondich – Planning / Community Development Director.

2. Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Barten, seconded by Roesner, to approve the December 8, 2020 regular meeting minutes. Motion carried (4-0, Judd had not yet arrived).

3. Review Financial Reports

Planning Director Ondich presented the financial reports to the Park Board noting that during the month of December there was \$417.28 added to the Park Equipment Fund from 1 new home permit being issued and that a total of 43 new home permits had been issued in 2020.

A motion was made by Barten, seconded by Roesner to accept the financial reports as presented. Motion carried (4-0, Judd had not yet arrived).

4. Brana Gateway Memorial Bricks – Michael Busch

Planning Director Ondich stated that City Staff recently received a call from Michael Busch who was seeking to create new memorial bricks for his parents to be put at the Brana in Greenway Park and that staff informed Mr. Busch that the brana brick program is inactive and that the City has a Memorial Park Bench and Tree Program, but Mr. Busch is inquiring about potentially re-establishing the brana brick program. He stated that current staff was not around when the Brana project occurred, but he was able to find information on the Brana and a little bit on the brick program. He stated that the brana bricks program appears to be a project of a group called “New Prague Opportunities” as well as possibly from the Chamber of Commerce from around 30 years ago and that as part of a fundraiser for the brana project bricks were sold at the Chamber office for \$25 each and could be inscribed with a message. He stated that the City does not have any other information in the files about the bricks such as how much money was raised, how the bricks were inscribed or how many bricks were bought for the plaza at the brana, but there are several bricks that were not inscribed. He stated that at this time, staff would like the Park Board’s opinions on re-starting the brana brick program to replace uninscribed bricks with newly inscribed bricks with the funds raised possibly being used for repair and maintenance on the brana and the plaza/garden area around it.

Vice Chair Anderson asked if funds raised could be put in a fund designated for a specific purpose.

Planning Director Ondich stated that putting the funds in a designated fund account would be possible and identified for specific projects.

Joe Barten stated that he believes the brana and plaza project was a specific moment of time where the funds were raised for that specific project and he would rather see a push for a larger scale project such as full plaza replacement rather than a few one off brick donations. He stated that he thinks it would be less feasible to have just a few bricks purchased and replaced at a time. He suggested that bricks as a fundraiser might also be a better idea for an entirely new project within a city park such as the downtown central plaza for example.

Vice Chair Anderson stated that maybe there would even need to be in-house inscribing capabilities if only a few bricks were done at a time.

Maggie Bass stated that she serves on the committee for the central plaza project and could bring up the discussion of fundraising as it relates to that project whenever they reconvene. She stated that the project was more to honor the history of the city than to be a place of memorials, but was an idea to discuss.

Steve Roesner asked if bricks could be inscribed on site so that the bricks wouldn't have to be removed. He also noted that the cost of the bricks would also have to be significantly higher than \$25 per brick to make the program worthwhile if it were to be opened back up.

Vice Chair Anderson stated that based on his experience in order to remove a brick an adjacent brick may need to be broken and removed.

Joe Barten stated that there are tools to remove bricks, but these bricks have been in the ground for over 30 years.

Maggie Bass stated that there are other memorial programs within the City that are set up and that those should be looked at with Mr. Busch at this time and that future endeavors for fundraising could be explored.

The Park Board took no further action at this time relating to the fundraising bricks at the Brana plaza area.

5. Miscellaneous

- a. 2022-2026 Project Plan** – Planning Director Ondich stated that he attached the 2022 – 2026 Project Plan as updated following the last Park Board Meeting and that he would keep the list on the agenda each month to discuss project ideas as they come up. He stated that he first wanted to confirm the projects for 2021 and noted that he recently spoke with the City Engineer to put together a quote package to find a contractor to complete the Southside Park Drainage project and that the drinking

fountain at Southside Park would most likely be done by city staff and fit in as time allows.

Joe Barten stated that he's been using the Northside Park sliding hill and noted that it gets dark so early it would be nice to have a light.

Maggie Bass stated that she lives next to the park and stated that neighbors may have issues with lights. She stated that input from the neighbors would be advisable and that she noted that lights at the northside park court area should also be discussed even though summer use means it is light much later into the evening.

Planning Director Ondich stated that he would obtain some pricing for lights at the sliding hill and court area that would include timers and other controls, including lights that would limit affect on neighboring properties. He stated that he could bring the information back to the park board to discuss further and to schedule a potential neighborhood meeting to gather input on the lighting improvements.

Joe Barten also stated that he was concerned about the water that is held on the floor of the new picnic shelter at Heritage Park.

The Park Board stated that they were concerned about this in general and that they would like to know if there is a fix to the problem.

Planning Director Ondich stated that they were aware of the issue and that there were punch list items remaining to be completed on the shelter. He stated that he would let the Park Board know what could be done.

- b. Fitness and Aquatic Center Update** – Planning Director Ondich stated that the fitness center portion of the FAC re-opened on December 21st, 2020 with a 25% capacity, not to exceed 100 people, a 12' physical distancing requirement where exercising is occurring and with face coverings being required at all times. He also noted that on January 4, 2021, the pool was able to re-open with reservations being required for lap swimming use on odd lanes only and with water walking allowed in the current channel but only one person at a time. He also stated that swim lessons and organized youth sports could also use the pool at this time. He stated that the 25% capacity, not to exceed 150 people is the limit on the entire facility together. He stated that the financial picture would once again show major losses for the most recently shut down. Maggie Bass noted that Scott County was offering grants to help off set costs to the FAC at up to \$15,000 which would provide some assistance to the City's and School's finances related to the FAC.

- c. Ice Rinks and Warming House** – Planning Director Ondich stated that flooding the rinks at Sliding Hill Skate Park and Settler's Park has recently occurred and that the City was able to open the recreational rink areas at Sliding Hill Skate Park and Settlers Park on January 5th. He stated that the hockey rink was not officially opened at this time due to unauthorized use slowing the progress of the ice making. He stated that staff had also received updated guidance from the state

regarding the warming house and that it was able to be opened at 25% capacity along long as social distancing could be met. He stated that staff determined that 25% capacity was 12 to 14 occupants but that with social distancing being maintained the number probably would drop to about 10. He stated that staff had not yet hired rink attendants, but that if they could it probably would be worth opening the warming house. The Park Board agreed that they would like to see the warming house open at 25% capacity with social distancing being maintained. They also mentioned discussing the option of opening without a rink attendant with appropriate signage and with occasional stops by the police if possible.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:01 PM by order of Vic Chair Anderson.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ken Ondich". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ken Ondich
Planning / Community Development Director