

**Meeting Minutes
New Prague Park Board
Tuesday, September 20, 2011
6:30 PM**

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Chair Sharon Brown. Members present were Matthew Lasch, Maggie Bass, Allen Mahowald, Mike Slavik, Sharon Brown and Youth Representative John Knoer. Absent were Amy Jirik and Council Representative Shawn Ryan. Staff present was Ken Ondich – Planning Director and Jim Calliguri – Parks Maintenance Supervisor.

2. Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Bass, seconded by Lasch to approve the July 12, 2011 meeting minutes. Motion carried (5-0).

3. Review Financial Reports

Planning Director Ondich presented the financial reports to the Park Board, noting that during the month of August no additional funds were added to the Park Equipment Fund from residential and commercial permits.

A motion was made by Mahowald, seconded by Bass to accept the financial reports as presented. Motion carried (5-0).

4. Youth Ball Field Reservation Policy Review – Comments Received

Planning Director Ondich stated that during the first week in August the Youth Ball Field Reservation Policy was mailed out to 36 representatives of various teams, leagues, school district and community education department. He stated that he asked for comments back by August 29, 2011 and that no comments were received by this deadline other than Mark Novak of the New Prague Youth Baseball Association indicating that their group would like to come to a Park Board meeting and voice their concerns in person. He stated that he did receive other comments via e-mail from two other representatives in addition to Brad Skogerboe of the New Prague School District. He stated that the two teams that provided comments do not want to have to pay a fee to use the fields and that they also made a suggestion that the teams can “work it out” if there are conflicts. He stated that the proposed “fees” follow the same structure as was developed for the adult teams currently, which is based on the number of times a team uses a field and that the fees were tied back to staff hours for mowing, maintenance and general repairs as averaged among the fields. He stated that a memo drafted by the Park Board about ball team fees was last reviewed by the City Council in 2010 but no changes were made to add a youth team at that time.

Matthew Lasch stated that he had spoken with Mike Sticha of the St. Patrick’s field and that they charge a fee for the use of their fields.

Maggie Bass stated that she felt the fees were appropriate. She stated that the Park Board's argument for the fees could be bolstered with updated information about the maintenance fees the city incurs.

Planning Director Ondich stated that he and Jim Calliguri would update the cost of maintenance for the fields for review by the Park Board next month.

Mike Slavik asked why the fee would not be supported by the City Council if most teams had not objected to paying a fee. He stated that in these economic times the City could use the revenue. He stated that because the teams using the fields are competitive teams and that the participants pay a fee to be on the teams that it is only fair that the City be compensated for the use of the fields. He stated that while the fields are being reserved and used for competitive teams they are not available to the general public.

Planning Director Ondich asked Jim Calliguri if it would be possible to make sure fields are dragged for both games and practices if the team fee would apply to all teams regardless of how they use the fields.

Jim Calliguri stated that they currently do not have enough staffing to drag the fields right before the games, but the revenue from the field use could help pay for another staff person to complete the work.

Mike Slavik asked about utilizing volunteers.

Jim Calliguri stated that some teams have suggested 16 year olds to do the work, but only 18 year olds are allowed to run equipment and they also need a permit to drive the equipment as well.

The Park Board asked staff to update the field maintenance fees and to bring the matter back for final discussion at a future meeting before forwarding to the City Council for consideration.

5. Quote for Replacement Trees – Settlers and Southside Park

Planning Director Ondich that as is listed on the 2011 Park Board Projects and Goals listing, staff has obtained a quote from Trees Plus for replacement Trees for Settlers Park and Southside Park. He stated that a total of \$2,250 was budgeted for this purpose. He stated that the quote from Trees Plus provides for 2" to 2.5" caliper trees planted by a tree spade including any of the following species: Norway Maple, Deborah Maple, Autumn Blaze Maple, Linden, Red Oak, Sugar Maple and River Birch for \$250 each and that at the quoted price, a total of 9 trees could be purchased with staff to determine the appropriate location and type of trees for each park.

Mike Slavik stated that he has had very good results with trees from Trees Plus.

A motion was made by Slavik, seconded by Mahowald to approve the purchase of 9 trees from Trees Plus as noted on the quote dated 7/29/11 to be paid for from the 2011 Park Board Budget. Motion carried (5-0).

6. Review 2012 Park Board Projects and Goals Listing

Planning Director Ondich presented a draft list of the 2012 Park Board Projects and Goals noting that the list needs to be approved as soon as possible by the Park Board. He stated that similar to 2011, a starting point of \$14,600 has been put into the preliminary budget but that the City Council can choose to cut therefore it is important to rank the projects in order from 1 (top priority) to the least priority. He noted that the current project list is \$7,900 over the \$14,600 requested budget amount so it will need to be reduced/modified by that amount. He stated that as with 2011, the list does not contain "Park Equipment Fund" purchases for 2012.

The Park Board recommended that the Memorial Park and Southside Park entrance signs be removed from the current year list and placed back on the long term list.

Maggie Bass asked if consideration should be made to have a trail of the pet waste stations before purchasing many of them.

The Park Board recommended budgeting for one pet waste station to be placed in Greenway Park as a trial.

Jim Calliguri suggested increasing the buffet table costs to \$2,000 to be installed at two shelters in Memorial Park and also at Foundry Hill Park and Northside Park.

The Park Board noted that they were short on projects for 2012 with the changes suggested and asked staff to move the 2-5 play structure for Southside Park from the longer term list to the 2012 list.

Planning Director Ondich stated that he would revise the listing and provide options for a 2-5 play structure at Southside Park for review at the October Park Board meeting.

7. Miscellaneous

- a. **Results from Online Trail Survey** – Planning Director Ondich stated that the final action item from the City's Participation in the Statewide Health Improvement Program (S.H.I.P.) was the completion of an online survey regarding the use of the City's trail system. He stated that earlier this year the survey was created with the assistance of S.H.I.P. staff and posted online using a free online survey service at www.kwiksurveys.com. He stated that the survey was posted online from May 11, 2011 through September 5, 2011 with a total of 64 responses received. He stated that the survey was advertised in the City's Newsletter, the City's Website and also on the City's Facebook page. He stated that some of the key results were:
 - During warm weather months, most residents use the trails 1-4 days per week.
 - During cold weather months, most residents never use the trails.
 - Most residents using the trails use them for walking/jogging.
 - Most residents feel safe using the trails.
 - As a reason why residents are less likely to use the trails, most residents noted that they did not know where they lead or connect.

- Most residents had used the Greenway Trail (which starts behind Subway/Fishtale) but noted that they would use it more if it were a loop instead of a dead end as it exists currently.
 - In the general comments, there were many comments that the trails need to be continued, looped or better connected to other trails or area amenities.
- b. BAM – Donated Bike Rack** – Planning Director Ondich stated that the Bicycle Across Minnesota (BAM) group donated a bike rack along with some educational materials. The educational materials have been placed in the City Hall lobby and the bike rack will be installed in the small City “park” located downtown.
- c. Hockey Rink Boards – Issue** – Planning Director Ondich stated that it has recently come to the attention of City Staff that some area cities including Shakopee, Inver Grove Heights, Rosemount and Watertown have all experienced similar cracking and dasher board durability issues with their dasher board systems that are identical to the system at Sliding Hill Skate Park. He stated that the City has had various issues with the “Prowall” system manufactured by Sport Resource Group of Minneapolis. He stated that the dasher boards are a “plastic” product that was guaranteed to stand up to cold weather use. He provided a short history as follows:
- City purchased “Prowall” dasher board system (manufactured by SRG) in May of 2008 through Becker Arena Products. Cost was \$22,937.
 - Various cracks and breaks in the boards over the 2008/2009 season caused the City to contact Becker for an explanation of the issues.
 - Becker explained that the “Prowall” system we purchased was not an “upgraded” version that was used as a reference for the initial purchase.
 - The City threatened litigation and ultimately reached a settlement to replace the entire board system to an upgraded “cross-link resin” system for \$3,825 in June 2009. (total cost of system at this point is now \$26,762). The limited 3 year warranty reset to end on 6/16/12.
 - No significant issues were experienced during the winter of 2009/2010 with the new system.
 - Following the 2010/2011 winter season, various cracks and breaks were experienced from “typical” hockey rink use (see attached pictures). In April the City replaced 3 panels at ½ the normal replacement cost per the limited warranty. \$862 was the cost of the replacement panels. (total cost is now up to \$27,624).
 - City was informed that Shakopee, Inver Grove Heights and Rosemount had been in discussions about the same issues over a couple year period with the same dasher board system. They indicated that they were all seeking a replacement wood system or a cash settlement from the manufacturer (SRG). A \$30,000 settlement was a figure that they determined would be acceptable from SRG. At this point, Shakopee’s settlement request has been denied and requests have not been sent by Inver Grove Heights or Rosemount, of New Prague. It should also be noted that Shakopee was given a 1

year warranty extension and “kick plate replacements” based on their earlier complaining about damage from typical use.

He stated that staff has asked City Attorney Scott Riggs for an opinion on how to move forward with the product knowing that we will continue to have issues and that the limited warranty ends after the coming season of use. He added that the City attorney works for the same firm that Shakopee’s attorney works for and they will discuss the matter in the near future. He stated that as a replacement option, the city has past experience with wooden systems and is not sure that such a system would be any less of a headache than the current system. He stated that staff also researched a competitor’s product (Athletica’s Gamplex system), but it recently has been specified that it is not suitable for ice hockey use.

- d. **Thank You for Donated Plants in Memorial Park** – Matthew Lasch stated that he had a Thank You card for the Park Board to sign for the company that anonymously donated the native plans for the Memorial Park planting project completed in the spring.
- e. **Chimney Swift Towers** – Sharon Brown stated that she had recently obtained some information about a possible future Eagle Scout Project for the construction of Chimney Swift towers. She stated that she would provide information to staff to put on file.

8. Adjournment

Chair Brown adjourned the meeting at 7:34 PM. Motion carried (5-0).

Respectfully Submitted,



Ken Ondich
Planning Director