

PARK COMMITTEE MEETING
February 11, 2014
Minutes

Call Meeting to Order

Chairman John Flynn called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

Members Present

John Flynn, Leslie Gustafson, Jim Elvestrom, Patrick Regan, Jonathan Weiss, Cindy Webster, Scott Ferguson, and City Administrator Dana Young

Members Absent

None

December 3, 2013 Minutes

The Committee approved the December 3, 2013 minutes on a motion by Jim Elvestrom, seconded by Leslie Gustafson. Motion carried 7-0.

Scott Ferguson, Term Limit

Dana Young stated that Scott Ferguson's second three term of office officially expires this month. He stated that with the difficulty in finding new members, one option would be for the Park Committee to recommend the reappointment of Scott Ferguson to an additional one year term of office. He stated that this might give the Committee suitable time to eventually find a replacement.

Motion by Cindy Webster to reappoint Scott Ferguson to a one year term of office effective until February 2015. Seconded by Leslie Gustafson. Motion carried 7-0.

2014 Chair & Vice-Chair

Motion by Cindy Webster to reappoint John Flynn as 2014 Chair of the Park Committee and Scott Ferguson as 2014 Vice-Chair of the Park Committee. Seconded by Jim Elvestrom. Motion carried 7-0.

Leslie Gustafson stated that she might have an interest in serving as Chair next year.

Park Reports

Committee members provided their monthly park reports:

Scott Ferguson noted that the ice rinks are not plowed by the City crew on weekends and that the Village Hall warming house was not open at around 11:00 a.m. last Saturday. Dana Young stated that it is the City's policy to not require the public works crew to plow rinks or trails on weekends due to overtime costs. He added that he will contact the individual responsible for opening & closing the warming houses about the incident last Saturday.

Jonathan Weiss noted that there seems to be an inordinate amount of dog poop at Thorpe Park this winter. Jim Elvestrom agreed and that there are a lot of dogs running off their leash and there seems to be a lot of dog poop on the walking path.

Thorpe Park Usage

Discussion was held regarding recreational usage at Thorpe Park in light of Brian Larson's request to install a lacrosse field at Thorpe Park. Brian Larson, 18920 Park Avenue, was present to continue discussions on this issue.

Dana Young stated that he has received preliminary schedules from the Minnetonka Baseball Association (formerly East Tonka Little League) on their proposed use of the two fields at Thorpe Park and a list of over 120 Deephaven residents who participate in their baseball program. He stated that according to their schedule, they use both fields from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., Monday – Friday, from late April to around July 4th. He stated that the 2014 baseball schedule is typically determined in March.

John Flynn noted that Tonka United also uses the outfield near the basketball court two or three nights per week for practice.

Dana Young asked Brian Larson about the length of the LaCrosse season. Brian Larson stated that the season runs from May through July.

Patrick Regan stated that he would like to maximize the use of the park and there shouldn't be a monopoly on park usage.

Brian Larson stated that he thought the soccer practices were informal and he hasn't seen a lot of use of the baseball field in the NW corner of the park.

Jim Elvestrom stated that he lives right across from the park and has seen kids using this field a lot. He stated that it is typically full from 5:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. every evening.

Brian Larson stated that he would like to see the fields shared more evenly and noted that LaCrosse has been growing in popularity, much of it at the expense of baseball & soccer.

Dana Young stated that it would be difficult for the City to eliminate the baseball field due to the City's ongoing investment in the maintenance of the fields and the relatively new purchase of the backstops.

John Flynn stated that there is non-baseball space in the outfield or the hockey rink.

Jim Elvestrom asked if the hockey rink could be used for LaCrosse practices. Brian Larson stated that the rink would be too small.

Further discussion was held on the lack of practice fields this summer due to some renovations that are planned at the High School and at several Elementary Schools.

Cindy Webster stated that we should do what we can to help with the lack of field space this year.

Scott Ferguson suggested that Brian talk with St. Therese about any space that they might have available for this program. Brian stated that it might be tough to find space this year at St. Therese due to the construction of the senior housing facility.

Dana Young stated that he will talk with Tonka United to see if there can be a shared use of the outfield space this summer.

Scott Ferguson exits at 8:45 p.m.

Dogs Permitted at Deephaven Beach

Dana Young stated that it has been a Park Committee policy to allow dogs' access to the blacktopped path through Deephaven Beach. He stated that the City Council reviewed a complaint from Pat Paul regarding dogs running at large at the beach and referred the matter to the Public Safety Committee for their consideration. He stated that the Public Safety Committee recommended that dogs no longer be permitted on the Deephaven Beach path due to ongoing problems with dogs running at large and defecating in the beach area.

Jonathan Weiss stated that this is an awful pretty place to walk your dog.

Cindy Webster asked if this is a huge problem. Dana Young stated that the public works crew has indicated that the amount of cleanup required at the beach from dogs has increased.

It was the general consensus of the Committee to continue the policy of allowing individuals to walk their dogs on the path portion of the beach but to increase police enforcement.

Arbor Day Celebration

Dana Young stated that the annual Arbor Day Celebration has been scheduled for Sunday, April 20th at 1:00 p.m. at Thorpe Park.

Lesley Gustafson noted that April 20th is Easter.

Dana Young stated that the Arbor Day Celebration will then be moved to Sunday, April 27th.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Patrick Regan, seconded by Jonathan Weiss. Motion carried 6-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Park Committee will be held on Tuesday, March 4, 2014.