

PARK COMMITTEE MEETING
December 5, 2017
Minutes

Call Meeting to Order

Chairman Patrick Regan called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Members Present

Patrick Regan, Scott Hemink, Lindsey Carr, Wendy Duren, Jonathan Weiss, and City Administrator Dana Young

Members Absent

Tracy Whitney, Scott Ferguson, and Kent Carlson

September 12, 2017 Minutes

The Committee approved the September 12, 2017 Park Committee minutes on a motion by Wendy Duren, seconded by Patrick Regan. Motion carried 5-0.

Matters from the Floor

Jaxon Bak, 19080 Eastwood Drive, was present to request permission to install 10-20 bat houses on trees in Burton Park and along the LRT Trail. He stated that he is a member of the Boy Scouts of America and is working towards becoming an Eagle Scout. He stated that bat houses help to naturally reduce mosquitoes.

Wendy Duren stated that bat houses are not as successful on trees and should be at least 10' above the ground. She added that the success of bat houses also depends on their receiving sufficient sun light.

Jaxon Bak stated that he plans to install them 15'-20' feet above the ground and locate them near the Back Bay, where there would be enough sunshine.

Scott Hemink asked if the bat houses need maintenance.

Jaxon Bak stated that the bat houses are constructed with an addition coat and shouldn't need any other maintenance. In answer to additional questions, Jaxon stated that the bat houses would be installed using screws and he would plan on using a ladder to install the bat houses on trees to a distance of 15'-20' above the ground. He added that this would be a spring or summer project.

Dana Young noted that the City of Deephaven owns Burton Park but any plans to install bat houses along the LRT Trail would have to go through the Three Rivers Park District. Further discussion was held on locating the bat houses on city-property at or near Haralson Park instead of the LRT Trail.

The Committee stated that they don't have any objections to the project and requested that Jaxon provide City staff with the construction plans for the bat houses, a plan outlining how to safely install the bat houses, and to contact staff once the proposed tree locations have been marked.

Park Reports

Brief discussion was held on the improvements to the Thorpe Park Hockey Rink and pending improvements to the Warming House.

Scott Hemink stated that he has talked with the Minnetonka Baseball Association and they expressed a willingness to upgrade the Thorpe ball fields by installing ag lime. He stated that a final decision would be made after the results of the February registration. He stated that the MBA would consider adding ag lime to the fields, or expanding the field, or installing an adjustable field. He added that the MBA currently maintain Freeman Fields and further discussion on the proposed field improvements would be held sometime after the registration period.

Wendy Duren asked if the City were planning to do something to avoid icing the walking path at Thorpe Park when icing the rinks. Dana Young stated that he would talk to public works about this issue.

Appoint 2018 Chair & Vice-Chair

Discussion on the appointment of a 2018 Chair and Vice-Chair was postponed until the February 2018 meeting.

Discuss 2018 Committee Appointments

Discussion on the reappointment of Committee members was postponed until the February 2018 meeting.

Discuss Bikeway Feasibility Grant

Patrick Regan stated that he met with the Bike Grant Administrator and sent out several bike feasibility studies that had been undertaken in other communities. He stated that the Administrator was interested to see if the bikeway could enter Minnetonka by connecting to Hwy 101 and Minnetonka Blvd. Patrick stated that he has not discussed this with Minnetonka as he wanted to meet with the Park Committee on this issue first. He stated that the original concept was to install a walking path along that portion Minnetonka Blvd through Deephaven to the Deephaven Elementary School.

Lindsey Carr voiced her concern about installing a bike path on the shoulder of Minnetonka Blvd.

Patrick Regan stated that one of the reasons that we were given such a large grant is due to these concerns and with the hope that we could consider the connection to Hwy 101 and Minnetonka Blvd.

Scott Hemink stated that the user of this bike path is probably not children due to the concerns with safety along Minnetonka Blvd. He asked how we move forward with this grant.

Patrick Regan stated that we would develop a Request for Proposals and sent it out to contractors. He noted that the City could potentially receive up to \$150,000 in grant funding for the construction of the bike path.

Scott Hemink noted that the lack of a viable bike path along Minnetonka Blvd is one of the chief complaints from residents.

Wendy Duren stated that it is important to identify the bike path prior to the reconstruction of Minnetonka Blvd in 2020.

Scott Hemink stated that it might be worth the additional engineering cost to consider the development of a bike path plan all the way along Minnetonka Blvd through Greenwood.

Jonathan Weiss stated that it would make more sense to just take the bike path to the Elementary School. He noted that the LRT Trail already parallels Minnetonka Blvd all the way to Excelsior.

Dana Young agreed and stated that this would require us to coordinate further bike path designs and costs with the City of Greenwood, who are very unlikely to support a bike path anyway.

Patrick Regan stated that he will draft up a Request for Proposals and compile a list of potential contractors for our review. He added that it would be helpful to get additional Council guidance on how much the City would be willing to contribute towards the grant and the overall scope of the bike path.

Discuss Park Usage Fees

Dana Young presented a Park Usage Fee survey provided by the Tonka Bay City Administrator for Committee review.

Scott Hemink stated that park usage fees could be established that could raise \$15,000 or so each year from the associations that are using our parks to assist in park maintenance costs.

Dana Young questioned whether that much could be raised since he was only aware of two associations using our parks – the Minnetonka Baseball Association using the ball fields and Minnetonka Community Educations using our tennis courts. He added that even though the associations are charged for these park usage fees, it is the parents who actually pay for it.

Patrick Regan stated that as long as Deephaven residents are using the parks as part of the associations, he personally doesn't mind not charging for field use.

Patrick Regan noted that soccer practices are also held at Thorpe Park. Wendy Duren also noted that the Healthy Kids Running Program also use Thorpe Park.

Scott Hemink stated that perhaps park usage fees are not worth discussing if the City Council isn't interested.

Dana Young stated that he isn't sure whether the Council would be interested in charging for field usage or not. He noted that they do have some interest in charging Minnetonka Community Education for their tennis court use, particularly due to the high cost of maintaining the courts. He stated that he will ask the Council if they have any interest in pursuing the use of park usage fees.

Other

There were no other issues to discuss this evening.

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting of the Park Committee will be held on February 13, 2018.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Wendy Duren, seconded by Lindsey Carr. Motion carried 5-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.