

EDINA PARK BOARD
7:00 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
EDINA CITY HALL
SEPTEMBER 13, 2005

MEMBERS PRESENT: George Klus, Jeff Johnson, Linda Presthus, Todd Fronek, Jeff Sorem, Karla Sitek, Ray O'Connell, Mike Damman, Mike Weiss

MEMBERS ABSENT: Andy Finsness

STAFF PRESENT: John Keprios, Ed MacHolda, Janet Canton, Vince Cockriel, Donna Tilsner

OTHERS PRESENT: Jim VanValkenburg, David Andreasen, Annie Glavan, Jim Grotz, Alex Piazza, Blair Ransom, Weld Ransom, Germana Paterlini, Steve Spellman, Jack Keegan, Helen Woelfel, Russelle Kimmel, Bradley Benn, Martha Rice, Dianne Plunkett Latham, Dan Latham, Gregg Bjork, Jill Brewer, Renae DeBates, Marcia Friedman, Bob Dildine, Arden Aanestad, Edward Janiga, Al Alexander, Paul Bastyr, Jean White, Paul Bearmon, Katie Meehan, Patti Ellingson-Solheim, Bob Solheim

I. APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 14, 2005 PARK BOARD MINUTES AND JULY 26, 2005 SPECIAL PARK BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Linda Presthus MOVED TO APPROVE THE JUNE 14, 2005 PARK BOARD MINUTES AND THE JULY 26, 2005 SPECIAL PARK BOARD MINUTES. Mike Damman SECONDED THE MOTION. MINUTES APPROVED.

II. HURRICANE RELIEF BAND CONCERT REQUEST – BLAIR RANSOM

Blair Ransom, 5217 Abercrombie Drive, indicated that he is a student at Edina High School and is a member of a band. He noted that two other band members are also with him tonight. He explained that their plan is to put on a benefit concert at the Centennial Lakes Centrum Building in light of the recent events in New Orleans and the Gulf Coast. He stated that the reason they are here is to request that the rental fee be waived because the rental fee would be a significant dent in their donations. It was noted that the dates they are hoping to have the concert would be either September 23rd or September 24th. Mr. Ransom stressed that 100% of the profits would be donated to the Red Cross. Mr. O'Connell stated that he would like to commend and thank Mr. Ransom and his band members for their message, it's very good.

Mr. Keprios asked Mr. Ransom how they plan to collect the money and are they going to sell tickets or pass the hat. Mr. Ransom stated that they feel the most effective way to collect money would be to ask for donations where they will have a table set up to collect the donations. He explained that having a cover charge is a major turn-off for a lot of kids and feels it would deter a lot of kids from coming. Mr. Keprios stated that the city would need some assurance that the monies do in fact find their way to the Red Cross and asked Mr. Ransom to follow up in writing the amount of donations that are collected. Mr. Ransom noted that they will have a group of people collecting the donations and writing down names and amounts to which he will present it to Mr. Keprios once the concert is over.

Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that he has discussed this with the Centennial Lakes Manager Tom Shirley to which he totally supports this and thinks it's a great idea. He stated that there will be no out-of-pocket expenses for the city because basically what they are asking for is to waive the rental fee.

Linda Presthus MOVED TO WAIVE THE FEE FOR SEPTEMBER 23RD OR 24TH FOR THE HURRICAN RELIEF BAND CONCERT. Karla Sitek SECONDED THE MOTION.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

III. YOUTH SPORTS PRESENTATION – PAUL BEARMON

Mr. Klus informed the Park Board that Paul Bearmon, an Edina resident, would like to give a presentation and talk briefly about some of his beliefs when it comes to youth sports and what he is doing to promote these youth athletics.

Paul Bearmon, 4526 Arden Avenue, gave a prepared speech presentation (see attached prepared speech).

Dr. Bearmon stated that the reason he is here tonight is because he really doesn't know where else to go. He noted that if you go back 30 or 40 years it was Park and Recreation that manned the youth programs. However, in many of the suburban areas associations were given that control and at some level it did make sense because it was a way of saving money and maybe a way of hopefully giving the community a little more input, but now the problem has become one of supervision. There's nobody watching these programs. For example, let's say basketball is going to not give a team 12 hours but instead six. No one is going to object because if a parent objects their kid is going to become blacklisted. Dr. Bearmon noted that what he is asking the Park Board to do is take a look at this issue and the way it's evolving.

Mr. Fronck indicated that he coaches football and thinks football is good in the sense that the coaches come up with four equal teams for all of the grade levels. There's no traveling or elite team and asked Dr. Bearmon if he has looked at how the other associations work. Dr. Bearmon replied that he doesn't have the knowledge of how all of

the other associations work in Edina. However, football does seem to be doing it correctly or at least a lot better than everyone else and that's one of the reasons why kids stay with football. Mr. Fronck pointed out that the high school football coach said it himself the number one reason that kids quit sports is because they are either put in the wrong position or they are put at the bottom of the line. Therefore, if they can do something as a Park Board then he thinks it should be their duty to do that. Dr. Bearmon pointed out that the notion that somehow evolved among the people running these associations is to start out with a large broad group e.g. 200 kids and try to end up with 20 with the hope that those 20 will eventually give Edina a good high school team. He noted that what they should do is start with a large group of kids and keep those kids as long as they can. He noted that if the majority of kids are being told in 5th, 6th and 7th grade that you're just not cutting it is atrocious. He stated that he is not talking about high school kids because it's tough enough telling a 14 or 15 year-old that they don't make a team. Dr. Bearmon indicated if you look at basketball for example, if you look at the discrepancy of hours given to one group versus the other you have to ask the question why this is happening especially when these are public facilities.

Ms. Presthus indicated that she thinks Dr. Bearmon brings up some very valid points, however, there are several levels and layers of playing and she is not exactly sure what Dr. Bearmon is asking for because she is hearing a mix of two things. The issues seem to be having kids get cut from an elite team and the psychological effects versus the playing time. She pointed out that by definition house leagues are typically less of a time commitment and less playing time because that is what the people desire and people who want a more intense and involved curriculum go to the traveling teams. Ms. Presthus asked Dr. Bearmon if he is questioning the Park Board in the allocation of time and if he feels that the associations don't give equal time to the traveling and house league because she will argue there is a reason for that. Dr. Bearmon replied that perhaps he didn't quite clarify what he is trying to say. He stated that first there is no supervision so there isn't anyone who has the understanding of kid's growth and development. Second, he agrees that there are plenty of people who prefer not having the intensity that traveling programs require. However, his point is if 200 kids try out for a traveling team and only 20 make it, of the 180 kids who were cut, he's sure there are a fair number of kids who would prefer not to travel but he is concerned about the kids who want to travel and are cut. He stressed that again he is not talking about the 14 and 15 year-olds.

Dr. Bearmon gave an example by explaining that three years ago there was a traveling baseball team for 10 year-olds which is absurd because what happened is a large number of kids were discouraged early on and felt they weren't as good as their peers. He noted that if you tell kids when they are 10 or 11 years old they aren't good enough it will have some pretty potent effects on them. Dr. Bearmon pointed out that since then the baseball program has changed and is now a whole lot more inclusive. He explained that because the associations have no supervision they can change overnight because they are always getting a different group of people on the boards and there are no rules that they have to adhere to because no one is overseeing what they are doing. Currently the groups are whoever is on the board and they are not responsible to the Park Board and they are not

responsible to the public at large. Therefore, they can do whatever they want and that is definitely a problem.

Mr. Klus thanked Dr. Bearmon for making the Park Board aware of what he is concerned with in youth sports today. He noted that this could possibly be an agenda item in the future to discuss. Dr. Bearmon asked that on the agenda he would like to ask the question does the Park Board take the responsibility or do they ask someone else to.

IV. ACCESS TO GYM FACILITIES POLICY

Mr. Klus indicated that they are going to talk about the proposed gym facilities policy which is very similar to the Park Board's Access to Field Facilities Policy. Mr. Klus read the "Athletic Association's Relationship with The Park Board and the Park and Recreation Staff". (See attached). He noted this was put together many years ago and he felt it would be good to review before they get into a discussion on just what the Park Board's relationship is with the athletic associations.

Mr. Keprios stated that he thinks the philosophy in general is that the Park Board's views from day one is that they support these independently incorporated athletic associations in whatever way they can to make them successful in a manner that best serves the community at large. He added that they do this at an arms length. Mr. Keprios stated that he disagrees with what Dr. Bearmon said earlier about there being no supervision because he thinks they have a great system that is run by very good people. He commented that some people don't agree with the traveling system but that's the way the world is today and that's the way youth sports are organized across the country. Mr. Keprios noted that the "Athletic Association's Relationship with The Park Board and Park and Recreation Staff" was written on November 8, 1977 by the Park Board. He stated that in his staff report he tried to explain how he has viewed the relationship between the city, staff and youth athletic associations in the past. Mr. Keprios indicated that since the creation of the youth athletic associations both staff and the Park Board have attempted to let these independent organizations make their own program decisions without an overwriting veto vote of the city or staff. Mr. Keprios explained that staff has long been actively involved in giving these associations professional advice that is in keeping with the long standing philosophy of the city. When a youth athletic association makes a decision that is grossly contrary to the cities defined guidelines and philosophy then the city's leverage really is to deny access to facilities and deny any city administrative and/or clerical services. He noted that as they see it that's the extent of the city's power. Mr. Keprios explained several years ago a group of parents who did not like the way the baseball association had organized their program, which was contrary to the previous year, because instead of developing teams based by neighborhood they developed it by ability and felt that was a better program for the kids. However, this group of parents disagreed and they took the issue all the way from Park Board to the City Council to which the City Council's final decision was they are not going to tell the associations how to run their programs.

Mr. Keprios pointed out that when youth athletic associations rely on the Park Board and City Council to solve their problems that could otherwise be resolved by volunteer board members the associations stand to risk an outcome that they might not like. In addition, they stand the risk of losing volunteers by taking away their authority to make their own program decisions by dictating what they must do.

Mr. Fronck asked Mr. Keprios if he meets with the association presidents every year and asked if they as a Park Board could provide some expertise and reiterate some of the guidelines to help the associations make some commitments to what is best for the community. Mr. Keprios replied that as staff they try to pull all of the presidents together twice a year to discuss mutual issues. They all have many of the same issues and they do a lot of problem solving as well as share a lot of information to which a lot of great ideas come out of it. Mr. Keprios stated that he thinks it would be very appropriate for the Park Board to invite the presidents to a Park Board meeting to enter into a dialog and discuss some of the things that Dr. Bearmon brought up today because those are good issues.

At this time Mr. Klus opened the meeting to the public.

Annie Glavan, 7124 Glouchester Avenue, indicated that she was a girls house basketball coach for two years and last year was a 4th grade coach in the girls traveling association. Ms. Glavan indicated her background includes: a collegiate all-American in volleyball as well as played professional volleyball, runs basketball camps and volleyball camps around the state of Minnesota and Wisconsin for the last ten years and helps out with the University of Minnesota volleyball camps. She noted her point to this is she has been coaching and doing this for quite a while.

Ms. Glavan explained to the Park Board what has been happening with the girls basketball program over the last two to three months. She indicated that last year was the first year that the Edina Girls Traveling Basketball Association (now known as EGBA) wanted to start a 4th grade traveling team to which her daughter played on that team and she was the coach. She explained that it was a very relaxed schedule to which they practiced one night a week and played in two tournaments. The cost for each player was \$55.00 to \$70.00 and everyone went home happy.

Ms. Glavan pointed out that this year her daughter is now in 5th grade and everything changes. Her daughter now has two choices: she can play in the Edina Girls Athletic Association House Basketball League (EGAA) which costs \$70.00 and they play 16 games with maybe one or two practices. She stated in her opinion that's not good because there's really no development learning process which is needed to develop basketball players. Ms. Glavan noted that the other option is to play traveling in the EGBA where the starting fee is \$450.00 and an extra \$100.00 if you don't have a uniform to which they practice two nights a week and play in ten weekend tournaments. However, for her family and for 20 other families that doesn't work because as a family they can't commit to that schedule, time and dollar amount. Therefore, house is not enough to develop basketball, it's more of a social setting and traveling is too much at the 4th, 5th and 6th grade level. Ms. Glavan noted that she made a proposal to EGAA and

asked for more practice time and asked that they practice one night a week and play a game the next because they need to develop skills otherwise kids are going to quit. However, EGAA felt they couldn't provide that. She stated that she then went to EGBA and proposed that they provide an intermediate level league within each grade level. The kids could practice one night a week and play in two to three tournaments and the costs would dramatically decrease to \$120.00 with volunteer coaches. However, they were unable to do that. Therefore, she pulled 20 girls whom she has coached over the last two years, whom have already paid, to play for the Edina Sting which is this third association. She stressed that she is just a parent who wants her daughter to have an opportunity to play basketball at a lesser reduced schedule, it's that plain and simple. She added that as a matter of fact most of these girls wouldn't make a traveling team. However, as parents and families they don't want to play house because they are not getting the instruction they need to better themselves and traveling is too much of a commitment. Ms. Glavan informed the Park Board that Karla Young, who was unable to be here tonight, is an 8th grade coach who has the same issues and that together they have formed an association which has a board and by-laws and are recognized by the Minnesota Youth Athletic Services, however, they are not recognized by the Park Board and therefore gym time and equal access is what has brought her here tonight.

Ms. Glavan indicated that she has spoken to Mr. Keprios, Ms. Tilsner and Mr. MacHolda as well as numerous other people about how they as a group of taxpaying families in Edina get a basketball experience that is equal to the ones that are provided to EGAA and EGBA. The City is not meeting the needs of all of the families. Therefore, she is asking the Park Board for gym time. She stated that she knows there's a crunch this year and they don't have gyms but all she is looking for is some available gym time at the same rate as everyone else and doesn't see why they shouldn't be allowed to get that. She stressed that she is not asking for prime times but is asking for a gym in Edina at the same rate as the other associations, it's that plain and simple.

Ms. Glavan informed the Park Board that she has talked to Mr. Bjork and she is planning on going back to EGBA next year and working out a plan where they can have different levels, however, this year it doesn't work because of the gyms. She stated that she is asking for this year only. Ms. Glavan commented there are four different places where girls can play basketball; EGAA, EGBA, Edina Boys Basketball Association (EBA) and the Sting. She noted this is crazy and suggested everyone come together and make one association that would have divisions and make it a one stop shop for all parents and have different levels and make everyone happy.

Patti Ellingson-Solheim, 4901 Lantana Lane, indicated that she is also part of the Sting Association and has a daughter in the 8th grade and is on Karla Young's team. She stated that they have the same issues as Ms. Glavan's team in that they wanted to play less tournaments and work harder on the fundamentals. She indicated that they had a schedule just like other teams for gym time and they had a successful season and were never in the same tournaments as the EGBA. She stated that they had already been working on signing up for tournaments for this year when two weeks ago they were told they are not going to get gym time. She indicated that they felt if they would have been

told about this sooner they would have had more time to work with because now with sign-ups going on they are now under pressure that they are going to have to go through the whole system of getting back into the traveling program.

Ms. Ellingson-Solheim pointed out that last year when it was a 7th grade team they didn't need a whole gym every time they practiced because a lot of times they only worked on half-court drills. Therefore, maybe they could come up with a system of splitting up the gyms for one night a week. She noted that there are more ways to share the gyms so that everybody can have an opportunity to play basketball in Edina because right now they are limiting kids. She commented that by having the Edina Sting it probably gave more kids in the Edina system time to play basketball as well as they probably didn't have to make cuts in the EGBA. Ms. Ellingson-Solheim stressed that it's really important to have as many kids in the program as they can because they need to encourage kids and stay connected with them in as many ways as they can.

Dr. Bearmon asked why the Sting program shouldn't supersede the basketball program that's currently established. In other words, what they're talking about is exactly the kind of values and concerns that should be a concern to everybody in this community. It would seem to him that the Park Board may want to reconsider who's calling the shots on how basketball is being run. The girls in this program are being told they can't even have access to the gyms. He stressed again that the associations are not elected and is not responsive to anybody except themselves and therefore maybe they should be given priority but that's a decision that the Park Board needs to make.

Mr. Fronck indicated that he is a little confused and asked if someone would clarify how the whole relationship works. Ms. Glavan explained that EGAA is the house league for girls in grades 2 through 9. The EGBA is the traveling program and up until this year was for 5th through 8th graders. However, this year they are providing basketball for 1st through 8th graders. The Edina Sting has two girls basketball teams, one is for a combination 5th/6th grade girls and the other is for 8th grade. Lastly there is the EBA which allows girls to play during the winter and offers both house and traveling.

Gregg Bjork, 6605 Field Way, indicated that he is currently the President of EGBA and has a 7th grade daughter in the program. He noted that previous to that he was a member and president of EBA and therefore has been part of the Edina basketball community for 10 years. He stated that there are approximately 1,600 boys and girls within the City of Edina who are provided services through EGAA, EGBA and EBA. He explained that most of the kids in the EBA say they are looking for a one to two night a week commitment, they are not looking for the traveling experience, therefore, with 1,000 kids in EBA 880 of them are in the house league and most of that is by choice. Mr. Bjork indicated that he is somewhat confused because he met with some members of the Sting last week and it was his understanding that most of those girls have re-registered into the EGBA for 8th grade this year. Therefore, he was a little taken aback in terms of the Sting because he thought that was no longer an issue. He noted that he didn't prepare any comments tonight other than the policies that he thinks they are putting into place. He noted that one policy deals with access to the gyms and the other deals with the resources

that the city is going to put forth in order to support different associations. Mr. Bjork pointed out that one concern he has as a member of the community is that if any group of people can get together and demand services from the city just because they're Edina residents and give them equal treatment to organizations who are putting on programs for 1,500 kids. He commented that over the course of the last 15 years between the school and the city they are not only providing services for the kids but they've also made significant contributions back to the community.

Mr. Bjork indicated that with 1,500 kids in the basketball program you are never going to get 100% satisfaction. He noted that the EGBA and EBA always send out a satisfaction survey and this year EGBA scored a 4.3 out of a 5 point scale on overall satisfaction and he believes 84% of EBA participants were either satisfied or very satisfied with the program. He stated that EGBA is responsible to the community and is an open board and they welcome anyone who wants to be a part of the board and meetings are open and anyone is allowed to attend. He commented that he honestly believes that there is plenty of opportunity for anyone who wants to approach the board with good ideas and be a part of it that there is opportunity for them to do that.

Mr. Bjork stated that Ms. Glavan is right in that they've talked about the need for a winter time basketball experience for the girls who don't want traveling. He indicated that he respects the fact that there are 20 girls that Ms. Glavan has put together but candidly if you ask him he thinks that's the tip of the iceberg. He noted that as a community based program and what he's explained in order for him to have this 5th grade team he can't just do it for 20 girls, he has to open it up to the community as a whole. Therefore, the 20 now turns into 60, 70, 80, etc., and then what about the 6th, 7th and 8th graders. He stressed that it's not about finding a space for 20 girls, its finding space for potentially 300 to 400 girls who want to have that same type of opportunity in the winter time. Mr. Bjork commented that with the gym space at South View being out of commission this year they have already been informed they can expect significant interruptions of service at the high school because of the construction. It's going to be a nightmare for scheduling gyms just to support the existing programs let alone expand it to another 200 or 300 individuals.

Mr. Klus asked Mr. Bjork if he is concerned about the number of girls who would sign up for this and how would they handle it, wouldn't that significantly reduce the number of participants that are already in other programs or would new girls be coming in. Mr. Bjork replied he's not sure how that would work out because they made it very clear that this is a winter program and not a fall program. Their program does not start until the EGAA basketball season is completed. EGBA is the "in-season sport" for the basketball so all of their policies are about winter basketball so they are not trying to take over as much as provide those winter type opportunities so it's a supplement to and not a replacement of EGAA.

Mr. Bjork indicated that the second thing is the policies that were put forth by the school and by the city are actually policies that have been in place for some time, this is not a new thing within the last couple of weeks or months. The policies associated with the

school board as it relates to access to the gyms provides access to any community organization and there is a prioritization that occurs.

Ms. Presthus stated that when she was involved in the EBA there were different levels of traveling under one umbrella for example there would be an A, B and C team. The “C” team played three tournaments and the “A” team play ten tournaments and it was evaluated by grade and by what the desire was as well as the number of participants. Ms. Presthus asked if the girls basketball does this or has the policy changed. Mr. Bjork explained that they go into it with a target of what they think they are going to have for the number of participants and number of teams as well as where those levels will be. If it happens that there is a smaller number of teams then they will have to retrench and make a different decision. He stated that it’s not a pre-decision but is based on who shows up to try-outs, what the kids are capable of doing and what the parents are interested and willing to do. However, as part of making a policy up front by saying they are going to carve this out before try-outs are even done, teams are even selected and the number of kids who try-out are determined is hard to do. Mr. Bjork commented that last year they tried to provide that for the fourth graders and they are providing that for the fourth graders again this year. However, this was an introduction to traveling basketball versus traveling basketball. Ms. Presthus asked isn’t this the same thing they are asking to do right now to which Mr. Bjork replied it is. However, he believes if there was the opportunity to open it up to the community and they advertised it to all 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th graders he believes that there would be enough demand that it would overflow and overpower them.

Rena DeBates, 5712 Bernard Place, EGAA board member and basketball sports director indicated that EGAA has a house league fall program that is a recreational program as well as they do skills development. She noted that EGAA basketball has been around for 27 years and noted that this year there are approximately 310 girls in the program from grades 2 through 9. She indicated that their mission is to educate children in skills, rules and strategy of sports which they will carry through into adulthood. They are not a training ground for traveling basketball and their focus isn’t on skills development to get girls into the traveling program. She pointed out that it’s an all inclusive program to anyone who wants to play basketball. Ms. DeBates commented that during the past two years they’ve received a lot of feedback from Ms. Glavan as well as other parents who are aligned with Ms. Glavan regarding their skills development. She explained that in response to that feedback they formed a task force last spring which included Ms. Glavan, Ms. Tilsner, several parent coaches, a couple of EGAA board members and referees who brainstormed ways to strengthen their skills development. Ms. DeBates indicated that they also met separately with Mr. Bjork and his group not necessarily related to their skills development but that was part of the discussion. She commented that EGAA does recognize that there is room for improvement in their skills development. However, their coaches are volunteers and they do not have to have training in basketball. Ms. DeBates indicated that one of the biggest recommendations was one of Ms. Glavan’s which was to form a coach mentor program where they would recruit coach mentors that would work with their volunteer coaches for the first three or four practices or events. It was decided that the coach mentors would meet ahead of

time with the referee representatives and they would come up with common ground, common rules and common skills that would be taught through these mentors to the different parent coaches in an actual event situation so it would not involve additional time from their parent coaches as far as their time commitment. Ms. DeBates indicated that they were very excited about the recommendation and brought it before the EGAA board which was approved and they were ready to go. She stated that at that point in time she had Ms. Glavan's commitment that she would be a coach mentor as well as she would help them recruit coach mentors. Ms. DeBates explained that she's not quite sure what happened but she received an e-mail in June from Ms. Glavan that she was not able to make that commitment and quite frankly didn't have the resources to pull it all together.

Ms. DeBates stated that what EGAA is trying to accomplish is they are trying to focus on their skills development and they want to work with the EGBA and with any parent volunteers to help develop and improve their skills development. Ms. DeBates commented that she doesn't think they are the program where an intermediate traveling basketball program would exist because they are not about developing girls into a traveling program. Ms. DeBates stressed that EGAA does believe they know how to run a house league recreational program, they've been doing it for 27 years and they've got great participation.

Mr. Fronck asked Ms. DeBates if they have had any trouble with gym space in the fall. Ms. DeBates replied that at one time they were a winter program but they gave up that winter time slot because of gym space issues but they would love to have that winter time slot back for their house program.

Ms. DeBates indicated that the main point is they need to all work together. They are about fostering the love of sports for all skill levels and she would love to work with Ms. Glavan to improve EGAA's program.

Bob Solheim, 4901 Lantana, stated that he thinks it's important for everyone not to lose focus on what this is all about which it's about parents who love their children and who want to provide a values driven program for their children. He noted that they have their children's best interest at heart and that is why they are here tonight.

Mr. Klus asked Dick Ward, President of EBA, how many girls currently are involved in boys basketball and what do you think the reasoning is for joining boy's basketball. Mr. Ward replied that this year that number may be significantly different than past years. He explained that the EBA is for 1st through 9th graders and it is predominately boys who participate to which they have approximately 1,000 participants. He noted that they have had a lot of girls playing at the 3rd and 4th grade level and a few at the 5th grade level and the main reason those girls sign up is because there is no other opportunity to play house basketball in the winter in Edina. Mr. Ward stated that they do run a traveling program for boys in grades 5 through 8 and typically the number of participants is anywhere from 130 to 150 depending on the number of teams they field as well as the interest and demand in that program. Mr. Klus asked Mr. Ward if these are girls who really want to

play recreation basketball versus travel to which Mr. Ward replied that he thinks it's a combination of interest in continuing to play in a recreation league but they also want to get better in a sport they like.

Mr. Ward stated that like the other associations EBA does a great job serving the community at large and they serve a broad base of needs of the community and have a comprehensive program. He noted that they are trying to serve all of the kids and not just 10 or 20 kids at a time. He indicated that not everyone is going to necessarily agree with that or care for that but that's their goal. He added that the associations certainly need to have the authority and responsibility to continue to run their programs.

Ms. Presthus asked Mr. Ward if all of the traveling teams have the same commitments to which Mr. Ward replied they generally all have the same number of tournaments. However, last year they started to take 5th graders into the traveling program but they did not hold try-outs or evaluations for this grade. He stated that they played in two to three tournaments the first half of the year so that they could get a feel for it and added that some parents did exit the program at that time because it was too much. The second half of the year they held a more specific evaluation to which they then went on to play in five or six tournaments. Mr. Ward pointed out that the kids who try-out for traveling and don't make a team doesn't mean that there aren't other resources available for them to continue to play basketball at some level. Mr. Ward informed the Park Board that the EBA purchases approximately 100 hours of open gym time which is not used for games, practices or traveling, but is strictly used as open gym. He noted that is their biggest block of gym time that's available for kids to play. Ms. Presthus asked if girls are welcomed to attend to which Mr. Ward replied a lot of girls do come and play so the girls definitely benefit from it.

Mr. Ward informed the Park Board that a lot of parents take advantage of the private sector resources such as Minnesota Development Basketball. Mr. Ward stressed that they can't be everything to everyone because they don't have the resources.

Mr. Fronck asked Mr. Ward if he thinks the EBA would be significantly hindered if they did put the Sting program on the priority list and they were on equal plane as EBA for one year. Mr. Ward replied that right now there is no more gym time especially with the shortage of gyms this year. Also, given the growth in their program and the continued interest in the girls program they are going to be full. He stated that if the gyms had more users it would definitely cramp their program. Ms. Glavan pointed out that if her girls couldn't play for the Sting they would be in the EGBA so there would still be the same number of kids looking for the same amount of gym space. Those kids are not going away so it's the same as far as she is concerned.

Ms. Klus asked Ms. Tilsner if she knows how much gym time the Jr. Olympic volleyball is looking for in the winter months. Ms. Tilsner replied that they have five teams and are looking for an hour to an hour and a half per team once a week during the winter season.

Katie Meehan, 5229 Hollywood Road, indicated that she knows the gyms at OLG sit empty a lot of time and wondered if the city were to approach some of these private institutions and offer to pay for some space to get you through this tough stretch it would be a win, win for both sides.

Linda Presthus MOVED TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC PART OF THE DISCUSSION.
Mike Damman SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Johnson stated that he likes the idea of sharing a court for practices because in hockey they do it all the time and it works. Also, he knows that a lot of churches have courts and maybe that's another option to look into. He noted that with the crunch they are going to have for the next 1 ½ years it's going to be difficult finding gym space. However, he doesn't see it being a problem two years down the road. Mr. Johnson asked Mr. MacHolda what are the hours that are used right now at the school gymnasiums. Mr. MacHolda replied that typically they use the gyms starting at 6:00 pm and ending at 10:00 pm. He pointed out that Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays are booked solid and have therefore now moved part of EBA to Friday nights in order to free up some additional time for traveling during the week and Saturday mornings. Mr. MacHolda explained that the only days they stay away from are Wednesday nights for religious education and Sundays. Mr. Klus asked aren't Wednesday nights used for the adult programs to which Mr. MacHolda replied two gymnasiums are used for adult basketball and two gymnasiums are used for adult volleyball on Wednesday nights, however, they are not filling all of the gyms. Mr. Johnson commented that for this year during the crunch they may need to start using gymnasiums on Wednesday nights.

Mr. Weiss indicated that having been on both the EFA board and EBA board as well as a Park Board member he knows it is a very difficult task to please all constituents, if 85% to 90% of the people are satisfied then he thinks they are doing a very good job. He noted that he doesn't know that there is an easy answer to this but they do need to think about the 200 kids and not the 20. He noted that he thinks they have to make time for those who follow the guidelines and you either participate within those guidelines or you need to go elsewhere.

Mr. Klus commented that one option they have for the Sting is to add them into the priorities somewhere and if there is space available they can have it. Ms. Sitek asked is there space available to which Mr. MacHolda replied he doesn't think there will be. Ms. Sitek responded that she doesn't necessarily think they can make that decision if they don't know that. Mr. Klus commented that another option they could look at is to do something like they did with baseball a few years ago where the Park Board gave a group of people a field if it was available for one year only. As he remembers they did not get first choice but they had a choice.

Mr. Fronck asked if he were to want to have a tea party he would not be allowed to use gymnasium space? Mr. Keprios replied that under this policy the associations that they provide services to would have first priority access and any gym time left over would be returned to the school district.

Ms. Presthus indicated that they set a precedence on this a couple of years ago with baseball to which they were in the same situation and Park Board granted them a one year grace so they could work out their problems and go back under one umbrella. She noted this is an option for them to consider and it wouldn't change the overall policy because it would be for one specific incident.

Mr. Sorem commented that he likes Mr. Johnson's idea of sharing the courts for practice. He noted that he thinks it could become a bigger issue if they don't let the Sting play. Also, Ms. Sitek brought up a good point is there even space for them to start with because that would be important to know. At this point he just doesn't know.

Mr. Damman stated that he believes the priorities that they have here in front of them and the guidelines should stay the way they are. He noted that he would like to see the athletic association volunteer boards come up with a workable plan for groups like the Sting. He commented that he doesn't think this is something the Park Board should be involved in because they really don't want to duplicate services and feels it's not their duty to step in at this point.

Ms. Sitek indicated that giving the Sting a one year grace period seems to make the most sense because it sounds like they are working on a plan to be under one umbrella next year.

Mr. Fronck commented that he agrees with Mr. Damman in that this seems to be solely an association issue and if the kids did indeed go to EGBA they would need to accommodate them. However, it seems they have had some differences in figuring that out and noted for the record that they should maybe revisit the associations that the Park Board recognizes and supports. He stated that he does think the Park Board needs to stay at an arms length but this way the associations are forced to work for the greater good rather than trying to split off. He noted that it appears to him that something can be worked out. Mr. Fronck pointed out that it seems to him that this is totally an association issue and is maybe coming in on Park Board's arms length duties.

Mr. Klus stated that he is in agreement with Ms. Presthus in that they are still not meeting the needs of the girls who are in the Sting and maybe they should give them a one year deal. If there is gym time left over after the priorities have scheduled their time then again he thinks they should offer that time to the Sting before it goes back to the school. Again, this would only be for one year because he doesn't want to keep revisiting this every year. Mr. Klus stated that they need to look at what's best for the girls because if they have different needs this year and there is court time available then we ought to allow them to use it but at the same time it's a one year deal.

Mr. O'Connell entertained a motion for a priority 3 for somebody like the Sting for this year but only use it as a temporary deal.

Mr. Weiss asked when a group of parents from the EBA finds out about this and next month comes in with their 20 kids how do we handle that. He stressed that he has a great concern about granting exceptions because once you grant an exception you will start the pathway that you do grant exceptions.

Mr. Keprios explained that back when the baseball issue occurred it was the first time the Park Board staff had to deal with that type of issue so they learned as they went. He noted that the way they reacted to that was they were asked to draft a policy that addressed those who were independently incorporated athletic associations in the city. However, what they neglected to do is state that only these youth athletic associations that forms and meet those guidelines will have priority access. He pointed out that is how that baseball group was able to have that priority for one year. Mr. Keprios commented that the city attorney has advised them that they do have the legal right if it's for the community benefit to recognize one group for each sport. That does include that house leagues can be separate from traveling leagues because they are separate sports in that they have a differentiation fees for the fields which are in place. Mr. Keprios stated that the issue that the Park Board is addressing tonight isn't to determine whether the Sting program is worthy and valid, although he's sure they are great people and it's a great program. What is before the Park Board is a policy for the greater good to take from here on out. He asked the Park Board if for example they would be ready if another group wanted to start up a separate men's club at Braemar or a football group wants to start up a new football group and have equal access. Mr. Keprios pointed out that he thinks they are going to start seeing more and more of this because he feels the customers are becoming a little more demanding. They want it their way and if they don't like something they're going to go out and form it on their own. He noted that other communities are experiencing this as well. Therefore, what is being recommended by staff is the policy as it's drafted. He indicated that's not to say that everyone else does not have the opportunity for gym time because any gym time that's left over will be given back to the school. He stated the only problem with that is they don't know what's going to be left. Mr. Klus asked instead of giving the hours back to the school district why not offer it to other people within the community. Mr. Keprios replied because that's a service they are not going to provide because it's the school's decision to determine what the fee would be. He added that they are very fortunate right now in that the school is only charging the city \$6.00 an hour. Mr. Klus asked if they typically return some hours to the school to which Mr. MacHolda replied that it's very doubtful that they will be returning any time to the school.

Mr. Klus asked Ms. Glavan if she has talked to the schools about getting gym space to which she replied yes and she received the same answer as Mr. MacHolda's.

Mr. Fronck asked if he is correct in that Ms. Glavan, Mr. Bjork and Mr. Ward cannot come to an agreement. Ms. Glavan replied that the simple solution this year would be her 20 girls go back into their program and play at a reduced schedule, however, they have not come to that agreement because Mr. Bjork feels if he offers that to her 20 kids then he has to offer it to everyone.

Mr. Weiss noted that just to clarify if a group is not a priority 1, 2, 3 and falls outside of the Edina Park Board jurisdiction then they need to go to the school in an independent negotiation. Mr. Keprios replied yes, the request needs to go to the school.

Ray O'Connell MOVED TO ACCEPT THE PRIORITY USE OF EDINA SCHOOL DISTRICT'S GYMNASIUMS AND RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES TO BE ACCEPTED AS WRITTEN.

Mike Weiss SECONDED THE MOTION.

Ms. Presthus asked if the Sting is a non-profit organization to which it was noted yes.

Mr. Klus indicated that he wants to say that he's not feeling good about leaving kids out. He understands the gym issue and he's glad to know that for the future the associations are going to be dealing with that issue and is hopeful that a year from now the issue will be solved. However, that doesn't help for this year. Mr. Klus noted that he still would like to see a different priority for this group because if the city has time that they are not giving back to the school and nobody wants that time then he thinks that any group that meets the criteria of these guidelines should be allowed to go in and vie for that time. He commented that if the city doesn't have that gym time then they already know they can go back to the school and get it. Ms. Presthus asked Mr. Klus if he would suggest having a fourth priority for those who don't fit into the first three but meet all of the requirements within the guidelines. Mr. Klus replied that he would feel more comfortable with that if they are electing as a city to keep gym time. Mr. Klus stated that there is a motion on the floor and he would ask for an amendment that would include this group under a fourth priority if they are going to keep gym time and not use it.

Mr. O'Connell indicated that he thinks what they've heard is that all they are trying to do with this amendment is satisfy a one year problem. What is listed on the draft will satisfy all of the other questions so he doesn't feel there needs to be an amendment the way it's written at this point. The way it's written at this point satisfies what they need to accomplish tonight.

Mr. Klus stated that there is a motion on the table "TO APPROVE THE ADOPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACCESS TO GYM FACILITIES POLICY AS WRITTEN"

IN FAVOR: Mike Damman, Mike Weiss, Ray O'Connell, Todd Fronek, Jeff Sorem, Jeff Johnson

OPPOSED: Karla Sitek, Linda Presthus, George Klus

MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Klus thanked everyone for their discussion and noted that it is very much appreciated.

V. UPDATES

- A. Todd Park Hockey Rink – Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that a week ago the City Council again brought up for discussion the Todd Park hockey rink under concerns of the council. He noted that they voted 3 to 2 to direct staff to find a portable hockey board system that they feel is going to work best. Mr. Keprios pointed out that to purchase a new portable board systems would cost approximately \$22,000 to \$28,000. He noted that he plans to research other potential options.
- B. Braemar Athletic Field Development - Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that the Braemar Athletic field is now basically complete. He noted that there are a couple of punch items left on the list including some washed out sod and asphalt. Mr. Keprios stated that it was a great project and it's going to be one of the best multi-purpose athletic fields in Minnesota mainly due to its quality and size and beautiful bowl setting location.
- C. Grandview Square Park Grand Opening – Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that this Thursday at 3:00 pm they will be having the unveiling of the plaque at Grandview Square. He noted that there will be a grand opening celebration and that the official program will begin at 3:15 pm. Everyone is welcome to attend.
- D. 2006 Operating Budget- Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that as he stated in his memo of August 9th staff proposed to request from City Council that they reinstate their park maintenance vacancy that has existed since 2003 due to a retirement. This expenditure would cost approximately \$56,000, however, it did not survive the budgeting process. Staff also requested that \$7,500 be allocated for the National Recreation Park Association accreditation process which would provide education opportunities for staff to make our operations a lot more efficient for our customers. However, the Council felt this was not the year and it did not survive the process. Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that the needs assessment survey was back on his list of requests, which is estimated to cost approximately \$19,000. He noted that it has survived the budget process so far. He indicated that staff also requested \$40,000 to catch up on fencing, paths and hard surfaces to which they are woefully behind. He stated that the Council currently is considering \$20,000 instead of \$40,000. Lastly staff requested an additional \$5,000 for athletic field maintenance because fertilizer is becoming a lot more expensive than anticipated to maintain our new sand/peat athletic fields, and that request is still being considered for the 2006 budget. He commented that everything else budgeted for 2006 are incremental increases.

VI. PRESENTATION – DIANE PLUNKETT LATHAM

Mr. Klus informed the Park Board that Diane Plunkett Latham will be giving a presentation on buckthorn. He stated to Ms. Latham that the Park Board very much

appreciates the work that she and the buckthorn group do. They have become very educated through the process over the years and have seen a lot of great things happen.

Ms. Latham gave a presentation on buckthorn that included numerous digital photos of parks with buckthorn issues to which Mr. Klus then thanked her and her group for all of the good efforts that they do in the community.

Russell Kimmel, 6268 Sandpiper, indicated that when she moved to Nine Mile Village she set out to restore the wetlands at Nine Mile Village which really are the same wetlands at Bredesen Park. During this project they have eradicated a lot of buckthorn to which she personally has put in hundreds of hours of her own time into the restoration effort. She stated that the amount of buckthorn in Bredesen Park makes their efforts almost meaningless unless something is done with it now. She suggested that large equipment be used to eradicate the buckthorn and because there is so much buckthorn this is no longer a Boy Scout project. She commented that there are a lot of people in the area who are sort of discouraged about their own projects of eradicating buckthorn because of the issues at Bredesen Park. Therefore, it would be very helpful if the City could help them. Mr. Klus replied that they really appreciate everyone's effort and that he wishes there was more they could do right now about the buckthorn in Edina.

Mr. Keprios asked the audience if anyone has been knocking on resident's doors requesting them to remove buckthorn. Ms. Latham noted that they did put some hangers on doors last year but they haven't done any this year. Mr. Keprios explained that someone has been posing as city officials telling them that it's mandatory to remove buckthorn. He stated that they now have a very serious public health issue at an address in the Indian Hills neighborhood in Edina. The Department of Agriculture is looking into the matter because someone misused a pesticide in a very dramatic fashion to where the drift effect has killed several desirable trees and under-story in the large surrounding area, plus the soil contamination is of great concern. He noted that the city is asking for everyone's help in identifying whoever this person is that's knocking on doors and inappropriately identifying themselves as a city official.

VII. OTHER

A. Bike Trails – Mr. Klus informed the Park Board that there is some type of bike council that was going to deal with bike trails in Edina and noted that if there's an opportunity for a Park Board member to be on that council Mr. O'Connell has already indicated he would like to do that.

B. Edina Unplugged - Ms. Tilsner informed the Park Board that there is a volunteer group that is working on a program called "Edina Unplugged" which is basically a family night that will be held on Monday March 13th. She explained that they are going to be asking that all extra-curricular activities, band, sports, etc., not schedule anything for this date because they are hoping that everyone can spend one night with their families having family time such as eating together or going bowling, etc. This is just a heads up and more information will be coming soon.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mike Damman MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 10:25 PM. Todd Fronek SECONDED THE MOTION. MEETING ADJOURNED.