

Minutes of the
Edina Park Board
Tuesday, April 10, 2007
Edina City Hall
Council Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT: Andy Finsness, Mike Damman, Ray O'Connell, Carolyn Nelson, Howard Merriam, Randy Meyer, Jeff Sorem, Todd Fronck, Linda Presthus, George Klus, Karla Sitek

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

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

George Klus MOVED TO APPROVE THE MARCH 13, 2007 PARK BOARD MINUTES. Howard Merriam SECONDED THE MOTION. MINUTES APPROVED.

II. NEW BUSINESS

A. Todd Park Hockey Rink - Mr. Keprios summarized his staff report and gave a brief history of Todd Park. He stated that it is staff's recommendation to continue to provide eleven outdoor hockey rinks in the system, regardless of where the rinks are located. In addition, it is staff's recommendation to make all eleven of those hockey rinks permanent.

Mr. Keprios went through the pros and cons of placing a hockey rink at Todd Park. He stressed that a decision needs to be made prior to July 1st. Either they purchase the portable boards for an additional \$10,900 or they return them by July 1st.

Richard Miller, 5340 Hollywood Road, indicated that he does not play golf, use the swimming pools or gymnasiums. However, he is glad to pay for them. He stated that because these are all great enhancements in the community it is interpreted as an increased value in their properties. He noted that he doesn't think you can be serious about outdoor recreation if you don't have both organized and unorganized outdoor hockey. He stated that he would like to see the City maintain this big asset for the community at Todd Park.

Katie Meehan, 5229 Hollywood Road, indicated that the neighborhood is not against hockey, it's just the idea of having permanent boards in such a small space.

Pat Cronin, 11 Cooper Avenue, stated that the city is already vested in Todd Park and therefore feels they should maximize that investment and keep the hockey rink at Todd Park.

Tim Meehan, 5229 Hollywood Road, stated that he thinks the duty of the Park Board is to determine what the best use of that park space is. He pointed out that if it wasn't for the comfort station, Todd Park would be the least ideal place to put a hockey rink.

He stressed that there is barely any grass left and by putting up permanent boards it would be the worst use of that space.

Jeff Bauers, 12 Cooper Avenue, stated that he can guarantee that more people are using the space at Todd Park in the winter with the hockey boards. If the boards weren't there in the winter it would be open white space that would not be used.

Nancy Hall, 4501 Parkside Lane, stated that she can attest to the noise because she lives there. She indicated that she is confused because there are other less attractive areas that have on-site parking, why choose Todd Park. Todd Park is completely surrounded by residents on all four sides and there is no available parking.

Andy Halper, 4437 Rutledge Avenue, stated that the hockey rink does get used. However, in order for everyone to be able to enjoy the green space that is there the way nature intended it to be, the hockey boards needs to be portable.

Mr. Meyer asked how much does it cost to put the boards up and take them down annually. Mr. Cockriel replied that he has not calculated it to the dollar but it does take a crew of four to six the better part of a week to put them up. Taking them down is a lot quicker, it takes a crew of eight approximately seven hours. In addition, it takes that similar amount of time to put up a permanent rink in the rest of the system as it does that one rink.

Mr. Merriam asked when do the boards typically go up and when are they taken down. Mr. Cockriel replied that they try to put them up the last part of October and take them out the first part of May. A lot does depend on weather conditions.

Mr. Fronек asked what does it cost to build a permanent rink. Mr. Cockriel replied approximately \$25,000 which includes labors, fencing, materials, etc.

Mr. Merriam asked what has been the hockey experience with the plastic boards. Mr. Sorem replied that he did play hockey at Todd Park this past winter and he doesn't think the quality of the plastic boards is very good. The boards were warped after one year of use. After this past year the boards were starting to concave which would make the puck bounce off in all different directions as well as actually leave the rink, which could become a safety issue.

Mr. Klus indicated that he doesn't have a problem if the boards are permanent or portable. He noted that he does think, however, that the hockey rink should stay there because of all of the reasons they've debated in the past. Mr. Klus stated that his biggest concern is when this was discussed a couple of years ago and a recommendation was made to the City Council and they really didn't look at the Park Board's recommendation. The City Council went on and did what they felt was best. He commented that he doesn't want to spend a lot of time debating this issue if it's going to the City Council and the City Council is going to decide again. Mr. Klus indicated that he thinks whatever recommendation the Park Board puts on the floor he would encourage that part of it state that if the City Council is not in agreement with this that they will send it back to the Park Board. If it means they have to hold a

special meeting to look at the concerns of the City Council and send a second recommendation back to the City Council. Mr. Klus stressed that he wants to make sure that the time they spend on this debate is worth their while do so.

Ms. Sitek stated that she thinks the hockey rink needs to remain at Todd Park whether the boards are permanent or removable.

Ms. Presthus commented that she also thinks there should be a hockey rink a Todd Park. She noted that she is familiar with removable boards and does know their limitations both for safety and quality.

Mr. Finsness asked if it costs the same to set up and remove this portable rink compared to a removable rink why not remove a permanent kind of structure every year. Mr. Cockriel replied that if you compare their patented green wood boards to the plastic portable boards, the materials don't hold up on the plastic boards the way they do on the wooden boards. He explained that while the plastic one is a lesser quality to begin with it is made for ease of removal and to put back together. Mr. Cockriel pointed out that this particular plastic portable rink is really a permanent rink that has been rigged to be somewhat portable. Mr. Finsness asked Mr. Cockriel if he thinks his staff could rig a wooden one so that it could be removable. Mr. Cockriel replied that his staff would have to experiment with a little engineering to try and figure out something. He stated that they don't want to get into a situation where it's taking the same amount of time to put them up and take them down. In addition, year in and year out, the boards will need to be stored and they will take a beating.

Mr. Klus asked what the useful life of the temporary boards versus the wooden boards. Mr. Cockriel replied that the wooden ones typically last at least 15 years. He noted that plastic ones will be gone within ten years. The boards are already noticeably warped, they already had issues with stress cracks and they've replaced a bolted stop sign. He stated that another problem with the one piece plastic boards is if you get a nick on the top that board is frozen in there for the winter and interlocked to a point where you can't take it out. He noted that on the permanent wooden boards they can be taken off and fixed within a half hour. Mr. Cockriel pointed out that you are going to have some replacement of the plastic boards each year. He noted that they've already replaced two different sections and currently have a third one that's beyond repair.

Mr. O'Connell stated in his opinion the whole question has pretty much been covered for two years and the plastic boards have been what they expected, and it is ineffective use of the Park Department's employees time. He noted that he feels they should return the boards and discontinue their contract and replace the rink with a permanent structure.

Mr. Damman stated that there definitely should be a public rink at Todd Park. He stated that if they do decide to put a hockey rink at Todd Park it definitely should have permanent boards.

Mr. Sorem indicated that Edina is a hockey based community and he thinks the hockey rink should stay at Todd Park and should have the permanent wooden boards. He stated that during the summer the kids do play inside of the boards as Mr. Keprios previously mentioned.

Ms. Nelson noted that she agrees, there should be permanent hockey rink at Todd Park.

Mr. Fronck stated that he agrees there needs to be a hockey rink with permanent boards at Todd Park. However, if there is some way to make it less of an “eyesore” by putting in some landscape to sort of hide the rink from some of the neighboring houses it would probably be worth looking into.

Mr. Klus indicated that he would like to hear more about staff designing some type of portable structure that they would be happy with putting in and taking out each year. Since they are obviously leaning towards some type of permanent structure it’s important for the Park Board to hear about it. Mr. Cockriel replied that if they were to get stuck with the portable rink, then he would recommend that they try to design something different. However, whether they can design something that stands up and is safe and sturdy is yet to be seen.

Mr. Finsness stated that he thinks they should keep the rink and send staff on a charge to give it their best shot at designing a wooden rink that is removable. He noted this would be a great solution, if it could be done, because he does think it’s fair to the people to have some green space during the summer. He commented that he knows this may set precedent, however Todd Park is a little bit different compared to the other parks.

Ray O’Connell MOVED TO RECOMMEND TO THE CITY COUNCIL TO ELIMINATE THE PLASTIC BOARDS BY DISCONTINUING THE CONTRACT WITH THE ATHLETICA COMPANY FOR THE REMAINDER RECOVERY OF \$10,900 WHICH IS DUE ON JULY 1, 2007, AND REPLACE IT WITH A PERMANENT STRUCTURE HOCKEY RINK.

George Klus SECONDED THE MOTION.

George Klus moved to propose an amendment to the motion to have staff look into and determine whether or not it could be possible to make a removable permanent structure. Mr. O’Connell replied he would like to change possible to feasible. The amendment would read: Have staff come back with a recommendation to the Park Board on whether or not it would be feasible to have wooden boards that could be removed each season. Mr. Klus stated that he would also like it added to the motion that it be brought back to the Park Board within a year to have a discussion about that for the future. Mr. Klus indicated that maybe this should be made a completely different motion.

Ms. Presthus stated that they have discussed these options for a non-permanent rink and that is how they came up with the Athletica boards. She commented that they did

look at wooden portable boards but they weren't the same quality as the Athletica plastic boards. Ms. Presthus pointed out that all this is doing is pushing them back into the same discussion they had two years ago and ruled out. She stated that she doesn't know what has changed in the last two years to revisit it again.

Mr. Keprios reminded the Park Board if they want Todd Park to have a removable board system it is staff's recommendation they make the investment and purchase the plastic boards they have been using.

Mr. Klus called the question and asked Ms. Canton to read back the recorded motion: Ray O'Connell MOVED TO RECOMMEND TO THE CITY COUNCIL TO ELIMINATE THE PLASTIC BOARDS BY DISCONTINUING THE CONTRACT WITH THE ATHLETICA COMPANY FOR THE REMAINDER RECOVERY OF \$10,900 WHICH IS DUE ON JULY 1, 2007, AND REPLACE IT WITH A PERMANENT STRUCTURE HOCKEY RINK. Mr. O'Connell stated that he would prefer to leave the motion as it is.

IN FAVOR: Howard Merriam, George Klus, Mike Damman, Linda Presthus, Karla Sitek, Carolyn Nelson, Jeff Sorem, Todd Fronck, Ray O'Connell

OPPOSED: Andy Finsness

ABSTAINED: Randy Meyer

MOTION CARRIED.

- B. Edina Park Board Resolution for Support of Bicycling - Mr. Fronck stated the "Edina Park Board Resolution for Support of Bicycling" is fairly self-explanatory and basically puts the City and the Park Board on notice that they support bicycling and they support what the bike task force is trying to do as far as developing a comprehensive bicycle plan throughout the city. He explained that it's more of an instrument that they can send to the City Council and maybe encourage some of the other boards to pass similar resolutions in order to bring more awareness to biking and to encourage biking throughout the city.

Todd Fronck MOVED TO APPROVE THE EDINA PARK BOARD RESOLUTION FOR SUPPORT OF BICYCLING. Mike Damman SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

III. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Athletic Facilities Fund Raiser Committee/Foundation - George Klus - Mr. Klus informed the Park Board that they did have a good turnout at last month's meeting as well as they came up with a mission statement. He commented that he will have Mr. Keprios include it in the next Park Board packet.

Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that this is not a school or city driven project. It is a grass roots effort from volunteers and residents within the community.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

V. UPDATES FROM STAFF

A. Athletic Association Presidents Meeting – Mr. Keprios thanked Todd Fronck and Ray O’Connell for attending the meeting. He indicated that one item that was left undone from the Edina Youth Sports Task Force exercise was the insurance mandate question. Mr. Keprios pointed out that they have now come up with a recommendation from administration that they do have a minimum mandate along with a workers compensation mandate if they have employees. Mr. Keprios explained that he intends to draft a memo to provide that mandate to all of the athletic association presidents asking them to do their own analysis and their own research. He indicated that Andy Stotts, President of the Edina Soccer Association, has volunteered to coordinate a collaborative effort to kind of leverage the number to get a better premium and calculate what it would cost on a per participant basis in order to determine how much their registration fees may have to go up.

B. Comprehensive Plan Update – Mr. Keprios explained that he would like for the Park Board, when they have time, to look over the Comprehensive Plan on a macro level to kind of get the grasp of the big picture; specifically the categories he has identified, and see if this is the direction they ought to be heading and the policies they ought to be adopting as they go down the road. He asked the Park Board that when they have any ideas or thoughts to send him an e-mail and he will collectively keep those and put them in the Park Board packet. He stated that it is a draft and is subject to change.

Mr. Keprios indicated that the next step in the process will be to upgrade the guidelines and standards.

C. 2007 Tree Planting Projects – Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board of the Arbor Day planting that will take place on Friday, April 27th at 10:00 am on Edina Court. He also handed out the city forester’s annual report.

Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that Edina resident, Jeanne Hanson, recently was successful in acquiring a grant from the Minnehaha Watershed District to do some plantings at Pamela Park. He stated that they will be working with that group in trying to make that happen.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm.