

Minutes of the
Edina Park Board
September 14, 2010
Edina City Hall, Council Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT: Todd Fronck, Dan Peterson, Rob Presthus, Ellen Jones, Jennifer Kenney, Austin Dummer, Felix Pronove, Randy Meyer, Joseph Hulbert, Keeya Steel, Louise Segreto

MEMBERS ABSENT: Bill Lough

STAFF PRESENT: John Keprios, Ed MacHolda, Janet Canton

I. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Dan Peterson MOVED TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 9, 2010 PARK BOARD WORK SESSION MINUTES. Todd Fronck SECONDED THE MOTION. MINUTES APPROVED.

Dan Peterson MOVED TO APPROVE THE JULY 13, 2010 PARK BOARD MINUTES. Todd Fronck SECONDED THE MOTION. MINUTES APPROVED.

II. WELCOME NEW STUDENT MEMBERS

Mr. Hulbert introduced and welcomed Austin Dummer and Felix Pronove, the two new student Park Board members.

III. NEW BUSINESS

- A. 2011-2015 Capital Improvement Plan – Mr. Keprios gave the Park Board a brief power point presentation to summarize the 2011-2015 Capital Improvement Plan.

Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that he is recommending \$30,000 be appropriated as seed money for planning and developing the proposed Edina Veterans Memorial. He noted that he envisions this money to help jump start the project by paying for the engineering and architect fees. He indicated that once the committee has their final plan they will bring it before the Park Board and ultimately the City Council. Mr. Keprios pointed out that the committee will be fundraising for the rest of the project which they hope to be somewhere between \$200,000 and \$300,000.

Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that the committee did take a vote on the site for the memorial at their last meeting and it was decided that Utley Park is where they would like to place the Veterans Memorial. He explained that the committee put together a list of criteria and from that list came up with four possible sites. Each member visited those four sites and shared their opinions at the meeting. At that time a vote was taken and they overwhelmingly voted for Utley Park as the site. Mr. Keprios indicated that he

thinks they will ultimately need to go through a public hearing process before the site and plans can be formally approved.

Mr. Meyer asked if staff will oversee the \$30,000. Mr. Keprios replied that the \$30,000 does not go to the Edina Community Foundation but will remain in the city coffers and is something that he will manage.

Mr. Peterson commented that it seems to him that the social center of the city is moving towards Centennial Lakes. He noted that he doesn't know if it meets all the criteria but it would seem to him that someday with the promenade from the Galleria and Target all the way down to the lakes would be a good place for a Fourth of July parade. Mike Goergen, Chair of the Veteran's Memorial Committee, indicated that Centennial Lakes was one of the locations that they did their due diligence on utilizing the criteria. He explained that the general consensus on Centennial Lakes was that it was too commercialized because they are looking for a quieter place where people will be able to meditate, etc.

Mr. Keprios pointed out that another site that was considered was Arneson Acres Park but the committee felt it was too residential. The committee did discuss talking to the Edina Historical Society to see if they can come up with something where the public could go to view records that are available.

Mr. Keprios pointed out that later in the process they found out that Utley Park was also the site chosen by a group that formed back in the 1940's to be the site of a veterans memorial. They even drew up a small plan and tried to fundraise for it; however, WWII came about and the plan was never developed.

Mr. Keprios indicated that unless there are any strong feelings on the Park Board that the committee should consider a different site then that is the direction they are going.

Mr. Meyer asked about the restrooms and if they are on track for updating at some point. Mr. Keprios replied that they are probably due for some upgrade because they are very old and will need to be looked at eventually.

Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that to do the parking lot at Garden Park it's going to cost approximately \$250,000. He noted that it is his intention to apply for another youth sports grants since it will be serving such a large athletic complex. He commented that if it were to happen it would allow for them to do additional capital projects that they currently can't afford to do.

Mr. Meyer asked Mr. Keprios how he defines maintenance versus capital because there are some sites around the city where he thinks with a little more maintenance now they may be able to delay some things awhile. Mr. Keprios replied that the asphalt maintenance is an enormous and expensive challenge. He explained that they send resurfacing professionals to their various sites to get their opinions to see if something can be fixed or does it need to be replaced. Mr. Keprios stated that this has to be analyzed every year and sometimes twice in the same year because they all age a little

differently depending on the base. He added that they try their best to stay on top of that with operating budget dollars.

Mr. Meyer asked Mr. Keprios if at some point you need more dollars are you able to move some of the capital into the operating budget and if so how do you make those decisions. Mr. Keprios replied there is over a \$250,000 in the operating budget that is called the hard paths and hard surface budget. He noted that it's difficult to keep up with the infrastructure and that the path and hard surface budget is one that keeps getting picked away at and they don't have the dollars to keep up with it. Mr. Keprios pointed out that in the next three years they will have spent \$800,000 on just asphalt and unfortunately they have to rely on the capital plan to cover it because the operating budget isn't large enough to cover it.

Ms. Segreto asked what the Natural Resource Inventory Assessment is. Mr. Keprios responded that it's a study that the Park Board has requested. He explained it's basically a study and an analysis of the natural resources and especially woodland areas. One of the survey results will be to determine if there are some extremely valuable rare natural resources that they need to be made aware of. In addition, it will tell them where they are when it comes to managing things such as buckthorn control, plantings, etc. He indicated that it basically maps out the parkland throughout the entire city, over 1500 acres, of which many of those acres are wooded and determines how these natural resources should be managed in the future. Mr. Keprios stated then another reason for delaying this is because now that there is an Energy Environment Commission they may have a different view on where the priorities are regarding natural resources and specifically woodland areas, use of pesticides, etc. Ms. Segreto asked if the assessment is being done by a private consultant company to which Mr. Keprios replied yes it would be a private consulting firm and staff would bid the project.

Ms. Jones asked Mr. Keprios in regards to pathways if he has explored being able to get any grants. She indicated there are livable grants with paths that somehow connect with other bikeways, etc. Mr. Keprios replied that if there are other grant dollars that haven't been explored he would like to know about them and would be happy to look into them.

Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that in regards to Countryside Park, the Waters Development is in negotiations with the City Council on what their park dedication fee will be. He noted that they could use some of those Park Development Fund dollars to do some of the maintenance items at Countryside Park and perhaps pull some of the master plan further up on the agenda. He commented that it is his view that those dollars should go to serve the park closest to the development, so that might be another area where they may have dollars coming in.

Mr. Keprios explained that for 2015 he had originally focused more of the dollars toward accomplishing the rest of the master plan for Countryside Park. However, with dollars possibly coming from the Water Development he has changed his focus to replacing the warming house at Normandale Park. He indicated it's a tough call because what's going to be the most important thing in 2015 probably won't be what it is now. He pointed out the reason he chose this is because it's their highest attended playground program, there

is a large demographic population of kids in the neighborhood that is growing, there's a lot of scheduled baseball and the hockey rink as well as the playground equipment is used extensively. Mr. Keprios commented that he would not be offended if someone wanted to make a different recommendation.

Mr. Keprios reminded the Park Board that they did a Needs Assessment Survey four years ago to which 865 people responded, which is phenomenal, and gave them a 95% level of confidence of the results. He indicated that the residents have a need for a wide range of Park and Recreation facilities but first and foremost on the list with 86% is they want more walking and biking trails as well as natural areas and wildlife habitat. He noted that the idea of a recreation center came in second but the next highest on the list is the development of outdoor athletic fields for sports. Mr. Keprios pointed out that Edina is an aging community and therefore it's difficult to get a high percentage of support for things like soccer fields and baseball fields. However, with a primarily more senior aged population 31% is pretty high for the support of athletic fields. Therefore, he does think that validates the Pamela Park master plan new athletic field and would like to keep that on the radar screen.

Mr. Keprios stressed that maintenance of the city parks as well as the walking/biking trails are services that should receive the most attention by city officials over the next two years.

Mr. Keprios stated that priority wise they are going to first and foremost replace and repair what's broken. Also, the Veterans Memorial is high on the list with \$30,000 seed money. In addition, developing new pathways, pathway lights and trails are also high on the priority list. He noted that he thinks they can complete the master plans at Countryside Park and Pamela Park as they can afford to. Mr. Keprios commented that eventually they may want to complete the master plan for Van Valkenburg Park, the small section that can serve as a mini-park for the neighborhood.

Mr. Fronck commented that the next three years show an increase of \$215,000, \$195,000 and \$140,000 as compared to what they approved last year. He asked Mr. Keprios to comment on the increase, where those extra dollars are coming from and the thought process that went into those increases. Mr. Keprios replied he is hoping as it goes through the process that the dollars will be there between grants and possibly some other sources. He indicated there is talk about franchise fees that the City Council is closing in on and that those dollars would also go toward their parks capital plan. He noted that is not just for this but also for some of their enterprise facilities that struggle and don't have the capital dollars to make their improvements.

Mr. Keprios again noted that the five year capital improvement plan changes. It should change slightly every year to adjust to the needs and other priorities that may surface. He indicated that it gives us a good road map and a good idea of how much money they are going to need to get the projects done.

Ms. Jones asked how old is the playground equipment at Countryside Park and is it slated for next year because it's a safety issue. Mr. Keprios explained that through the master

plan process they want to relocate the location of the play equipment. In addition, it's a one of a kind in the Edina system and was somewhat experimental in that it's all creative play equipment and not traditional equipment. He noted they were informed that kids would be wildly attracted to it; however, that didn't turn out to be the case and he heard from several residents over the past several years that they don't like it as well as traditional playground equipment. Mr. Keprios commented that the equipment is approximately 16 years old.

Ms. Segreto indicated that she knows the Bredesen Park comfort station was vandalized a couple of years ago and was wondering what they are doing to safeguard the comfort station so that it's not vandalized. Mr. Keprios responded they are doing all they can. They have put up security surveillance cameras and have given the police a heads up to patrol the area when they can. He indicated that by keeping the camera highly visible it has reduced a lot of the vandalism.

Ms. Segreto asked if there are certain hours the comfort stations are open or are they open 24 hours a day, in particular Bredesen Park. Mr. Keprios replied that Bredesen is one of the few that is open 24/7 because they do not have the keyless entry system wired into it. He added that it would cost an additional \$12,000 to make that happen plus they would need to pay for an additional phone line. Mr. Keprios indicated that he thinks they are waiting for a renovation of the building and hope to get some fiber optics near that site so then they can electronically lock and unlock by computer program like they do at the four newer shelter buildings. He explained that the rest of the shelters are locked and unlocked manually. However, because Bredesen is so heavily used, especially really early in the morning, they just leave it open.

Mr. Peterson asked how often the Needs Assessment Survey is done. Mr. Keprios replied in his view it should be done no longer than 15 years apart. He noted that he believes this past one was done about 25 years ago.

Ms. Steel asked what pathways have been added to the park system since the survey. Mr. Keprios replied that the path at Garden Park has been added since then. He noted that unfortunately a lot of the dollars had to be spent for upkeep and maintenance. He stated that the next added one would be to put lights around the pathway at Lewis Park. The new pathways they are proposing are for Countryside Park and he would eventually like to get a hard surface path around Highlands Park, which he thinks would be heavily used. Mr. Keprios pointed out that they also need to remember that when the Nine Mile Creek regional trail happens there will be several millions of dollars of new trails for Edina residents that he thinks will go a long way to serve that need.

Todd Fronek MOVED TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED 2011-2015 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN. Louise Segreto SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

B. Park Assignments – Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that he and Chairman Hulbert recently discussed the park assignments to see if they wanted to divvy out park assignments any differently now that there are two new student members. He noted that

they then discussed what the real purpose is for the park assignments and felt it served a great purpose for the time that it was done. However, it seems that if a resident did come to a Park Board member with a concern it would ultimately end up on the Park Director's desk, which it should. Mr. Keprios indicated that in his view all Park Board members are assigned to all parks and would like to challenge the Park Board to familiarize themselves with all of them. He noted he would be happy to give tours of the parks if anyone was interested. He added that he thinks by doing it this way it will eliminate another step in the process.

The Park Board agreed that they no longer need to have park assignments. Mr. Peterson asked Mr. Keprios if he would put in his staff report what issues residents call him about so they have some sense of what people are concerned about.

C. Community Advisory Team Report – Member Ellen Jones – Ms. Jones noted that she doesn't have anything to report at this time.

III. UPDATES FROM STAFF

- A. Activities Directory - Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that Mr. MacHolda has done a wonderful job with the Activities Directory that is now on-line. He noted that they have put the map back in to show where all of the parks are as well as it has a matrix showing what facilities are in each park. Mr. Keprios indicated that he is also working with the Statewide Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) group to get a grant to create a three-fold map that shows all of the parks and where all of the amenities are that could be put in your pocket.
- B. City Manager – Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that the City Council has hired a new City Manager, Scott Neal, who is from Eden Prairie and will begin November 8th. In addition, Interim City Manager, Heather Worthington, has accepted a position at Ramsey County and her last day will be October 6th.

IV. PARK BOARD COMMENTS

- A. Hockey Boards – Mr. Hulbert asked if the new hockey rink boards are going in soon at Pamela Park. Mr. Keprios replied yes, they are. He reminded the Park Board that the City Council has approved the purchase and installation for lighting at both Pamela Park and Walnut Ridge Park which are both scheduled to go in this year. He commented that they hope to get them both done this year but if not there will still be general ice rinks and hockey rinks regardless.

Mr. Keprios reminded the Park Board that there is a Joint Work Session between the City Council and Three Rivers Park District Board of Commissioners scheduled for Wednesday, September 29 at 7:00 p.m. at the South View Middle School Auditorium. He indicated that the Park Board members are being asked to please attend as an observer. He stated what he thinks might happen is eventually the Park Board is going to be asked to come up with a singular route recommendation for which to base a public hearing on but doesn't think they are going to be

asked to conduct a public hearing at a Park Board meeting. He will be asking the City Council to decide on a process for the Park Board and City Council regarding public hearings and dates.

MEETING ADJOURNED