

MINUTES
OWATONNA PARK AND RECREATION
REGULAR PARK BOARD MEETING
May 10, 2021
4:30 PM

Members Present: Gina McGuire, Sara Baird, Greg Posch, Angie Malo, David Christianson, Jonathan Thiel, Jonathan Douglas

Staff Present: Jenna Tuma: Senior Director of Parks and Recreation, Eric Anderson: Recreation Manager, Danielle Bakken: Recreation Supervisor, Danielle Licht: Recreation Supervisor, Mary Jo Knudson: Administrative Specialist, Jessica Abrahams: Administrative Technician

Others Present: Doug Voss, City Council Member

OPENING BUSINESS

- A. Call to Order
- B. Roll Call: Greg Posch – Present, Angie Malo – Present, David Christianson – Present, Jonathan Douglas – Present, Jonathan Thiel – Present, Sara Baird – Present, Gina McGuire – Present

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion by David Christianson, second by Jonathan Thiel to approve the May 10, 2021 Park Board Meeting Agenda. All members voted aye for approval.

APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 12, 2021 MINUTES

Mary Jo Knudson proposed the following change regarding the Local Trails Connection Grant verbiage: minutes state “The winner will be announced...” Would like language changed to “Grants will be awarded and announced...”

Motion by Angie Malo to approve the April 12, 2021 Park Board Meeting Minutes with the change proposed by Mary Jo Knudson, second by David Christianson. All members voted aye for approval.

PERSONS WISHING TO APPEAR-

- a. None

PARK PERMITS

- a. Choice Technical Academy Graduation – May 22, 2021 at Dartt’s Park Parking lot. Choice Technical Academy would like to hold graduation in the Dartt's Park parking lot on May 22, 2021. Estimated attendance is 50-60, all participants and families will social distance. Motion by Jonathan Douglas, second by Jonathan Thiel to approve the park permit. All members voted aye for approval.

OLD BUSINESS

a. Project updates

i. We All Play

The construction of this project started last fall. Since the last park board meeting a lot has been accomplished. The asphalt for the Miracle Field has been completed. The asphalt will take 30 days to cure before the pour in play can be installed. The installation of the playground equipment has started as well as most of the curbing of the playground. The building foundation and plumbing has been completed and the rest of the block work of the building is being worked on. Also, the two retention ponds have been completed. In the next couple of weeks, the fence post for the Miracle field will be installed, all of the playground equipment should be installed, work on the building will continue, and some of the walkways to the amenities of the park will be started. We hope to finish construction in early July with a grand opening the third week of July. Financially, Corky's Earlybird Tournament recently gave a \$25,000 matching grant. With this grant the committee is tasked with raising the last \$29,000 to completely fund the \$1,159.854 project.

ii. Council Chambers

There's been discussion for a few years to update the Council Chambers to address areas around safety, access, room functionality and technology. At the May 4th Council meeting, the Council approved WOLD Architectural to do the schematic concept work. A project team was formed consisting of Council, West Hills Commission and City staff, this team will guide the design. Budget is approximately \$400,000 which is included in the CIP. An exterior access that's ADA compliant will be added.

NEW BUSINESS

a. Welcome New Board Members

i. Sara Baird

ii. Gina McGuire

There were two openings for the Park Board this year. A new application process was used for recruiting and selecting interested residents. The Mayor and Jenna Tuma interviewed all candidates and selected Sara and Gina. We are excited to have them join the Park Board and guide the future of the Parks and Recreation Department. They both have a strong interest in serving the community and helping to shape the future. Welcome Sara and Gina.

Gina McGuire was sworn in with the Oath of Office.

b. Election of Officers

As stated in the City Code 255:10: At the first meeting to be held in May of each year, the Board shall elect from its members a President, Vice-President and a Secretary, to

serve for a term of one (1) year and until their successors are elected and qualified. Duties of Officers: The President, and in his absence, the Vice-President, shall preside at all meetings and exercise the functions usually devolving upon the presiding officer of similar bodies. The Secretary shall keep a record of all business transactions at the meetings of the Board and of such other matters as the Board may direct. The Secretary does not need to take Board minutes.

President: Angie nominated Greg Posch, second by Jonathan Thiel.

Roll Call Vote: Greg Posch – Aye, Angie Malo – Aye, David Christianson – Aye, Jonathan Douglas – Aye, Jonathan Thiel – Aye, Sara Baird – Aye, Gina McGuire – Aye. Motion passed, Greg Posch is President of the Board.

Vice President: David Christianson nominated himself for president. Greg Posch nominated David Christianson for Vice President, second by Angie Malo.

Roll Call Vote: Greg Posch – Aye, Angie Malo – Aye, David Christianson – Aye, Jonathan Douglas – Aye, Jonathan Thiel – Aye, Sara Baird – Aye, Gina McGuire – Aye. Motion passed, David Christianson is Vice President of the Board.

Secretary: Angie Malo nominated Jonathan Thiel, second by Greg Posch.

Roll Call Vote: Greg Posch – Aye, Angie Malo – Aye, David Christianson – Aye, Jonathan Douglas – Aye, Jonathan Thiel – Aye, Sara Baird – Aye, Gina McGuire – Aye. Motion passed, Jonathan Thiel is Secretary of the Board.

c. Borrow Box update

The Borrow Box at Sid Kinyon Courts was implemented to remove monetary barriers for youth to participate in activities such as Pickleball, Tennis, Bocce, Kubb, Ping Pong and Bags. This has been very popular, and could be duplicated in parks such as Dartt's, Brown, Manthey and Morehouse. Each box costs approximately \$500 for materials and implementation. Boxes will be available for donations of implementation and equipment. Staff recommends adding more Borrow boxes at appropriate sites, as budgets allow. Angie Malo made a contact with Gopher Sport regarding donating equipment, staff should hear from Gopher Sport.

d. River Springs Water Park Sponsorships and New Program

Five major sponsorships, totaling \$11,300 have been received for River Springs for the 2021 season. Three aging Funbrella Covers are being replaced by the following Sponsors: 1) Deml Heating and Cooling; 2) Prairie Ridge Orthodontics; 3) Federated Insurance. New Program being offered this summer is "Key Log Rolling". Sponsors of this program are: 1) Wottreng Family Dental; 2) Dufrene, Wayne & Associates, Ameriprise Financial Services.

COMMUNICATION

a. Director's Report

The Parks Department was fully staffed with the addition of two new full-time hires. A laborer was hired for Parks and another to work for Building and Grounds. We are excited for them to join the team! As of this week, the department has a job opportunity

in the Recreation Supervisor role with the resignation by Dani Bakken who has accepted a new position outside of the City. We wish her well and thank her for her contributions to the success of the Parks Department. Recruitment for her position will start soon.

The ordinance recommendations approved by the Park Board have both passed the first readings at the City Council. The recommendations are: 1) amendment to the Lake Kohlmier ordinance adding phrase that prohibits diving and swimming from the fishing piers and 2) allowance of alcohol at Central Park during special permitted events.

The City remains a candidate for the Lowes Community Improvement Grant and should learn the results soon. If received, the grant monies will be used to improve and replace the Lake Kohlmier Play Area equipment.

b. Staff Report

COVID Update: Capacity limit restrictions end as of May 28. Mask requirement for all indoors activities or outdoor events that exceed 500 people is in effect through at least June 30. River Springs Water Park will be operating at normal capacity, no pre-registration needed for open swim. Starting in June all programs will be allowed back into the facility at West Hills Social Commons; no registration will be required but patrons will check in at the front desk. Trips will be offered soon. Current hours will remain the same.

Eric Anderson: Lake Kohlmier Boat Rentals and Concessions are scheduled to open on May 29. Hours: Thursday & Friday 1:00-7:00p; Saturday & Sunday 12:00-7:00p. Scheduled to put in Swim Area ropes/buoys on May 30. River Springs Water Park is scheduled to open for the season on June 4 at 4:00pm. Social Commons is planning to start offering Day Trips as part of the June/July Newsletter programs.

Adopt-a-Park/Mary Jo Knudson: Currently 9 areas have been adopted by individuals and groups, with 7 making a two-year commitment. Each group is supplied with buckets, bags, pickers, gloves and safety vests. Several inquiries are still 'out there', so we are expecting to gain more. We are in the process of ordering signs for entrances to adopted areas with the name(s) of our volunteer(s) on them. We are thankful for the hard work we've already seen from these volunteers!

c. Board Member Report

Greg Posch: It would be nice if Brooktree employees wore nametags. Jenna Tuma will contact Tom Vizina with the suggestion. There is a fundraiser for the Youth Scholarship Fund at Cashwise Foods on Thursday. No Parking signs were removed at Lake Kohlmier, on the north side. There have been a lot of cars parking in this area, Greg would like the No Parking signs installed again and signage to deter people from walking through the wildflowers.

Angie Malo: Asked if a lot of school groups were scheduled to come to the water park at the end of the school year, and how staffing efforts were going. Eric Anderson reported there are a couple groups scheduled for the end of the school year and Dani Licht has been recruiting lifeguards this past year with offering many lifeguard training classes.

Angie also wondered what happened with the mural by the Blast that was being talked about a couple of years ago. Jenna Tuma will follow up. The butterfly/rain garden at the end of Cinder Hill (intersection of Mosher Ave and Linn Ave) needs attention. Jenna Tuma will follow up on this as well.

David Christianson: Would like to know the plans and timeline for the neighborhood park off Country View Ave. Jenna Tuma will follow up on this. Wondered what happened with the Peace Pole the Exchange Club wanted to place in Central Park. It was reported that City Council wanted an alternative location, it was brought to the West Hills Commission. There were a couple spots on the West Hills campus discussed; however, pole design requests by the Arts Center and West Hills Commission put the pole out of budget for now.

Jonathan Thiel: Asked how the Adopt-a-Park was going. Mary Jo Knudson reported there has been good response and people have done a good job cleaning up the parks. Reflector vests with the Adopt-a-Park logo have been purchased to identify the individuals/groups when they're in the parks.

Jonathan Douglas: Inquired about the deer hunt. Mary Jo Knudson reported we have applied for a hunt this year but have not heard back from the DNR yet.

Gina McGuire: None.

Sara Baird: None.

Doug Voss commented that the City Council takes Park Board's recommendations seriously and appreciates the time and effort of the board members.

d. Announcements

i. In the News

1. Weekly Owatonna People's Press articles: <http://ci.owatonna.mn.us/Blog.aspx?CID=3>
2. Earth Day activities article in Owatonna People's Press: [Residents to celebrate the planet on Earth Day | News | southernminn.com](#)
3. Owatonna Live Straight Talk (Nikki was guest): [Straight Talk \(owatonnalive.com\)](#) – aired 4/20

e. Upcoming Key Dates

- i. Soccer Field Dedication – May 20 at 3:30 pm
- ii. We All Play Grand Opening – July 2021

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by David Christianson, second by Jonathan Douglas to adjourn the Park Board Meeting at 5:49 PM. All members present voted aye for approval.

The next board meeting will be on June 14, 2021 at 4:30pm at the Park Maintenance Shop, 1140 Industrial Rd.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jessica Abrahams
Recording Secretary