

PARKS & RECREATION
ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

February 7, 2022 5:45 pm
City Arena

Members Present:

Steve Ball
Rich Yost
Whitney Sauer
Jen Vogt-Erickson

Members Absent:

Tony Segura
Amy Leach
Jodi Hartman
Jason Howland, Ex-Officio

Staff in Attendance:

Cathy Malakowsky, Director of Community Engagement and Enrichment
Afton Wacholz, Recreation Administrative Assistant
Joe Grossman, Parks Superintendent

Others in Attendance:

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Steve Ball at 5:51pm.

Adopt Agenda:

Jen Vogt-Erickson made the motion to approve the agenda for tonight's meeting and Rich Yost seconded the motion. The board voted in favor of said motion 4-0. Motion declared passed.

Approval of the Minutes:

Rich Yost made the motion to approve the minutes from the December 20, 2021 meeting and Whitney Sauer seconded the motion. The board voted in favor of said motion 4-0. Motion declared passed.

Public Items:

There have been questions on what the maintenance schedule is for the outdoors rinks on weekends and holidays. Joe stated that Academy and Hayek rinks are plowed only (no sweeping or flooding) due to staffing hours primarily. The Parks Department's main goal during weekends is sidewalk snow removal.

Action/Discussion Items:

Joe Grossman shared the 2022 Parks CIP's. Many of their large purchases are for tractors, park maintenance equipment, trucks, play equipment and building maintenance projects.

Rich Yost shared an update on the Snyder Field Project and the meeting that was held between city staff and user groups of the facility. The first project on the list is water mitigation/tiling. There will also be a need to replace fencing at the fields as well. Rich understood it that the City would be asking for roughly \$325,000 to be raised by the user groups to share funding of covered dugouts, etc. There was continued discussion on how the rental of Snyder Field from Riverland could impact any improvements that would be made should Riverland want to take back their land in the future. The City has been leasing this land from Riverland for nearly 60 years. There was also discussion on the naming rights of the complex, currently known as J.M. Snyder Fields.

Cathy Malakowsky shared the current information on the comprehensive plan for the city and the community survey. She is urging all board members to complete the survey and to also promote the survey to others in our community so that the City can gather the feedback that is received for future planning. This is a blue print for the city for the next 10-20 years and an indication to where our resources would be put toward. The focus for feedback is specifically for the young adults and families as well as the underserved in our community. From the first 100 responses to the survey, local parks and our lakes were popular topics of interest.

Old Business:

Recreation: Report given by Cathy Malakowsky and Afton Wacholz as follows;

- Warming houses have been open since January 8
 - Hayek, Lakeview, and hawthorn: Monday- Friday 5:00-8:00 pm
 - Hayek, Lakeview, and Academy: Saturday and Sunday 1:00-8:00 pm
 - We have had to close several times for weather or staff shortage

Park	Amount of people who have visited as of 1/31
Hawthorne	133
Hayek	219
Academy	88
Lakeview	348

- Sent out returning Staff letters for the pool and Play Park Staff
 - Starting to get those returned right now have 13 lifeguards who plan on returning
- We will be posting the positions for summer by February 15
- Afton is beginning to get dock inquiries.
- We are hoping to hold an American Red Cross lifeguard class during spring break to train any new lifeguards
- We are working on getting a schedule created for playparks and summer events.
- Have started scheduling Thursdays on Fountain bands to include Albert Lea Community Band, Geoff Elvee (country), Whalen and the Willows (blues, country, soft folk-rock) Mark Cameron Band (Blues) more to come!

Parks: Report given by Joe Grossman as follows;

- Continued work on outdoor rinks and snow removal.

- Picnic tables are undergoing maintenance and resurfacing.
- Continued work on vehicle and equipment maintenance.
- Staff training for the state and also playground inspection is being complete both online and at in person training sessions in Rochester.

City Arena: Report given by Cathy Malakowsky and Afton Wacholz as follows;

- Lon has resigned from his position with the arena/recreation, effective January 28. Bob will be evaluating options for that position over the next couple of weeks before advertising for a new employee.
- High School section games start. Girls will play on February 9; Boys will start sections on February 22.
- Albert Lea City Arena will host the A Peewee District tournament from Feb 18-20.
- We are taking requests for spring and summer ice.
- Afton has taken on the ice schedule this season, and working with user groups to begin scheduling out for the next year.
- Big Freeze is happening on February 12. Lakeview Park will host the pond hockey tournament.

Senior Center: Report given by Cathy Malakowsky and Afton Wacholz as follows;

- Senior Center trips will start again in March.

Marion Ross Theater: Report given by Cathy Malakowsky and Afton Wacholz as follows;

- Waiting for new panic bars for front doors.

Board Member Items:

- Rich Yost –
 - Shared with the board that the Youth Baseball Association is currently holding indoor open gym sessions at the local YMCA and are very appreciative of the flexibility and support the YMCA staff have given to them to provide this opportunity.
- Whitney Sauer –
 - Expressed her continued support of a recreation center for our community to provide more valuable services to our residents.

Adjournment: Rich Yost made a motion to adjourn the Park Board meeting, and Whitney Sauer seconded the motion. The board voted in favor of said motion 4-0. Motion declared passed. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Afton Wacholz
Acting Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Secretary

Approved:

Steve Ball