

PARKS & RECREATION
ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

June 17, 2024 6 pm
Council Chambers – City Hall

Members Present:

Steve Ball
Therese Salazar
Kent Rahn
Wende Taylor
Whitney Sauer
Tony Segura

Members Absent:

Amy Leach
Jason Howland, Ex-Officio

Staff in Attendance:

Cathy Malakowsky, Community Engagement and Enrichment Director
Ryan Hajek, Assistant Director of Public Works
Dani Bakken, Recreation Coordinator

Others in Attendance:

none

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Steve Ball at 6:10pm.

Adopt Agenda:

Whitney Sauer made the motion to approve the agenda for tonight's meeting and Therese Salazar seconded the motion. The board voted in favor of said motion 6-0. Motion declared passed.

Approval of the Minutes:

Therese Salazar made the motion to approve the minutes from the April 15, 2024 meeting and Wende Taylor seconded the motion. The board voted in favor of said motion 6-0. Motion declared passed.

Public Items:

- Pickleball club letter
 - There was a discussion on the pickleball letter
 - The Club have been given the Rec facilities application form to submit and were provided feedback
 - The pickleball courts are scheduled to be resurfaced this year

- Board has some concerns that letters continue to be sent to the board, however the correct protocol in completing the Rec facilities project application form has not been taken
- Afton has informed them that we have received the form but still waiting for the additional information on the budget, funding and design
- Wende is going to reach out to Chris Utz about the next steps to make sure that they know the next step needs to be a complete in order to move forward

Action/Discussion Items:

- **Zoning ordinance presentation**

- Cathy presented presentation on zoning changes related to adult focused businesses
 - Cannabis, off sale liquor and sexual orientated
 - Looking for the Advisory board to setback agreement from the park board
 - Discussion with board on thoughts
- Whitney Sauer made the motion to support the proposed setback for the adult focused businesses from parks and recreational facilities as presented. Kent Rahn seconded the motion. The board voted in favor of said motion 5-1 (Tony Segura voted no). Motion declared passed.
 - There was a discussion about grandfathered in companies

- **North Lot/Splash Pad Bathroom Project Design**

- Ryan presented on the status of the North Lot/Splash Pad bathroom project
 - Brought up that the farmers market has requests
 - Discussion on if we need to have an overhead for a shelter attached to the bathroom facility
 - Pictures have been taken of structures we currently have in our parks
 - Must have internet and cameras
 - City would like feedback from board on style and layout of the facility
 - Ideas discussed:
 - This facility should be bigger than Frank Hall and include at least 2 stalls in the women's and 2 stalls/2 urinals in the men's
 - Ryan will check on guidelines if adult sized changing tables will be needed
 - Board was asked if they felt a family friendly/gender natural restroom was needed
 - Exterior should be appealing to downtown area; does this need to go through the Historical Preservation committee?
 - Discussion on maintenance of the facility, including cleaning and vandalism
 - Costs to consider:
 - Building assembly
 - Site work
 - Sewer and water
 - Concrete

- Electric, fiber and cameras
- Heating for winter
- Storage area for Famer’s Market
 - Should this be included in the original plan or would they need to request their needs/wants through the project application process?

Staff Reports:

Recreation: Report provided by Bob Furland and Dani Bakken;

- Thursdays on Fountain
 - June 13th Flashback
 - June 20th Mike Munson
 - June 27th Holly Day
 - July 11th, Ron and Steve Unplugged
- June 12th Wind Down Wednesday
- June 15th Albert Lea Pride Festival 12:00 – 4:00 p.m. Central Park
- Neighborhood Parks
 - Opened on June 3
 - Participation so far:
 - Lakeview - 104
 - Academy - 74
 - Hawthorne - 61

Parks: Report provided by Ryan Hajek and Mike Westney;

- Storm damage clean up
- Tree trimming & take downs.
- Meier tree will be starting the second round of EAB treatments.
- Replaced sidewalk at Fountain Lake park by the dock.
- We started spraying fence lines & tree rings.
- Finished June playground inspections.
- Will be installing 2 new memorial benches on the blazing star trail.
- Getting ready to start the new playground at Belview.
- We held 2 big baseball tournaments at Snyder field.
- Lots of mowing & trimming work.
- Very busy with rentals at the pavilions.
- Equipment maintenance work.
- Will be installing electronic door locks at Pioneer park, the Beach, & Frank hall bathrooms.

City Arena: Report provided by Bob Furland/Josh Heilman;

- **Facility update –**
 - Staff is working with APEX on the design of the arena lobby, refrigeration and electrical components of the project

- Maintenance is being completed – cleaning and painting
- **Events -**
 - Youth Hockey
 - none
 - Waldorf
 - none
 - High School
 - Summer hockey three days a week for boys and girls teams
 - Figure Skating
 - none
- **Events –**
 - Colstrup ice will be removed beginning June 29th

Aquatic Center: Report provided by Bob Furland/Dani Bakken;

- Opened on Monday June 3
 - Total of 2,034 visits since opening day
- Upcoming Special Events
 - Sunday, June 16 Father’s Day celebration-
 - All fathers get in for free with a paid admission
 - Thursday, June 20 Teen Night
 - DJ and other games and activities for ages 12-15
- Membership Passes Sold
 - Individual - 24
 - Caretaker - 8
 - Family – 88
- Session 1 of swim lessons started June 10 and it will go until June 21
 - 197 kids participating this session

Senior Center: Report provided by Bob Furland;

- **Trips -**
 - June 18th Winona Museums Tour
 - July 16 Wild Rose Casino trip
- **Programs/Events –**
 - June 11th – Senior Center June Birthday Party
 - June 12th - Board meeting
 - June 12th Coffee and conversations
 - Funeral Planning
 - Veterans Benefits
 - June 13th Water Color with Beth Tostenson

Marion Ross Theater: Report provided by Bob Furland;

- **Upcoming events -**
 - Fiddler on the Roof will be showing June 20 -23 and 26 – 30

- July 6th 507 country concert
- July 14th Midwest Legends Denny and the DC Drifters concert

Other: Report provided by Cathy Malakowsky;

- **Financing approved:** At its June 10 meeting, the Albert Lea City Council approved borrowing \$15.5 million to fund rec facility improvements, several street projects and two solar energy projects:
 - \$9.9 million for [rec facility improvements](#) as approved by voters in a referendum this past April
 - \$4.2 million for street projects this year
 - \$1.4 million for solar energy projects at the Wastewater Treatment plant and City Arena
- The solar project for the Arena will be placed on the roof of the Colstrup Rink. It will cost \$456,100 after applying federal funding. Apex guarantees that it will save about \$22,800 a year in utility costs with a payback period of 20 years. The solar project was NOT part of the referendum. The City is seeking ways to reduce its energy use as part of implementing its Climate Action Plan.
- To see the recording of the full meeting, go to YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Zstr7_zrs.
- **Rock-n-Roll the Lakes:** This annual bike ride is set for Aug. 10 with 10, 30 and 50 mile routes. The ride will start and end at Central Park this year.
- **Blue Zones:** A reporter from the New Guardian newspaper visited Albert Lea on June 4 to learn more about Blue Zones Albert Lea, and toured many parks and rec amenities. Blue Zones has an intern this summer: Macy Taylor of Albert Lea will be reviving walking and potluck moais, developing content for social media and other platforms, and holding events to promote healthy habits.

**** Top 5 Project Updates:**

Restrooms by Splash Pad –

- Ryan Hajek will be discussing design plans with the board at the June meeting.

Develop the Union Pacific rail to trail –

- No new updates.

Develop an off-season field house –

- Status of the non-city group working on this idea?

Upgrade Snyder Fields –

- Staff have been working on regrading certain fields that are not draining correctly.

Update aging facilities, including the City Arena and Aquatic Center –

- See Cathy’s report on council action. Apex will be visiting on Friday, June 14 to discuss lobby and front office designs at the arena and the locker room and office space at the aquatic center.

Board Member Items:

- Whitney Sauer –
 - Thank you to Recreation for their help with the traveling travelers at the neighborhood parks
- Therese Salazar –
 - Discussed the pool bathroom cleaning as they smelled really bad
 - Dani clarified the cleaning routine and the issues they are facing with patrons
 - She would like to be sure the City Council continues to support the bathhouse renovation needs at the Aquatic Center
- Tony Segura –
 - Questioned by the Aquatic Center can’t be open a couple hours a day for later in August.
 - Dani explained why we close when we do because our staff are high school and college students and they are returning to school mid-August
 - Dani will look at surrounding area pools for closing dates and report back to Tony

Adjournment: Tony Segura made a motion to adjourn the Park Board meeting, and Wende Taylor seconded the motion. The board voted in favor of said motion 6-0. Motion declared passed. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Dani Bakken
Temporary Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Secretary

Approved:

Steve Ball
Park & Recreation Advisory Board Chairman