



**CITY OF ALBERT LEA
PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD**

*September 2024 Meeting
9/16/2024, 6 pm
City Arena Conference Room*

1. CALL TO ORDER:
 - a. Roll Call
 - b. Adopt Agenda

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
 - a. July 15, 2024 Meeting Minutes (August meeting was cancelled)

3. PUBLIC ITEMS:

4. ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:
 - a. Review and discussion of Rec Facility project estimates
 - b. Review and discussion of Arena remodeling plans
 - c. Review and discussion of Aquatic Center remodeling options

5. STAFF REPORT DISCUSSION:

6. BOARD MEMBER ITEMS:

8. ADJOURNMENT:

MISSION STATEMENT

“To provide quality recreational opportunities and to plan, acquire, develop and maintain attractive and safe parks and facilities that enhance the quality of life in the community of Albert Lea.”

PARKS & RECREATION
ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

July 15, 2024 6 pm
City Garage

Members Present:

Steve Ball
Kent Rahn
Whitney Sauer
Amy Leach

Members Absent:

Therese Salazar
Wende Taylor
Tony Segura
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
Afton Wacholz, Recreation Office Manager

Others in Attendance:

Lynn Rothmeier, Freeborn County Trails Association

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Steve Ball at 6:00pm.

Adopt Agenda:

Amy Leach made the motion to approve the agenda for tonight's meeting and Whitney Sauer seconded the motion. The board voted in favor of said motion 4-0. Motion declared passed.

Approval of the Minutes:

Amy Leach made the motion to approve the minutes from the June 17, 2024 meeting and Kent Rahn seconded the motion. The board voted in favor of said motion 4-0. Motion declared passed.

Public Items:

- Pickleball club letter
 - Cathy, Ryan and Bob will be meeting with Christ Utz on August 1st to discuss the latest project application submission and the need for more information on how this project will be funded. Staff will also discuss the other project applications that have been submitted successfully.

Action/Discussion Items:

- **Bike shelter/kiosk proposal at Frank Hall Park presentation**
 - Cathy presented with several “hats” as the secretary of the Freeborn County Trails Association, Blue Zones Project Lead and Engagement and Enrichment Director with the City of Albert Lea. Lynn Rothmeier was in attendance as the treasurer of the Freeborn County Trails Association.
 - The Trails Association is a 501c3 established in 1995 with the purpose of developing the Blazing Star Trail. Now they continue to serve to promote local trails and organize the Rock and Roll the Lakes event held in August that has been running since 2018.
 - The Trails Association would now like to contribute to putting a bike kiosk/shelter at Frank Hall Park at the trailhead of the Blazing Star Trail. The shelter is projected to cost \$70,200 with all funds being raised/donated. The Association would donate the shelter to the City of Albert Lea and City staff would do all follow-up repairs and maintenance.
 - The shelter would include maps to show trails, advertising of community events, businesses, etc, bikes racks, along with electrical access for charging phones and potential chargers for ebikes. The plan would be for building to take place in the summer of 2025. Kent asked if businesses would need to look at bike racks due to the promote of their businesses at the new kiosk. Cathy did add that uptown does have bike racks.
 - Steve Ball asked the presenters if they felt the shelter/kiosk was big enough and Lynn stated that they felt this was a very good size for the area and it was one of the bigger ones she has seen at other trails.
 - Whitney Sauer made the motion to recommend to the City Council to approve the bike shelter project, as presented, for Frank Hall Park and direct staff to work with the Trails Association to move forward with building the structure. Kent Rahn seconded the motion. The board voted in favor of said motion 4-0. Motion declared passed.

Staff Updates:

Kent did ask what the plan would be for the old Kwik Trip building once they build new. Staff reported that would be up to Kwik Trip but they would assume they would sell.

Recreation: Report provided by Bob Furland and Dani Bakken;

- Planned to participate in Wind Down Wednesday on July 10; event was cancelled
 - carnival games and a bounce house
- Movie in the park held on July 12
 - Disney movie Brave
- Neighborhood play park activities end on July 25
 - Numbers as of July 3rd -
 - Academy-213
 - Hawthorne -187
 - Lakeview-232
- Upcoming events -
 - July 17 - Sibley Park rolling rec
 - July 23 - Hayek Park rolling rec
 - July 23 - Neighborhood play parks to Aquatic Center
 - August 14 - Wind Down Wednesday

- August 16 - Movie in the Park

Parks: Report provided by Ryan Hajek and Mike Westney;

- Tree trimming & take downs
- Lots of mowing & trimming
- Started work on new playground at Bellview
- Spraying weeds & fence lines
- Snyder & ballfield maintenance
- Equipment maintenance
- Painting park signs & inside park buildings
- Maintenance & cleanup on park rental sights
- EAB treatments have started
- Lots of storm damage cleanup & repairs

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

- Facility updates –
 - Working with Apex for the upcoming referendum projects
 - Colstrup cooling system shut down July 1st
 - Ice removal and clean up is completed
 - Apex/Rink Tec will frost test on Colstrup July 22nd - core samples to be taken
 - Organizing old blue prints for the Arena, Aquatic Center, and Theatre
 - Afton is working on ice scheduling for the coming season
 - Removing Nystrom Rink glass, dasher boards, wheel chair ramps and bleachers for the August dog show
 - Grounds and arena maintenance
 - Zamboni off season maintenance
- Events -
 - Youth Hockey
 - none
 - Waldorf
 - none
 - High School
 - none
 - Figure Skating
 - none
- Events –
 - Dog Show August 10th and 11th

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

- The Aquatic Center will close for the season on August 11
- Session 2 swim lessons began on July 8 and will go until July 19; session 3 will run July 22-Aug 2
- With the rain and the colder weather, we have had to close early a lot in June

- As of June 30, we have had 7,302 visitors
- Upcoming events -
 - July 14- Mother's Day special
 - July 21- Veterans Day special
 - July 24-27- Holidays in July

Senior Center: Report provided by Bob Furland;

- **Trips -**
 - Wild rose casino trip- July 16
 - Treasure Island casino- August 20
- **Programs/Events –**

Marion Ross Theater: Report provided by Bob Furland;

- **Facility Updates –**
 - Ordered air conditioner, furnace and air conditioner booster for the lower level
- **Upcoming events -**
 - July 14 - Denny and Swanee
 - September 26 - Peter Antoniou - Psychic Comedian
 - October 18 - The Super Tramp Tribute

Other: Report provided by Cathy Malakowsky;

- **Rec Facilities referendum projects:**
 - At its July 8 meeting, the Council accepted the bonding proposal that will finance \$15.5 million for several street projects, recreational facility improvements, and solar energy projects, including the solar for the Arena roof.
 - Also July 8, the Council approved the low quote of \$42,350 from Jim and Dude's to replace the 5 shower units in 3 locker rooms at the Arena. This was a CIP project that was moved to the referendum proposal. The quote was 41% higher than estimated. The City's purchasing policy requires Council approval for any CIP purchases 20% or higher than originally estimated. Staff may proceed with accepting Jim and Dude's quote.
 - Rec Staff are moving ahead with accepting the low quote of \$15,725 from Jim and Dude's – nearly 50% less than estimated – for replacing a furnace and installing a dressing-room air conditioner at the Marion Ross Performing Arts Center. These were also CIP projects moved to the referendum proposal.
 - Apex continues to work on the design phase for several other projects.
- **Inclusive Playground**
 - The All Together group held a groundbreaking ceremony July 10 at Edgewater Park. Work is set to begin soon on preparing the site for the playground.
- **UP Rail to Trail**
 - HDR Consulting continues to work on the preliminary design and environmental review.

**** Top 5 Project Updates:**

Restrooms by Splash Pad –

- Discussion at last month's meeting

Develop the Union Pacific rail to trail –

- See Cathy's report

Develop an off-season field house –

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

Upgrade Snyder Fields –

- No new updates

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

- See staff reports

Board Member Items:

- Steve Ball –
 - Asked about the flooding of the volleyball courts on the south, as it appeared the north courts dried up fairly quickly. Staff believe there may be a tile plugged and would be looking in it further.
 - Would like to see the walk ways mowed as there is grass almost 2 feet tall. Mike stated that they need to weed whip those areas so they don't damage any fences, etc in the gardens. Mike will check with staff on getting these areas cleared better.

Adjournment: Kent Rahn made a motion to adjourn the Park Board meeting, and Amy Leach seconded the motion. The board voted in favor of said motion 4-0. Motion declared passed. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Afton Wacholz
Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Secretary

Approved:

Steve Ball
Park & Recreation Advisory Board Chairman

September Parks and Recreation Department Updates from Staff

Recreation: Report provided by Bob Furland and Dani Bakken;

- Participated in the Mexican Independence Day event on September 15 at the North Lot
- Preparing for Safety Day on September 17 at Morin Park from 4-6p
- Participating in the Hawthorne Elementary Resource Fair on September 18
- Fall adult women's and co-ed volleyball leagues start the week of September 16

Parks: Report provided by Mike Westney;

- Still a lot of mowing & rough mowing.
- Tree trimming & take downs.
- Going to start mowing & spraying ponds & right of ways.
- Working on Troy Hammer playground.
- Painting free throw lines & 3 point arcs on our basketball courts.
- Equipment maintenance.
- Start work on Grizzly field.
- Building maintenance.
- The electronic locks have been installed at Pioneer Park.
- Park rental maintenance & cleanup.

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

- Facility updates –
 - Nystrom rink opening was delayed one week due to warm weather and some compressor issues
 - Colstrup cooling system has been started up with hopes of getting ice on by early October
 - Staff has been working with APEX on the designs for the Arena lobby and Rec/Skate office areas. Further discussion on the budget and designs is on the agenda for this month's board meeting.
- Events -
 - Youth Hockey
 - Fall camp begins Sept 14
 - Mites Hockey registration is open and will begin late October through the Albert Lea Hockey Association
 - Waldorf
 - D1 and D2 teams started practice on September 3
 - D1 had an exhibition game against Steele County on September 6
 - D2 has their first game on September 20
 - High School
 - Captains practices began this week for both the boys and girls' teams
 - Figure Skating

- Fall season practices began Monday, Sept 9
- **Events –**
 - None

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

- Recreation staff has been working with APEX on designing a new admission access and concession area. Further discussion on the budget and designs is on the agenda for this month's board meeting.

Senior Center: Report provided by Bob Furland;

- **Trips -**
 - December 10 – Bells Will Be Ringin' at Sidekick Theatre
- **Programs/Events –**
 - Crafters Group - Tuesdays at 12 p.m.
 - Bingo - Mondays and Wednesdays at 1:00 p.m.

Marion Ross Theater: Report provided by Bob Furland;

- Facility Updates –
 - Dressing room floor was refinished by Granicrete
- Upcoming events -
 - Drinking Habits performance dates will be Oct 3, 4, 5 ,6M, 9, 10, 11 and 12
 - September 26: Peter Antoniou – Psychic Comedian
 - October 18: The Super Tramps: Super Tramp Tribute

Other: Report provided by Cathy Malakowsky;

- **City Council action**

At its Sept. 9 meeting, the Albert Lea City Council approved the preliminary property tax levy for 2025. It would be \$8.9 million, an increase of \$1.2 million from this year:

- 4.98% increase in the general fund levy, mostly due to higher wages for City staff
- 9.6% increase in the debt levy for rec facility improvements
- 1.17% increase in the debt levy for street projects

What is the impact to homeowners? On a \$100,000 home, the city portion of property taxes would increase by \$69.01 from \$540.25 to \$609.26 per year. The annual breakdown for the increase: \$50.50 for rec facilities; \$15.85 for general expenses; and \$2.65 for street projects and other debt.

Also Sept. 9, the Council approved the zoning changes for new cannabis, off-sale liquor, tobacco and sexually-oriented businesses, including the setbacks from parks, rec facilities and other places frequented by children and families.

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