

PARKS & RECREATION
ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

March 20, 2023 5:45 pm
City Hall – Council Chambers

Members Present:

Steve Ball
Jodi Hartman
Therese Saindon
Amy Leach
Rich Yost
Tony Segura
Jason Howland, Ex-Officio

Members Absent:

Whitney Sauer

Staff in Attendance:

Cathy Malakowsky, Community Engagement and Enrichment Director
Bob Furland, Recreation Manager
Ryan Hajek, Assistant Director of Public Works
Mike Westney, Parks Superintendent
Dani Bakken, Recreation Coordinator
Afton Wacholz, Recreation Administrative Assistant

Others in Attendance:

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Steve Ball at 5:45pm.

Adopt Agenda:

Amy Leach 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 6-0. Motion declared passed.

Approval of the Minutes:

Amy Leach made the motion to approve the minutes from the January 18, 2023 meeting and Jodi Hartman seconded the motion. The board voted in favor of said motion 6-0. Motion declared passed.

Public Items:

Action/Discussion Items:

Project Review Process – Discussion and Potential Action

Cathy presented the newly created document for the Project Review Process. This document explains the process in an easy follow and visibly appealing way. Board members stated they liked the format as well as how visually appealing it was. Discussion was had on a few of the steps to piggy back on items

that were addressed at the last meeting. All in all, there were no significant changes requested by the board at this time.

Cathy and Afton presented the most updated Project Request Application Form for this process. There was discussion from the board on the word limit in each box as well as concern of the format, to be sure that all of the information entered by the applicant would be able to be seen in the box when printed out for review if done online. Therese Saindon mentioned that she has this issue when she completed her application for the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. City staff member, Teresa Kauffman, will be working to reformat the document for both online submission as well as printed form. There were slight wording adjustments and layout design that the board requested to be adjusted prior to finalizing. Cathy presented the document that would be created on the City of Albert Lea website to inform and instruct citizens on this overall process. The application itself would be found in at least two different areas on the website to ensure that citizens have easy access to complete. No other major suggestions for change were presented by the board.

Tony Segura made the motion to adopt the Project Review Process in full as presented by staff with the following changes on the financial section of the application – replace the “and” with “and/or” in the description under the Project Funding/Funding Sources box, as well as replacing the word “Commitments” with “Sources” in the following box where it is asking applicants to submit or upload documents to support their financial position for the project. Therese Saindon seconded the motion. The board voted in favor of the said motion 6-0 on a roll call. Motion declared passed.

Additional Board Members Discussion

Cathy presented to the board the discussion that was had with Kim from the Board Retreat in regards to the number of members on our board. Per our City Charter the board is comprised of 7 voting members with one ex-officio from the City Council. The discussion to add more board members was expressed to help with the issues we have with meeting quorum at meetings. The board discussed the pros and cons of adding additional members with the majority of the discussion leading to the addition being a position change. The City Charter Commission meets once a year and it will be in May of 2023. Adding members to the Parks and Advisory Board would mean a request in change to the charter that would be made by this group.

Additional discussion was had on possibly adding a student representative, who would be a non-voting member. The board agreed that having a student(s) on our board would give productive feedback to the board. Cathy is going to have further discussion with City staff and other boards on what adding a student would look like.

Amy Leach made the motion to move forward with a recommendation to the Charter Commission for the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to consist of 7-9 voting members, an increase from just 7 members. Tony Segura seconded the motion. The board voted in favor of said motion 6-0 on a roll call vote. Motion declared passed.

Parks and Recreation section of Update to City Comprehensive Plan - Discussion

Cathy briefly discussed that the City has adopted the Comprehensive Plan and that it may be helpful for the board to review the Park and Recreation section so they are aware of the information. This may also help the board set future goals.

Additional Action Item from Staff – Snyder Field Scoreboard Proposal

Rich Yost, Albert Lea Youth Baseball, had already presented to the board regarding a proposal to place permanent scoreboards at all five Snyder fields. The board voted in favor of the project however did want Rich to bring more specific plans back to the board for final approval. The scoreboards will be constructed by Lou-Rich, who will also donate their time to make the scoreboards. Rich presented the

plans. The money to fund the materials of this project is already in place and will be fully funded by the user groups, with assistance from the Parks department with install. Each board will be roughly \$1,000-\$1,100. The size of the main part of the boards will be 40" X 98", with the advertising top piece 14" X 98". Youth baseball and softball will be seeking field sponsors to display at the top of each board. The sponsors will be put on the board with a removable decal to accommodate changes throughout the years. The scoreboard will use magnetic plates to display the scores and innings, as electronic option quotes came in quite high. The user groups and the City staff will work together to decide on the exact locations of the boards at each field. They are leaning toward putting them in the outfield corners. Therese Saindon made the motion to approve the design and placement of five new magnetic scoreboards at Snyder Field. Amy Leach seconded the motion. The board voted in favor of said motion 6-0 on a roll call vote. Motion declared passed.

Staff Reports:

Recreation: Report provided by Bob Furland and Dani Bakken;

- Warming houses closed February 13
 - Final Numbers
 - Lakeview - 894
 - 64 pairs of skates were checked out
 - Hayek - 528
 - 4 pairs of skates were checked out
 - Academy - 190
 - Hawthorne - 169
 - Total Visits: 1781
- Partnered with the Police Department for a public skate; offered pizza, pop/water and watched Harry Potter along with open skate. Roughly 120 people attended
- Partnered with Community Education and the YMCA for spring break programming March 15-17
 - Had about 220 kids register
- Hiring
 - The summer job opportunities have been posted on the website; we have received some applications so far
 - Held interviews for our manager positions
 - All people who applied are returning staff from last season
 - We will be offering the position to 4 of the individuals
- Working on planning summer events

Parks: Report provided by Ryan Hayek and Mike Westney;

- Hired Andy Johnson full time in the park dept effective April 10th.
- Started hiring process for shared position between the arena and parks.
- Started the hiring process for summer help.
- Have 4 employees going to the 2-day shade tree short course for recertification.
- Have 3 employees going to pesticide applicators recertification.
- Working on Lakeview bathroom project.
- Finishing up on the yearly major cleaning of Edgewater Bay Pavilion.
- Working on tree removals & equipment maintenance.
- 7 of use went over to Austin for an EAB workshop.

- Emerald Ash Borer – Request for Proposal went out for the EAB treatments due back on the 21st
 - This should include pricing for private tree treatment for the public
 - Working on a plan for private tree debris
- Snyder Field – Getting ready to put out an RFP on the fencing and dugouts
 - Need to get the volleyball court done
 - Need to get the parking lot squared away
 - Will report on progress as soon as we are brought up to date
- Vehicle ordering – Not yet able to get any

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

- The city arena hosted the Minnesota hockey Bantam A South Region tournament on March 3-5. Teams from Northfield, Willmar, Luverne, MN River, Monticello, Rochester, Sauk Rapids, and Mankato.
- Albert Lea Figure Skating Club will present the "Albert Lea Figure Skating Club's Diamond Jubilee" skating show on March 25th and 26th.
- We are working on the pricing and design of bleachers for the Nystrom arena.

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

- Dani has started to interview applicants for the seasonal pool manager positions.
- Josh has been working with contractors for replacement of steel beams and steel grate flooring replacement and pool painting. Hope to schedule updates for this fall.
- Pool will open June 5th.

Senior Center: Report provided by Bob Furland/Cathy Malakowsky;

- Tech Tuesdays first Tuesday every month to help with cell phone and tech questions.
- March 27th 9-11 am Health and Wellness expo at the senior center.

Marion Ross Theater: Report provided by Bob Furland;

- ACT presents: Almost Maine March 9 – 18th tickets available
- Kitchen area is complete.
- Getting prices for automatic door opener on one set of main entrance

Other:

Cathy has written and advertised a RFQ for energy savings and building updates for the city's recreation facilities. Company proposals are due to the City on March 20.

A possible agreement between the city and a performance contractor. The contractor will identify recreation building needs, design and possibly install energy conservation measures and guarantee their performance.

Inclusive Playground: The volunteer group has raised \$761,241 for the playground so far, including \$350,000 from the City and \$100,000 from the County. Cathy submitted an application March 10 for a \$300,000 DNR grant for this project.

Food truck court: The Albert Lea City Council voted Feb. 27 to accept the low bid of \$92,693 to create a food truck court on East Main Street along the channel between Fountain and Albert Lea lakes. This project will consist of landscaping, power hook-ups and a concrete pad for up to three food trucks. The City Parks Department will provide most of the landscaping and benches to help reduce the costs. This would be phase 1 of a larger project to improve the area, with phase 2 including a soft landing for kayaks and other small watercraft, along with stabilizing the channel walls. The food truck court will be built this summer with the second phase in future years.

Art Walk: Art Walk Albert Lea is accepting submissions for its first sculpture collection this spring. Art Walk is an initiative to encourage public art in the city. It is housed under the umbrella of Main Street Albert Lea. Two recent projects include the murals on the warming houses at Lakeview and Academy parks. Art Walk Albert Lea is open to a wide range of sculpture styles and materials, as long as they are weatherproof. Regardless of their level of experience, all area artists are encouraged to submit their draft proposals by April 21. Detailed guidelines and additional information about the project can be found here: <https://cityofalbertlea.us11.list-manage.com/track/click?u=ac11db7fe1a824cfcf170ddf5&id=e641b1a012&e=c2fbd10463>.

Tentative events Recreation is involved with in 2023

Apr 8 - Easter Egg Hunt

May 5 - Cinco de Mayo

May 6 - Connect Event

May 25 - Thursdays on Fountain starts

June 9 - 10th Eddie Cochran

Jun 14 - Wind down Wednesday

Jun 17 - Albert Lea Pride

Jun 19 - Juneteenth

June 30 – July 4 festival

July 12 - Wind down Wednesday

Aug 9 - Wind Down Wednesday

Aug 12 - Rock N Roll the Lakes

Aug 20 - Last Thursday on Fountain

Sept 9 - Taste of Albert Lea

Sept 16 - Mexican Independence Day

Sept 19 - Safety Day

Oct. 20 – 22 & 27 – 31 October between at the Fairgrounds (Fall Festival)

Board Member Items:

- Steve Ball –
 - Steve thanked the Parks department for all their hard work on the outdoor parks this winter. They looked great and there was a lot of use at them.
 - Jason Howland –
 - ACT just wrapped up the show Almost, Maine; good response from the community who attended
 - ACT has a few special things planned for this summer:
 - Shakespeare In The Village at the FCHM; will perform Much A Do About Nothing; auditions will be August 24th and 25th
 - Kids Theater Camp in July; M-F 9-11am with a performance on Friday evening to cap off the week; more information will be available on the ACT website in the near future
 - New building manager for the theater – John; looking forward to the new ideas he has to offer to ACT

Adjournment: Amy Leach made a motion to adjourn the Park Board meeting, and Therese Saindon seconded the motion. The board voted in favor of said motion 6-0. Motion declared passed. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Afton Wacholz
Acting Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Secretary

Approved:

Steve Ball
Park & Recreation Advisory Board Chairman