

PARKS & RECREATION
ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

July 18, 2022 5:45 pm
Edgewater Bay Pavilion

Members Present:

Steve Ball
Rich Yost
Amy Leach
Jen Vogt-Erickson
Tony Segura
Jodi Hartman (attended via phone call)
Whitney Sauer
Jason Howland, Ex-Officio

Members Absent:

Staff in Attendance:

Ryan Hajek, Assistant Director of Public Works
Dani Bakken, Recreation Coordinator
Joe Grossman, Superintendent of Parks
Afton Wacholz, Recreation Administrative Assistant

Others in Attendance:

Shane Koepke – Art Walk Albert Lea

Call to Order:

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

Adopt Agenda:

Rich Yost made the motion to approve the agenda for tonight's meeting and Amy Leach seconded the motion. The board voted in favor of said motion 6-0 (Jen Vogt Erickson was not present for the vote). Motion declared passed.

Approval of the Minutes:

Jen Vogt Erickson made the motion to approve the minutes from the April 18, 2022 meeting and Rich Yost seconded the motion. The board voted in favor of said motion 7-0. Motion declared passed.

Public Items:

Shane Koepke from the Albert Lea Art Walk presented an art proposal for the Pioneer Park – aerator building and Sibley Play Park building. The design for Pioneer Park was shown to the board. It was a simpler design with bright flowers. Jason Howland requested that the design reflect more of a lake theme (ex. Lily pads, fish, etc) since the building is right on the path next to Fountain Lake and would be visible to those on the lake as well. Shane was open to exploring a new idea to bring back to the board in response to Jason's request.

The Sibley Play Park building design was created by a local woman who would also do the painting. The presented design was more complex and detailed however did not show any color. Board members did request to see an updated design with the intended colors, etc. This art would be on the exterior wall facing north on Front St.

Shane reminded the board that these projects would be fully funded by the Art Walk organization. Shane will bring back updated designs for the next board meeting.

Action/Discussion Items:

1. Frank Hall Tennis Court Conversion:

The board continued conversation on the request from the pickleball group to convert the only remaining City tennis court located at Frank Hall park to additional permanent pickleball courts. The board looked at four different options:

- Vote to keep the arrangement as is
 - Vote to recommend that the City Council approves to make the conversion to additional permanent pickleball courts
 - Vote to request that city staff explore additional data: feedback from the Albert Lea tennis community, school district plans for the tennis courts at SW, cost of building a new tennis court with lights at another location, cost of building a new pickleball complex at another location, etc.
 - Recommend the City seek a way to easily convert courts between pickleball and tennis
- Tony Segura made the motion to approve option 3 and request additional information from city staff. Amy Leach seconded the motion. The board voted in favor of said motion 7-0. Motion declared passed.

2. EAB Management:

Ryan discussed the presented EAB Management Plan. Due to the EAB activity, it is estimated that in 5 years the local area could be completely infested if we were to wait and do nothing now. There are not enough resources to wait and do it all at once. Staff requests approval from the board to move forward with this plan.

Amy Leach made the motion to approve the EAB plan as presented by staff. Jen Vogt-Erickson seconded the motion. The board voted in favor of the said motion 7-0. Motion declared passed.

3. Snyder Field Score Boards:

Rich Yost discussed and presented the preliminary proposal from the Albert Lea Youth Baseball Association to place manual scoreboards at the fields at Snyder. At this time the association feels that the manual scoreboards will provide the needed amenity at a reasonable cost. The association has received a price quote from Lou Rich of \$1,300 per field which would be funded by the user groups. Rich requested approval for these scoreboards to be placed at Snyder. After discussion from the board, they are requesting that additional communication be had between the Youth Baseball and Youth Softball organizations in order to present a more structured plan to City Council for approval.

Jen Vogt-Erickson made the motion to approve the placement of the scoreboards at Snyder contingent of the follow up communication between the two user groups. Tony Segura seconded the motion. The board voted in favor of the said motion 6-0, with Rich Yost abstaining. Motion declared passed.

4. Brookside Garden Fencing:

Discussion continued on the deer issue at the Brookside garden plots. Due to the increased concerns from the community, staff requested a quote for 8 foot fencing around the entire garden, including walk gates and gate for city equipment to enter. The quote was roughly \$43,500. The staff and board discussed ways to recoup the costs of this addition from the

garden renters. In order to recoup the total cost of the fencing over the next 15 years, the cost of the individual garden rentals would need to increase from \$20 per plot per season, to \$60 per plot per season. Steve Ball has discussed this with several gardeners already and has received positive feedback that the increase would be worth the security of their produce. There was discussion of concern on if all of the renters would be in favor of this increase.

Jen Vogt-Erickson made the motion to have City staff survey the current renters at Brookside Gardens and provide the results of support or apprehension for fencing to be placed around the gardens at the cost of the renters. Rich Yost seconded the motion. The board voted in favor of the said motion 6-0 (Steve Ball was absent for the vote). Motion declared passed. Staff will work on creating a survey to send to the current garden renters.

Old Business:

Recreation: Report given by Dani Bakken and Afton Wacholz as follows;

- H2Whoa event has about 75 kids participate
- Play Park numbers were up this season with Lakeview being our most utilized park, followed by Hawthorne and then Academy; ice cream socials were held at each park with about 150 attending at Lakeview Park
- Staff is currently working on plans for Safety Day for Tuesday August 9th
- DNR Grant for the Inclusive playground was not received; city staff will continue to discuss the next steps for resubmitting or going another route for funding
- Play parks will be partnering with Community Ed for a boat house day with provided transportation to and from the parks
- Bayside Ski team will be hosting a regional tournament on July 28-31 with 8 teams coming to town to compete as well as individuals
- State 11 year old baseball tournament will be held at Snyder Fields this weekend with over 70 games scheduled

Parks: Report given by Joe Grossman as follows;

- Working on improvements to the main Edgewater Park bathrooms, with new paint and new doors
- New playground equipment is going in at Memorial Park
- Youth softball and baseball practices and games are wrapping up for the season
- Continue to spend time on mowing and trimming
- Ordering many trees to be planted yet this fall
- Weed control
- Uptown watering of flowers
- Bids are open for the Snyder tile project, only two bids have been received and the price is much higher than anticipated.

City Arena: Report given by Dani Bakken as follows;

- Full time staff, Jed Bair, started on July 5th as the new Arena/Aquatic Center technician
- Finishing up remodeling of the Waldorf Locker Room due to water damage
- Fresh paint in the hallways, bathrooms and locker rooms
- Summer maintenance on both Zambonis

- New rubber flooring going in starting August 3rd in Nystrom hallways, locker rooms, arena office and lower conference room
- Roof project is scheduled to begin late August
- Colstrup ice has been removed and new spectator net will be going up
- Several quinceanera's scheduled the next month
- Dog show will be August 12-14 and State Steak Cookoff will be August 19-21
- Nystrom compressors will start up August 15th and painting will be begin August 22nd
- Waldorf starts practice August 29th

Aquatic Center: Report given by Dani Bakken as follows;

- Great season all around; numbers are down just a bit from last season but it may be due to our tracking system. This years numbers will be more accurate.
- Alpha Orthodontics sponsored a free swim day and would like to do this again next season
- Last day in operation is Sunday August 14th
- Quotes for new gel coat for the slide this fall and the structural beams and grading in the garage area

Senior Center: Report given by Dani Bakken as follows;

- Casino trips and a play are the upcoming trips in the next month; numbers look good

Marion Ross Theater: Report given by Dani Bakken as follows;

- Staff is working on quotes to replace the cabinets in the green room

Board Member Items:

- Tony Segura –
 - Tony inquired about the rules for donating old play park equipment that is being taken out and replaced with new, specifically for organizations like the United Preschool. Joe Grossman provided information on those rules that prevent the City from being able to donate or sell any used equipment.
- Jen Vogt-Erickson –
 - Jen discussed her concerns regarding the blind corner while on the walking trail in Pioneer Park. This blind corner is at the location of the aerator building. Jen suggested that signs be put up or possibly painting a warning on the building when they are completing the project for the Art Walk.
- Amy Leach –
 - Amy discussed the presence of blue-green algae by her dock space on the Edgewater side of Fountain Lake. She was wondering if the City could provide information to the public about the presence so people are made more aware. Staff informed the board that they use the notices from the Shellrock Watershed District as they have staff who are out looking for the presence of the algae and have better knowledge of the algae itself.
 - Amy also wanted to confirm that the skate park would be relocated if it were to be moved due to a new development at the City Beach. The staff confirmed that the skate park would find a new location in our community if it was moved from the City Beach location. Jason also informed the board that no proposals were submitted so the marina project is not going forward at this point.
- Jason Howland –

- The Albert Lea Anglers hosted the SE MN Conference Tournament on Fountain Lake. A total of 10 teams from Albert Lea, Kasson and Rochester competed. The host team received many compliments on the lake and the success they had fishing.

Adjournment: Tony Segura made a motion to adjourn the Park Board meeting, and Rich Yost seconded the motion. The board voted in favor of said motion 6-0 (Steve Ball was absent for vote). Motion declared passed. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Afton Wacholz
Acting Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Secretary

Approved:

Steve Ball
Park & Recreation Advisory Board Chairman