



Public Services – Parks & Recreation

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
OF THE
ANOKA PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
TUESDAY, JANUARY 12, 2021
COUNCIL WORK SESSION ROOM OF ANOKA CITY HALL
2015 FIRST AVENUE, ANOKA MN

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairperson Steve Nelson, Joe Anderla, and Sam Scott

MEMBERS PRESENT VIA ZOOM: Derek Sebesta, Mary Blankenship, Terri Poe, and Julie Huspeck

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mark Beckenbach

GUEST PRESENT: Mike Clark

STAFF PRESENT: Lisa LaCasse, Public Services Administrator; Nickie Jenks, Recreation Manager and Jon Holmes, Public Services Supervisor

OATH OF OFFICE

Anderla conducted the oath of office for Nelson, Scott, and Sebesta.

APPROVE MINUTES

Blankenship requested a change on the December regular meeting minutes. Under 'Items for next meeting', the word "move" needs to be past tense – moved. A motion **was made by Nelson, seconded by Scott to APPROVE THE DECEMBER 15, 2020 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD WITH CORRECTIONS.**

6 ayes – 0 nays. Motion carried

OPEN FORUM

NEW BUSINESS

Election of Chair/Vice Chair

The floor was open for nominations for 2021 Chairperson. Anderla nominated Nelson for Chair. There were no additional nominations. **A motion was made by Anderla, seconded by Blankenship to approve Nelson for Chair. 5 – AYES, 0 – OPPOSED. Motion carried.**

Nelson is the 2021 Chairperson of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board.



The floor was open for nominations for 2021 Vice-Chairperson. Anderla nominated Scott for Vice Chair. There were no additional nominations. **A motion was made by Anderla, seconded by Nelson to approve Scott for Vice Chair. 5 – AYES, 0 – OPPOSED. Motion carried.**

Scott is the 2021 Vice-Chairperson for the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board.

Committee Assignments

A copy of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB) Committee Outline was provided to all members for review. Scott requested to be added to Recreation Areas and Facilities, Pool Advisory, and the Arts and Culture Committee.

2020 Park and Recreation in Review

LaCasse put a PowerPoint presentation together highlighting 2020 accomplishments. After Park Board review, Nelson will present this to City Council in February.

An update was given on the integrity of the material used for the tennis court rehab; cracks started showing up about 2 months after the seal coat was laid. The manufacturer of this seal coat claims the product should mitigate court cracking for 10-15 years. LaCasse has tried and contacted the manufacturer about this issue. The company has not acknowledged the complaint.

Nelson asked if there were any updates on Station Park since the December meeting. LaCasse replied that staff has asked Kimley-Horn to review the land survey and figure out what exactly could fit into the area. The area is currently surveyed out with stakes. There is some topography, so land grading & limited tree removal may be needed. The area available appears to be about the same size as the playground and the parking lot at the Nature Preserve.

2021 Goals

This year the Park Board requested to review the Councils goals for 2021 before deciding on goals, so that the board could have a starting point. Normally, the board receives Councils goals after their goals are set, which makes the board feel like they are blindly making goals with no clue what council wants. Three council members turned in their goals in time for the board meeting. LaCasse provided the synopsis of the goals; there is not really a consensus between them. Nelson states that it makes it hard to target something when the Councils goals are all not unified. More can be accomplished if everyone agrees to what they are working towards as a whole.

Scott wants to see more community awareness for volunteer opportunities. He feels as though some demographics are not reached, and that some people are not aware of the events in time to make plans. LaCasse replied that part of the challenge is finding a way to communicate to everyone when something comes up quickly (ex. The Santa, Sirens, and Friends was put together in a couple weeks). Scott stated that sometimes the assumption is that everyone uses Social Media, which has been the quickest/easiest form of communication. Jenks explains that residents can sign up for updates and alerts through the City of Anoka's website. She will push for more updates to the community. The new recreation software, CivicRec is set up for scheduling volunteer opportunities and can be used to directly contact people who are registered for classes/activities. She also explained that there has been community outreach for feedbacks on projects that have been done, easily through Survey Monkey. Something like that can also be incorporated.

Anderla wants another full-time employee for Public Services maintenance. The city has acquired more park space and updating facilities, but haven't increased the workman hours to accommodate the expectations of up-keep. He stated that he thinks Riverfront Memorial Park would be better suited for the 'Farmers Market' because the parking spaces adjacent to the park. Anderla would like to see permanent bathroom facilities in the areas around the city that are heavily populated during special events. The portable facilities that are used during the events fill up, and get dirty fast. He reminded the board that the bathroom at John Ward Park has been closed for five years now, and it has not been in the budget to re-construct.

LaCasse states that more full-time employees for Public Services can be encouraged for future. She also suggested the board consider goals that are not necessarily project focused and are broader and systematic based.

Sebesta stated he doesn't get a good feel for Councils' goals. Consensus of the goals make it easier to align. Nelson suggested the Park Capital Fund be renewed. If the council is going to set a 0% levy, our goals can't go anywhere because there is no funding. He asked what the best revenue stream is currently. LaCasse replied that, the park dedication funds from new developments is the largest stream of revenue. LaCasse suggested watching trends of other communities. Some cities have fewer smaller parks and focusing on building large community parks and not neighborhood or mini-parks. Each park in the system requires maintenance; playgrounds, picnic tables, benches, and grills all have a lifespan and will need to be replaced at one point. Typically playgrounds need replacing about 20-25 years. The playground at John Ward is now 16 years old. Nelson adds he doesn't like the idea of goal setting when the budget has already been planned and cut for the year.

LaCasse summarized points that the board was focusing on, four goals for 2021 were put together:

1. Complete budgeted/planned projects
 - Rudy Johnson Park Reconstruction Phase 2
 - Obtain easements for 4th Ave alignment of Rum River Trail/Rail Crossing
 - Mississippi & Rum Riverbank Stabilization projects
 - Amphitheater National Registry Re-evaluation
 - Enloe Parking Lot resurface
 - Station Cove/Park
 - Trail maintenance
2. Identify and pursue funding options for future park development projects and facility improvements. Identify long-term funding stream for park capital fund to support park system needs in the future.
3. Advocate for the increase of full-time maintenance staff members to align with park, boulevard, and landscape planned projects and maintenance expectations. Align park budget with maintenance needs and expectations of care.
4. Educate and encourage publics' use of information/communication tools available through the city website, recreation software, and social media platforms for receiving city information and submitting citizen reports/comments/complaints.

A motion was made by Scott, seconded by Huspeck to approve the 2021 Goals set by the Park and Recreation Advisory Board.

6 – ayes, 0 – nays. Motion carried.

Winterfest 2021

Jenks announces that Winterfest will be on February 13th. The event will be all outside (weather permitting). Applicable COVID precautions will be in place. The activities planned include sledding, skating, snowshoeing, music on speakers, crafts to go, and a corn hole bags tournament. Maybe a fire-pit, but no s'mores, popcorn or hot chocolate. Volunteers will be needed.

Archery Hunting Report

10 deer were harvested out of both Kings Island and The Anoka Nature Preserve. One 8 point buck was found in the corn field when the corn was harvested, it was most likely struck by a car, and ended up in the field.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Skating Rink/Sledding Update

Warming houses are open for emergencies and bathroom use only. Skate changing is encouraged to be done outside. Skate assists are available at most rinks. Masks are available, and there have been no issues with COVID precaution enforcement.

Amphitheater

The final report from New History will be shared in February. LaCasse talked to Greg Lee, City Manager about a work session with the Council and New History. Lee suggested just inviting Council and HPC to the February Park Board meeting. LaCasse shared that she is expecting that the findings will likely be to keep it listed, including benefits/restrictions that come along with keeping it listed on the National Register.

COMMUNICATIONS

The February 2021 Park Board meeting has been moved to Tuesday, February 23rd. The 3rd Tuesday conflicted with the City Council meeting that was moved to February 16th, because of Presidents day.

ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

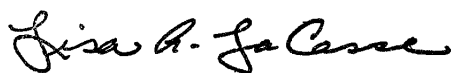
Amphitheater Report from New History

Adjournment

There being no further discussion, **a motion was made by Scott, seconded by Anderla, to ADJOURN THIS REGULAR MEETING. 6 ayes – 0 nays. Motion carried.**

Time of adjournment 9:02 pm

Respectfully Submitted,



Lisa LaCasse
Public Services Administrator