



Public Services – Parks & Recreation

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
OF THE
ANOKA PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
TUESDSAY, APRIL 20, 2021
COUNCIL WORK SESSION ROOM OF ANOKA CITY HALL
2015 FIRST AVENUE, ANOKA MN

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

MEMBERS PRESENT VIA ZOOM: Derek Sebesta, Terri Poe, and Mark Beckenbach,

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: Julie Huspek and Mary Blankenship

STAFF PRESENT: Lisa LaCasse, Public Services Administrator; and Jon Holmes, Public Services Supervisor

GUESTS PRESENT: Brandon Kuehn, Artist for Art Installation; Trevor Pinewski, Cory Pinewski, and Aaron Hunter, residents for skate park rehab request

APPROVE MINUTES

There being no changes to the March meeting minutes. A motion **was made by Scott, seconded by Clark to APPROVE THE MARCH 16, 2021 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD.**

7 ayes – 0 nays. Motion carried

OPEN FORUM

Memorial Donation/Art Installation

Brandon Kuehn, Anoka resident since 2012, is also an art professor at Augsburg College and Anoka Ramsey Community College and involved with hospice work. Kuehn shared a PowerPoint presentation of the proposed art installation which is titled "Telephone in the Wind" it's essentially an old fashioned styled telephone booth with an unattached telephone and a private space to grieve. Sasaki made is telephone available to the public as a place to grieve and "make a telephone call to their loved one". This was conceptualized in a private garden in Japan. Kuehn would construct/assemble the phone booth, would take all costs on his own, community could benefit. Asking for a location with public visibility, assistance with installation and a plaque in loving memory of Steve Schmidt. Possibly near the river, but he understands that space is valuable. Scott, suggested Peninsula Point Park. Idea of being in a public space is more forgiving; Nelson shared concern of vandalism, how much would it take for maintenance. No troubles in japan, but that's a completely different area. If it was closer to downtown or where there are cameras it could be better protected. Memorial rock garden, and veterans memorial, it's another space in the area to go grieve. Scott addressing vandalism, have adopt a memorial, a group takes responsibility of it with the help of the city. Plexi glass instead of real glass would be preferred by



Holmes. LaCasse asked for clarification of the materials Kuehn plans to use; wood and plexi glass. Actual phone booths are very expensive. Nelson asks if there are security cameras in the downtown area – there are several in Riverfront Memorial Park. LaCasse suggested a location near the rain garden, or one of the overlooks, also initially thought that Rice Street Beach maybe nice, it could even be installed in a temporary location, and moved to the new Riverwalk once the public art space is created. Kuehn indicated that he would not have hard feelings if it doesn't work out. Originally just people in Japan would visit it, and now people from all over the world go to the phone booth to use it to "talk" to the deceased. Nelson it's worth a try. Anderla thinks Riverfront Memorial Park along the trail would be a good location because of the name of the park, and it's within camera view; Rice Street Beach is too remote. Holmes said we could install 4x4 concrete pad alongside the trail. Nelson asked if the board is in agreement and asked staff to work with Kuehn to identify which park/location. Clark likes the idea of memorializing Steve Schmidt. Scott asked about landscaping, Kuehn doesn't need to make it fancy, Lacasse suggested landscaping to match other garden areas and to make it special. Poe loves the idea, loves interactive abstract art, very cool and unique thing to our community.

Poe motioned to move forward with it, Clark seconded. All in favor.

NEW BUSINESS

Capital Improvement Budget 2022

Three gentlemen from Pinewski's Ski & Board shop were in attendance in favor of speaking in support of revamping the skate park at John Ward Park. The equipment currently at the park is over 20 years old and is becoming unsafe for users. LaCasse explained there is a grant opportunity with MN Amateur Sports Federation that is open through May 21st. The grant funding is for a maximum of \$125,000 reimbursement, but would need to be spent by October 2022. Rough cost estimates were obtained from Spohn Ranch, a well-known skate park designer and builder, they recommended having at least \$250,000 dedicated towards the new skate park for the size of the community. Using concrete to construct the park is recommended for longevity, instead of just getting pre-fabricated components. The equipment that is currently at John Ward was donated by a previous Park Board Chair, and has been moved around from various parks but has been at John Ward since 2005. Scott has visited the park recently and thinks it is unsafe.

LaCasse suggests going the concrete route would be best because this is an opportunity to do something really cool for the community, why would we just want to piece it together. The Park could be a great avenue for community outreach to involve the community. There are fundraising opportunities with this type of project. Parents want their kids occupied, and skating is a great activity for most age demographics.

\$175,000 - \$200,000 of park capital funds would be ideal to match the grant, and construct a quality skate park. Grant awards may take place before park capital is finalized, the timing is perfect. T. Pinewski shared some cost estimates and design mock ups that he obtained from Spohn Ranch. The designers there placed some skate park models on a google map layer of the concrete pad that is currently there, it's about 13,000-15,000 sq. ft. Cost estimates and square footage is included with the mock ups. He would like to see if city could increase the proposed budget allocation to allow the park to have features that are suitable for all experience levels. He doesn't want to city to just put in the skate park to get it done, it should last a long time and be a good place for people to go. Holmes echoed that thought from a maintenance standpoint.

Scott shared that his top priorities in the CIP items were the skate park and finishing Rudy Johnson. With the HWY 10 reconstruction, and the trails that will be added from the Greenhaven PKWY/Highland Park reconstruction, it really opens up access by foot or wheels for a large part of the city. Staff at Pinewski's

doesn't recommend people to use John Ward, they direct people to Champlin or Maple Grove. They would like to have a common local resource to direct people to. Hunter added that there is an old saying "if your City doesn't have a skate park, the City is the skate park". A lot of frustrations come from people wanting to use that park but don't feel safe enough doing so. The Pinewski's started a petition on change.org last Friday that has 640 signatures already. LaCasse inquired on the demographic that is signing the petition, it would be nice to know if they are coming from, specifically how many live within the City. Pinewski will see if he can see that information.

Anderla would like to start focusing on one park at a time moving forward. If we are thinking of doing a skate park, there should really be a bathroom facility added. People are more inclined to go somewhere for a longer period if there are bathrooms, and not portables. Pinewski agreed that bathrooms are important to keep people at the skate parks. The skateboard community travels and there are a lot of groups that get together to go skate. LaCasse likes Anderla's idea to focus on one park at a time during the CIP process.

LaCasse explained that typically the biggest discussion point is finding the location, and we already have the location. There are ways to decrease the costs by in-kind donations. Nelson doesn't want "lame" attached to the park, incorporating special Anoka things is an idea. Pinewski mentioned starting a gofundme.com, but doesn't know what to set as a goal amount. LaCasse shares that there would be an RFP process for engineering, and create a focus group for the design. Irrigation rehab is already in the budget and is coming from water/sewer funds. If a larger restroom facility was added it would roughly be \$350,000, in addition to skate park funding in the area of \$350,000, for a total of around \$700,000. The three guests from Pinewski's were thanked for their time and efforts. For 2022 CIP the board agreed that Rudy Johnson and John Ward should be the focus of requests. Staff was asked to continue the CIP discussion for 2023 and beyond at the May meeting.

Ordinance Review: Chapter 74, Article III – Diseased Trees

The Board was provided copies of the proposed ordinance for Diseased Trees along with a supporting policy document regarding diseased tree high-cost abatement assessments. Saloka explained that after having the city assessor Mr. Varner, review the policy that he didn't see a need for abatement cost limits, nor did he see the need to have a hardship demonstrated in order to approve the financing from the city. The main reasoning being that, if a property owner comes to the City in search of financial help in order to abate a diseased tree, they obviously don't have the resources to cover the unplanned expense so why would we make them show a financial hardship. Financing has been offered at 4% in a 5 year term. This being at no cost to the city, and it is really just a resource for residents. Emerald Ash Borer will eventually impact our city along with other tree disease and pest epidemics, and this is one way we can better prepare our residents for the loss of trees and the need for abatement on private property.

Nelson had one concern that the assessment policy wasn't limited to only residential properties, and is wondering if the policy should be limited to residential R1 or R2 properties. LaCasse and Saloka are to connect with Mr. Varner and ask if he has concerns of the policy not being restricted to certain property types like residential R3 and R4, or commercial properties.

A motion was made by Scott, seconded by Clark to approve THE DISESED TREE ORDINANCE - CHAPTER 74, ARTICLE III 7 – AYES, 0 – OPPOSED. Motion carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Rudy Johnson

LaCasse revisited the proposed building/shelter concept and asked the board to make a decision tonight about moving forward with purchase. LaCasse added that she and Holmes met with Washington Campus staff and District 11 facilities staff about the status of construction. They specifically inquired about the building. In 2022, the gymnasium at Washington will be under construction. The school would like to utilize the park for year round physical education classes but the building is a key factor. They need to have a secure "lock down" location available to students to have class off-site. They currently use Erberts and Gerberts. The district is willing to uphold their agreement of \$150,000 contribution and will pay that amount in 2022 when the building is constructed. The district liked the design with just the two unisex restrooms and indicated 2 units was sufficient for their usage.

Staff doesn't recommend giving up the interior footage for the expansion of the restrooms. LaCasse reviewed the updated pricing quote. \$6000 for increase in restrooms and \$30,000 for addition of decorative stones.

A motion was made by Beckenbach to PROCEED WITH THE CUSTOM CEDAR BUILDING WITH 2 RESTROOMS AND METAL ROOF, WHETHER THE DISTRICT FOLLOWS THROUGH WITH THE FUND AGREEMENT, Clark Seconded. 7 – AYES, 1 – OPPOSED.

Dog Park

LaCasse put this item back on the agenda because the item was tabled without a specific date or requirement for discussing it in the future. Sebesta made a motion to not discuss the creation of a dog park in Anoka until it is brought up again by the community. Beckenbach seconded. All in favor. Motion Passed.

Mississippi Riverbank Stabilization Bid Result

LaCasse went over the bid results for the riverbank stabilization project at Mississippi Community Park that came in last Thursday. There is just under \$890,000 available for this project in a combination of two grants and city grant-match funds. There were seven (7) bid alternates that went along with the base bid. The city received twelve (12) bids; five (5) of the bids were under the engineers estimate for this project was \$1.1 million. There are \$100,000 of park capital funds that are dedicated to the reconstruction of the trail. The lowest bid that came back was \$758,000, which is \$180,000 under budget. Bid alternate one involved the inclusion of spawning grounds, alternate two (2) is for recreational boulders to fish from, alternate three (3) is to have supplemental plantings to help restore the area and not just willow staking, alternate four (4) involves using limestone instead of granite, alternate five (5) is also for limestone, alternate (6) replaces all granite with more natural field stone, and alternate seven (7) is the addition of 350 large boulders along the shore as rip-rap. We will be moving forward with either angular granite rock and large boulders or field stone. Council will probably want the large boulders along the shore, and there could be a potential to maximize grant funds by going higher up in elevation with the rip-rap. Nelson asked how high in elevation. LaCasse suggested if possible we go to the 839 elevation mark, it is the observed springtime water level high. Overall, the results were good news. **A motion was made by Nelson to MOVE FORWARD WITH THE RIP-RAP GOING TO ELEVATION MARK 839 WITH THE USE OF ANGULAR ROCK AND LARGE BOULDERS, Anderla seconded. 7 – AYES, 0 – OPPOSED. Motion carried.**

COMMUNICATIONS

Spring Fling Recreation Expo

This Saturday from 11-2pm organization of businesses, Pinewski's will be there letting people try out skate boards, reps from Disc Golf, pickle ball association will be teaching people how to play, police handing out trinkets, and our department handing out info on the pool.

2021 Arbor Day Celebration

Arbor Day is the 30th, last night Council read a proclamation to dedicate this year to Tommy Hammer. The planting will take place at the Anoka Community Mission on Pierce St at 10AM. Councilmember Barnett will be reading book, Councilmember Weaver presenting a framed copy of the proclamation to Sue Matheson, Tom's life partner, and we will be planting a hackberry tree and plan on naming it Huck. We will plant an additional 3 trees for Arbor Day, a total of 4 trees planted for 40 year recognition of being a Tree City. City has \$10,000 budgeted for planting trees along boulevards.

ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

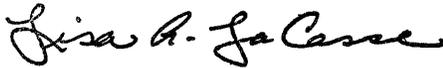
Capital Budget

Adjournment

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

Time of adjournment 9:27 pm

Respectfully Submitted,



Lisa LaCasse
Public Services Administrator