

**PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

TUESDAY, JUNE 22, 2020

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair McDowall-Seyko called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Committee Members present: Scott Marotz, Denise McDowall-Seyko, Doug Peterson, Laura Talvitie. Committee Members absent: Jason Brevig, Shane Fisher, and Scott Zettervall.

Also present: Recreation and Communication Coordinator Corrie Scott.

3. ADOPT AGENDA

Committee Member Peterson motioned to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Committee Member Marotz, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Committee Member Marotz motioned to accept the April 27, 2020 Parks Advisory Committee minutes as presented. Seconded by Committee Member Talvitie, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

5. BUSINESS

5A. PLAYGROUND SAFETY DISCUSSION

Committee Member Doug Peterson has brought forward an article about playground safety for the Parks Committee and City staff to review to ensure that efficiencies are being achieved.

Peterson stated that his priority with bringing this forward is to mitigate risk and that having regular maintenance documented can help if there were ever a lawsuit against the City. Peterson commented that having documentation for regular parks maintenance can also help the City receive discounts through insurance. Peterson stated that he did some research on the League of Minnesota Cities site and found information that confirmed his thoughts and he asked the Committee if this is something the Parks Advisory Committee should bring forward to Council.

McDowall asked if Public Works is already doing regular maintenance. Marotz stated that Public Works is doing regular maintenance, but they aren't taking a proactive approach with documentation. Marotz stated that Public Works might be spread too thin to put into place more regular and structured maintenance, but that third party playground equipment companies do offer inspections for Cities and this might be an option for the City that won't overwhelm Public Works staff.

McDowall asked what other surrounding cities have for maintenance polices and inspections. Marotz stated that it would be a good idea to invite a third party inspector to an upcoming Parks Meeting.

5B VACATED PARKS COMMITTEE SEAT

On May 27, 2020 Recreation and Communication Coordinator Corrie Scott received notice that Jason Brevig has vacated his seat on the Big Lake Parks Advisory Committee. Mr. Brevig was appointed to his seat in January, 2020. His term is set to expire on 12/31/2022. Staff is asking for approval to provide public notice of the vacated seat and to collect letters of interest along with resumes from interested candidates.

Committee Member Peterson motioned to direct staff to provide public notice of the vacated seat and to collect letters of interest along with resumes from interested candidates. Seconded by Committee Member Talvitie, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

5C. STAFF UPDATES

Scott reviewed the following:

1. Summer Programming

- a. **Farmers Market:** The summer market takes place every Wednesday from 3-7pm from June-August and 3-6pm in September at Lakeside Park. Parking has become an issue with an increase of park patrons in 2020. Staff is looking into options for additional parking.
- b. **Backyard & Beyond:** Staff has restructured this program to be two separate day camp events at Highline Park that require registration through the Library. Maximum participants will be 10 individuals.
- c. **Movie in the Park:** The September event will continue as scheduled. There is a potential to host a drive-in style event with the Cable Commission's equipment.
- d. **Music in the Park:** The Legacy Foundation has brought the 2020 Music in the Park season back starting with a big event on Thursday, June 2, 2020 including fireworks and the season ending on August 13, 2020.

2. **Lakeside Park Metered Parking:** Metered parking at Lakeside Park began at the end of May. Daily and Seasonal parking costs will remain the same. Information on the new parking meter have been posted on the City website and Facebook page.

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Staff is requesting that Parks Committee provide their feedback on the new system to ensure that it is working efficiently for residents.

3. **Fairy Houses:** Residents have been creating 'fairy houses' and placing them in local parks, mainly McDowall Trail. In April the City made a Facebook post encouraging that these 'fairy houses' be made with natural items to avoid hurting wildlife and the environment. Recently pictures of vandalized 'fairy houses' were posted in the Big Lake Forum. This poses a risk for Public Works staff who use equipment to mow the grass and maintain the trails and parks. Staff would like the Parks Committee to discuss ways to encourage eco-friendlier 'fairy houses' and potentially a week or two 'event' in the summer where residents can show off their creations and then remove them for maintenance and to avoid more vandalism on the trails.
4. **Park Maintenance Survey:** Staff is asking the Parks Committee to keep an eye on the existing parks in Big Lake and make a list of updates that should be considered for 2021. Examples include updated sidewalks, deteriorating park equipment, etc... Later in the Summer or Fall the Parks Committee will have a discussion on what parks should be considered priority for repairs and upgrades.
5. **Brom Park:** Residents in the neighborhood near Brom have made complaints at a recent Council Meeting about their basements flooding. Staff is wondering what the Parks Committee Members' thoughts are on potentially lowering the water table in that neighborhood. This area is where the City owns land for a potential park, but due to annual flooding issues, nothing has been constructed.

McDowall stated that having a temporary short-term parking area for the farmers market would be helpful for those that aren't using the park, but want to get in for shopping. Marotz stated that it would be a good idea to have a week or two designated in the early spring for residents to display fairy houses and do sidewalk chalk art and the Parks Committee could judge the fairy houses and announce a winner.

McDowall stated that there has been an increase in motorized skateboards on the paths going at high speeds and because they are quiet, it is difficult to hear them coming when walking the paths. She also stated that there has been more debris on the McDowall Trail this year than in years past.

Marotz stated that he is in favor of lowering the water table near Brom so that a park can be placed in that neighborhood, because at this time there isn't a park within walking distance for the homes there. McDowall stated that it would be a good idea to meet at the land near Brom. Marotz stated that another park that should be looked at soon is Powell Park. Peterson stated that the committee could meet at Brom in July and Powell in August.

6. **OTHER** – None.

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7. ADJOURN

Committee Member Talvitie motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:32 p.m. Seconded by Committee Member Peterson, unanimous ayes, meeting adjourned.