

***PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING – APRIL 6, 2023
MINUTES***

The Regular Bi-Monthly Meeting of the Andover Park and Recreation Commission was called to order by Chairperson Widmyer on April 6, 2023, 6:00 p.m., at the Andover City Hall, 1885 Crosstown Boulevard NW, Andover, Minnesota.

Commissioners Present: Chairperson Jake Widmyer, Commissioners Jim Lindahl, Kristin Lackie, Sophia Newton, Shane Stenzel, Tracy Strombeck, Liza Shafto

Commissioners Absent: None

Also Present: Parks & Streets Operations Manager Jason Baumunk

OATH OF OFFICE/NEWLY APPOINTED COMMISSIONER

Commissioner Widmyer administered the Oath of Office to Liza Shafto.

RESIDENT FORUM

No one appeared to address the Commission.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

March 16, 2023 Workshop Meeting

Commissioner Strombeck made a correction to the last article on page 4 where the wrong name was listed. It stated, “Jim Dickinson asked if the City would entertain putting in something that would generate revenue.” Instead of Jim Dickinson it should read Shane Stenzel.

Mr. Baumunk made a correction to another spot further down about adding pickleball courts. Commissioner Lackie was listed as the speaker, but it was Commissioner Stenzel.

Motion by Strombeck, seconded by Commissioner Nelson to approve the March 16, 2023 Park Commission Workshop minutes as amended. Motion carried 5 ayes, 2 present (Lindahl and Shafto).

March 16, 2023 Regular Meeting

Motion by Stenzel, seconded by Strombeck, to approve the March 16, 2023 Park Commission Regular Meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried 5 ayes, 2 present (Lindhahl and Shafto).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Parks and Streets Operations Manager Baumunk stated there were no changes or additions to the agenda.

Motion by Stenzel, seconded by Lindahl, to approve the April 6, 2023 Park Commission agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

HERO'S TOURNAMENT - REQUEST TO WAIVE FEES

Mr. Baumunk explained that the fees are requested to be waived again for the 7th annual Hero's tournament. There have been no issues with the request for waived fees in the past and it is for a good cause. The Park and Recreation Commission is requested to recommend the tournament and field usage fees be waived as being requested by the group The Invisible Wounds Project.

Commissioner Strombeck asked to know what the request is benefiting. Mr. Baumunk shared some things the Invisible Wounds Project put their money toward in 2022, including 1,500+ couples therapy sessions, 200+ wood-working therapy sessions, 50 mental health retreats for veterans and first responders, among other things. He added that they keep their focus local.

Motion by Commissioner Strombeck, seconded by Commissioner Stenzel to recommend the City Council waive the fees for the 7th annual Hero's tournament. Motion carried unanimously.

UPDATE SPRING/SUMMER FIELD SCHEDULES

Mr. Baumunk explained that this item is in regard to field schedules, which were due in mid-March. He doesn't have schedules for fast and slow pitch softball yet. All tournaments for the year have been submitted and approved. The main parking lot at Sunshine Park is being redone this summer and will need to be closed for the duration of July, which has been communicated to the users of those fields. He plans to present a full schedule at the next Park Commission meeting.

ACSO 1ST QUARTER REPORT

Mr. Buamunk shared that the Anoka County Sheriff's Office has not reported any damage or malicious activities in the parks.

Commissioner Nelson thanked residents for watching the parks.

Mr. Baumunk added that many issues involving park vandalization are reported by residents and encouraged residents to continue looking out for and reporting suspicious activity.

OUTSTANDING ITEMS

1. **On-going Projects:** Mr. Baumunk reviewed the remaining on-going items. He shared that all playgrounds have been ordered. \$50,000 was allocated toward a new playground for Lunds Park North from the Park Dedication fund. \$40,000 was allocated toward the Hidden Creek North shelter but they are over-budget for the project. The Park Dedication fund should fully cover the shelter so they either need to downsize the project or ask Council for more funds.
2. **Updates from Previous Meetings – Park Survey Options:** The QR code in the newsletter will be discussed during the Workshop session. They received 126 responses and a variety of comments that will be discussed during the Workshop.
3. **Kelsey Round Lake Boardwalk:** The project has been approved and is just waiting on when the contractor is able to complete the project.
4. **Seasonal Staff:** Parks and Street departments are looking for seasonal staff. Mr. Baumunk encouraged people to apply. He shared that the age requirement is 17 and up, there is a minimum \$15/hour starting, and it would involve four 10 hour days per week.
5. **Parks Maintenance Update:** Mr. Baumunk reviewed the maintenance report for the season. Every plow was out plowing on Saturday and it still took 12 hours which is twice as long as usual. They have been going through equipment and getting ready for summer.

OTHER ITEMS OR UPDATES

Nothing to report.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Nothing to report.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Strombeck, seconded by Stenzel, to adjourn the workshop meeting at 6:13 p.m. Motion carried unanimously

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristina Haas, Recording Secretary
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.

***PARK AND RECREATION WORKSHOP MEETING – APRIL 6, 2023
MINUTES***

The Workshop Meeting of the Andover Park and Recreation Commission was called to order by Chairperson Widmyer on April 6, 2023 6:15 p.m., at the Andover City Hall, 1685 Crosstown Boulevard NW, Andover, Minnesota.

Commissioners Present: Chairperson Jake Widmyer, Commissioners Shane Stenzel, Jim Lindahl, Tracy Strombeck, Kristin Lackie, Sophia Newton, Liza Shafto

Commissioners Absent: None

Also Present: Parks & Streets Operations Manager, Jason Baumunk
Others

REVIEW MARCH/APRIL NEWSLETTER PARKS SURVEY

Mr. Baumunk shared some results from the Parks Survey that residents were able to fill out using a QR code that was printed in the March/April Andover newsletter. Residents provided input on improvements for specific parks, their interest in reserving a park shelter for a private event, how many people a shelter should accommodate, and which parks they believe should have a shelter. Mr. Baumunk shared that out of the 121 people who filled out the survey, 50 said they would like to reserve a shelter.

Mr. Baumunk noted many residents made comments on Sophie’s Park. There is currently no green space and residents would like more. The problem is that it is sandy. Mr. Baumunk suggested he could get bids on how much it would cost to get irrigation put in there so they could grow grass more easily. The Commissioners agreed adding irrigation was a good idea to make the park space more usable. Mr. Baumunk shared that there is currently no electricity at the park. He suggested putting power in and adding a security light since there have been vandalism issues. The Commission agreed with this suggestion as well. Mr. Baumunk shared he will get costs together and add it to their CIP discussion list.

Mr. Baumunk stated there were many resident comments on Hickory Meadows Park, which is a large park with almost nothing in it other than a small playground. Mr. Baumunk shared half the park is currently irrigated and the Commission discussed adding more irrigation so there could be more grass. The addition of basketball courts was discussed but there hasn't been a big demand for those. An octagonal gaga ball court and some Adirondack chairs were suggested so there are activities for older kids and more comfortable seating options, since these needs were mentioned in resident comments. The Commission agreed to start with adding more irrigation to create a larger grassy area.

The Commission discussed a trail connection they are hoping to make, which they are waiting on State grant money for. Everything is in place for the bridge they plan to add, which will connect neighborhoods, but they are waiting on one property's easement so they can receive the grant funds to complete the trail. All neighborhoods are currently not connected by trails, but residents would like them to be.

Although it did not come up in the survey, Mr. Baumunk brought up the Prairie Knoll warming house building. They are waiting on a yes or no answer on whether or not they can add a second floor to the building with the foundation as it is, or if they have to tear down and redo the foundation on the building. The football association would like to use it but the building is currently not big enough for their storage needs, and the bathrooms are not sufficient. The Commission discussed other amenities that could be added to Prairie Knoll park, like pickleball courts or a skate park. Mr. Baumunk shared he would look at pricing for skate park equipment. Other potential locations were also discussed for pickleball courts.

The Commission discussed the challenge of replacing playgrounds. The City's current budget of \$50,000 no longer pays for playgrounds that residents are happy with. \$50,000 only covers basic equipment that doesn't have anything fun for older kids to do.

Mr. Baumunk brought up the interpretive historical signs created by past Councilmember Val Holthus to share the history of certain landmarks at various park locations, asking the Commission what the plan is for those. QR codes were suggested so residents could scan a sign and read information online, versus having everything printed right on a physical sign since there is a lot of information. Mr. Baumunk said he will add a further discussion of this to a future agenda.

The Commission discussed a resident request for ADA handicap equipment at Wild Iris Park and Shady Knoll Park. Mr. Baumunk said he could look into the possibility of adding some ADA equipment. He shared ADA playgrounds are significantly more

expensive. Wild Iris Park is relatively new, and did not have many survey result requesting ADA specific additions.

The Hills of Bunker parking lot came up a lot on the survey. Residents would like it paved, so the Commission discussed prioritizing that. Mr. Baumunk stated he would get a cost on it and add it to the CIP discussion list.

Commissioner Strombeck noticed many residents commented about paying a lot of money toward Park and Recreation fees and are likely thinking the money should all go toward the park nearest their homes. She suggested making it clearer to residents that money goes toward the City's whole Park system.

Commissioner Stenzel shared he appreciated looking through the results of the survey, and suggested having a survey QR code always available for residents to give feedback and comments about their satisfaction with the parks and suggestions for improvements. The Commission agreed the survey was helpful and informative for their planning purposes. They discussed using a Google Form for a survey instead of a QR code since it is free.

The Commission discussed adding a gate to Hawkridge Park that would close and lock at a certain time, since a resident commented that there are numerous after-hour activities. It is a very remote park.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:14 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristina Haas, Recording Secretary
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.