

***PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING – OCTOBER 3, 2019  
MINUTES***

The Regular Bi-Monthly Meeting of the Andover Park and Recreation Commission was called to order by Chair Lindahl on October 3, 2019, 7:00 p.m., at the Andover City Hall, 1885 Crosstown Boulevard NW, Andover, Minnesota.

Commissioners Present: Chair Jim Lindahl, Commissioners Ted Butler, Kathy McElhose, Mark Miskowiec, Dawn Perra and Jake Widmyer.

Commissioners Absent: Angela Marinello

Also Present: Assistant Public Works Director, Todd Haas  
Parks Maintenance Supervisor, Jason Grode

***RESIDENT FORUM***

No one appeared to address the Commission.

***APPROVAL OF MINUTES***

***Motion*** by Butler, Seconded by Widmyer, to approve the September 19, 2019 Park Commission minutes as presented. Motion carried on a 6-ayes, 0-nays, 1-absent (Marinello) vote.

***APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA***

***Motion*** by Miskowiec, Seconded by Perra, to approve the Agenda as presented. Motion carried on a 6-ayes, 0-nays, 1-absent (Marinello) vote.

***UPDATE ON JOINT MEETING WITH ANDOVER CITY COUNCIL***

Assistant Public Works Director Haas reported that the City Council will meet jointly with the Park Commission on Tuesday, October 22 at 6:00 p.m. Mr. Haas reviewed the agenda items for the joint meeting.

**A. Discussion of Updating the Park Dedication Study**

Mr. Haas explained the process for updating the facilities chart, park acreage, and how the Park Dedication fees are determined. Mr. Haas explained that the park project costs (for both new items and replacement items) will need to be updated. Andover's ultimate population numbers are currently being reviewed by Metropolitan Council which will be used in determining the new park dedication fee.

Commissioner Perra asked when staff will hear back from the Met Council. Mr. Haas replied that the item is on the October 22 Council Agenda for discussion and beyond that, a timeline is not known at this time.

## **B. 2020-2024 Parks CIP**

Mr. Haas presented the Council's changes to the Parks CIP stating that it has not been formally adopted by the Council yet.

Chair Lindahl stated that Pine Hills North Facility was intended to be a premier park and is now being neglected. Chair Lindahl would like to see the paving of the parking lot moved up and included back into the Park CIP. Commissioner Butler concurred and added that the parking lot is not designed to be gravel and does not work well for parking without asphalt and pavement markings. Chair Lindahl stated the park is used frequently for soccer and football, has excellent facilities and lighting, but has a poor parking lot.

Commissioner Miskowiec asked why the parking lot needs to include curb and if the City can pave the lot without it. Mr. Haas replied that curb keeps cars on the pavement, helps with water runoff, and is a city standard required in most private commercial developments.

Commissioner McElhose indicated there may be more options for curbing other than concrete curb and referred to asking the City Engineer about those options.

Commissioner Perra suggested waiting on the Prairie Knoll Park parking lot and moving forward with Pine Hills North Facility. Commissioner Perra stated usage is a better reason for paving the lot than resident complaints.

Chair Lindahl asked about the perception of paving Prairie Knoll if the lot isn't used. Mr. Haas stated the Prairie Knoll lot is being used by the football association and park users are being directed to the north lot by parking attendants.

Commissioner Perra inquired about the athletic associations contributing to the cost of paving the lot. Mr. Haas replied that the associations have not indicated interest in helping fund the paving the lot. The issue of paving the parking lot is

driven by staff due to the problems arising from vehicles spinning around in the gravel lots.

Commissioner McElhose inquired about the number of vehicles using the lot for spinning donuts and asked if it is a true concern. Commissioner Butler replied that it is multiple cars in multiple locations, wherever there is a large gravel parking lot.

Commissioner McElhose indicated that Andover has high standards and a paved lot would fit in better with the look that Andover desires. Mr. Haas explained that the decision to pave is based on funding and usage.

### **C. 2020-2024 Playground Replacement Schedule**

Mr. Haas reviewed the items on the Playground Replacement Schedule with the Commission. Mr. Haas stated that the plan includes two playgrounds per year, however with 42 parks in the Andover park system, three replacements per year would be ideal. Mr. Haas stated the standard life of a playground is 15 years and some playgrounds may be eligible for refurbishing depending on condition and style. Mr. Haas indicated staff would like a bigger budget to accommodate the number of parks. The current budget is \$100,000 per year.

Commissioner Widmyer asked how much the City would need to allocate to complete three playgrounds per year. Parks Maintenance Supervisor Grode stated each structure is approximately \$40,000 - 50,000 and \$150,000 would be sufficient.

Commissioner McElhose asked how the City could get more money for playground replacements. Commissioner McElhose stated that the condition of the playgrounds should reflect the City of Andover. Commissioner McElhose asked about the number of replacements the City of Coon Rapids is constructing and how they acquired the funds. Chair Lindahl replied the City of Coon Rapids passed a bond and that Andover will need to acquire funds internally.

Commissioner Perra asked if staff can identify which parks need replacement the most and potentially replace two and refurbish one each year. Mr. Grode stated this option is a possibility as the cost to refurbish is about half the cost of a replacement. Mr. Grode stated that not every playground can be refurbished.

Commissioner Butler asked staff to look at the playgrounds needing replacement in the next three years and identify which ones can be refurbished and then adjust the schedule to reflect that.

Mr. Haas stated that neighborhoods provide input on what type of playground they want at their park and replacement or refurbishing would depend on

neighborhood feedback. Mr. Haas stated that staff will be working on neighborhood surveys soon for the 2020 replacement schedule.

Chair Lindahl stated the playgrounds change as the neighborhoods change.

Commissioner McElhose asked how the refurbishing works. Mr. Grode replied that the plastic pieces are replaced, and the metal structures are repainted if the basic frame is deemed to be reusable. Mr. Grode added that costs are also reduced if the concrete border is in good shape. Mr. Grode explained that there are many different types of playgrounds available now, including a ropes playground which is more contemporary. Mr. Grode stated the neighborhoods have a great amount of input on what gets placed in their park. Mr. Haas brought up the idea of an inclusive playground at a larger Andover Park. The Commission expressed interest in an inclusive playground.

#### **D. 2020-2024 New Trail Segment Improvements**

Mr. Haas went through the New Trail Segment Improvements plan for the next 5 years.

Commissioner Perra asked about the new development at 161st and Crosstown and if there was a trail planned for that area. Mr. Haas stated there is a plan for a trail connection at the Villas at Crosstown Woods along the east side of Crosstown Blvd NW.

#### **E. 2020-2024 Trail Reconstruction Improvements**

Mr. Haas went through the Trail Reconstruction Improvement plans.

#### **F. Discuss Mowing Area within Natural Areas versus Irrigation**

Mr. Grode stated the Council wants to revisit the areas the City reduced or removed mowing. Mr. Grode stated the City has added irrigation in several parks requiring more frequent mowing and staff is at capacity for mowing. Mr. Grode stated if the City begins to mow new areas, staff will be stretched thinner.

Commissioner Miskowiec asked if staff was feeling pressure to mow. Mr. Grode stated the City has received some complaints, for example, at Terrace Park.

Commissioner Miskowiec said that he is okay with natural areas in parks unless there are number of complaints. Commissioner Butler agreed that the natural areas are not a nuisance and don't look bad. Commissioner Butler stated support to keep the mowing schedule as is.

Chair Lindahl recommended putting up a sign up that says natural habitat.

Mr. Grode indicated that staff is looking at other areas that are not used and returning it to a natural state. Mr. Grode mentioned Timber River Park where staff eliminated an area from the mowing schedule and seeded it with a wildflower and pollinator mix.

Chair Lindahl stated that if the area looked purposeful and attractive, people will think it's supposed to be there.

Commissioner McElhose recommended adding educational signs.

The Commission came to a consensus to keep mowing as is or reduce it and increase natural habitat.

Commissioner McElhose asked for more budget information as to what each area of Parks costs. Mr. Haas stated he will send her budget information.

### ***REVIEW OUTSTANDING ITEMS***

Assistant Public Works Director Haas presented outstanding items with the Commission.

1. **Andover Community Center Advisory Board** - Commissioner Butler stated the Community Center Advisory Board will meet on Monday, October 7. Commissioner Butler updated the Commission on construction, parking, and urged patience from facility users. Mr. Haas stated the parking area will be open mid to end October.
2. **Completed Projects** – Mr. Haas informed the Commission that the Hills of Bunker Lake Park West irrigation is complete and will be implemented in the spring.
3. **On-going Projects** – none
4. **On-hold Projects** – none
5. **Items of Interest** -  
Mr. Haas stated the hockey association has agreed to provide volunteers to keep the warming houses open until 9 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays. Weekend hours will generally remain the same as 2018-2019 season. Hours are posted at each warming house and on the City website. Mr. Haas informed the Commission that the trail improvements for Kelsey Round Lake, ASN, and Hills of Bunker Lake West Parks will be bid and constructed as one package in 2020.
6. **Parks Maintenance Update** – Mr. Grode reviewed items listed in the staff report, highlighting irrigation and wood chips.

Chair Lindahl asked if the irrigation systems have moisture meters. Mr. Grode replied yes, but every now and then the systems fail and need to be fixed. Mr. Grode stated the City plans on adding more sensors, both rain and flow sensors. Mr. Grode stated staff can shut systems off remotely from a computer or phone

***ADJOURNMENT***

***Motion*** by Butler, Seconded by Miskowiec, to adjourn the meeting at 7:56 p.m. Motion carried on a 6-eyes, 0-nays, 1-absent (Marinello) vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Shari Kunza, Recording Secretary  
*TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*