

**Tuesday, August 1, 2023, 5:30 PM
CITY OF MINNETONKA BEACH
PARK COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**

Members Present: Chair Kim Petersen, Vice Chair Laura Paine
Commissioners: Curt Holt, Laura Paine, Lucian Panait, and Patty Rezabek
Absent: Dave Christiansen, Chip Zawislak
Staff Present: City Clerk Jane Burgess, Public Works Superintendent Jason Hilgers
Council Liaison: Mayor Joe Pagano
Guests:

Petersen opened the meeting at 5:30 pm.

1. Minnetonka Beach Business

1.1. Approve Agenda – August 1, 2023

Panait motion Rezabek second to approve the August 1, 2023, meeting agenda. With all members voting in favor, motion carried.

1.2. Approve Minutes – June 6, 2023

Holt motion, Panait second to approve the June 6, 2023 meeting minutes. With all members voting in favor, motion carried.

2. Administration

2.1. Budget Review – KP

Chair Petersen and commissioners reviewed the 2023 Budget. They discussed the turf restoration plan and the fertilizer program with AJ's. Hilgers stated that he has not seen results yet from this year's fertilizing, but the drought hasn't helped. Holt confirmed that it takes a year to judge the progress so perhaps they will see it next year. Hilgers stated that Bartlett did an EAB treatment today, and Paulsen of Bartlett told him that the trees are now taking the treatment up slowly as the recent rain helped that process.

Panait stated that Waterfront Restoration's weed removal program is going well this summer, and there are very few weeds near the end of the docks because they are pulled by their divers. He added that some days the wind blows weeds to shore very quickly. Hilgers stated that he and the summer volunteer workers have hauled a lot of weeds out of Swim Beach Park so far this season.

Petersen stated that under the Restore the Shore category, Natural Shore Technologies has serviced the swim beach planting area twice in the past, taking care of invasives and keeping the area maintained nicely. They will be coming one more time for their final visit this summer.

Holt stated that the Gardens by Lynn budget for labor was \$3,770. The Annuals budget for summer plantings was \$1,050, and \$275 for spruce tips. So far \$2,665 has been spent on labor hours, half of which was for spring leaf removal. They discussed having Public Works blow out the leaves at City Hall this fall, and again prior to Gardens By Lynn starting their work next spring. Hilgers stated that the previous gardener informed him of when she was coming so he blew the leaves out before her crew came in the spring. Holt will make sure Lynn contacts Jason next spring for leaf removal prior to them starting work. Holt added that in July the City was billed for only two labor hours at \$230, and there are 15 labor hours left on the contract at \$975. \$275 remains in the budget for spruce tips. He stated that they are on track and if spring labor hours are reduced next year for leaf removal, there will be more labor hours available for the season. The commissioners discussed what they liked and did not like for plant selection and maintenance this year. Holt watered the Welcome Sign flowers initially this season but suggested using drought

tolerant plants for the Welcome Sign in the future such as red and white petunias and geraniums. With the blue in the sign, it would be a patriotic display.

Burgess suggested weeding the perennial garden along Lake Road on the side of City Hall if possible, and she also told the commission that there is an invasive perennial taking over the Hosta along the back sidewalk of City Hall.

2.2. Review of SPOC (Single Point of Contact) Assignments

Petersen stated that nothing has changed, and with Christiansen's absence today that discussion can happen later, so the assignments will remain as is. They discussed pushing off the 2023 \$3500 CIP swim beach paver project and Hilgers had suggestions for a possible solution there. They decided to evaluate the project in 2024.

2.3 Election of Officers for 2023/2024 – KP 9/1/23 – 8/31/24

Rezabek motion, Holt second to reelect Kim Petersen as Chair and Laura Paine as Vice-Chair of the Park Commission effective September 1, 2023 – August 31, 2024. All ayes, the motion carried.

3. Operations

3.1 State of the Parks, Your View (the next 5 years) – All

Petersen stated that next year is the last year of the current Park Commission Five Year Plan 2020 - 2024. She asked the commissioners to think about what they see in the parks and how they see the parks being used. City Council asked that Parks think about what the next five years looks like regarding City parks for 2025 – 2030. An outline will include park amenities, park usage, capacity for labor and funding, environmental improvements with shoreline, forest health and park management. Petersen added that the focus can be on the health of the lake and the health of City land. Process refinement is a topic that could also be included looking at what has been done in the past especially with grants, CIP, budgeting and refining those items going forward. Petersen is to present an outline of the Park Commission's input for this at the September council meeting. Parks will discuss all this at their September 5th meeting.

Panait stated that different parks serve different purposes. Ray Peters Park historically has been underutilized and it is a sporty park. Kids like to play soccer there. Consideration can be given to adding a skate park there or pickleball courts. Some residents told Panait that they would like pickleball courts there and would like that to be considered. He asked if perhaps the baseball field should be removed or does it get used. They discussed the baseball field's increased usage years ago. He added that Half Moon Park is a small kids park with an awesome playground, and nothing needs to be done there. Swim Beach Park struggles with weeds and docks, but this year was a better year.

Rezabek stated that many years ago, there were Memorial and Labor Day weekend ball games at Ray Peters Park. Orono used the park for a couple of years for T-ball practice. She added that there is space to the west in the park that could be cleared for use, and there are grants for equipment and facilities including the Hennepin County Youth Sports grants.

They discussed baseball, soccer, and that hockey and skating are the focus at Ray Peters Park. Pagano stated that the Park Commission should define in an outline what their vision of City parks is for the next five years, including community input with a specific purpose. Then City Council will give specific direction to Parks how to proceed. Pagano praised Parks, with its fifth leadership team, for staying the course and having the discipline to nearly complete the first Five Year Plan. He advised them to have a foundation and an approach like the one that worked for them for the last five years and do the same for the next five years but take it to the next level. He suggested using a different angle other than maintenance such as, "What do the parks mean to the Park Commission?" Is it nature, sports, or use for gathering places. He told the commissioners that they have a blank canvass to tell council what they think, and they should plan on spending a year developing the new Five-Year Plan.

Panait stated that they should review each park individually and consider the vision of each one. Pagano stated that that concept is consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan.

The commissioners discussed open spaces in City owned property that are neglected including the garden in the Huntington Pt Rd E. cul de sac and at City Dock 2, and who is supposed to maintain these areas. Petersen stated that rip rap on Crystal Bay at the City Dock locations needs attending to right away. Petersen said there needs to be clarification as to what areas need to be attended to and by whom and what do not.

Paine asked if the City should dispose of the old, broken skate park ramps and parts. Petersen stated that they will create an outline using the categories below and including ideas from commissioners to present to City Council including Paine's question about equipment disposal.

Holt asked if they will identify what is possible and what is probable, to which Pagano stated that they should study the City's Comprehensive Plan for guidelines.

- Existing Amenities
- Park Usage
- Capacity (Funds and Labor)
- Environmental Improvements (Tree/Forest, Shoreline, Turf Management)
- Process Refinement (Grants, CIP, Budgeting)

3.2 Hard Asset Punch List Update – LP/JH

Petersen asked what the procedure is with disposing of City property as it pertains to throwing away the broken, unsafe skate park parts. Mayor Pagano said that as those parts are a potential liability they should be disposed of, and a motion does not need to be made to do so. Hilgers said he needs the room where the parts are sitting for the new water treatment plant, but he will keep the two rails at Ray Peters Park for winter use.

Holt asked about installing solar powered lights at the new Welcome Sign. They discussed options and decided to see if there is money remaining in the budget at the end of the year that could purchase solar lights for the sign.

Hilgers explained what resident and Boy Scout Peter Jans will do for the City for an Eagle Scout project. He will build and enclose three trash/recycling cart areas in the City with concrete bases and wood structures around each site at the beach, City Hall, and Ray Peters Park. Home Depot and an anonymous resident donor are helping fund the supplies needed for the project.

Panait asked where the tire swing at the swim beach came from. No one knew the answer.

They discussed that the geese deterrent lights will be put out next spring during nesting season. Hilgers explained that he did not install the buoys or the geese lights at the swim beach this year to keep the beach clean looking. He added that it took three years to get the geese to stay away from the beach with the light program which was to be expected. Petersen stated that the Natural Shore plantings help block the geese as they have no runway to get up to the grass. Pagano stated that the Cattails along the shoreline at the Lafayette Ridge beach are keeping geese away successfully as well.

3.3 Green Asset Punch List Update – KP/JH

Petersen stated that the only update she noticed is the Buckthorn in the hedge at swim beach, and Hilgers stated that he will take care of it. Petersen added that a new Rhododendron was planted at City Hall to match the others. Petersen added that as a future idea, a tree could be planted near Lafayette Road where the crab apple trees are by the bench. Rum River still owes the City a tree and it could go there to replace a Service Berry tree that died. Hilgers

said he will clean up the bench area and plantings. He added that Woodbridge and Lafayette Roads as well as others in the City are getting badly damaged from all the trucks that drive on them.

4. FYIs

4.1 National Night Out – Tonight 6:30 – 8:30 pm

Petersen noted that National Night Out has begun outside of City Hall.

5. Commissioner and Liaison Comments

Rezabek stated that along Crescent Street there is a large rut that is getting deeper right next to the road, and Hilgers stated that he will look at it.

Paine asked if Parks could have an article in the Beachcomber asking for volunteers for specific projects they can do with minimal supervision. Petersen stated that there have been volunteer groups in the past who have helped. Pagano stated that the City has asked for help at various clean-up days, and Rezabek stated that some residents have helped with Garlic Mustard pulling.

Holt gave a pollinator garden update for Lafayette Park stating that it will take three years for it to grow. He will start planting and weeding in the next two to four weeks by hand as it will have its cover crop zone. He told Hilgers that next year if anything grows there, he will need to mow it at 6-8 inches once monthly after the initial flush. Paine suggested an article be put in the Beachcomber about the garden. They discussed options for signs with perhaps a QR Code that links to the City's website.

Pagano thanked the commissioners for their service to the Park Commission and thanked Petersen and Paine for renewing their leadership roles. He appreciates the fact that they take pride in their work with enthusiasm.

Burgess reminded the commission that Panait's three-year term is over August 31st. He is renewing his term on the Park Commission which was good news. She added that she had not heard if Zawislak is renewing his term which also expires August 31st.

6. Closing Comments and Adjournment – Co-Chairs

Holt motion, Rezabek second to adjourn the August 1, 2023 Park Commission meeting. With all members voting in favor, motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 pm.

Public in attendance:

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Burgess, City Clerk