

**Tuesday, October 1, 2024, 5:30 PM
CITY OF MINNETONKA BEACH
PARK COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**

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

Petersen opened the meeting at 5:32 pm.

Oath of Office – Dave Christiansen and Patty Rezabek

Burgess administered the Oath of Office to Christiansen and Rezabek with terms expiring August 2027

1. Minnetonka Beach Business

1.1. Approve Agenda – October 1, 2024

Panait motion, Rezabek second to approve the October 1, 2024, meeting agenda. With all members voting in favor, motion carried.

1.2. Approve Minutes – August 6, 2024

Burgess amended the minutes as requested.

Christiansen motion, Rezabek second to approve the August 6, 2024 meeting minutes as amended. With all members voting in favor, motion carried.

2. Administration

2.1. Administrative Calendar - LP

Rezabek asked if there will be tree planting this fall and Petersen said she would discuss that later in the meeting. Petersen stated that there is one more meeting this year and she reminded commissioners to turn in invoices or receipts to Burgess no later than November 22nd. She added that she will be presenting the 2025-2029 5TP final draft to the City Council on October 7th and will request approval of it.

2.2. 2024 Budget Audit - KP

Petersen stated that the Park Commission will finish the year within the approved budget. Rezabek stated that she still has not heard back from Prairie Restoration for Invasives Removal (Buckthorn.) Petersen stated that Pleasant View Gardens also does Buckthorn Removal so the commission can get another bid. They reviewed recent invoices received at the City, invoices yet to be billed, and discussed what work came in under budget.

- Public Works and Hard Asset Spend Down Plan – JH

- Green Team Spend Down Plan – CH

- City Hall Spending - JB

2.3. 2025 Draft Budget Review and Approved in October by City Council.- KP

Petersen stated that the total Park Commission budget for 2025 is the same as 2024 at \$19,800 for Parks without Public Works whose new budget for Parks is \$18,950 or \$34,800 together for 2025 total. There were some reallocation of categories done and shifting of Public Works projects.

2.4. Parks 2025-2029 Five Year Plan

- Final Draft to City Council – October 7

Petersen will present the 2025-2029 Five Year Plan to City Council on October 7th. Tonight an approval motion is needed for the plan. Commissioners praised Petersen for all her efforts in creating this plan and she added that Breazeale and Paine helped greatly with the project. Pagano stated that every deadline was met with this project creation. Petersen stated that Burgess will create a binder with tabs housing the new plan to pass on to the next generation of Park Commissioners. Petersen expressed her thanks for the plan template created by Pagano when he was on the Park Commission.

Rezabek motion, Paine second to approve the 2025 – 2029 Five Year Plan and recommend City Council approval. All eyes, the motion carried.

- Project Recommendations

1. Shoreline Restoration

They discussed the Crystal Bay Shoreline Rip Rap project and the fact that Niccum, who is doing the project has staffing issues that may delay the project which is being paid for by CIP funds. Niccum is honoring his quoted price which is good. They also discussed asking the City Council for approval to pursue an Opportunity Grant for the green space on the Crystal Bay shoreline. Parks will work with the DNR to help determine the scope and timeline of the three-year project implementation. There will be more details presented at the Council meeting.

2. Reforestation of Arcola Woods Water Treatment Plant site

They discussed partnering with the City to do this reforestation project and also work with Hennepin County.

3. Forest Restoration and Stewardship

Petersen stated that areas in need at Half Moon Park and Ray Peters Park will be evaluated to focus tree planting efforts for next year as many trees were lost there. There is more sunlight now so the natural forest can be brought back to that area. She added that the strip of land on the left side of the path going up to Ray Peters from Half Moon Park has not been maintained. This area should be amended to make it a woodland floor instead of a garden that needs maintenance. Christiansen used the brush hog there too to cut back invasives. They will use the 2006 Forest Restoration and Management Plan that was created for Minnetonka Beach as a guide. Christiansen asked if that area will be sprayed this year, and they discussed whether to do it now or wait until spring. Hilgers recommended waiting until spring as the area looks great right now. Petersen is hoping that the Tree Trust will have trees in the spring that can help in the City – at this time they do not have any available.

Hilgers noted that City turf was looking great and then the rain stopped.....

3, Operations

3.1. SPOC (Single Point of Contact) Updates

- Green Asset Team – CH, KP, PR, DC

They discussed hiring Grounds Crew to do two spraying in back of City Hall to eradicate the invasive Snow on the Mountain problem. Hilgers added soil and seeded the area along the sidewalk, and it looks great now. The Hosta that was there always turned brown at the end of summer, so it's gone it is gone and now there is a clean simple look there. Hilgers added that

he will have the irrigation redone so water can reach areas farther away. They discussed how good the native plantings look and that C20 was applied around trees in Lafayette Park to help them.

- Hard Asset Team – JH, LP

Hilgers put gravel down on the walking trail along Shoreline Drive. He added that Hennepin County might cut down 10-12 Ash trees next to the Dakota Trail this winter. That will leave 3-4 trees left there that are non-Ash. The City might be able to use money to buy larger trees than the size that Hennepin County will be planting which could be seedlings or bareroot. The commission can discuss this over the winter. They discussed that Bi-annually there is money in the budget for EAB and tree replacement next up for 2026. They will discuss this at a later date. They discussed the Diane Rogers Garden on Arcola on the Hennepin County Rail Authority's land and Hilgers said he will meet with them to see what they want to do with that garden. Hennepin County Rail has authority over 55 miles of corridor along the Dakota Trail and they are addressing the privatization issues that many residents have done along there. The goal is to determine what CAN be done for Minnetonka Beach residents who live along the trail, not what CAN'T be done. This includes mowing the promenade along the trail and Hilgers is waiting for an answer to that. He applied for a permit to mow along the promenade a year ago and has not received an answer if can mow the promenade.

Panait stated that there were no beach closures this year as the beach water was tested each week by Hennepin County. No one knows why there were not high levels of E Coli all summer. Hilgers stated that the wind blew in a different direction than normal, so Tonka Bay had the weeds Minnetonka Beach normally does and they failed some water tests this summer. Panait praised Waterfront Restoration and Vi Hilgers for keeping the Swim Beach very clean this summer.

Panait provided an update on the Swim Beach Docks issue from the recent Dock Committee meeting. He stated that at the committee's first meeting in May, resident and marina owner Richie Anderson presented dock layout plans he created as a possible solution to the Swim Beach Docks issue. The goal is to open up the view of the beach and lake for all residents and possibly reconfigure the docks. The commission discussed boat maneuvering difficulty with Anderson's plans due to wind and the design itself. The group then considered three different options. One option was canopy removal and just have covers for lifts but not canopy boathouses. The downside to this is boat heights will be all different with different kinds of boats. He added that no conclusion was reached about that possibility. The next step is the committee will ask for additional options from Anderson to be considered at the November 12th City Council meeting.

Christiansen stated that he and Pagano had a discussion at the City's fall cleanup event about the history of the swim beach docks. He said that he was a member of the Park Commission at the time when more docks were added at the Swim Beach, and they were not involved in that new reconfiguration. Christiansen stated that the Dock Committee went directly to the Council with the reconfiguration and bypassed Parks. They discussed the City lawsuit history and how that affected City Docks and movement of them. Panait stated that a plan is under consideration to reduce the number of docks at the Swim Beach by two by attrition. One dock was vacated there this summer, and it may not be rented as an option. He added that the goal of how to open up the views at the Swim Beach is unclear at this time. He explained that a Lake Okoboji design was presented at the Docks meeting as a possibility by a resident who has experience with large dock installations. Other than that, there has only been one other professional involved so far and that is Anderson.

Christiansen asked the commission to consider what they want to see at the Swim Beach and what is their priority for that area. Parks should make a recommendation to the Council as they were tasked to do so taking into consideration Dock Committee Chair Steinke's clarifying questions and also the Comprehensive Plan.

Pagano stated that there needs to be collaboration amongst Docks and Parks, and in 2016 the Park Commission voiced these same concerns about the Swim Beach docks and the view at the beach. He shared the *Share the Shore* concept and referred to the Guiding Principles of the Comprehensive Plan to protect the views of the lake.

Petersen stated examples of other similar communities in Washington and Vermont that have swim beaches and docks, but do not have boathouses and lifts that impede the views of the water unless it is a marina. She added that the increased amount of docks at the Swim Beach has changed the character of Swim Beach Park, and it is not an open space for all right now. Rezabek agreed.

Panait stated that the City was not involved with the installation of boathouses at different heights and different colored canopies on them. He added that it is hard for a City to control things when they do not have ownership of it.

Christiansen stated that Panait provided a fair assessment, and it is difficult to reel established things back in and some residents may be frustrated and angry.

Rezabek stated that Swim Beach Park is a city park for all residents. She spoke about when there were only about five docks at the Swim Beach. She spoke of legal issues resulting in slips being moved to the Swim Beach.

They discussed people having personal agendas resulting in the view at the swim beach now just 57 feet wide. They discussed possibly removing boathouses, and some slips to widen the view. They discussed the difficulties with reconfiguration plans with variables such as wind and mucky bottoms, and how it does not feel safe swimming in Lafayette Bay.

Christiansen motion, Rezabek second that on behalf of the Park Commission's Oath to Protect, Maintain, and Improve the Parks and Public Lands of the City of Minnetonka Beach For the Safe Use and Enjoyment of All Its Residents, we support a plan to achieve a broader perspective and view at the Swim Beach at a minimum of 150 feet of exterior dimension between the south and north openings prioritizing a southwest view. All ayes, motion carried.

- Administrative & Financial – PR, JG, LP

4. Commissioner and Liaison Comments

Paine reviewed the park survey results. There were 24 total responses with 9 having various recommendations including swings, swimming, boating. 15 respondents provided usage responses with a list of a variety of items they would like to see at each park. When asked to look into the future and list what respondents would like to see in the parks there was a long list of suggestions. Some respondents answered the Safety Concerns question 4 items listed. Of note, many grandparents shared that they use the parks with their grandchildren.

Hilgers, Rezabek and Paine said the Fall Cleanup went great! Rezabek stated that this is the first event ever that families did not come to help – more individuals than families. There was wonderful representation

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by Parks and City Council and all goals for picking up brush and branches on the trails were met. Rezabek suggested having another event. Petersen thanked everyone for helping.

Mayor Pagano complimented the event and said it was very well organized from snacks and drinks to Hilger's plan where everyone knew what to do. He added that the Park Commission has struck a high level of competency, and they are looking towards the future identifying realistic project priority lists.

5. Closing Comments and Adjournment Co-Chairs

Rezabek motion, Paine second to adjourn the October 1, 2024 Park Commission meeting. With all members voting in favor, motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:39 pm.

Public in attendance:

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Burgess, City Clerk