

WEST ST. PAUL PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, October 5, 2021

Parks & Rec. Members Present: David Lynch, Kirsten Mulraney, Bonnie Bellows, Mike Petrasek, Sara Blair
Non-voting Members Present: Wendy Berry, Council Liaison; Sharon Hatfield, Admin Specialist; Dave Schletty, Assistant Parks and Recreation Director

1. **ROLL CALL**
2. **REVIEW/APPROVE MINUTES**

Chair Petrasek called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. The minutes from the September 14, 2021 meeting were approved by the Committee.

3. **NEW BUSINESS**

- a. **Marthaler Park Draft Master Plan Recommendations**

Assistant Parks and Recreation Director Schletty updated the committee regarding the public open house for the project and the City Open House. Schletty thanked Member Bellows for her participation at the City Open House. The project open house was not well attended; however, many positive comments were gathered from the event. Schletty talked to about 25 people at the City Open House. He received good feedback and overall, positive remarks from residents. They liked the changes coming to the park. Some of the concerns were mostly about on-going security issues. With the proposed changes, the City hopes to address the security issues. Changes include security lighting and reconfiguring the parking lot. Parking lot changes will reduce drive-in traffic to the park. The City will also investigate installing cameras to monitor the park. Schletty has spoken to the nearby residents on Kraft Road to minimize the impact the changes will have on their property.

Schletty reviewed the plan with the committee members. Schletty related that the public is very excited to see an observation deck at the top of the sledding hill. The current shelter area may be repurposed at a future date. Member Lynch asked if there were plans to restore the area on the western side of the lake. Schletty said that the City could explore restoring the area when the City performs the pond restoration. The City would need to work with the DNR for this effort. Clpn. Berry asked about the accessibility from the new parking lot to the playground and the incline. Schletty said the area is flat. A slight berm might be created when the plan is implemented. Berry asked about safety concerns with the playground being close to the pond. Schletty said that this is a good point; the City may install a partial barrier. Petrasek asked if the phases of the project would also be advanced to Council with the plan. Schletty confirmed this; the budgeting phases would be included.

A motion was made to advance the plan to City Council at their next meeting by Member Bellows. Schletty clarified that the plan would be reviewed by Council at the next worksession on October 18. The plan would be adopted at the October 25 meeting. Member Mulraney seconded the motion. The motion carried. All Ayes.

- b. **Halloween Event & Recreation Updates**

Schletty said the official coloring contest sheet is available in City Hall and will be posted on the website tomorrow. The event will be on Sunday, October 31, 6-8 pm at Harmon Park. The City has "not had a lot of luck" with sponsorship for the Trick or Treat Trail. The event will feature free hotdogs, a costume contest, games and a photo booth. There will also be bonfire pits like in past years. Schletty asked for volunteers for the event. Mulraney asked Schletty for a list of the businesses that committee members could contact for sponsorship.

4. **OLD BUSINESS**

- a. **2022 Playground Replacement Discussion**

Petrasek said that the City has been discussing replacing equipment at Kennedy Park, the Pool Park and at Weschcke Park. Petrasek said that he was not comfortable moving this topic forward until it was discussed with more committee members present. He asked committee members to visit the parks and come back to the

November meeting to talk about this subject. He asked Schletty to take photographs of the parks for committee members. He would also like recommendations from City staff as well.

b. Skate Park Update

Mulraney is organizing a meeting with people to generate new ideas and talk about new trends for the skate park.

5. OTHER

- a. **Council Updates-** Berry said that the direction from the committee regarding the Marthaler Park Master Plan is very good. She does not expect any objections, especially about the observation tower. Berry mentioned the Park and Recreation programming and said that Sam Murphy is doing a great job. The City is very fortunate to have the partnership with Mendota Heights. Berry asked about the pickleball courts in Emerson Park. Schletty said that it officially opened yesterday. Petrasek said, "Park and Rec Advisory Fans, you heard it here first!"
- b. **Marthaler Park Halloween Event-** Donna Lindberg and Carol Keyes-Ferrer talked about the afternoon event they have planned for nearby residents of Marthaler Park. They would like to have Humboldt Avenue blocked for the event. Schletty thanked Lindberg and Keyes-Ferrer for their work in forming the Friends of Marthaler Park.
- c. **Staff Updates-** Schletty talked about the fall recreation programming. The Glow Dash at Garlough and Marthaler Parks was a lot of fun. About 75 people showed up. Last weekend in partnership with Dodge Nature Center, West St. Paul had a class regarding the basics about fire building. Other programming includes youth gymnastics and a PeeWee sports. There will be a school year Tour de Rec program also.
- d. **Dirt Bike trail-** Matt, a "mountain bike trail ambassador" presented the idea of a dirt bike trail for Marthaler Park as part of the improvements. Schletty said he does not think Marthaler Park is big enough park for a mountain bike trail. He asked Committee Members to mull over the idea.
- e. **Garlough Park Disc Golf-** Schletty said that the City, as part of the trail project, might put in a concrete plaza at the first tee box and have a bench and bike rack installed in the plaza.
- f. **Harmon Park Vandalism-** Mulraney asked for an update on the restrooms. Schletty said that the restrooms have been closed because of vandalism problems. Soap dispensers have been ripped off the walls; soap and red dye have been sprayed all over the restroom. Fires have been started in the restroom. There is a social media challenge for the vandalism. The time period for the vandalism is after school, and middle schoolers are the culprits. The restroom at the concession stand has also been vandalized.
- g. **Plantings on Robert Street-** Bellows said that the volunteers who are doing the flowers are doing a wonderful job. Schletty said that they better do a good job, because they are paid workers. They also do garden maintenance in the parks as well.
- h. **Hockey Tournament, Police vs. Fire fighters-** Petrasek said that the tournament will be this Saturday October 9, 3:30 pm at the Doug Woog Arena, (formerly Wakota Arena.) Immediately after the game is a party at Dunham's Bar. The \$5 admission will include a taco bar. There will also be a raffle. The proceeds will go to Neighbors, Inc.
- i. **Ice Arena-** Schletty said the Public Works staff did an overlay on the parking lot at the arena. They also restriped the parking lot.
- j. **Open Committee Member Seat** – Residents can fill out an application on the City website. The seat will be filled in November.

6. ADJOURN

The committee members adjourned at 6:52 pm. The next Parks and Recreation Committee meeting will take place on Tuesday, November 9, 2021 at 5:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon G. Hatfield