

CITY OF BLAINE  
ANOKA COUNTY, MINNESOTA  
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP  
Monday, October 18, 2021

6:30PM  
Council Chambers  
10801 Town Square Drive

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Sanders at 7:01PM.

**ROLL CALL**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Tim Sanders, Councilmembers Wes Hovland, Chris Massoglia, Richard Paul, Jess Robertson, and Jason Smith.

Adjunct Member Drew Brown.

**ABSENT:** Councilmember Julie Jeppson.

Quorum Present.

**ALSO PRESENT:** City Manager Michelle Wolfe; Community Development Director Erik Thorvig; Public Works Director Jon Haukaas; Police Chief/Safety Services Manager Brian Podany; Finance Director Joe Huss; City Engineer Dan Schluender; Senior Parks and Recreation Manager Jerome Krieger; City Attorney Chris Nelson; Communications Manager Ben Hayle; Deputy Finance Director Ali Bong; and City Clerk Catherine Sorensen.

3.1 Proposed 2022 Parks Capital Improvement Budget and Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan.

Finance Director Huss stated in a change of process from previous years, staff will present the proposed 2022-26 Parks Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to the city council for the council's review and input before seeking a recommendation on the plan from the Park Board and Natural Resources Conservation Board. This year's process is taking a broader approach, and consolidate all parks projects, rather than make separate presentations based on the three major funding sources. He said it is hoped this approach would encourage more effective discussion and assessment of the needs of the parks infrastructure system as a whole. Staff reviewed the proposed revenues and project expenditures in further detail with the council and asked for comments or questions.

Councilmember Hovland shared concerns about the potential danger of leaving dead tinder and diseased ash trees throughout the community and said he supported the removal of these trees. Mr. Huss commented the city had set funding aside to address this concern.

Councilmember Hovland expressed concern with the liability issues of the city having a skate park. He questioned if a skate park was feasible for the city and if there was enough interest in the community to warrant the investment. He reported he supported the bandshell at Aquatore Park, especially given the viability and popularity of this park. He commented further on how park dedication fees would begin to dwindle over time which meant the council would have to be wise with this funding. Mr. Huss stated staff was aware of the fact the funds were limited and this was reflected within the parks capital improvement plan.

Councilmember Massoglia explained he supported the improvements to Aquatore Park so long as the donations came through from the Blaine Festival Committee.

Councilmember Robertson indicated she supported the bandshell at Aquatore Park as well noting this would be a great amenity for the community.

Councilmember Massoglia commented he did not support the Blaine Wetland Sanctuary (BWS) pavilion improvements as believed the site did not need restrooms.

Councilmember Robertson stated she supported the pavilion at this time, but needed more information regarding future expenses. She believed the restrooms made sense at this location and requested staff to provide the council with better information on cost estimates. Mr. Huss indicated staff would be going through the bid process and would be able to provide more clear numbers for the council in the near future if council was supportive of the concept.

Councilmember Hovland reported he supported the BWS pavilion having restrooms.

Councilmember Robertson indicated she supported the parking expansion at Happy Acres Park but did not support the proposed extra improvements. Mr. Huss noted staff would continue moving forward with the parking lot project as it was slated for 2022.

Councilmember Smith explained he supported the Lexington Waters Park. Councilmember Robertson agreed but recommended the sidewalks be addressed prior to the installation of the park.

Councilmember Hovland noted he supported the proposed neighborhood park improvement projects. He explained there was a need to improve the smaller local parks in the community.

Mayor Sanders requested the city attorney speak to the liability the city would have if a skate park were pursued. City Attorney Nelson reported the city would have immunity from any lawsuit related to injury that occurs at any city park, including a skate park.

Mayor Sanders commented he believed there was a growing popularity for skate parks because of the increase in the use of scooters.

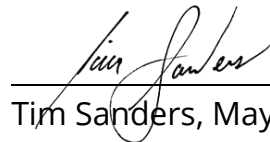
Councilmember Hovland questioned if the city would benefit by having signage posted stating the city was not liable. Mr. Nelson reported this could be done.

Councilmember Robertson indicated she did not support the skate park due to its timing. She suggested the skate park be considered in the future.

Councilmember Massoglia explained he supported a skate park because this would be a unique amenity for the community and was of the opinion this amenity would serve the community better than a pavilion with restrooms at the BWS.

Mayor Sanders supported the city looking into an adopt-a-park program in order to get residents more involved in the city parks.

The Workshop was adjourned at 7:35PM.



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Tim Sanders, Mayor

ATTEST:



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Catherine Sorensen, CMC, City Clerk  
*Submitted by Minute Maker Secretarial*