



City of Blaine Anoka County, Minnesota Minutes - Final

10801 Town Square Dr.
Blaine MN 55449

Park Advisory Board

The Park Board is an advisory body to the City Council. One of the Board's functions is to hold public meetings and make recommendations to the City Council. For each item, the Board will receive reports prepared by City staff, provide the opportunity for public response, conduct Board discussions and make recommendations. The City Council, however, makes all final decisions on these matters.

Tuesday, November 26, 2013

7:00 PM

Council Chambers

1. Call To Order

Chair Bird called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Staff Present: Nate Monahan, Program Supervisor; Jerome Krieger, Program Supervisor; Bob Therres, Public Services Manager.

Present: 6 - Markle, Chair Bird, Das, Langenfeld, Lester, and Pribbernow

Absent: 1 - Leathers

3. Approval of Minutes

3.-1 [PB 13-11](#)

APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 22, 2013 PARK BOARD MINUTES

Sponsors: Monahan

Attachments: [OctoberMinutes.doc](#)

Commissioner Markle requested the following corrections:

Page 6, section 5.2, 2nd paragraph from bottom of page, second sentence, change “constraint” to “restraint.”

Page 8, section 5.4, second paragraph, add “Emerald” before Ash.

Commissioner Pribbernow requested the following corrections:

Page 3, first paragraph, first sentence, change “Board” to “Bird”.

Moved by Markle, seconded by Das, that the Minutes be Approved. The Motion was adopted unanimously.

4. Open Forum for Citizen Input

None.

5. New Business

5.-1 [PB 13-12](#)

PARK UPDATES

Sponsors: Monahan

Recognition of Eagle Scout, Matthew Choquette

Program Supervisor Monahan stated Matthew had painted several signs in the parks and logged in over 133 hours. He stated Matthew had also put wood chips around the signs. He thanked Matthew for all of his hard work.

Mr. Choquette thanked the Park Board for coming up with the project and helping him through it. He thanked his parents for their support and the vendors who supplied the materials for the project.

5.2 Park Updates

Program Supervisor Monahan presented an update on Aurelia Park. He indicated the first layer of asphalt had been put down. He noted the courts would be north/south and the tennis court would be on the west side of the asphalt and the basketball court would be on the east side of the asphalt. A fence would be put in separating the two courts. He indicated everything would be finished in the Spring.

Program Supervisor Monahan presented an update on Little Bit Park. He indicated there was a little delay with the playground being put in, but it should go in next week and the playground should be done by the end of the week.

Program Supervisor Monahan presented an update on Happy Acres Rink #3. He indicated the asphalt had been put down and the rinks were being flooded now. Commissioner Langenfeld asked if the end fencings were done. Program Supervisor Monahan responded they would be done by December 20, when the rinks were opened, weather permitting.

Chairman Bird asked if there were more or less rinks. Program Supervisor Krieger responded the number would stay the same, but Quail Creek would be a larger rink and a trailer would be brought in to serve as a warming house.

Commissioner Lester asked how many rinks would there be. Program Supervisor Krieger responded four parks had warming houses and all of them, except Happy Acres, had one hockey and one general rink. He stated Happy Acres had additional hockey rinks. He noted there were also parks that had just pleasure, general rinks with no lights or supervision. He stated all of the parks and hours were on the website as well as being published in the City brochure that went out last week. He stated he also updated the hotline every day to inform whether the rinks were open or closed.

Program Supervisor Krieger presented an update on Lexington Athletic Complex. He indicated they had met with Carlson McCain to go over the final concept plan. He stated the plan had basically stayed the same since it was originally presented, except for the northeast corner where a basketball court had been added and the playground area was shifted to the west so there was ample parking.

Chair Bird asked which multi-purpose fields were lit. Program Supervisor Krieger responded Field A and B would be lit along with the northwest fields. The two fields along the east side close to the homes would not be lit. He noted the building would have a meeting room, storage space, garage, concession area and a picnic area on the north side with a covered overhang. He stated there were also restrooms in the building that could be accessed from either side of the building as well as from the inside of the building.

Chair Bird asked how far the building was from the playground. Program Supervisor Krieger responded it was approximately 200 yards.

Commissioner Langenfeld asked if the tennis and basketball courts were lit. Program Supervisor Krieger responded the tennis courts were, but not the basketball court.

Program Supervisor Krieger stated this had been presented to the Council and they had told staff to proceed forward with planning and budgeting. He stated they had met with finance to go over budgeting and they were working on an up to date price. He indicated at this time they were looking to use the funds out of the Capital Improvement Fund. He stated this would go to the Council in January and would need to pass on a 6-1 vote in order to use the money from

the Capital Improvement Fund.

Public Services Manager Therres stated the City had a Capital Improvement Fund, which was not a part of the Park Capital Improvement Fund. He noted various funds had been placed in the Capital Improvement Fund over the years and the Council had set some guidelines for the use of those funds. He noted this was a loan and would be paid back by the Park Department over time.

Chair Bird asked if the Council did not approve this by 6-1, what the alternatives were. Public Services Manager Therres stated that was the reason staff went to the Council first to see how they wanted to proceed. He noted the Council said they were in support of proceeding and this was the time to do it as an entire project.

Discussed

5.-2 [PB 13-13](#)

Follow up to Amend Dog Ordinance 14-141 All dogs will be kept under restraint by their owners at all times

Sponsors: Monahan

Attachments: [Dog Ordinance.pdf](#)

Program Supervisor Monahan presented a memorandum from the Police Department regarding how other communities are handling pet ordinances. He indicated a report from CSO Zuehlke had been provided noting that the City Attorney believed the mention of a capable person left too much to interpretation and believed the City's current definition of "restraint" made the Dog at Large ordinance unenforceable. She indicated she had also spoken with an attorney at the League of Minnesota Cities to inquire about civil liability regarding dogs in City parks.

Chair Bird asked if there were any comments.

Bradley Caren(?sp), National Street, stated he had lived on National Street for 14 years and had a 19 month old retriever. He stated he had used Lochness Park a lot of the past 14 years and particularly over the last year and a half. He stated he was here to comment on the recent change on City policy regarding off leash dog walking at Lochness as well as the City as a whole. He stated he understood this change occurred due to the Police Department. He noted his other issue was about requiring all dogs to be on leashes at all times in City parks. He stated in the last year and a half, he had gone to Lochness Park at 8:30 a.m. and met up with many people who also had dogs and they would

walk their dog around the hill and the lakes. He stated walking dogs on leashes and walking dogs off leashes were two different activities. He stated a Labrador retriever could not be exercised on a leash. He noted dogs off leashes would run, play, swim, etc. He indicated this was not a case of just walking a dog on or off leash. He stated one confirmation of that was what happened a month or two ago when the Police Department put its own laws on the ordinance and ramped up enforcement and that constituted a policy change and what was okay for years and years was not okay over the next month or two. He stated now the dog needed to be under close proximity and had to respond to the first command given. He noted most people did not have children that behaved that well, and their dogs were under control; they listened; and they were not a threat. He stated once the Police put up posters, stopped people in the parking lot, and explained what was required, most of the people stopped coming. He stated the park was used by dog owners. He himself had logged over 700 hours in the park and people had stopped coming out of the fear that the Police would start issuing citations as they had said they would. He stated the park was now basically empty. He noted yesterday he stopped there in the morning and there was one car there, when normally there would be many cars. He stated now there was an empty park where before there was a nicely used park. He asked why this change in city policy and he noted it was a change in policy. He stated the ordinance might not have been changed, but the policy had been changed and the abandonment of the park confirmed that. He stated the posters the police department put up talked about the ordinance and it related to the concerns to keep dogs from running on city streets, but there were not any city streets at Lochness park; as well as to make sure people were not bitten by dogs. He asked what was the reason for this new regulation in the park. He indicated after three calls to the police department, they agreed to provide him all of the incidents at Lochness Park over the last two years. He stated he did not know if all the incidents had been provided to the Board.

Chair Bird stated they did have those incidents. Mr. Caren stated over the past three years there had been only three incidents, one being the same dog that lived next to Lochness Park and got out of his contained area. He stated another incident was when the dog was running loose. He indicated no citation was issued and the Police Department had handled it well. He acknowledged that was a violation of the ordinance and he would have no complaint if a citation was issued. He stated another incident happened in 2012, where a dog was loose, and it took four minutes to resolve. He stated those three incidents there was no indication of any harm being done. He indicated this did not provide a dangerous situation and that was all there was to justify what was now happening. He stated he went by there three times

today and he saw one person. He noted he believed this was a very sad and unfortunate result. He stated he did not know if there were any complaints that had not made it into the records. He stated there was one lady who “dragged” a small toy dog around with a leash and there were some incidents with her. He stated he encountered her for the first time when his dog ran up to her dog with both dogs wagging their tails and they began to lick each other’s noses. However, she started screaming that her dog was being attacked by his dog. He stated he did not know if that woman had generated complaints, but the people he met over there did not always have their dog right at their side and sometimes the dog had to be called 2-3 times, but the dogs were under control and were in the presence of their owners. He stated the dogs were not running loose without supervision. He stated he wanted to allow Lochness Park to remain what it was prior to the recent Police enforcements. He stated he did not know why the Police were now looking for dogs in the park. He noted there were over 40 off-leash dog parks in the metro area and Blaine was about the only City who did not have an off-leash dog park. He read all of the 40 off-leash dog parks. He noted Minneapolis had nine off-leash dog parks. He believed it would be unfortunate to drive any more people away from Blaine by requiring all dogs to be on leashes in parks. He stated the poster did cite the Ordinance and noted the incidents, but this was what was not occurring in Lochness. He stated the ordinance did not require dogs to be leashed in parks.

Amy Ellingson, Lino Lakes, stated she found a haven in Lochness Park and this park served a purpose for her and her family. She stated she was a nurse and believed in exercising her dogs every day. She indicated they patronized The Village when they went to/from the park. She stated she was surprised they were being treated like criminals. She indicated now they have switched to the Maple Grove dog park and patronized the Maple Grove shops instead. She proposed they “share” the park by having hours that dogs had to be on leashes and times that dogs did not have to be on leashes. She noted she had never had any problems with her dogs and people wanting to pet them.

Stan Nickle(?sp), Shoreview, stated they started coming to Lochness as a group about 3 ½ years ago because it was closer to restaurants and other activities they could not find at other dog parks. He stated they would meet one and sometimes twice a week and would go to the restaurants afterwards, but now they were not doing that. He stated Lochness was a park they could walk in the winter because it was paved and it was not as treacherous. He noted the dog walking was not just for the dogs, but for the people as well and now they have lost that connection.

Chair Bird stated if the Police Department has changed their enforcement or the strength of their enforcement that was something the Police Department would need to address, as the Ordinance had not changed. He stated the City had over 60 parks and what was experienced at Lochness might not be occurring in the other parks with unleashed dogs and incidents. He stated that might be a reason why the enforcement was ramped up. He stated he has been in the city since 1983 and since that time, Lochness was always being used as an unleashed dog area, but that area had changed including a corporate business and Frisbee golf. He stated the demographic of the park has changed and that might be why the Police were now enforcing the issue. He stated the Board has not decided if the ordinance should be changed or not. He stated he was interested in the idea of allowing dogs off leash during certain hour only in that park.

Commissioner Pribbernow stated while she was preparing for this meeting she looked at best practices throughout the nation and the idea of sharing a park was what Oakland, California was doing.

Mr. Caren stated a number of the people had thought if they could have off-leash two or three hours in the morning (8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.) that would be ideal and then the people who objected to it, they could have the other hours. Chair Bird stated they would need to look at this, but it might be an option until the City could find a location for a dog park.

Program Supervisor Monahan stated they were looking at parks they could use as a dog park, but nothing had been done further until more people came forward saying they wanted a dog park. Chair Bird requested City Staff contact the League of Minnesota Cities to see if they had any information about having a shared park.

Program Supervisor Monahan stated he would also check with other cities.

Chair Bird thanked everyone for coming in and giving their opinion.

Discussed

5.-3 [PB 13-14](#)

SWAN PARK FEATURE

Sponsors: Monahan

Attachments: [Swan Park.pdf](#)

Program Supervisor Monahan presented Swan Park's feature. He

noted in 1984 the park was developed. He outlined the amenities in the park.

Informational: no action required

5.-4 [PB 13-15](#)

The December 24, 2013 Park Board meeting

Sponsors: Monahan

Program Supervisor Monahan stated the December Board meeting was scheduled the day before a holiday. He recommended the December meeting be cancelled.

Chair Bird noted as long as he had been on the Board, the December meeting had been cancelled.

Motion by Commissioner Langenfeld, to cancel the December Park Board meeting. Motion seconded by Commissioner Das.

Motion approved unanimously.

5.-5 [PB 13-16](#)

OTHER

Sponsors: Monahan

Attachments: [2013 holiday celebration flyer.pdf](#)

Program Supervisor Monahan noted Program Supervisor Shari Kunza started October 21 taking over for Tom Godfrey. He indicated she was previously with the City and came back. He stated she was the Program Supervisor in charge of the Winter Holiday Celebration.

He stated the Winter Holiday Celebration was being held on December 2 this year from 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Informational: no action required

9. Adjournment

Moved by Markle, seconded by Lester, that this Meeting be Adjourned. The Motion was adopted unanimously. Chair Bird adjourned the meeting at 7:58 p.m.