



City of Blaine Anoka County, Minnesota

Blaine City Hall
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November 2011 Minutes

UNAPPROVED

CITY OF BLAINE
PARK ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, November 22, 2011
7:00 p.m.

The Blaine Park Advisory Board met in the Council Chambers of City Hall on Tuesday, November 22, 2011.

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

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Commissioners Bird, Das, Langenfeld, Leathers, Markle, Newland and Chair Walthour.

Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: Jim Kappelhoff, Park and Recreation Director.

2. **Approval of Minutes: October 25, 2011**

Commissioner Newland requested the following corrections:

Page 5, third paragraph, third sentence, change “pushed out to a 2012” to “pushed out past 2012.”

Motion by Commissioner Newland to approve the minutes of October 25, 2011 as amended. Motion seconded by Commissioner Das. Motion approved unanimously.

3. Open Forum for Citizen Input

None.

4. Recommendation for Establishing the 2012 Fees for Park Dedication

Park and Recreation Director Kappelhoff presented a background and summary of the recommendation for establishing 2012 fees for Park Dedication. This recommendation will go before Council for approval on December 15. He reviewed that fees have not been increased since 2008.

At the October meeting the Park Board was asked by staff to enter into discussion on the setting of park dedication fees for 2012. The main focus of the discussion was whether to increase the fees or have them remain the same. Staff determined that some Board Members could be in favor of a slight increase between 1% and 5% depending on receiving additional information.

With this in mind, staff has provided attachments with this item in the form of respondents to a 2012 Park Dedication Survey of other metro area cities and a Fund Balance Projection showing how percentage increases would impact the park fund balance from 2012 to 2016.

2012 Park Dedication Survey Summary

The majority of cities that have responded are not increasing fees and a few are waiting until 2012 to determine their rates. Only one responded they are proposing to raise fees. Roseville is recommending an increase in residential units of 1% to 2% (2% was used in the survey). Currently they are at \$3,000 per unit.

Fund Balance Projections

Staff has provided the Park Board with fund balance projections based on the current 2012-2016 Capital Improvement Plan recommended by the Park Board in October. The fund balances are in three (3) different categories of increases and encompass the options discussed by the Board; Residential Development Only, Commercial/Industrial and Residential Development, and All Development. None of the projections were over a 5% increase staying within the Park Boards recommended limits.

Park and Recreation Director Kappelhoff asked if there are any questions on his presentation.

Commissioner Das expressed appreciation for the report as it was helpful. He reviewed that Blaine has low residential park dedication fees in comparison to other cities. He recommended a 5 percent increase. He recommended a 2 percent increase for commercial park dedication fees.

Commissioner Markle stated that there was a lengthy discussion on this topic last month. He explained that if a 3 percent increase is approved Blaine will stay within the area of the chart with surrounding cities. He stated that a 5 percent increase would be seen as a strong increase and not favorable. He suggested a 3 percent increase across the board. He reviewed that this would increase the balance by \$10,000 to \$12,000 which will help the budget in the future. He suggested a 3 percent increase for both residential and commercial/industrial.

Commissioner Newland stated that the Park Dedication Fee Comparison Summary was helpful. He suggested that Blaine is near the bottom of the residential fee schedule. He commented that the Blaine Charter allows a maximum increase of 10 percent annually which would equal \$243. He commented that this would have a substantial impact on the balance. He stated that this may be considered a strong increase but Blaine is on the low end now. He stated that the increase will not have a considerable impact in development. He requested that the commercial fee not be increased as Blaine is right in the middle of the chart for this currently. He agreed to a compromised 5 percent residential increase and a 0 to 2 percent commercial increase.

Commissioner Bird noted that he was not at last month's meeting. He asked why industrial is included separately.

Park and Recreation Director Kappelhoff stated that Blaine breaks this out separately from commercial where as other cities do not.

Commissioner Bird stated that he is considering a 5 percent increase in residential fees and 2 or 2-1/2 on commercial and industrial. He stated that this would keep Blaine in the same range on the chart of cities.

Chair Walthour suggested that looking at a 5 percent increase will keep them in the same position as they are now on the chart. He stated that he is considering 5 percent for the residential and 2-1/2 to 3 percent for commercial and industrial. He explained that Blaine would need to have a 20 percent increase to match up to Ham Lake so the 5 percent increase is reasonable. He explained that this is a good value to the citizens yet keeps the costs affordable to the developers.

Commissioner Langenfeld stated that fees have not been raised since 2008. He reviewed that real estate values have been in decline. He commented that bids have come in low for projects. He commented that funds have been well managed. He stated that keeping fees in a comparable spot with other cities is not a reason to raise the fees.

Chair Walthour stated that real estate costs are depressed and the housing market is teetering. He suggested that Blaine should consider still being competitive as they are near the bottom of the chart by comparison. He recommended bringing Blaine in line with the other communities. He explained that the increase will have a minimal impact on fund balances but will give a little more cushion for the future.

Commissioner Leathers stated that since 2008 the increase of these fees has been discussed and it was decided that to remain competitive the fees should not be raised. He suggested that keeping the city in mind and considering past projects and future building he would support a considerable increase. He noted that the fee could be raised 10 percent to keep current and competitive. He commented that the Board has a tight balance and suggested that conservatively managing it in the future be continued. He offered that a lesser increase for commercial and industrial be considered to promote development. He suggested a 5 percent increase on commercial/industrial but agreed that a 2 to 3 percent increase would be acceptable. He asked that consideration be given next year to increase fees again so that amenities can be developed.

Motion by Commissioner Markle to recommend to the City Council to establish park dedication fees for 2012 with a 5 percent increase for residential and a 3 percent increase for commercial/industrial. Motion

seconded by Commissioner Bird.

Motion passed 6-1 (Commissioner Langenfeld).

5. Suzanne Park Feature

Park and Recreation Director Kappelhoff stated that Suzanne Park is the 34th park out of the city's 62 parks. Suzanne Park is a mini park which is located south of 109th and west of Highway 65. He explained that it was mostly acquired through park dedication in 1956 and it is one of the city's oldest mini parks. It is located centrally in the city. The development was called Edwall's First Edition. It was in a smaller development of 36 single family lots. He stated that in 1983 a quarter acre was obtained through tax forfeiture increasing Suzanne Park's size to 1 acre. He explained that the park name was based on a street which at that time was called Suzanne Lane. This intersected 108th Lane and went into the park. He explained that this street currently is sometimes called Ulysses Street on today's map although it is not a street but rather it is an easement. He explained that the park is hidden from view by houses, Highway 65 and by a fence. He explained that it is landlocked with the nearest park being Quincy Park $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile away. There is a small wooded area in the center of this mainly flat park. He added that in 1986 park features were added which included a slide, picnic tables, an old fashioned merry-go-round and a skating rink was flooded in the winter. He reviewed that it was fenced off from residents to prevent park users from cutting through the yards. He reviewed that over the years some features were removed as they were determined to be unsafe. He explained that this included the horseshoe pits, and merry-go-round. He stated that in 2003 there was a neighborhood meeting with a new playground approved. This was installed for \$30,000. He stated that the Blaine VFW has an annual event at this park with a barbeque and live band. He reviewed a PowerPoint of the park. He explained that some signs refer to the park as Suzanna Park but it is actually spelled Suzanne Park in the legal documents.

Chair Walthour asked who owns the wood fence.

Park and Recreation Director Kappelhoff stated that he understands it was a cooperative effort between the city and VFW.

Chair Walthour stated that the fence looks aged.

Park and Recreation Director Kappelhoff stated that replacement of this should be looked at in the future.

Commissioner Newland asked if this park is near the abandoned gas station. He asked if the road will go through there and impact park access.

Park and Recreation Director Kappelhoff stated that it is near the gas station property which is up for sale. He stated that discussion on this has not come up recently but the park may be impacted by the road.

6. December Meeting

Park and Recreation Director Kappelhoff stated that the December 27th meeting is during a holiday week. He stated that the Board needs to make a motion to cancel this meeting if they decide to.

Chair Walthour stated that the Board can discuss cancelling the meeting. There is a past precedence of cancelling the meeting. He added that there typically is nothing to discuss at a December meeting.

Motion by Commissioner Bird to recommend to the City Council to cancel the December 27, 2011 Park Board meeting. Motion seconded by Commissioner Leathers.

Motion approved unanimously.

7. Other

A. Winter Holiday Celebration

Park and Recreation Director Kappelhoff presented information on the Monday, December 5, Winter Holiday Celebration at City Hall. This is the 10th annual year for this event. Santa will be here, there will be entertainment, stories, crafts, hayrides, and a bonfire with smores. Choirs will be participating from Centennial, Spring Lake Park and Blaine. This is a free event and is typically well attended. It is from 6:30 to 8:00 pm.

B. Outdoor Ice Skating Rinks

Park and Recreation Director Kappelhoff presented information about the outdoor ice skating rinks. The tentative opening is on Friday, December 23rd. He reported that Aurelia Park, Happy Acres Park, Ostmans Park and Quincy Park have warming houses with skating rinks. The hours of the warming houses are on school days Monday - Thursday 4:00 to 9:00 pm, Fridays 4:00 to 7:00; weekend's noon to 7:00 pm. On vacation days hours are Monday - Thursday noon to 9:00 pm, Friday's noon to 7:00 pm. On Christmas Eve and Christmas day, New Years Eve and New Years Day the warming houses are open noon to 5:00 pm. He explained that there are six other rinks at Ostman's Park, Carrera East Park, Deasons Park, Ivy Hills Park, Quail Creek Park and Xylite Park which have no warming house or lights. He explained that flooding has not begun yet due to the temperatures. He reviewed that the new hockey rink which was paved at Happy Acres will be opening this year.

Park and Recreation Director Kappelhoff reported that the Blaine Triathlon, 2012, is listed on the website for registration. He commented that Blaine Medical Center has agreed to be the headliner sponsor for the event. He reviewed that the date has been changed to Saturday, May 19 at 8:00 a.m. There is approval from the County for the bike leg on Lexington Avenue going up to Radisson Road and into the Lakes Area. He stated that the Park Board will have further discussion in January. He explained that a mailing will go out to people who live along the bike and run routes to inform them of the event and invite them to the January 23rd Park Board meeting.

Commissioner Bird asked that a copy of the triathlon mailing be sent to each Boardmember to prepare them if they are presented with questions.

6. Adjournment

Commissioner Newland motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Langenfeld seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

Chair Walthour adjourned the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Bostrom
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.