

Park Advisory Commission Meeting Minutes

APRIL 16, 2020

6:30 P.M.

CITY HALL

MEMBERS PRESENT	Bill Ganzlin, Bryan Belisle, Victoria Biehn, Mark Cermak, Anastacia Davis, Ginny Davis, Mike Shepard
MEMBERS ABSENT	
STAFF PRESENT	Paul Kauppi and Andy Wietecki
VISITORS	
NOTE TAKER	Andy Wietecki

AGENDA TOPICS

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm at City Hall.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of the minutes from February 20, 2020 was moved by Mark Cermak and seconded by Bryan Belisle.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Approval of the April 16, 2020 agenda was moved by Ginny Davis and seconded by Bryan Belisle with addition of Adopt-a-Park and park and restroom closures. Motion carried.

4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. Finalize Design Options for West Park Pavilion

Andy Wietecki updated the Park Advisory Commission regarding the final design of the shelter that will be built at West Park this summer. Additional options were shared with the Commission to add to the project to really enhance the aesthetics of the shelter. Park Advisory Commission member Victoria Davis stated that since West Park is our busiest park in the City that we should consider all the options. The entire Commission was unanimous in their decision to add the additional options to the shelter since the project is under budget.

Victoria Biehn requested an update on the timeline of when the project might get started. The materials will be ordered early next week but due to the pandemic conditions there is no definite delivery date. The project will not start until after the 4th of July so the park is not under construction for the 4th of July festivities.

5. NEW BUSINESS

a) Arbor Day Discussion

The Park Advisory Commission discussed that the typical Arbor Day festivities have technically been cancelled due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. This year the Parks Department will be using Park Commission instead of community volunteers will be planting a row of evergreens to make a visual screen between Ebba Park and the Water Plant. Andy Wietecki also advised the Commission that the pollinator garden will still be planted at Lakewood Hills but the Parks Department will be planting it instead of volunteers. Mark Cermak asked if the Boy Scouts will still be cleaning up trash along the lake. The Boy Scouts event has been cancelled as well.

Andy discussed with the Park Commission that the City of White Bear Lake has been awarded Tree City recognition for over 30 years due mostly to the Arbor Day events and want to keep that tradition going. Paul Kauppi also mentioned that the Arbor Day Foundation is doing a virtual Arbor Day where residents can plant a tree or do a mini-project and post it on the Arbor Day Foundation's website.

b) Emerald Ash Borer Treatment Plan for 2020

Andy Wietecki updated the Parks Advisory Commission on the plan to treat all of the City's park and municipal building Ash trees again this year. It occurs every other year. He also reported that 2020 will be the last year to treat your Ash trees in White Bear Lake. The Emerald Ash Borer Beetle has been in the City long enough now to infect all non-treated Ash trees. Additional treatments will not be able to save infected trees after this year. The infected trees will need to be cut down over the next few years.

c) 2020 Updates for Railroad Park Fountain

Andy Wietecki updated the Parks Advisory Commission on the fountain at Railroad Park. He found a company to replace the worn out steel manifold and valves with a new updated plastic manifold. This will be a huge improvement for this system and will help the fountain stay running for generations to come. The work will cost an estimated \$5,000 - \$6,000 and that includes washing the rust deposits off the exterior of the bricks behind the waterfalls.

d) Discussion Regarding May Summer Park Tour with Covid-19 Concerns

The Park tours that usually being in May as the weather begins to improve are probably not feasible at this time. Bryan Belisle suggested that each Park Advisory Commission member adopt a park or two. The goal would be to visit the park and report at the May Park Advisory Commission Meeting any items that may need attention.

The following are park assignments for the May meeting:

Ginny Davis - Rotary Park & Podvin Park
Bryan Belisle - Lakewood Hills Park

Mike Shepard - Matoska Park & West Park
Victoria Biehn - Stellmacher Park & McCarty Park
Anastacia Davis - Lions Park & Spruce Park
Mark Cermak - Ramaley Park & Yost Park
Bill Ganzlin – Bossard Park

e) Park and Restroom Closures

Bryan Belisle wanted to discuss whether the City parks and playgrounds are currently closed and what the City's plan for restrooms this summer. Paul Kauppi spoke about our park closures and what has been outlined in the Governor's stay at home order. With lots of deliberation with the City Council and City staff, we are keeping our open spaces and trails open to the public to use. The City has closed the playgrounds and posted 'playground closed' signage at all City parks and playgrounds. Paul Kauppi informed the Park Advisory Commission that the City of White Bear Lake has not yet decided if they are closing the beach at this time. The decision will be made at a later date. The City is making signs to post in City parks, along the trails and around municipal buildings that have a couple of white bears that states "NO BEAR HUGS and SOCIAL DISTANCE AT 6' APART" just to give resident a friendly reminder to continue to be mindful of spacing when enjoying the outdoors. The park restrooms will remain closed this summer because of the difficulty obtaining the proper PPE to clean the restrooms and keep City employees safe. The City has a portable toilet at the Boatworks Commons area and will get additional ones – if deemed necessary.

6. OTHER STAFF REPORTS

None.

7. COMMISSION REPORTS

None.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The next meeting will be held on May 21, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall.

There being no further business to come before the Park Commission, the meeting was adjourned. Moved by Mike Shepard and seconded by Anastacia Davis.