

# Park Advisory Commission Meeting Minutes

NOVEMBER 19, 2020

6:30 P.M.

WEBEX MEETING

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

## AGENDA TOPICS

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm.

### 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of the minutes from September 17, 2020 was moved by Mark Cermak and seconded by Ginny Davis.

### 3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Approval of the November 19, 2020 agenda was moved by Bryan Belisle and seconded by Mark Cermak.

### 4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

### 5. NEW BUSINESS

#### a) White Bear Lake Lions Club ADA Playground Fundraiser Announcement

The White Bear Lake Lions Club put an announcement in the White Bear Press in early November regarding their fundraising efforts for the all-inclusive playground. Paul Kowitz, the Lion in charge of fundraising efforts for this project, stated that the announcement was to let the public know that they are trying to raise funds to build the playground. Andy Wietecki addressed Bill Ganzlin's question about the City's contribution towards this project. At this point, no dollar amount has been discussed but the City is already contributing to some of the project's needs. Next year, the City will be resurfacing the parking lot at Lakewood Hills. With the resurfacing of the parking lot, the City will be reconstructing the parking stalls for handicap parking. The slope of the current parking stalls is too steep to comply with the ADA requirements. There is also a large amount of excavating that needs to be done to provide a nice level surface for the new playground to be installed. The White Bear Lake Lions Club would love to break ground in 2021. However, the coronavirus pandemic has

made that goal much less achievable. Bryan Belisle suggested that the White Bear Lake Lions Club contact more community foundations to see if they would be willing to help fund this project.

#### **b) Matoska Gazebo**

Bryan Belisle reported to the Parks Advisory Commission on the poor condition of the Matoska Gazebo. It has some visible rotting, panels kicked out from vandals, and it just does not look well maintained anymore. Bryan spoke with the City's former City Manager Mark Sather about the history behind the Gazebo. The City last remodeled it roughly 20 years ago. Paul Kauppi reported to the Commission on the discussions that the City Council has had and that they are split on either remodeling it or replacing it completely. Paul also explained that there is no historical value to the structure anymore because over 90% of it is NOT original. The City is removing the stairs to the second floor due safety and liability reasons.

Paul Kauppi explained that with the crazy year of staff working from home and the City Council dealing with large budget issues, there has not been a lot of time to dedicate to talks about the future of the Gazebo. Paul is hopeful that after the first of the year, City staff may be able to Gazebo improvements into discussions with the City Council.

The next steps in the process are getting estimates for the City Council on the cost to remodel versus replace the Gazebo. Andy reached out to a local reputable shelter company (the same company that built West Park's new shelter) about getting costs on an exact replica of our current gazebo but with materials that won't rot and are pretty much vandal proof. He received a quite with detailed drawings of what they can incorporate into the design to make this look almost exactly as it does today. The quote includes a new concrete slab and footings utilizing the existing steel staircase and making a floor on the upper level that won't rot or deteriorate in the harsh Minnesota weather conditions. The estimated cost for the structure, installation and concrete is roughly \$175,000 for an exact replica; however, the price would likely increase because the City wants to incorporate new lights and landscaping to the project.

Anastacia Davis suggested incorporating a memorial for loved ones into the Gazebo and using donations to help pay for the construction. Andy Wieteck thought that would be a good alternative for memorials because the City is running out space and everyone seems to want to have their loved one's memorial by the lake. Bryan Belisle suggested that park rental fees could be used to help fund the construction. The Parks Advisory Commission overwhelmingly supports having the Gazebo in Matoska Park and restoring it as an icon for future generations to enjoy.

#### **c) Parks Budget**

Paul Kauppi, Public Works Director and City Engineer, explained the state of the Parks Improvement Budget and the funding source is in jeopardy. The City Council has moved some funds around to fund the Parks Improvement budget at its current level for 2021; but they need to look for long term solutions for funding the City's park projects. The City of White Bear Lake's Local

Government Aid was cut because old smaller homes are being remodeled into larger homes. The loss of LGA money created a large gap in funding leaving us some big decisions that have to be made in our future budgets. Paul stated that Andy has worked diligently on creating a parks budget that looks at our most important items that need to be addressed. With a clear Parks Department budget, the City is able to see what funding is needed for the necessary improvements to our parks.

**d) Plan Joint Meeting with the Environmental Commission**

Andy Wietecki reported that the Connie Taillon, the City's Environmental Commission liaison, would like to schedule a joint meeting early next year. The Park Advisory Commission was unanimous about waiting until the groups could meet together in person, hopefully by early spring.

**6. OTHER STAFF REPORTS**

None.

**7. COMMISSION REPORTS**

None.

**8. OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

The next meeting will be held on January 21, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

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