



**MINUTES  
PARK ADVISORY COMMISSION  
CITY OF WHITE BEAR LAKE, MINNESOTA  
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2023  
6:30 P.M. AT CITY HALL CONFERENCE ROOM  
AT 4701 HWY 61 NORTH**

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE**

Chair Bill Ganzlin called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Bryan Belisle, Victoria Biehn, Ginny Davis, Bill Ganzlin, and Mike Shepard

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Mark Cermak, Anastacia Davis

**STAFF PRESENT:** Andy Wietecky, Parks Working Foreman; Paul Kauppi, Public Works Director/City Engineer

**VISITORS PRESENT:** None

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

It was moved by member **Ginny Davis** seconded by member **Victoria Biehn**, to approve the agenda as presented

Motion carried 5:0.

**3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

Minutes of August 17, 2023

It was moved by member **Mike Shepard** seconded by member **Victoria Biehn**, to approve the minutes of the August 17, 2023 meeting.

Motion carried, 5:0.

**4. VISITORS AND PRESENTATIONS**

Nothing scheduled

**5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Nothing scheduled

**6. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Park Inspection Reports**

Each Park Advisory Commission member spoke about the parks they inspected. This year the Commission teamed up with a few of the Environmental Advisory Commission (EAC) members during the inspections. The goal was to identify where new natural areas or pollinator friendly gardens could be added. A lot of great feedback was received from the EAC members on future projects.

Andy Wietecki mentioned that before new natural areas are added he would like the existing natural areas to be rejuvenated. Natural areas were established years ago with little to no improvements being made over the years. Andy also mentioned that another reason to focus on the already established areas is the high cost for the maintenance on these gardens/areas.

During Mike Shepard's recap of his inspection at Matoska Park, Bill Ganzlin was reminded about the additional handicap spots that were discussed at last month's meeting. Paul Kauppi spoke to City Manager Lindy Crawford and they were looking into potential areas in the parking lot to add an additional handicap spot. Paul advised the Commission that the lot currently has the correct number of handicap parking spaces for a lot of its size.

Another hot topic among the Commission members was graffiti and vandalism. Bryan Belisle asked if the City would put an article in the spring newsletter educating the public about the vandalism issues in the City parks.

The inspections went very well and a lot of issues were identified and taken care of earlier in the year by the Parks Department staff.

#### B. Marketfest Recap

Andy Wietecki asked the Park Advisory Commission members how Marketfest went this year and what were the main takeaways. The Commission agreed that traffic at the booth was definitely down this year compared to last year. The Commission suggested reducing the number of times the Parks Advisory Commission booth was at Marketfest next year – reducing the appearances from four to one or two times. The location of the booth appeared to make a difference in the number of visitors as well. There was more traffic at the Washington Avenue location as compared to other locations. The Commission reviewed the summary of Marketfest visitor comments and pickleball was once again the number one topic besides the positive feedback on the City's parks.

#### C. January Workshop Strategic Planning

Paul Kauppi advised the Commission members that they will be participating in the workshop with City Council again this January. The Commission members need to bring ideas of what they want to discuss with the City Council to the next meeting. The focus should be on the needs across all the City's parks and what is important for the future of the parks. Andy Wietecki reminded the Commission that there are only two more meetings before the workshop in January.

### 7. DISCUSSION

#### A. Staff updates

The trail at Hidden Hollow and West Park are being paved in the next two weeks. Restoration will follow once the asphalt has a chance to cure. The Parks Department staff removed the sand from the playground at Ramaley Park and replaced it with engineered wood fiber. Unfortunately, Ramaley was the only park that the Parks Department was able to get to this year. A new swing set has been ordered for Ramaley Park and will be installed late this fall when it arrives.

Paul also reminded the Park Advisory Commission members that the recognition banquet will be held on November 1<sup>st</sup> and he hopes everyone is able to make it.

B. Commission member updates

Bill Ganzlin received an email regarding the dog beach and shared the details with the Commission. Bill stated that most of the pictures showed people walking with their pets both on the trails or sidewalks and not necessarily at the dog beach. Both Paul Kauppi and Andy Wietecky asked the Commission to continue to monitor the dog beach and how the new improvements are working.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the Commission, it was moved by member **Victoria Biehn** seconded by member **Bryan Belisle** to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried, 5:0