



**MINUTES
PARK ADVISORY COMMISSION
CITY OF WHITE BEAR LAKE, MINNESOTA
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 19, 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, Mark Cermak, Ginny Davis, Bill Ganzlin, and Mike Shepard

MEMBERS ABSENT: Victoria Biehn, Anastacia Davis

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

VISITORS PRESENT: Jackie Lundy and Steve of the White Bear Lake Pickleball Club

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved by member **Mark Cermak** seconded by member **Ginny Davis**, to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion carried, 5:0.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Minutes of September 21, 2023

It was moved by member **Bryan Belisle** seconded by member **Ginny Davis**, to approve the minutes of the September 21, 2023 meeting.

Motion carried, 5:0.

4. VISITORS AND PRESENTATIONS

Jackie Lundy, who serves as the White Bear Lake Pickleball Club organizer, came to present to the Park Advisory Commission the need for pickleball courts in our community. There are 207 members currently enrolled in the White Bear Lake Pickleball Club that is organized through the WBL Senior Center. Jackie shared some stats of other communities who are building courts and some of the cities that already have courts available for play. There are currently no courts other than the school district and private courts available within our community. Jackie mentioned one of the biggest hurdles the club has is the lack of access to the school district courts during the school year. The courts are being utilized by the school district both before and after school during the school year.

Paul Kauppi asked what the size difference is between a tennis court and a pickleball court. Pickleball courts are much smaller. Four pickleball courts can be fit into the same space as two tennis courts. Steve also advised the Commission that dedicated pickleball nets are important because the nets sit 2 inches

lower than a tennis court net and are only one foot outside the court lines. Shared courts use tennis nets and those nets are 16 feet longer than a pickleball net creating issues with adhering to the rules of pickleball.

Paul Kauppi asked what it means to be a member of the White Bear Lake Pickleball Club. Jackie explained that it gives a person access to indoor/outdoor facilities to play on. The Club also supplies the balls, paddles, and offers classes to individuals that are just learning to play or looking to improve their skills.

Jackie listed the different parks the Club has looked at as possible locations that would work great for new courts to be added. The Club came up with quite a few possible locations but logistically they thought that Stellmacher and Bossard Park offered the best locations. Bryan Belisle mentioned the courts at Sunrise Middle School and suggested those courts might have more availability once the school projects are completed. Sunrise Middle School also offers more parking than any of the City parks. Bryan suggested creating a partnership with the school district to create new courts on their property since the City doesn't have many options available for the new infrastructure and parking is lacking at most City parks. Andy agreed with Bryan and believes it makes more sense for new courts to be added to Sunrise Middle School as there is plenty of open space available to add a number of new courts. The City parks may have open areas but many of them also have filtration infrastructure that cannot be built upon.

Bryan asked if there were any indoor courts. Jackie advised the Commission that indoor courts are limited and currently they only have access to the gym at Lincoln Elementary 3 days a week. The only options outside of Lincoln Elementary are private clubs like Lifetime Fitness. The school district currently has 17 dual courts which is meant for both tennis and pickleball but none dedicated to only pickleball. Andy asked what a reasonable number of dedicated courts would be and both Steve and Jackie both thought 10 dedicated courts would be a great number to satisfy the needs of the club.

Paul questioned how the Club scheduled their events and how do they get along with non-members or other residents who show up to play. Steve provided examples of how other community's schedule play but for the most part they welcome others to join in and play with them. Some communities have one or two non-club use courts. If someone shows up, the Club must leave or give non-members first dibs on the courts. Some communities only schedule club events on specific courts. Steve also addressed the noise that the game creates and to date there have no reported complaints to the White Bear Lake School District from any of their current court locations.

Andy asked about a reasonable time frame the Club would like to see new courts added to the community. Jackie and Steve both thought three years would be a great goal to work towards. They recommended that the City look into grants that are available through the DNR for new amenities such as pickleball courts. Based on the City's current capital improvement plan, park improvement funds are already designated out to 2029. The City would be looking at 2030-2032 to add a major project to the City's plans.

Andy suggested starting a fundraiser to help fund this major project as many of the sports associations do to help improve the fields they utilize. The White Bear Lake Lions Club, for examples, donated over \$400,000 for purchase and construction of the City's first All Abilities Playground at Lakewood Hills Park.

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

January Workshop Strategic Planning

Due to the length of the pickleball presentation, the Commission postponed the January workshop planning to their next meeting.

6. NEW BUSINESS

Nothing scheduled

7. DISCUSSION

A. Staff updates

Andy Wieteki reminded the Commission to attend the Volunteer Recognition Banquet on November 1st.

The City signed an agreement to develop three park sign concepts. Once the concepts are delivered, Andy will bring them to the Commission for input and ideas.

B. Commission member updates

None.

8. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Commission, it was moved by member **Mark Cermak** seconded by member **Mike Shepard** to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried, 5:0