

EDINA PARK BOARD

7:30 p.m.

March 11, 1997

MEMBERS PRESENT: Beth Hall, Jim Fee, Dave Crowther, Andy Herring, Becky Bennett, Michael Burley, John Dovolis, Bill Jenkins, Phyllis Kohler

MEMBERS ABSENT: Andrew Montgomery, Jean Rydell

STAFF PRESENT: John Keprios, Janet Canton, Mike Damman

I. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Mr. Keprios opened up nominations for a Chair of the Park Board. Mr. Herring commented that Mr. Montgomery is out of town at the present time, however, he did indicate that he would like to continue on as Chair of the Park Board. Therefore, Mr. Herring nominated Andrew Montgomery. Mr. Keprios asked for a motion to close the nominations. Jim Fee **MOVED TO CLOSE THE NOMINATIONS**. John Dovolis **SECONDED THE MOTION**.

Mr. Keprios asked if there was any further discussion. Mr. Herring noted that last year the Chair changed and asked if his recollection is correct in that it was mentioned to have the same Chair for two years. He indicated that he would like to see the Chair move around. Mr. Herring commented that Mr. Jenkins did an excellent job as Chair as well as Mr. Montgomery has been doing an excellent job. However, he would like to be sure it's put in the records that we should move the Chair around to the extent that we have people willing to act as Chair. He pointed out that his reasoning for this is that it gives some new vitality to the group.

Mr. Fee asked how long Bob Christianson and Joan Lonsbury were Chairs of the Park Board. Mr. Keprios replied that in the past he feels those were cases where they did a fabulous job and no one else really expressed a strong interest to serve in that capacity. Now it's a different scenario because during the last couple of years there have been a few people willing to serve. Mr. Keprios informed that Park Board that the way it's written in the by-laws is they serve a one-year term and then go through the nomination process again. Mr. Herring noted that he's not suggesting that be changed. **NOMINATIONS CLOSED. EVERYONE VOTED UNANIMOUSLY IN FAVOR OF MR. ANDREW MONTGOMERY AS CHAIR OF THE PARK BOARD.**

Mr. Keprios opened up nominations for Vice Chair. Mr. Herring **NOMINATED DAVE CROWTHER**. **JOHN DOVOLIS MOVED TO CLOSE NOMINATIONS**. Jim Fee **SECONDED THE MOTION**. **NOMINATIONS CLOSED. EVERYONE VOTED**

UNANIMOUSLY IN FAVOR OF MR. DAVE CROWTHER AS VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE PARK BOARD.

II. APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 11, 1997 PARK BOARD MINUTES.

Andy Herring MOVED TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 11, 1997 PARK BOARD MINUTES. Phyllis Kohler SECONDED THE MOTION. MINUTES APPROVED.

III. EDINA AQUATIC CENTER WATER PLAY EQUIPMENT

Mr. Herring indicated that he was surprised as anyone to find out that we were suggesting revenue bonds. He noted that Mayor's Smith's reaction was we just did a 5.5 million dollar bond referendum and he didn't like the idea of going out with more debt. He then asked Mr. Rosland if there is some other way this could be done and Mr. Rosland indicated that they need to pay for the equipment when it's installed. Therefore, they could use the proceeds from the bond for cash flow purposes to buy the equipment and have it installed. The money will then be paid back from the cash flow from the pool. Mr. Herring indicated that they feel confident they can pay the money off within two years and also pointed out that the bond money has to be spent within two years.

Mr. Fee asked how much more are we going to spend and Mr. Herring replied that it will be \$135,000. Mr. Herring commented that he asked very specifically about this to make it clear that we are not taking the \$135,000 out of the bond proceeds now. That we are not reducing what we are going to do under the bond with respect to the bond proceeds. Mr. Herring also pointed out that if we come up short we are going to be under a lot of pressure either through the bonds or if there is any money left in the Developer's Fund to make up the difference.

Mr. Jenkins asked Mr. Keprios what his thoughts are on the future position of the pool from a revenue and expense standpoint. Mr. Keprios replied that's a tough one to answer because we are not really going to know until we see how much business St. Louis Park is going to take away from us. Mr. Keprios pointed out that he thinks the large play structure is going to be a big draw, more so than anything else we have done at the pool.

Mr. Keprios gave a brief sequence of events which lead to this decision. He stated that in January the Park Board asked him to come up with some creative financing to fund the play equipment. He then explained that he and Mr. Montgomery talked and decided to wait until the arena bids came in to see where we were at financially because if the bids came in low we could take money out of the park bond. However, we were not that lucky and we knew at that point that there were no remaining funds to cover the equipment without not doing other projects. Therefore, with that in mind, we tried to do a lease to own option which we found out later would not work because the contractor indicated they wouldn't do that because they want control of the equipment. The contractor wants to be able to buy the equipment and own it because they are going to be responsible for it as a contractor. The contractor noted they would rather do it through a change order where we would go out and literally buy the equipment then we know whose

responsibility it is to take it off the truck and put it in the ground. Mr. Keprios explained that the play equipment was an add alternate, which was originally bid at \$140,000. The contractor, Meisinger Construction, later offered to purchase and install the new equipment for \$135,000. Mr. Keprios stated that thankfully Mr. MacHolda had a purchaser of our old equipment for \$9,000 which included pumps, filters and old equipment, as well as, reassembling the equipment. Mr. Keprios commented that we paid \$29,000 back in 1991 and we are getting \$9,000 for it now. Therefore, the cash we initially had to come up with was \$126,000.

Mr. Keprios indicated that after meeting with the Finance Department and the Assistant City Manager, being that the City Manager was on vacation, it looked like the only way to do it was through revenue bonds. That is why the report as you see it went before the City Council. However, when it was brought before the City Council, the City Manager was back from vacation and saw this for the first time. He stated that he felt the money should come out of the bond issue for now and then when we are done spending all of this we will know where we are at. All of the bond money has to be spent by August 1, 1998. If we find ourselves short and there are some projects we still feel need to be done that have been promised, then at that point in time we will borrow the money that was used to pay for the pool project through revenue bonds. Mr. Keprios explained that in either scenario the agreement was that it will still function as a revenue bond and that the pool will have to use it's own revenues above operating expenses to pay that improvement back over whatever period of time if we borrow the money. He stated that the chances are that it will be spread out over a five or ten year period depending on how much money we need to borrow at that point.

Mr. Jenkins commented that the bottom line is we got it done and that's the main thing. Also, he is encouraged that the City Council agreed with how it should be done. Mr. Keprios indicated that both Mr. Montgomery and Mr. Herring showed up at the meeting and did a very nice job speaking on behalf of the Park Board.

IV. EDINA AQUATIC CENTER MASTER PLAN

Mr. Keprios indicated that the Park Board passed a motion in January to spend an estimated \$5,000 to do a master plan for the aquatic center. He pointed out that Mr. MacHolda feels Williams Associates Architects would be the best consultant to do the job. However, there are other consultants who can do this type of master plan and we may find one that would be cheaper. Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that St. Louis Park is developing a wonderful facility and they used an out-of-town architect who did an excellent job for them. Mr. Keprios commented there a couple of big issues, however, that we have to get over. First, do we want to accept the fact that we will always be a competitive pool. If the answer to that is yes, this is something we are going to live with and we will do the best with what we've got then we will formulate a master plan around that theme that tries to be both.

Mr. Keprios explained there are a couple of approaches to this issue. If we look at what St. Louis Park is doing, they are really becoming the leader in developing an outdoor

municipal family aquatic center. They are going to draw people to their pool, it's that simple. They took out their competitive 50 meter pool and started over. They have a zero depth entry main pool with speed slides, water slides, tube slides, mushrooms and all types of play amenities that are really an attraction for all ages. They do not cater to the low revenue producer which is the athletic part of it, the swim team. Mr. Keprios stressed that he feels this needs to be a conscious decision before we dive into a master plan.

Mr. Jenkins asked how many hours a week does the Swim Team use the aquatic center. Ms. Bennett noted that they start at 5:30 a.m. and go until 10:00 a.m. Ms. Kohler asked is there another facility they could use such as Valley View or South View. Ms. Bennett replied they cannot use the schools because they are not 50 meters and in the summer they need a 50 meter pool. Mr. Keprios pointed out that 50 meter pools are not very common anymore.

Mr. Crowther asked if St. Louis Park is like a business in that it's an enterprise deal where they are trying to operate not just as a traditional public facility but they are going beyond that. Mr. Keprios stated that they have built a facility that's going to draw revenue to help offset their expenses. They have built a facility that doesn't cater to the low revenue producer which is the athletic portion of it.

Ms. Bennett indicated that she has been approached by a lot of parents who think they are going to lose their pool time at Blake as well as their fees are going to be increased from approximately \$25.00 to \$75.00 an hour because Blake is adding their own in-house programs. Therefore, the Swim Club is really in a crunch for pool space and she thinks they have talked to Mr. MacHolda and Community Education about it. They are currently trying to work out the scheduling for next year already but there is a problem.

Mr. Crowther indicated that taking the devil's advocate position do we have to be competitive. Our philosophy has been not to have the best and if St. Louis Park wants to do a big full blown deal and it draws people away do we really need to compete with St. Louis Park. Can we provide a nice facility without having to worry about spending more money on it and let the people go to St. Louis Park if they want that kind of deal.

Mr. Keprios indicated that it comes down to philosophically how do we want our pool to function. Should it be subsidized by the general tax dollar, which is what it probably will be if it continues to function as a competitive pool, or do we want to run it like a business where we will generate revenues. If we want to generate revenues then we do not operate the pool as a competitive pool. This is the issue. Mr. Herring asked Mr. Keprios if we should wait this summer and see how it goes before we shell out \$5,000. Mr. Keprios noted that's what he is afraid of, if we shell out \$5,000 will we still get the same pool. Mr. Keprios stated they have done a concrete core testing and the pool shell is going to be there for another 20 years. But if we go forward with this master plan essentially it will add things and be more of an attraction to the pool but yet continue to maintain it as a competitive pool as well.

Mr. Burley asked wasn't that the purpose of the master plan to allow us to not be short-sited in some of the construction that is taking place right now that would prevent an expansion two to three years down the road. Mr. Keprios indicated that is a good point and that was part of the drive behind it and the other question is where are we going to get the money to develop it. Mr. Burley pointed out that he is not arguing to say we should go ahead with the master plan but wanted to make sure he understands why we are doing this, because it sounds like we are changing our mind. Mr. Keprios noted that he just wants to make sure that we have all of the facts because it sounds great to have a master plan but when we would have the money to implement a master plan is another question. Mr. Keprios commented that they still owe the Developer's Fund \$207,000 and now they are going to owe another \$126,000 for the new equipment plus they still have capital debt from the 1991 renovation.

Mr. Burley asked Mr. Keprios what his opinion is and Mr. Keprios responded that at this time he feels it is a waste of money.

Ms. Bennett asked if the Park Board and staff could internally brain storm and come up with a long-range list of what we want and need. It seems like staff would probably have some sort of expertise if we just take the time and slow down a bit and try to be visionary about some of these things we could probably save ourselves some money. Mr. Keprios indicated that he thinks we have that vision on paper already and all the master plan would do is put down concrete numbers. He stated that we don't have the money to do that right now and therefore it doesn't make sense.

Mr. Herring asked if the fence could be moved out so there is a picnic area. Mr. Keprios indicated that he will look into that and feels it will be cheap and easy to do. Mr. Herring also commented that he would like to see a sand volleyball court put in on the far west end. Ms. Bennett asked what the cost would be for a sand volleyball court and Mr. Keprios replied approximately \$6,000. Mr. Herring asked Mr. Keprios if he can let the Park Board know about those two points and he indicated that he will have the information by the next Park Board meeting.

Ms. Kohler indicated that if we are looking for someone to run sand volleyball Community Education is always looking for a partnership. Mr. Keprios pointed out that they are rebuilding the sand volleyball court at Lake Cornelia Park. They are going to relocate the one that is there right now. It's in the new playground equipment site plan, which will have its bid opening on March 27th, and it will be a dynamite sand volleyball court very close to the picnic shelter. It was noted to wait and see how that one functions to see if there is a need to put one in by the pool, because that can always be added.

V. PARKS REFERENDUM PROJECTS UPDATE.

Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that the three bids have been approved by the City Council to go forward with the ice arena project. All three contractors have accepted, the building, the refrigeration/mechanical equipment and the dasher board system. He

indicated that right now they are in the paper work stage and when that is done they will have a pre-construction meeting as soon as all of the paper work is in order.

Mr. Jenkins asked how the bids came in compared to what was forecast and Mr. Keprios replied they were \$169,333 over budget, and on a budget that size they didn't do too bad. Mr. Keprios indicated there was one problem, however, in that the parking is going to need more money than what the Engineering Department originally planned. Now, instead of \$169,000 we are probably closer to \$269,000. Mr. Keprios pointed out that the City is going to do the parking lot themselves.

Mr. Keprios explained that there are two add alternates from the arena package that did not get accepted. The first one is the fire protection system, which will be put on hold for awhile. We hope to do that within the next five years to be funded through the Braemar Arena capital plan. The new arena will have a sprinkler system, that's part of the base bid. He explained that they rejected to add the sprinkler system which would essentially just be over the ice in the West Arena. It is important to abide by our own City Codes, which is why it is so important to add the fire suppression system in the West Arena. When we remodel a building we are supposed to then bring everything up to fire code.

The other item that will not be done at this time is the sound system. That was approximately \$11,000 which we will hold off on until we find another way to get that done. It was asked if the Hockey Moms would possibly be interested in helping out with that project. Mr. Keprios stated that he has to give the Hockey Moms a lot of credit for paying \$25,000 for the new concession stand equipment. Mr. Jenkins commented that the whole concessions deal has been a huge success from his standpoint and the Hockey Moms have been fabulous. Mr. Keprios indicated that the City has some portable sound equipment units that will function well for the time being.

Mr. Keprios indicated that the specifications call for the third indoor ice rink to be substantially completed by October 1st.

Mr. Keprios noted stated that March 27th is the bid opening date for Lake Cornelia Park. Also, they are still meeting with the shelter building committee. Mr. Keprios indicated he will be sending out notices next week to the residents of Todd Park to get their input.

VI. OTHER

A. Lewis Park Basketball Court - Mr. Keprios indicated that the Edina Basketball Association has made a commitment to fund \$12,000 for the basketball court at Lewis Park.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

John Dovolis MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:10 P.M. Beth Hall SECONDED THE MOTION. MEETING ADJOURNED.

