

EDINA PARK BOARD  
7:30 p.m.  
October 14, 1997

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MEMBERS PRESENT: Phyllis Kohler, Becky Bennett, Michael Burley, John Dovolis, Jim Fee, Andrew Herring, Bill Jenkins, Andrew Montgomery, Jean Rydell

MEMBERS ABSENT: Beth Hall, Dave Crowther

STAFF PRESENT: John Keprios, Ed MacHolda, Janet Canton

OTHERS PRESENT: Barbara Johnson

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**I. APPROVAL OF THE AUGUST 12, 1997 PARK BOARD MINUTES**

Jean Rydell MOVED TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 12, 1997 PARK BOARD MINUTES. Bill Jenkins SECONDED THE MOTION. MINUTES APPROVED.

**II. 1998 FEES AND CHARGES (PRELIMINARY REVIEW).**

Mr. Keprios explained to the Park Board that this year he wanted to hand out the fees and charges a month earlier for everyone to review. The reason being if anyone would like any additional information he will have a month to prepare and do whatever additional research may be necessary. He stated that a recommendation for the fees and charges will need to be made at the November Park Board meeting.

Mr. Burley commented that he recalls last year the main issue was the fee at the golf course. Mr. Keprios indicated that Mr. Valliere does send out a survey and noted that he would be happy to copy that survey to the Park Board as well as have Mr. Valliere attend the November Park Board meeting.

Mr. Montgomery pointed out that he was trying to rationalize the adult athletic fees. He noted that men's softball is \$310.00, indoor basketball is \$425.00, 4-man hockey is \$200.00 and co-rec broomball is \$475.00. He asked how does staff support those differences. Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that he will send out a copy of the budgets which show the revenues and expenses for each adult athletic program. Mr. Keprios noted that with the basketball program there are three officials and that's where a huge expense is, whereas hockey is self-officiated. Also, everyone pays a facility user fee just like the various youth associations.

Ms. Bennett indicated that she just received information regarding the open skating hours at Braemar arena and pointed out that there are actually less hours of open skating than last year. She asked why is this happening when there is now going to be a third sheet of ice. Mr. Keprios explained that last year the open ice hours were reduced to accommodate the girls hockey program. Ms. Bennett stated that there is no longer open skating on Friday nights and feels that was a very popular family activity. Mr. Keprios commented that he will look into it but recalls it was a financial decision. However, if it's dollars versus how much service we provide we do need to look at that. Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that Mr. Thayer will be at next month's Park Board meeting to answer further questions. Mr. Burley added that after a referendum and spending money on a new arena he feels that the community would want to see more open skating.

Mr. Burley asked why the adult non-patron pays more at the Richards Golf Course than they do at the Braemar Executive Golf Course. Mr. Keprios replied that it's because there is a difference in the courses and the debt service to be paid, however, he noted that Mr. Valliere can answer that question at the next Park Board meeting. Mr. Herring added that he would also like to know what kind of use the two golf courses get.

Mr. Herring indicated that he would like to have a discussion on how much time and energy goes into maintaining the bandy sheet of ice at Lewis Park for the limited number of residents. Mr. MacHolda replied that the "C" league plays exclusively at Lewis Park. The "B" league plays a minimum of 50% of their games at Lewis Park and the "A" league plays approximately 40% of their games at Lewis Park. He stated that bandy is played seven days a week at Lewis Park. Mr. Keprios asked Mr. Herring if he is looking for the amount of labor it takes to maintain the bandy sheet of ice. Mr. Herring replied for the maintenance of the sheet of ice and for MacHolda's time spent on the program.

Mr. Herring stated that the Aquatic Center increases make him a little uncomfortable. Mr. MacHolda replied this past summer there were some concerns about the fees being too high because we opened the main pool June 14<sup>th</sup> and the wading pool in July. He explained the reason the fees were left the same is because they have not been raised in seven years. However, if the pool had opened Memorial weekend he would have raised the fees. He noted that St. Louis Park's fees are slightly higher than Edina's fees. Mr. MacHolda stated that St. Louis Park will be approximately \$10.00 to \$15.00 higher than what Edina is proposing for 1998. He indicated that St. Louis Park was sold out on most days this past summer. He also explained that St. Louis Park is the only pool Edina should be compared to because they are the only two pools that are very similar in what they offer to the public.

Mr. Burley asked what is the purpose for raising the Aquatic Center fees, is it to meet the budget or is it to provide a slush fund. Mr. MacHolda replied that this year they broke even. He indicated that the last time the pool was renovated it was done through a revenue bond and we are going to be spending approximately \$80,000 a year up front to pay back that revenue bond. Therefore, to keep pace with expenses we need to increase

the fees. He noted that as Mr. Keprios stated in his staff report, it's not necessarily to offset something else but the goal is to have it self-sufficient. Mr. Keprios also pointed out that down the road the Aquatic Center is expected to pay back their \$207,000 loan from the Developer's Fund.

Mr. Keprios confirmed that at the next Park Board meeting Mr. Valliere and Mr. Thayer will be present to answer any further questions that the Park Board may have.

### **III. PARK SHELTER BUILDING PLANS**

Mr. Keprios explained that previously all bids were rejected for the three shelter buildings and three comfort stations, therefore, they went back to the drawing board. He indicated that recently Mr. Dovolis helped him work with the architect to find a way to cut back on some expenses. Mr. Keprios presented drawings of the new designs and commented that the cost is now approximately \$54,000 for each comfort station building compared to the original design which cost \$117,000.

Mr. Jenkins asked what amenities or square footage are being lost and Mr. Keprios replied that they are only losing square footage. Mr. Keprios explained that the shelter building plans have been broken down into two separate buildings. The larger of the two buildings will be at Cornelia School and Weber Park. The smaller two buildings will be at Walnut Ridge Park and Todd Park.

Mr. Keprios gave a breakdown of the costs for the shelter buildings. He noted that he feels the cost analyzer is a little high, however, he expects the bids to come in less than one million dollars. Mr. Keprios stated that we may be a little short but Mr. Rosland has assured him that we will be able to borrow any additional money needed to cover the shortfall.

Mr. Keprios noted that Mr. Dovolis has also offered a tremendous savings to the City by offering to sell at cost all of the heating and plumbing fixtures for the buildings. This will obviously be a significant savings. Mr. Dovolis has been extremely helpful.

Mr. Keprios indicated that he feels we can go forward with these plans, however, the Walnut Ridge area is a very sensitive area and as the Park Board may recall we assured those residents an opportunity to review any revised plans. Mr. Keprios indicated that he would like to send out notices and invite these people to attend the November Park Board meeting. Mr. Montgomery responded that he doesn't feel we need to bring this issue before another Park Board meeting. He noted that possibly a different meeting could be set up for those people to attend and have a few park board members present. Mr. Keprios indicated that he will set up a meeting time.

Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that this will be the last set of projects for the referendum dollars. He noted that there are a few projects that we did not get to yet, however, he hopes to accomplish the majority of the remaining projects through the

operating budget in the years to come. He stated that we planning on doing pathways, irrigation systems, fencing and hard surface areas in the coming years within the operating budget. Mr. Keprios pointed out that the Engineering Department has really come to the rescue on a lot of things.

Mr. Herring asked if there will be a capital budget for next year and Mr. Keprios replied no. The Park and Recreation Department has no capital dollars in the 1998 budget and there will be little money left in the Developers Fund after the completion of the Art Center Media Lab. Mr. Keprios explained that there is no capital plan for the City of Edina because there are levy limits in place which will be there for at least another year.

Mr. Jenkins asked about the new roof being put on the Golf Dome at Braemar. Mr. Keprios replied that the new roof will be put on the Golf Dome the end of this month. He indicated that it is being paid through the trust fund at Edinborough, therefore, it's a loan from Edinborough that we will be paying ourselves back. In essence, we are borrowing money from ourselves to get the job done which we may also have to do if we run short of money when we build the shelter buildings.

Mr. Burley asked about the basketball courts at Lewis Park and Utley Park. He indicated that he was informed that the Basketball Board went back to Mr. Rosland and stated that they wanted to build an indoor facility with private funds out at Braemar. Mr. Burley commented that he likes the idea but that he doesn't know how practical it is. Mr. Keprios replied that he did hear talk of this several months ago but he noted that another possibility might be the Northwest Club on York Avenue. Jerry Noyce mentioned that it may be for sale.

Mr. Keprios commented that Doug Johnson is thinking about adding on another gymnasium at the community center. Ms. Rydell commented that there might be gym space available over at the Lewis Engineering site or at the Grace Church site because they are moving. Mr. Keprios indicated that there are a lot of possibilities and there is a lot of demand for more gym space in Edina.

#### **IV. PARK REFERENDUM UPDATE**

Mr. Keprios handed out a list indicating where he feels we are going to end up with the park referendum projects. He noted there are a number of projects that do not show up on the list, however, he hopes to still complete them such as the asphalt work, irrigation work and a lot of fencing work which will all come out of the operating budget.

It was asked what is happening with the Gun Range and Mr. Keprios explained that a new multi-jurisdictional training facility for both police and fire is planned on being built. He noted that the training facility will include a number of cities, as well as, the Metropolitan Airport Commissions Security Force. Mr. Keprios indicated that the City of Edina's part of the deal is to provide the land for the site. He noted that it will be built a little bit further to the north than the existing gun range building and construction is scheduled to

start next year. Mr. Fee asked if the \$50,000 is part of the city's contribution and Mr. Keprios replied no. He explained that the \$50,000 is what was previously needed to make the current facility useable. However, if we weren't going to continue to operate the gun range than the site needed to be cleaned up in which the low bid came in at \$30,000. Therefore, the site is now cleaned of lead. Mr. Keprios pointed out that the \$20,000 that is left will probably come into play when we demolish the building or get rid of the rest of the lead.

Mr. Burley asked if the new facility will be open to the citizens of Edina. Mr. Keprios indicated that has not yet been decided and Mr. Burley asked then why are we doing this. Mr. Keprios replied that the police in this area need a place to train and all of the cities in the area are willing to pay for a facility. The main reason they chose Edina is so they don't have to send their officers to distant places for their training. In addition, the county and state informed us we had to put in some type of ventilation system in place at the existing building just to remain open due to potential lead dust. Therefore, the timing worked out well.

Mr. Burley asked who will determine whether or not the citizens will be able to use the facility. Mr. Keprios replied it will be the City Council and the topic will likely come before the Park Board down the road. Mr. Montgomery asked where is there another range open to the public. Mr. Keprios replied that the closest one he knows of is in Robbinsdale and there is also one at Mystic Lake Casino.

Mr. Keprios indicated that on the list he handed out there is an asterisk next to the items he feels we are committed to still do. He noted that at Heights Park we are going to try to put the basketball court in ourselves in the Spring. Mr. Keprios commented that there are some other improvements that are not listed which are going to eventually get done.

Mr. Herring asked what is the biggest item that we promised that we didn't deliver and Mr. Keprios responded that it is the shelter buildings and comfort stations. However, there will be other items that we will hear about such as irrigation and fencing. Other than that all of the other major items have been taken care of.

## V. OTHER

A. Strong Beer Recommendation to the City Council - Mr. Keprios explained that the City Council has looked at the Park Board's recommendation to allow the various facilities to allow consumption of but not sale of strong beer. He indicated that it has now turned into a much larger issue. He noted that the City Council has directed staff to investigate the risks vs. rewards of selling alcohol on the golf course and allowing consumption of strong beer at various park sites.

Mr. Montgomery asked how do they rationalize selling strong beer at restaurants but we cannot have it at our own facilities. Mr. Keprios explained that to consume strong beer at the sites were we currently sell 3.2 is not a big change in the ordinance. However, for us

to sell strong beer or wine would require us to have a wine license which then we would need a liquor manager.

Mr. Montgomery asked why can't we at least get the strong beer in for the catered functions at these various facilities. Mr. Keprios commented that the City Council is reviewing the matter. They want to review it as a package and not piece meal it.

B. Sponsorships and Donations Policy Revision (advertising on scoreboards) - Mr. Keprios indicated that the City Council did pass the Park Board's recommendation on the sponsorships and donations policy revision. He explained that the procedure we are going to use for now (on a two year trial basis) is anything \$5,000 or greater or any advertising that shows up where it has otherwise never shown up will require prior City Council approval. Otherwise, it is in the hands of the City Manager to decide what's appropriate and what's not. He noted that the City Council was very supportive and doesn't feel there is any issue regarding the scoreboards.

Ms. Bennett asked who will be sponsoring the baseball scoreboards and Mr. Keprios replied that he has not heard what baseball is securing for the scoreboards. Mr. MacHolda indicated that he thought baseball was looking at the beverage companies, Holiday, Davanni's and Edina Reality. There are four fields that need scoreboards so they can have multiple sponsors. Mr. Keprios commented that they are going to review these on a case by case basis where it applies. He also pointed out that everything will go through the Park Board first and then it will be passed on to the City Council.

Mr. Jenkins asked if the Baseball Association will receive all of the funds through advertising at places such as Courtney Fields. Mr. Keprios explained that if there is any advertising to be done at Courtney Fields it will be to fund a specific project like an amenity such as in this case to fund a scoreboard. He noted that the Baseball Association will not receive any money, it becomes property of the City of Edina to improve the city facilities.

C. Aquatennial Swim Meet - Mr. Keprios indicated that the Park Board's recommendation went before the City Council. He noted that the President of the Edina Swim Club, John Witzel, was present and spoke to the City Council. Essentially what happened is the City Council asked that the City Manager to work this out. The Council stated that staff should be in charge of scheduling facilities. Mr. Montgomery asked if the Edina Swim Club will be using the Edina Aquatic Center for their 1998 Aquatennial Swim Meet. Mr. Keprios noted that there has been no decision made yet. Mr. Herring commented that the recommendation of the Park Board has not changed.

Mr. Burley asked if he understood correctly that the Edina Swim Club may have their swim meet in Edina next year and Mr. Keprios replied that it is a possibility. Mr. Burley commented that the Park Board made a very difficult decision on this issue and the Park Board tries to buffer the City Council on a lot of these issues when maybe we should just

send these people to the City Council in the first place. Mr. Montgomery indicated that the Park Board would be very disappointed if the swim meet were held in Edina in July.

Ms. Kohler indicated that she feels it would be valuable if the Park Board published their practices and procedures as far as how citizen groups may address the Park Board and under what circumstances. She noted that hearing from small groups does not represent the 39,000 other people.

D. Edina Senior Center - Mr. Keprios explained to the Park Board where they are at with the senior center. He noted that he has just met with the architect and handed out information stating the differences between the plans at the Community Center and the YMCA. Mr. Keprios explained that at the Community Center they would be able to add parking spaces.

Mr. Keprios stated that the YMCA deal is still on the table. Mr. Herring asked if there are any other options and Mr. Keprios replied there are numerous options. For example, we could have a referendum and build a free standing building, we could take over Grace Church, etc. Mr. Herring asked if any other options have been pursued and Mr. Keprios noted that the YMCA and Edina Community Center are the only two options he has been directed to research.. Mr. Keprios pointed out that the Community Center site is similar to the YMCA in that they would pick up the maintenance and utilities whereas with a free standing building we are on our own for maintenance and utilities. Mr. Keprios indicated that the school would also be able to use this area just like the YMCA which might be a trade-off to help cover the operating costs. Mr. Herring asked if the seniors have had any input on the Community Center option. Mr. Keprios stated not yet but he will be meeting with them at the end of the month to bring them up to speed and ask for their input.

Mr. Fee asked who is the force behind this plan and it was noted it is the City Council. Mr. Herring asked if this community center location is the preferred location from the position of staff. Mr. Keprios replied that they are not that far into the study yet but looking ahead he feels the answer would be yes.

E. Edina Garden Council - It was noted that Barbara Johnson from the Edina Garden Council was in attendance. Ms. Johnson indicated that she has been an Edina resident for 44 years. Ms. Johnson commented that the Garden Club does not currently have a representative to attend the Park Board meetings to see what might affect them so that is why she is attending the meeting. Mr. Keprios commented that the Edina Garden Council has donated money to build the Arneson Acres gazebo and they are now looking into funding a fountain for the center of the formal gardens.

F. About Town - Mr. Fee complemented Mr. Keprios and the Park Department regarding the hard work involved in implementing the Park Referenda. He noted that he feels Mr. Keprios has done a great job and he knows it's been a lot of work from the very beginning through the whole process. Mr. Keprios indicated that he has a great staff who have all been fortunate to have a supportive City Manager, Park Board and City Council.

G. Putt-Putt Golf Course - Mr. Keprios indicated that next spring or summer the Park Board will play at the putt-putt golf course when all 18 holes have been completed.

H. Van Valkenburg Park - Mr. Keprios noted that Van Valkenburg Park was vandalized twice in the last week. He indicated that they are having security put in as well as the police officers will be patrolling it more heavily.

I. Van Valkenburg Park/Braemar Football Fields - Mr. Jenkins asked if football will be played again at Braemar once the fields are back in. Mr. Keprios replied not for awhile because the turf is just too vulnerable for the first year or two. Mr. Jenkins asked if they envision going back to Braemar after that time period and it was noted that they would like to try an every other year approach with football. He pointed out that it does shorten the adult fall softball program but he feels that is the right way to go.

**VI. ADJOURNMENT**

Bill Jenkins MOVED TO ADJOURN THE PARK MEETING AT 8:45 P.M. Jean Rydell SECONDED THE MOTION. MEETING ADJOURNED.