

EDINA PARK BOARD
7:30 pm
March 10, 1998

MEMBERS PRESENT: Becky Bennett, Dave Crowther, John Dovolis, David Fredlund, Beth Hall, Andrew Herring, Bill Jenkins, Jean Rydell, Tom White

MEMBERS ABSENT: Andrew Montgomery, Phyllis Kohler

STAFF PRESENT: John Keprios, Ed MacHolda, Janet Canton

OTHERS PRESENT: Marlys Swetman, Shirley Petersen, Marjorie Ruedy, Pete Anderson

I. WELCOME NEW PARK BOARD MEMBERS

Mr. Crowther welcomed the two new Park Board members, Dave Fredlund and Tom White.

II. APPROVAL OF THE DECEMBER 9, 1997 PARK BOARD MINUTES

Jean Rydell MOVED TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 9, 1997 PARK BOARD MINUTES. Andy Herring SECONDED THE MOTION. MINUTES APPROVED.

III. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Mr. Crowther asked the Park Board their thoughts on having the election of officers even though the current chairman is missing and secondly discussing term limits for Park Board members. Mr. Crowther indicated that his concern on this issue is that we no longer have a set term and there should be a set time when we have the election and as long as there is a quorum present he feels the election should be held.

Mr. Dovolis replied that he is a big believer that there should be term limits for both officers and board members. He noted that he feels this is a great way to get fresh, new ideas from new people who want to volunteer.

Mr. Herring stated that the only problem he sees is for the members who are new to the system and he thought that was the reason why the election was originally moved from January to February. He also pointed out that the other

problem is there was not a meeting last month and the Mayor was also late in appointing members. Mr. Crowther responded that relative to the issue of the new members he understands that point yet he wonders would the new members learn anything following this meeting that would impact them. Mr. Herring commented that it really doesn't matter to him, however, he does like the idea of moving the chairman around every two years and he is ready for a change.

It was the consensus to go forward with the election of officers.

Mr. Keprios asked for nominations for chair to serve a one year term which expires February 1, 1999.

Mr. Herring nominated Dave Crowther for Chair.

Mr. Dovolis MOVED THAT THE NOMINATIONS BE CLOSED. Mr. Herring SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. Keprios asked for nominations for vice-chair.

Mr. Crowther nominated Andy Herring for vice-chair.

Bill Jenkins MOVED THAT NOMINATIONS BE CLOSED. Beth Hall SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. Keprios asked if the board wanted to discuss the term limits at next month's meeting. Mr. Jenkins asked if the term limits are for members or officers in which Mr. Crowther replied he would like to see term limits for both. He indicated that he would like to see it on next month's agenda so everyone can have a chance to think about it before then. Mr. Herring brought up the point that these are appointed positions by the Mayor and therefore that decision is up to the Mayor. Mr. Crowther stated that the Park Board could suggest to the Mayor that people not serve more than a certain number of years as a Park Board member.

Ms. Hall indicated that being a park board member is not a position that you really get into right away, it takes awhile. Mr. Jenkins added that he is not a real fan of term limits. He feels if people are not contributing they should get off of the board but the people who are interested in serving have a lot of background to issues that you normally would not know unless you have been doing it a long time. Mr. Jenkins stated that he would be more in favor of having a term limit on only the chair and vice-chair.

It was noted this issue will be put on the agenda for the April Park Board meeting.

Mr. Crowther indicated that on behalf of the Park Board he would like to express thanks to Mr. Montgomery for the job he did as Chair and especially thanks to Jim Fee, who has retired, for the many terms he served. Mr. Keprios commented that Jim Fee will definitely be recognized at the Board and Commissions meeting.

IV. ARNESON ACRES PARK FOUNTAIN

Mr. Keprios indicated there are three guests present from the Edina Garden Council, Marlys Swetman, Shirley Petersen, and Marjorie Ruedy. He explained that the Edina Garden Council has been gracious enough to donate a lot of money to build the beautiful gazebo at Arneson Acres as well as numerous other improvements throughout the community. Mr. Keprios stated that we are forever in debt to the Garden Council. Mr. Keprios pointed out that now the Edina Garden Council is offering another donation. They would like to donate \$25,000 towards the purchase of a fountain at Arneson Acres Park. Mr. Keprios then noted on a map of Arneson Acres where the fountain is proposed to be placed as well as handed out a picture of what the fountain will look like.

Mr. Keprios explained that the low bid came in from Northern Water Gardens and commented that everyone felt it also was the best design. Mr. Keprios pointed out that Northern Water Gardens is also the same company who put in the water falls at the Centennial Lakes putting course as well as some redesign work at Edinborough Park. He stated that the total price tag for the fountain is \$25,000 and the Garden Council will pay for all of it. However, because it's a large donation it does need to go through the process of having a recommendation go to the City Council.

Mr. Crowther asked Mr. Keprios how this plan fits into what we had previously hoped to do. Mr. Keprios explained that essentially it was designed to have a waterfall that trickled down through a meandering brook with real stone and rock which would end up in a pond that would also serve water plant life, such as, water lilies. Then there were scheduled to be natural paths going around it with park benches. However, there were neighbors who were opposed to this project and the Park Board spent a lot time discussing the issue with the neighborhood. Therefore, it was felt that it would be in everyone's best interest to not do that plan. Ms. Rydell asked if the neighbors object to this current plan. Mr. Keprios replied no and that he will be meeting with one of the neighbors because he has a few ideas for him. He noted that this plan does not provide a health or safety risk as was feared with the previous plan.

Ms. Hall asked if the fountain will be on a timer and have lights in which Mr. Keprios responded there will be no lights and the fountain will run 24 hours a day because that is the best way to keep it operational.

John Dovolis MOVED TO ACCEPT THIS WONDERFUL GIFT FROM THE EDINA GARDEN COUNCIL AND THAT THEY SHOULD BE COMMENDED FOR ALL OF THE WONDERFUL THINGS THEY DO THROUGHOUT THE YEAR FOR THE CITY, WE THANK YOU ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD FOR THE GOOD THINGS THAT YOU HAVE DONE. Andy Herring SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

V. JENNY SCHMIDGALL DAY PROCLAMATION

Mr. Keprios noted that everyone has received a copy of the proclamation and he would like to have the Park Board's blessing on Jenny Schmidgall Day. He noted that she will be attending the City Council on March 16th to receive this honor. He noted that they are putting together a nice plaque with a green key and a picture of the Olympic Women's Hockey team on it. It will be her day and it will be presented to her at 7:00 p.m. at the top of the agenda at the City Council meeting.

John Dovolis MOVED TO ACCEPT THE JENNY SCHMIDGALL DAY PROCLAMATION. Tom White SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

VI. NAMING THE NEW BRAEMAR ARENA COMMONS AREA

Mr. Keprios gave a brief history of naming buildings, facilities, rooms, and parks after people who have contributed a lot to this town. He stated that he hopes we never run out of facilities or buildings because there are a lot of terrific people who deserve this honor.

Mr. Keprios explained that Mr. Rosland asked him to bring this topic to the Park Board. He noted that they would like to see the new commons area at Braemar Arena be named the Dahlen's Commons Area. Mr. Keprios stated that Jerry Dahlen served as Edina's Finance Director for many years and was instrumental in financing our way through the construction years. He pointed out that Mr. Dahlen is a strong supporter of the hockey program and rarely misses a Varsity or Jr. Varsity hockey game. Mr. Keprios commented that this will ultimately be the City Council's call, however, they do look to the Park Board for advice.

Ms. Bennett asked how would they designate this area. Mr. Keprios responded that he thinks it would be similar to the Warren C. Hyde Clubhouse at the Braemar Golf Course, it would probably have a very nice plaque placed in the designated area.

Mr. Dovolis, out of curiosity, asked what happens when we run out of things to honor people with. Mr. Keprios replied that the nice thing about naming buildings

after people is that buildings have a life expectancy and eventually need to be replaced which would be an appropriate time to be renamed. However, naming parks after people is more difficult to change.

Mr. Crowther stated that he feels as a board it might be hard to make this recommendation because no one here really knows anything about this person. Ms. Bennett indicated that she is not from this area and asked her husband for some background information on Mr. Dahlen. She indicated that he instantly related him with hockey and felt he was deserving of this because of his long standing and love of the sport.

Mr. Crowther commented that with this kind of issue he tends to go with what the staff's recommendation is because he does not really have any background with Mr. Dahlen.

Mr. Herring indicated that it is not like we are going through a list and saying who else deserves to have this honor. He stated that he is sure he is probably a wonderful person but he doesn't know him and indicated that there are other wonderful people too.

Ms. Bennett pointed out that she has a problem spending a lot of time hashing this out to come up with a recommendation which will not influence the City Council a whole lot. Mr. Keprios agreed that these types of things are more political in nature than setting policy. However, on policy and purchasing issues the City Council listens very carefully to what the Park Board has to say.

John Dovolis MOVED THAT WE APPROVE THE STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION TO NAME THE BRAEMAR ARENA COMMONS AREA THE JERRY DAHLEN'S COMMONS. Beth Hall SECONDED THE MOTION.

IN FAVOR - John Dovolis, Beth Hall, David Fredlund, Dave Crowther

OPPOSED - Becky Bennett, Andy Herring

ABSTAIN - Jean Rydell, Bill Jenkins, Tom White

VII. PARK SHELTER BUILDINGS AND COMFORT STATIONS PROJECT UPDATE

Mr. Keprios indicated that the bids for the park shelter buildings and comfort stations have been accepted and a couple of sites have already broken ground for construction to begin. Mr. Keprios stated that this is the last of the referendum projects. He explained what the comfort stations and park shelter buildings will look like and added that the projects will be completed in August.

Mr. Keprios stated that they just received an excellent offer from Paragon Cable. They have offered to give the city \$100,000 to be part of an expansion to the Garden Park comfort station. He noted they will be adding on some storage where they will keep some of their cable equipment. It will not be fancy and the restroom portion of the building will look very similar to the existing design except it will have an extra storage area for their equipment until the end of their franchise. Mr. Keprios explained that they will give us \$100,000 plus they will pay for all of the additional design fees and construction fees, which essentially more than pays for that comfort station. He commented that we needed this because we have had so many cost overruns and we are continuing to have them. It was asked if the city approached Paragon Cable or did they appear out of the blue with this deal. Mr. Keprios responded they came out of the blue and it needed to happen very quickly so the agreement in concept went straight to the City Council and they approved the agreement in concept. Mr. Keprios indicated that the same contractor also received the bid to do the renovation at the Lewis Park shelter building. There will now be an access to the bathrooms from the outside plus there will be new ceramic tile added to the restrooms.

Mr. Herring asked Mr. Keprios if he could expand a little bit on the over run, as well as, where we are on the dollars spent. Mr. Keprios replied that hind sight is always perfect and if he had to do it over again, he would have hired architects up front before going to the public to ask for money. We should have had cost estimates done and then gone out and interacted with the community so we would have had a better idea up front what everything would cost and ask the community if they would be willing to support it. However, we did not spend any money to design anything. Mr. Keprios stated that he had no idea what everything would cost and that is the main reason for the unanticipated cost overruns. He noted that in addition to guessing what the costs would be they hit the construction market at it's worst in the last 50 years.

Mr. Herring asked if the costs would have been that accurate if you did a cost analysis before the bond even with the boom in the construction business. Mr. Keprios responded absolutely. He noted that with just the pool and the arena we are a million dollars over what we expected, which then had to come from the other park projects. Mr. Herring asked if the bids ended up coming in a million dollars more and Mr. Keprios replied it was the bids as well as a combination of design and other things that could not be foreseen.

Mr. Dovolis indicated that the shelter buildings had to be completely redesigned and re-bid. Mr. Keprios stated that the shelter buildings and comfort stations are not exactly what was originally planned. He noted that the buildings have been scaled down. Mr. Keprios pointed out that the architect didn't do the best job keeping the mechanical and electrical together and noted that Mr. Dovolis was a big help with the redesign and was able to save us a lot money.

Mr. Herring questioned if there will be a final report once everything is done in which Mr. Keprios responded yes. Mr. Keprios stated that he has already been requested to go back on the speaking circuit. He noted that he has been taking pictures and will put together another slide show that will give everyone an excellent visual understanding of everything that has been done.

Mr. Herring asked if there is a capital budget for 1998 and Mr. Keprios responded there is no capital plan for 1998, although, no one has a capital plan. He indicated they are currently trying to establish a capital plan for 1999 as well as develop a five year comprehensive plan. He noted there is a committee of department heads currently piecing this together.

VIII. BRAEMAR GOLF COURSE WINTER RECREATION USE

Mr. Keprios indicated that Andrew Montgomery requested that this topic be discussed again, so he put together a video so everyone could start thinking about this idea for the future. He explained that Braemar Golf Course is a beautiful facility that does not get taken full advantage of during the winter months. Mr. Keprios stated that over the years they have talked about putting in a tube sliding hill there and noted that it would be a wonderful addition to Braemar. Mr. Keprios then showed a video of tube sliding hills that are in Eagan and Eden Prairie. He indicated that Braemar has a couple of different hills that would work well for this.

Mr. Crowther asked Mr. Keprios if he has looked into what it would cost to operate these activities. Mr. Keprios replied that, if the Park Board is serious about looking into this, he will have more details available at the next meeting. Mr. Crowther commented that he doesn't think this is something that we need to rush into but if we start planning now we will be able to properly advertise it. Mr. Keprios pointed out that it may not be in the budget for 1999 but it could possibly be a great way to kick off the year 2000.

IX. OTHER

A. Centennial Lakes Putting Course - Mr. Keprios handed out a copy of the "Minnesota Golfer" magazine to the Park Board members and noted that there is a wonderful well written article in it about the Centennial Lakes Putting Course. He indicated that at the June Park Board meeting they will play the course. At 6:30 there will be a dinner and at 7:00 we will play the 18 hole course and if anything needs to be discussed we will have a meeting after golfing.

B. Senior Center - Ms. Rydell asked what is the status of the Senior Center. Mr. Keprios noted that in January they had a work session with the City Council and gave a presentation on community centers. He stated that Mr. MacHolda gave a wonderful presentation on the need for gymnasiums in Edina. He noted that during one of the discussions the senior center topic came up and the only

comment he heard was they still need a little more information. Therefore, Gordon Hughes will be contacting the City Council asking them what more information do they need so we can keep the senior center in motion.

Mr. Herring asked what is the story on the gymnasium space. Mr. MacHolda explained that his job was to research the gymnasiums that are currently in Edina, the hours that are permitted and how they are being used. He indicated that he looked at the number of participants and the different seasons and came to the conclusion that they are short a minimum of four gymnasiums and ideally six to eight would greatly enhance the program. Mr. MacHolda pointed out that there are some ways in which he could try to do the schedules differently to better utilize the current space so they would not have to go to the tax payer and look for another referendum. However, some groups are already playing on the weekends. Mr. Herring commented that he is aware there are problems of not having enough gymnasium space. His 13 year-old is playing games at 9:00 p.m. and his 10 year-old is playing games at 8:00 p.m., which is late. However, he did receive a nice letter from the EBA stating they are doing the best they can but there will be some late games scheduled. Mr. MacHolda pointed out there are over 1,100 boys in grades 1 through 8 playing basketball and when he started in 1985 there were 340. In addition, there is now girls traveling basketball which has greatly expanded and they play the same season as the boys, as well as, Jr. Olympic volleyball. Mr. MacHolda noted that he has weaned back on the adult programs and no longer offers adult basketball on Monday or Tuesday evenings. He stated that this program may even need to be eliminated in order to accommodate the youth programs.

Mr. Herring asked if by four gyms does he mean four full size gyms in which Mr. MacHolda responded yes, four full size gyms. More elementary size gymnasiums does not really help.

Mr. MacHolda indicated that a lot of things have been circulated in which one thought is to have a gymnasium added to the south end of the community center. He then commented that so many different ideas have been brought up. Mr. MacHolda then noted that a question he has heard is if it's WMEP, we again will be third or fourth in line to get into that space and that again creates a problem.

Mr. Herring asked how much would it cost to build these gyms and Mr. MacHolda replied that part of the study has not been done yet. At this point, they have assessed the hours that are actually available, the hours that are currently being used as well as how long they are being used and a list of all of the programs. Mr. Crowther asked for that information to be included in next months Park Board packet. Mr. Keprios indicated that at this point we are waiting for the City Council to give us some direction on what they would like done next.

C. Water Fountains - Ms. Bennett asked if the water fountains are going to be up and running at some of the parks this year because she heard some of them were in disrepair last year. Mr. Keprios answered that part of the bond issue plan was to replace all of the drinking fountains with handicap accessible drinking fountains, however, we fell short. Therefore, we are still going to try to do some of those types of things as well as some irrigation through the operating budget and, if necessary, the Developer's Fund. Mr. Keprios then noted as soon as the warm weather is here they will try to get the drinking fountains running the best they can.

D. Advertising - Ms. Bennett asked what is the status with advertising regarding the baseball scoreboards. Mr. Keprios replied that the Baseball Association brought this issue before the City Council in which the City Council eliminated their existing policy. Therefore, at this time there is no policy and we are on a two year trial basis in which every new form of advertising needs to be brought before the City Council for their prior approval.

Mr. Keprios indicated that the Baseball Board wants to have advertising on some of the scoreboards at Braemar in which one is a large board that is 36 feet long. He stated that right now they are looking at all of the things that would have to fall into place to make that happen. He noted that the city attorney is working on it to see if maybe there is another way of doing it without having to change the ordinance. Mr. Keprios commented that at this point they are not prepared to bring this before the Park Board because they are not sure what direction they are going to take. Mr. Keprios stated that the Baseball Association is pretty sure they have vendors who will supply the money to buy the scoreboards in exchange for advertising. He pointed out that right now the city ordinance does not allow any outdoor advertising.

X. ORIENTATION POWER POINT PRESENTATION

Mr. Keprios stated that mainly for the benefit of our new Park Board members after the Park Board meeting adjourns he will be showing a power point presentation that outlines the Edina Park and Recreation Department, its programs, facilities, staff, organizational chart, mission statement etc. Even though it is designed to orient our new members, all Park Board members are welcome to stay and view the presentation.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Jean Rydell MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:35 P.M. John Dovolis SECONDED THE MOTION. MEETING ADJOURNED.