

EDINA PARK BOARD  
7:30 P.M.  
MANAGER'S CONFERENCE ROOM  
SEPTEMBER 8, 1998

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MEMBERS PRESENT: John Dovolis, Bill Jenkins, Dave Fredlund, Beth Hall, Andrew Montgomery, Dave Crowther, Andy Herring, Phyllis Kohler

MEMBERS ABSENT: Becky Bennett, Tom White, Jean Rydell

STAFF PRESENT: Ed MacHolda, Janet Canton, Larry Thayer, Tom Shirley, Diana Hedges, John Valliere

OTHERS PRESENT: Marlys Swetman, Marjorie Ruedy

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**I. APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 9, 1998 PARK BOARD MINUTES**

Dave Fredlund MOVED TO APPROVE THE JUNE 9, 1998 PARK BOARD MINUTES. Andrew Montgomery SECONDED THE MOTION. MINUTES APPROVED.

**II. FEES AND CHARGES**

Mr. Crowther indicated that he would like the Park Board to discuss any questions or concerns they may have on the proposed fees and charges. He stated that at the October Park Board meeting they will need to make a formal recommendation of approval.

Mr. Crowther asked Mr. Valliere if he had any comments regarding the golf course fees for 1999. Mr. Valliere replied that the golf course is staying about even. He noted there are a couple of projects that they would like to get done, one being the rest station on the number 6 tee. Mr. Valliere indicated that he also feels they are where they should be in terms of the cost of golf. They are slightly ahead of the cost of public golf in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area but the privately owned public courses are considerably higher. Mr. Valliere did point out that the new course in Chaska will always be higher than Braemar because they have new debt. He noted that he feels Braemar golf course continues to enjoy the reputation of quality golf at an affordable price.

Mr. Crowther asked Mr. Valliere if the Minneapolis public golf courses are increasing their fees this year in which he replied that he did call around to area courses and does have a comparative study of 1998 in which Braemar is slightly above average. The Minneapolis public golf courses are currently at \$21.00 and will probably go to \$22.00.

Mr. Herring asked Mr. Valliere if he understands correctly in that when you do the operating budget you are also budgeting for what he would consider a capital expense, a bathroom station and two restrooms. Mr. Valliere explained that they are planning to do \$254,000.00 worth of capital budget this year and of that \$100,000 is rolling stock for our maintenance area, \$33,000 is for golf cars and \$80,000 is for the rest station.

Mr. Valliere pointed out that on the 1999 fees and charges the pull carts should be \$2.50 and not \$2.25. It was noted that would be corrected.

Mr. Montgomery asked about the disability single rider golf car. Mr. Valliere explained that awhile back a gentleman came before the Park Board with an impassioned plea about the fact that there should be some provision made for him because he could not get someone to ride on a golf car with him. At that meeting it was voted on and passed that it would cost 50% of the regular fee for a golf car if a person with a physical disability needed a golf car. However, what is now happening is there are an enormous amount of golf cars with only one rider and quite a few people who are in need of a golf cars, especially on hot days. Mr. Valliere pointed out that he feels if they adjust the rate to slightly more than 50% perhaps that would encourage more people to try to find someone to ride with them. He stated that they currently have a fleet of 75 golf cars.

Mr. Dovolis commented that Mr. Valliere and his staff have done a remarkable job with the golf courses and they should be commended for that.

Mr. Crowther asked Mr. Thayer if the arena fees still fall right in the middle in which Mr. Thayer replied yes.

Mr. Crowther indicated to Mr. MacHolda that the Park Board has a few questions regarding the adult sports. First, the basketball fee has been dropped. Secondly, the broomball fee has dropped dramatically. Thirdly, there seemed to be some interesting numbers on the bandy. He asked Mr. MacHolda for some insight on how these numbers were arrived at and why.

Mr. MacHolda indicated that as far as the adult basketball program is concerned he typically will look at the expense side to determine what our fees will be. He stated that he is going to take some of Mr. Montgomery's suggestions from last year on how the leagues are organized. He noted that the officials have not gone up, there are 168 games at \$45.00 per game. Also, the MRPA registration fees have not gone up. He is also offering four state tournament berths for teams that do well in the playoffs. Trophies are also being kept the same as last year. As far as things that have been eliminated or cut back on are the number of t-shirts provided to winning teams as well as purchasing a game ball for each league. Mr. MacHolda pointed out that he feels he will get the same 24 teams again this year and if he charges \$400.00 he will break even. He stated that at this time there are no gym expenses. Mr. MacHolda also noted that the three man basketball does not show up but he was able to cut that program in half.

Mr. Jenkins asked Mr. MacHolda if his philosophy is the same for all sports as far as identifying expenses and then setting a rate. Mr. MacHolda replied yes and noted that based on the previous years like in basketball there is no more gym space available to expand the program. Mr. Jenkins noted that he wanted to make sure that all programs are treated equally and that there are not some making money while others are not. Mr. MacHolda stated that it's his understanding that is the way the adult programs are supposed to be run. He indicated that some communities will charge a percentage to offset the professionals salary but that has never been done in Edina.

Mr. MacHolda explained that the co-rec broomball numbers have dropped significantly because it has been tough on teams to find women to participate and their fee was quite a bit higher than the surrounding communities. He pointed out that he has gone from offering the program on Mondays and Wednesdays to just one day a week and that is why the fee has dropped. He explained he is trying to make it more affordable so they can increase their number of participants. Mr. MacHolda also indicated that he can eliminate indoor ice and therefore playoffs would be held outside, which would save a lot of money.

Mr. MacHolda explained that with the Bandy program a year ago the players wanted to play a 90 minute game versus a 60 minute game, which meant the ice was that much more expensive at the oval. For the "A" league they are indebted to Roseville \$1,400.00, which the players wanted him to include into the registration fee this year. Mr. MacHolda noted, however, that he does hear two different things. The "C" division participant would like to play all of their games exclusively at Lewis Park and pay about half of the fee. Mr. MacHolda explained that the ABA has asked him to raise the fee because teams that have the ability to be in the "B" division were choosing to play in the "C" division based on the price. He pointed out that at \$1,000 per team it's really tough for a manager to pass the hat and get players to pay. He stated that last year the "C" division filled immediately over night, in which two of those teams truly were in a league by themselves which was unfortunate.

Mr. Jenkins asked Mr. MacHolda how many "C" league participants he feels are price driven versus ability. Mr. MacHolda replied he would have to say about one-third of the "C" league are price driven and really could be in the "B" league. Mr. Crowther asked why is there a price difference between the "B" league and "C" league. Mr. MacHolda explained that he wanted to keep the fee the same for both leagues but he couldn't expense it. Mr. Crowther asked if the "B" league gets something different than the "C" league. Mr. MacHolda pointed out that they basically get the same, however, the ABA would like to see the teams sign-up based on ability versus price. One-Third of these games will be played at the oval at \$230.00 per hour and the remainder of the games will be played at Lewis Park. He noted that the affiliation fee which goes to ABA is the same, bandy balls will be the same, facility use fee with the city will remain the same. He explained that he charges each team \$200.00 to step on city ice which turns out to be about the same that is charged the youth participant, \$6.00 per participant. Mr.

MacHolda stated that the “A” league plays at least two-thirds of their games at the oval and that is their bigger expense. Mr. Crowther asked where does the \$2,000 go. Mr. MacHolda replied that \$1,584.00 will go to pay for ice either at the oval or the City of Edina.

Mr. Jenkins asked about the “A” league being short money last year. Mr. MacHolda explained that after the “A” league fee was advertised based on the previous year the teams decided that they wanted to play the international game, which is 45 minute halves versus 30 minute halves. The oval needed to charge them for that time and they didn’t have the money. Therefore, they talked to the Park Director at Roseville and he was willing to extend them a 12 month period to raise the money or add it to next seasons registration fee, which is what they have done.

Mr. Montgomery asked how many of the adult athletic teams are sponsored versus pass the hat. Mr. MacHolda replied that outside of softball most of the teams are pass the hat.

Mr. Herring stated that for 19 to 20 teams we are netting approximately \$4,000 for administration on this program. Mr. MacHolda replied that it’s not administrative, if anything it would help offset the flooding of the ice. Mr. Herring explained that he is particularly sensitive about this program because of the low number of Edina participants and wants to make sure we are covering all of our costs including administrative costs.

Mr. Herring asked about the playground program and Mr. MacHolda replied he believes that program is subsidized by the general fund. He noted that he thinks people would be willing to pay more for that program. He stated that it is a very nice program and Ms. Bertrand and Ms. Miller put on a phenomenal year-end jamboree this year.

Mr. Herring asked for a brief report on how the aquatic center did. Mr. MacHolda stated that they had a fabulous year from the standpoint mother nature was fabulous. He noted for the first time they broke \$500,000 gross. He stated that there are a couple of debt services that need to be paid back. One was a revenue bond from 1991 and the other was borrowed money to do the play structure and bathhouse. Therefore, it looks like we will be able to meet our operating expenses plus debt service and possibly put a little bit back into the facility.

Mr. Herring asked Mr. MacHolda to address some of the complaints about the aquatic center. Mr. MacHolda indicated that the biggest complaint he hears is residents only should be able to use the aquatic center but if non-residents are allowed the surcharge should be greater between the resident and non-resident rate. He noted that he talked to Mr. Kojetin who informed him that ever since the pool was built this has always been a complaint. Mr. MacHolda pointed out that one day this summer they did have a sellout and it was the same day there was a sellout at St. Louis park. However, the last six weeks there has been a lot of space in the pool. Mr. MacHolda also stated that he doesn’t know if they would meet or exceed expenses if non-residents were eliminated. There were at least 1,000 non-resident season tickets sold this year. Mr. MacHolda indicated that Edina

by far has the highest fee. He noted that this is also the first year that Bloomington has charged a different rate for a resident versus non-resident. He stated that St. Louis Park charges the same price for non-residents, however, non-residents cannot enter the pool until after 5:00 p.m.

Mr. Jenkins asked if a lot of patrons were lost to St. Louis Park in which Mr. MacHolda responded that in August Edina's numbers were ahead of St. Louis Parks. He also pointed out that he thinks it has a lot to do with his staff of high school and college age kids, they do a phenomenal job at the pool.

Mr. Crowther asked when the last increase was for the user fee in which it was noted approximately five years ago it went from \$5.00 to \$6.00. Mr. MacHolda stated that this is a sensitive issue, it was the elected officials who wanted it and it has become part of the budget for these people. Mr. Crowther asked if the City Council wants to see an increase in this fee in which Mr. MacHolda replied the Park Board is the first to see this recommendation for an increase.

Ms. Kohler informed the Park Board that community education has talked about setting up a system where each family would only have to register once for the various activities. A person could sign up for anything without re-registering. She stated this would be great if Park and Recreation could also become part of it. However, the trouble would be the two organizations being able to communicate together. Ms. Kohler also pointed out that this would cut down on the overhead and hidden costs.

Mr. Montgomery indicated that he would prefer to see the user fee stay at the \$6.00 because he doesn't think raising it .25 will do anything. Mr. Jenkins stated he would say keep it at \$6.00 or raise it to \$7.00. Mr. Crowther suggested this issue be the focal point of discussion at the October Park Board meeting because there will need to be a formal recommendation at that time. Mr. Crowther noted that possibly Mr. Keprios could do a little work on the user fee issue to see what the sentiment is. He agrees you either leave it the same or you raise it \$1.00 because by raising it .25 you are only going to agitate people and not get anything for it.

Mr. Herring commented that at the next Park Board meeting he would like to know what the total amount of the subsidy is for the playground program.

Mr. MacHolda stated that he will let the Park Board know at the next meeting how many participants they have paying the user fee. Mr. Dovolis asked how many other cities have a park user fee. Mr. MacHolda he does not know but will find out for the October Park Board meeting.

### **III. FACILITIES REPORT**

Mr. Crowther indicated that Mr. Keprios is currently giving a report right now to the City Council and he will put this on the agenda for the next Park Board meeting and give us an

overview of what he is presenting right now to the City Council. The facilities report was given to the Park Board members and they were asked to review in advance and be prepared to discuss it at the next Park Board meeting.

#### IV. **OTHER**

**A. Dog Leash Free Zones in the Park** - Mr. Crowther indicated that everyone received a copy of the letter that was sent to Mr. Keprios regarding the dogs in the park. He stated that he would like to open this issue up for discussion. Mr. Herring indicated that he is against it. Mr. Montgomery noted that he feels some parks, such as Walnut Ridge, are not heavily utilized and would be a great place to let a dog run without a leash. Mr. Crowther asked who cleans up after these dogs when nature calls, isn't that the main reason for having dogs on leashes at parks. Mr. Montgomery stated that Walnut Ridge is not used for organized sports on the open space area and it would be a great place to run dogs. Mr. Crowther noted that a lot of people find it offensive, including himself, when people do not pick up after their dogs.

Mr. Crowther asked Mr. MacHolda how do we attack an issue like this. Mr. MacHolda explained that Mr. Keprios currently has Pat Melvin, an intern working with the administration department at city hall, contacting other communities to see what kind of policies and programs they have regarding dogs both on and off leashes. He stated that we will go forward from there and look at it one more time in October.

**B. Wooddale Park Comfort Station** - Mr. MacHolda informed the Park Board that they will also need to discuss the Wooddale Park Comfort Station at the October Park Board meeting. A number of residents have talked to Mr. Keprios as well as himself. Therefore, they have gone back to the architectural firm and are looking at a slightly different design.

**C. Arneson Acres Fountain** - Ms. Ruedy informed the Park Board that on Monday, September 14<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. the Edina Garden Council will be having a dedication ceremony for the new fountain at Arneson Acres and everyone is welcome to attend.

#### V. **ADJOURNMENT**

John Dovolis MOVED TO AJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:20 P.M. Bill Jenkins SECONDED THE MOTION. MEETING ADJOURNED.