

EDINA PARK BOARD
7:50 P.M.
CENTENNIAL LAKES PARK
CENTRUM BUILDING
JUNE 8, 1999

MEMBERS PRESENT: Andrew Herring, Andrew Finsness, George Klus, Chuck Mooty, John Murrin, Linda Presthus, Karla Sitek, Tom White

MEMBERS ABSENT: David Fredlund, Floyd Grabiell, Bill Jenkins

STAFF PRESENT: John Keprios, Ed MacHolda, Janet Canton, Tom Shirley, Ann Kattreh

OTHERS PRESENT: Marge Ruedy

I. APPROVAL OF THE TUESDAY, MAY 11, 1999 PARK BOARD MINUTES

Chuck Mooty MOVED TO APPROVE THE MAY 11, 1999 PARK BOARD MINUTES. George Klus SECONDED THE MOTION. MINUTES APPROVED.

II. EDINBOROUGH PARK & CENTENNIAL LAKES PARK; TOM SHIRLEY & ANN KATTREH

Tom Shirley indicated that he has been with the City of Edina for 9 years and is the manager of Edinborough Park and Centennial Lakes. He then introduced Ann Kattreh, Assistant Manger of Edinborough and Centennial Lakes.

Mr. Shirley gave a slide presentation on the two parks. He then explained the history of the parks, the design of the parks as well as what both parks have to offer.

Mr. Mooty asked Mr. Shirley what are the biggest criticisms you get with regards to either location. Mr. Shirley noted that with Edinborough Park there is still some debate as to what the park should be used for. He stated that with Centennial Lakes there doesn't seem to be any major criticisms, everyone seems to be fairly happy.

Ms. Presthus asked if Centennial Lakes is rented out very often in which Mr. Shirley replied that currently it is rented out approximately 110 times a year. He noted that it's very popular for Friday and Saturday night rentals and during the week rented mostly for

business meetings. Ms. Presthus asked if they can serve food in which Mr. Shirley responded that they do have a catering kitchen and bar service.

Mr. Murrin noted that he understands that the overall revenue source is less than the expenses but yet the golf course seems to be making some money. He stated that it seems like a lot of other revenue raising opportunities could do quite well and asked why other areas are not money makers. Mr. Shirley explained that the maintenance costs are really expensive. He indicated that it's free to use Edinborough with the exception of the pool, track and ice rink and noted that it would be tough to start a fee structure for people when they walk through the door because there is not a lot do to other than walk around the park and play in the great hall. He commented he is not sure people would pay for that. Mr. Murrin asked if Centennial Lakes does a little bit better in which Mr. Shirley replied that it's does because of the golf course.

Mr. Shirley pointed out that the original intent of Edinborough was for it to be run primarily on the interest income from a trust fund as well as from association fees. Mr. Murrin commented that it sounds like the businesses from Edinborough Park benefit by having Edinborough there but they are paying a share of the expenses. Mr. Shirley indicated that the way it was set up is each unit pays \$15.00 or more a month to use Edinborough so they really do get a great deal. However, the residents fee of \$15.00 was built in so they will never be charged anymore than that. The businesses however are charged for cost of living each year.

Mr. Mooty commented to Mr. Shirley that they have done a beautiful job with the whole park. Mr. Keprios noted that he has to extend a lot of credit to Mr. Shirley and Ms. Kattreh because they do an exceptional job and he is proud of all of his staff but these two really have a big challenge year after year and they have come through remarkably.

III. APPOINTMENT TO EDINA COMMUNITY EDUCATION SERVICES BOARD

Mr. Keprios explained that the Edina Community Education Service Board is looking for a replacement for Jean Rydell, former Park Board member. He noted that this is a volunteer position similar to the Park Board and is a great communication vehicle between the boards. He pointed out that we are tightly knit and we don't do a lot of joint programming but we want to make sure that we are not stepping on each others toes and we are not duplicating services. Mr. Keprios commented that Ms. Rydell did a wonderful job reporting back and forth to each group and feels that is something that should be continued.

Mr. Herring commented that he served on the Edina Community Education Services Board for two years and was the chair his second year. He noted that the annual operating budget when he was on board was about 3.3 million and stated that a lot of the programs are based on youth. Mr. Murrin noted that he was on some of the sub-committees of this board and noted that it is the number one community education program in the state.

Mr. Klus suggested that because there are so many new Park Board members perhaps this is a position where each year everyone could take a turn unless it is something where one person should do it for many years. Mr. Herring replied that one to two years is plenty and noted anyone who wants to volunteer can contact Mr. Keprios.

IV. REVISED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Mr. Herring indicated that at the last meeting the Park Board provided input to Mr. Keprios on the comprehensive plan which has now been included in the plan. He asked the Park Board if they had any additional comments to add. Chuck Mooty MOVED TO APPROVE THE REVISED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN. John Murrin SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

V. LEWIS PARK BANDY/SOCCER FIELD

Mr. Herring indicated to the Park Board that as they can see from their packet of information that this has been a very controversial issue in the past. He noted that it has now been four years and he feels it is time to revisit the issue.

Mr. Keprios pointed out that what is different about the issue today than what it was when it was first brought to the Park Board is the Soccer Association was offering money to develop a soccer field. He noted that offer is no longer on the table but feels if we were to go to the Soccer Association and ask for money they may still be willing. Mr. Keprios explained that this time the issue is being initiated from the Park Board and not the Soccer Association therefore it has a much different twist. He stated that he can remember people at the City Council meetings with signs saying “don’t let the Soccer Association buy our park land”, which now is not part of the equation. What it comes down to is what services do you want to provide? Do you want to provide a service for bandy which started here and was the first bandy rink in the United States and continue with that tradition or do you want to take the approach that Edina has done it’s part and maybe it’s time to move it all to Roseville, which really should be its home. Mr. Keprios pointed out that from staff’s perspective he really doesn’t think our recommendation has changed from when the issue first came to us. He noted that their recommendation back then was if you want to serve the residents of this city they would be best served if we developed the facility into a viable soccer field and spent the money to do it right and ask bandy to step aside and go to Roseville.

Mr. Keprios stated that it would be disappointing to the bandy world but he thinks that what really turned the City Council the first go around wasn’t so much the bandy program as it was the criticism he got from the neighborhood of Lewis Park that came forward and said we don’t want to lose that large sheet of ice. He pointed out that at this time, however, it is a completely different City Council as well as a different group bringing the issue forward.

Mr. Herring indicated there are a few reasons why he wanted to bring this issue up again. His number one concern is the cost of maintaining that large sheet of ice. He noted that as he recalls we spend over \$100,000 a year to maintain our outdoor ice and we have one person who spends all of his time maintaining that one sheet of ice. He stated that his recollection is that you could take that one person and have him do other things than just maintain one rink. There has been a lot of effort and a lot of resources dedicated to that one facility. Mr. Herring pointed out that his recollection is the neighborhood is very concerned about parking as well as concerned that this park will become a soccer complex with lights and tournaments going on during the weekends. He noted that the large sheet of ice is very much valued by the people around Lewis Park, however he thinks there could still be a large sheet of ice there just not the size of a bandy rink.

Mr. Herring pointed out that we are running out of space for the soccer program and commented that there are now approximately 3,000 kids in the program. Mr. MacHolda indicated that is correct we are short of space and are reliant on the school district to help facilitate the program. Currently he uses five Edina School district fields and it has already been communicated to him by the athletic director that next year the school is planning to re-seed and restore some fields which means he will really have a shortage.

Mr. White asked how many fields do you envision putting on Lewis if you were to eliminate the bandy rink but still keep a fairly large sheet of ice. Mr. MacHolda replied it would be one soccer/football field, however in essence another field is actually gained because the field has lights so it is almost like gaining two fields.

Ms. Presthus indicated that the football association has indicated to her that they would be thrilled to have this made into a football field because they are also in desperate need of a field.

Mr. MacHolda added that the Baseball Association is also on board with this because what is happening is in the fall youth football is using Courtney baseball fields and Van Valkenburg Park for fields which really don't go hand in hand. Soccer and football are more compatible than what they are with baseball.

Mr. Klus asked what have the bandy people said about this issue and asked if anyone has talked to them about this. Mr. MacHolda replied that he thinks they are obviously aware that they may lose the facility because they know going into each season that there may be a change. It's a great amenity for them and it's very inexpensive. He noted that it costs \$240.00 an hour at Roseville and it costs \$60.00 an hour at Edina. Mr. White asked why do we only charge \$60.00? Mr. MacHolda responded that is a big increase from what they paid in the past and explained that the bandy players will say that we don't have a zamboni or refrigeration like Roseville as well as we don't plow in the afternoon if we get a snowfall.

Mr. Mooty asked how much hockey and free skating are utilized on the big sheet of ice. Mr. MacHolda stated that it's hard to say because with the Bandy program there are three

leagues which means 24 teams and therefore most evenings, Saturday mornings and Sunday afternoons are scheduled. Therefore, the daytime hours are free and he knows that speed skaters and residents with young children use it this time of day. Mr. MacHolda also pointed out that when the bandy program started there was no Centennial Lakes, which is a very large free skating area.

Mr. Mooty indicated that from his standpoint if the facility is not really focused on residents to a large degree and it obviously costs a significant amount to maintain it. However, his concern is not knowing exactly what other uses there are for the facility, who else are we taking it away from is it more than just bandy. He noted that he thinks Mr. Herring's idea of still providing a free skating area as well being able to utilize the field would be great but he would like to see some type of diagram or layout as to whether or not that is doable. He stated that this facility is truly recognized and known as a really nice place to go and skate and added that he is not a skater and his kids are not in hockey but that is what he has heard. Mr. Mooty commented that he would hate to see it lose the image of it being a nice place for people to go and be able to skate. He stated that he definitely agrees that we need more soccer and football fields, especially with lights and if we are able to pick something up that would be wonderful. However, how are we going to re-seed and maintain these fields is something that needs to be looked at, how will these things be funded. Therefore, he is concerned that we are going to take something away and not really have the dollars to put anything in there. Mr. Mooty noted that brings us back to soccer and football, would they be willing to provide any dollars to help subsidize the cost. Mr. Mooty explained that he is not in disagreement with where this might be going but he would like to see what we are trying to do before we just get rid of something as well as what costs are we talking about to re-seed and get the field to a functional level. He also stated that he would like to get some written agreement from the football and soccer associations as to what it is that they are willing to do to help us. Mr. Mooty also indicated that he would like to get some feedback from bandy and the Edina Hockey Association as to what that will do to them as far as taking that service away. Therefore, from his standpoint he thinks the concept is a good concept because it's different from where we were before because the community is not as involved in bandy as it used to be but he needs to have a greater comfort as to what we are trying to pull off before we pull the trigger.

Mr. Klus indicated that from his view he would like to see what the long range plan is. He noted that he understands there is a crunch right now because we are going to lose some soccer fields next year but beyond that how many soccer fields are we going to need in the future. He stated that he needs a bigger picture so that he knows that when a decision is made it will solve the problem for the next four or five years in terms of facilities for certain sports. Therefore, he doesn't feel comfortable making a decision until he has more information on the long range plan.

Mr. Murrin commented that he would be interested to take the next step and ask if a motion would be in order to support this to go out and do a study as to what it would cost as well as what budget allocation could be committed to the project from the funding

sources that are available to the city. He suggested that possibly calls could be made to see what other contributions we might be able to gather from the soccer and football associations. He stated that this would give us more of a road map and something we can work with. He then noted that once Mr. Mooty and Mr. Klus' points are dealt with and we can see the numbers and the time table and at that point if it looks workable then invite all of the interested parties to attend a meeting so they can't say they got ambushed since it is such a controversial issue.

Ms. Sitek commented that she understands that was the proposal, that if we chose to pursue this issue that notices will be sent to the Lewis Park neighborhood, bandy and all of those involved in the decision making process. She noted that she lives in that area and knows that she and the neighbors are concerned about games being played at night with the lights as well as tournaments being held on the weekends. She stated that this is a much bigger issue than a simple soccer game.

Mr. MacHolda pointed out that the original proposal stated that we would never schedule more than two fields at one time. He also noted that the reason the Soccer Association brought this forward is because the 5 and 6 years olds were playing at Weber Park on a surface that is flooded for skating and therefore you can't grow grass and they basically were playing on dirt. Secondly the on street parking was very difficult and with this age group there were 450 kids in the program. Therefore, they came to the city and offered \$40,000 to develop a field. He indicated it would not be turned into a soccer complex and there would not be any soccer tournaments held there.

Mr. Keprios informed Mr. Klus that there is a long range plan for the fields and he will share that at the next Park Board meeting. Mr. Keprios explained that as Mr. MacHolda pointed out part of the goal is to get these large ball programs off of the softball and baseball fields and one way to do that is to put them at a field where there is existing lighting.

Mr. Keprios indicated that he will ask the Engineering Department to draw up a diagram of how the area will look and literally do some square footage measurements and compare that to what we do in our other parks. He stated that he also thinks there might be enough money in the operating budget to hire an engineering architecture firm who are professionals at field and development. They could research it and tell us exactly what it is going to cost to get the job done. At that time Mr. MacHolda could make the necessary phone calls to the Soccer and Football Associations to see if those dollars are in fact available as well as anyone else who may be interested in donating some money for this. Mr. Keprios stated that they will then report back to the Park Board with their findings and at that time a motion could be made for a recommendation to the City Council.

VI. OTHER

A. Cornelia School Playground Equipment - Ms. Sitek explained that she was contacted by person from Cornelia School and they would like to know if the city would be willing to help them reinstall some of the old playground equipment that was recently torn up. A lot of this equipment can still be used by different groups. She indicated that Cornelia School was told it would cost \$4,500 to put the equipment back in and that is why they are looking for help from the City.

Mr. Keprios replied that they would be happy to supply help where it's appropriate and where we are affective such as moving gravel, etc. However, as far as actually installing equipment he doesn't think that is something that the city really wants to expose itself to.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Murrin MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:50 P.M. George Klus SECONDED THE MOTION. MEETING ADJOURNED.