

EDINA PARK BOARD
7:30 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
OCTOBER 10, 2000

MEMBERS PRESENT: Andy Finsness, Tom White, Linda Presthus, Karla Sitek, Andy Herring, George Klus

MEMBERS ABSENT: Floyd Grabiell, Scot Housh, John Murrin, Chuck Mooty, David Fredlund

STAFF PRESENT: John Keprios, Ed MacHolda, Janet Canton

OTHERS PRESENT: Mike Pagh, Bill Pearson, Tim Moodie

I. APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 13, 2000 PARK BOARD MINUTES

George Klus MOVED TO APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER 13, 2000 PARK BOARD MINUTES. Karla Sitek SECONDED THE MOTION. MINUTES APPROVED.

II. YOUTH ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION PRESENTATIONS

A. Edina Football Association - Mike Pagh

Mike Pagh, President of the Edina Football Association (EFA), indicated that there are just under 800 kids participating in the EFA. The EFA is for youths in grades 2 through 8. He explained that second and third graders play flag football and 4th through 8th graders play tackle football. There are approximately 250 kids participating in the flag football program and also noted that there are a fair number of girls who participate. The 4th through 6th grade tackle program is an in-house program and teams are divided up through the equi-draft system. The number of participants has really grown over the last few years. There are approximately 125 to 130 participants in each of these grades. Overall the numbers are very strong and they are thrilled with the participation.

Mr. Pagh explained that the 7th and 8th graders play in the Lake Minnetonka Athletic Association (LMAA). They play teams from Wayzata,, Orono, Minnetonka and Hopkins. He noted that they are also trying to align themselves with Bloomington or Eden Prairie to which those teams play with 11 players and LMAA plays with 9 players. Mr. Herring asked what are the merits of one versus the other. Mr. Pagh replied that he

thinks it's a little easier to organize and to coach 9 man football, especially at the younger grade levels. Also, 9 man stemmed from the fact that originally they didn't have as many kids playing football so in order to have enough teams and diversity of teams, 9 man football made the most sense. Mr. Pagh indicated that right now he doesn't think there would be any difficulty switching to 11 man football, especially at the 7th and 8th grade levels. Mr. Pagh indicated that the football season is about a 2 month season and goes by very quickly.

Mr. Pagh explained that they use an equi-draft system to try to balance out teams, which is unlike basketball, hockey, etc. All of the coaches go into a drafting room once they know how many teams there are going to be and each kid is draft by position. The players are graded in terms of height, weight, speed and so forth. At the end of the night the coaches put their name in a hat and they draw which team they are actually going to coach. Therefore, the team they have been drafting in all likelihood is not going to be the team they are going to coach which tends to really make the teams balanced. Also, the coach will ultimately need to make a trade in order to get their own kid on their team.

Mr. Pagh indicated that all of the teams practice together at the beginning of the season as a unit and not as an individual team. This way everyone gets a chance to learn some of the basic skills whether they end up making weight or not making weight. He noted these kids sizes do change over the years and just because they can't carry the ball one year doesn't mean they won't be able to the next.

Mr. Pagh pointed out that football is one of the few sports where kids are guaranteed participation from 2nd grade through 12th grade as long as they sign up on time and work at it. Mr. Pagh indicated that with regard to the football philosophy, it is considered a successful season if they have as many kids playing at the end of the year as what they started with. He commented that they want to teach the kids not only the fundamentals of football but also character qualities such as the value of teamwork and positive attitude whether they are winning or losing.

Mr. Pagh pointed out there are 25 members on the Edina Football Board. He noted that they do not have any big fundraisers and that they are able to fund the program through the participation fees which range from \$50.00 for flag football to \$100.00 for tackle. He indicated that they also help support the varsity program with some equipment. Mr. Pagh commented that they do not provide the football equipment for their players but they do provide them with a jersey and t-shirt and see to it that they are properly outfitted in terms of the equipment that they buy. He noted that while it's fairly expensive buying new equipment the vast majority of the equipment gets used for years and is handed down and sold at the equipment swap. Therefore, you can really outfit a kid for a reasonable amount of money. Mr. Pagh stated that they do have scholarships available for people who cannot financially afford to have their kids play.

Mr. Pagh commented that Todd Olson, Edina Varsity Football Coach, has been outstanding and noted that he runs a summer program through the Edina Football

Association for various grade levels. He noted that he has also been very helpful to the Edina Football Association relative to helping them with his assistance in various things and he really appreciates all that he has done. Mr. Pagh also commented that he appreciates the relationship they have with Park and Recreation, Ed MacHolda and Janet Canton do a great job for them as well.

Mr. Pagh pointed out that they use virtually all of the fields in Edina and noted that the Edina Football Association is certainly a supporter of the bond referendum that is being talked about. Ms. Presthus asked Mr. Pagh if there are any problems with the number of fields or the quality of fields. Mr. Pagh replied that there are some quality issues with the turf at several of the fields and commented that Lewis is especially in tough shape as well as Highlands.

B. Braemar City of Lakes Figure Skating Club - Bill Pearson

Bill Pearson, President of Braemar City of Lakes Figure Skating Club, indicated that the Braemar City of Lakes Figure Skating Club was started in 1966 - 1967 when a club from Minneapolis joined a club from Edina at the time Braemar ice arena was built.

Mr. Pearson indicated that there are currently just under 250 members in the club. He explained that the club falls under the guidelines of the United States Figure Skating Association, USFA, and Braemar is a member of that club. In the Twin Cities area there are 17 figure skating clubs including St. Cloud and Rochester. Mr. Pearson stated that of the 250 members 80 of those are what they consider competitive skaters to which they are skating 2 or 3 sessions per week. Other skaters are considered more recreational skaters and are skating once or twice a week. There is no age restriction for the skating club, however, the majority falls into the age range of 7 to 12. Mr. Pearson indicated that there are currently 18 kids who are going to the Upper Great Lakes Regional Competition in St. Louis next week. From the Upper Great Lakes they go to the Midwestern and then on to Nationals. He noted that one skater last year did go on to Nationals.

Mr. Pearson explained that as a Club they predominately use the East rink at Braemar. He indicated that they rent about 60 to 70 sessions per week and each skater is charged per session. Mr. Pearson stated that the Club operates year round because they are not a seasonal sport, however, they do take a break occasionally and are off a week in June and a week in August. He noted that they limit it to 22 skaters per session for safety reasons.

Mr. Pearson pointed out that each member needs to make arrangements with their individual coach and are billed separately for that. Mr. Pearson indicated that there are four synchronized skating teams. There are 16 skaters on the preliminary team with ages ranging from 5 to 9. There are 20 skaters on the juvenile line with ages ranging from 5 to 12. There is also a novice line with ages ranging from 12 to 14 and a senior team with ages ranging from 14 to 25. Of the 80 kids who are synchronized skaters there are two boys participating. Mr. Pearson noted that in March they operate an annual competition

which is a fundraiser that typically brings in 350 skaters from around the Midwest area to compete. He indicated that they also have a spring ice show.

Mr. Herring asked Mr. Pearson how many members are Edina residents to which Mr. Pearson replied approximately 70%.

Mr. Herring asked if there is any friction between the figure skating club and the hockey association over ice time. Mr. Pearson responded that now with three sheets of ice he hasn't noticed any friction. However, he knows everyone would prefer to have ice time between 4:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Pearson pointed out that when he compares Braemar to other arenas they travel to, Braemar is by far one of the finest arenas around. He noted that the Braemar staff take a lot of pride in taking care of the facility and they work well together.

Mr. White asked what sort of changing room facilities the club has to which Mr. Pearson replied that they use the bathrooms. Mr. White then asked if they have a separate office to which Mr. Pearson responded they have a club room where approximately 70 to 80 skaters rent out lockers from the city on an annual basis. He indicated that they also have a room that is 12 x 14 for the professionals to change their skates and that's limited. Mr. Pearson stated that when they host competitions they utilize some of the other locker rooms. He noted that he would like to see additional space for the pros and for the students. Mr. Pearson indicated that the club does the cleaning and the maintenance of the club room. He also noted that two years ago they re-painted it, put in a new ceiling and painted the lockers and everything was paid for out of the club's funds. He noted that they also put in a new rubber flooring last year.

Mr. Whited asked Mr. Pearson if they have any advertising on the boards to which he replied that currently they do not but that they are looking into it.

C. Edina Swim Club - Tim Moodie

Tim Moodie, President of the Edina Swim Club (ESC), indicated that the Edina Swim Club was established in 1957 and is one of the oldest swim clubs in the State of Minnesota. The ESC was established at the same time ground was broken for the Edina Aquatic Center. The ESC is not a learn to swim program, it is a competitive swimming program for swimmers ages 6 to 60 and older. The club offers a master swimming program for swimmers who wish to swim beyond their college years and many of the master swimmers compete in swim meets locally and nationally and some have even won their events.

Mr. Moodie indicated that the senior team is geared for swimmers ages 13 to 21 and it acts as a feeder program to the Edina girls and boys high school swimming and diving teams. The Age group team is for swimmers ages 12 and under and added that the Edina

Swim Club age group team has won the last three consecutive state swim meets which is an outstanding accomplishment.

Mr. Moodie stated that with over 200 swimmers the Edina Swim Club is the fourth largest swim team in the state. He indicated that the other top clubs have approximately 250 to 270 swimmers. Mr. Moodie explained that the club offers different ability based programs for the participants and all swimmers are encouraged to take part in local, regional and national swim meets, however, participation in swim meets is not mandatory. He indicated that placement in these ability based programs and costs for the programs vary depending on the swimmers skill level. Non-master swimmers must try-out for the team and the swimmer must be able to swim one length of a 25 yard pool on their fronts and one length on their backs. The groups practice 3 to 8 times per week focusing on technique, fitness, competition and fun. Practices take place at the Edina Aquatic Center, South View, Valley View, Edinborough Park and Blake School. Mr. Moodie explained that morning and evening sessions are available and the division between boys and girls participating is approximately 2/3 girls and 1/3 boys. The Edina Swim Club employs three full-time and three part-time professional coaches with extensive experience, education and enthusiasm. The swimming program is year-round with a brief break in late August and early September. Mr. Moodie pointed out that the club is a member of the USA swimming which is the governing body for competitive swimming in the US.

Mr. Moodie stated that the clubs goal is to provide a fun, safe, discipline learning environment for participants to achieve their goals and attain their full potential in the lifelong sport of swimming.

Mr. Herring asked if the number of participants is going up, down or staying the same. Mr. Moodie replied that their numbers are maintaining and one of the reasons they are maintaining is because of the safety issue. There can only be a certain number of swimmers in each lane of the pool at a time.

Mr. White asked other than dues where do the Edina Swim Club's funds come from. Mr. Moodie indicated that they host a couple of meets throughout the year, they have a poinsettia sale as well as a couple of car washes throughout the year.

Ms. Presthus asked if anyone ever gets cut. Mr. Moodie replied that no one can really get cut but they do have to make the team in that they are able to prove they're at a certain skill level. He then explained that there is a developmental team that operates out of Edinborough which is geared towards kids who are on the bubble. It's a little more coach intensive to help get kids into other ability groups.

Ms. Presthus asked Mr. Moodie about their facilities. Mr. Moodie indicated that the newest competitive facility that they use is 36 years old and he doesn't know if any other association has a facility that old. He stated he doesn't count Edinborough because it's really not a competitive facility, it's more of a recreational facility although they do use it

for the developmental group. He noted that he has been very vocal and outspoken in supporting a 50 meter facility which is expensive, takes up a lot of room and is a scary thing to bite off. Mr. Moodie commented that with that said, it also offers a lot of opportunity to make money back, bring things to the community as well as run programs concurrently which can't be done in a small facility. He noted that as a club they will support any kind of new facility which increases or improves what they currently have.

Ms. Presthus asked if there were a 50 meter facility do you think there would be an opportunity to rent it out. Mr. Moodie replied no question about it and noted that as a club they are meeting on Monday night with Mr. Faust to discuss the possibility of working together with him to create some opportunities in the community.

III. UPDATES:

A. Off-leash Dog Site - Mr. Keprios indicated that last month the Park Board voted in favor of going forward with the proposed off-leash dog site so long as Chief Siitari was satisfied. Mr. Keprios noted that he attended a joint meeting last week at the St. Louis Park Community Center with Chief Siitari, St. Louis Park's Chief of Police, a couple of Minneapolis police officers, a Park Board member from Minneapolis, some staff from Minneapolis and two attorneys from Minneapolis to try and work this out. He noted that the City of Minneapolis and the Minneapolis Park Board are very motivated and convinced it can work and really want it to work. Mr. Keprios indicated that St. Louis Park really wants to find a way to make this work to the point where they are willing to offer even more support enforcement wise if that's all it's going to take. He indicated that Chief Siitari is not in favor of this proposal and is not going to support it due to lack of available resources in the department to be able to handle the extra workload and because it is not a safe location in his view. Ms. Sitek noted that she doesn't understand what the extra work is to which Mr. Keprios replied he cannot answer that question. Mr. White asked if something were to happen out there right now somebody from the Edina police force is going to have to go there and maybe do something about it. Mr. Keprios indicated that it's used as an unauthorized off-leash site now.

Mr. Keprios noted that St. Louis Park is so committed to getting this to work they are to a point that they have indicated an interest in offering their enforcement to the site. He indicated that he thinks what's going to happen is the St. Louis Park City Manager is going to contact our City Manager. He also commented that he thinks it's a shame if we don't at least give this project a try.

B. Skate Park - Mr. Keprios indicated that everything is moving along and the committee, which includes, kids, adults and staff, have decided that it needs to be an indoor facility first and foremost. He stated that they have an architect who has donated his time to date and it currently looks like it will be about a \$700,000 project. Mr. Keprios noted that they have their names in a joint application grant for ¼ of a million dollars to the state for their part of the youth initiative bill. Also, they have some groups in motion to try to secure some private donations. He stated that when all is said and

done he thinks we are looking at about an \$80,000 contribution from each of the three cities to make this work.

Mr. Klus indicated that he recently talked to the Director of the YMCA and he said that Mr. Keprios has been a real leader with this project along with the gentleman from Richfield. Mr. Keprios pointed out that Mr. MacHolda has also been right there with him the whole time through this process. Mr. Keprios noted that he's very excited about this and he thinks it's going to happen.

Ms. Sitek asked if the rules about advertising apply to this facility as well to the YMCA because she thought that companies who make rollerblading equipment would probably like to help. Mr. Keprios commented that the only ordinance that the YMCA would be bound by, if it is placed on their property, is the city's sign ordinance. The signage and advertising policy is a City Council adopted policy and is not an ordinance.

C. Varsity and Jr. Varsity Locker Rooms - Braemar Arena - Mr. Keprios explained that as it turns out there isn't going to be any money donated to make the locker rooms happen. Therefore, the hockey people want desperately for it to be put on the proposed referendum. Mr. Keprios pointed out that what he has also learned is that if we have a place for the boys we have to have the exact same thing for the girls. Mr. White indicated that if we do this we need to incorporate Mr. Thayer's plan to relocate the ice-resurfacing machine room for safety purposes.

Mr. Keprios indicated that Mr. Thayer would like to see a boys and girls varsity and junior varsity locker rooms done all at the same time. He noted that there currently is an architect working on this and it looks like the cost is approximately \$800,000.

D. Activity Center - Mr. Keprios gave a presentation on the Activity Center (Senior Center). It was asked when construction will begin to which it was noted, if all goes well, construction will begin this spring. Mr. Keprios pointed out that it will be a two level facility. The upper level will be the library and the lower level the Edina Activity Center. It was noted that the Activity Center will be approximately 18,000 square feet. The current Senior Center is 7,500. Mr. Keprios then showed a current plan of the Edina Activity Center.

Mr. Keprios explained that Mr. Hughes has asked him to present this to the Park Board because there are some seniors who feel that the design could be improved upon. On the Activity Center level there is a mechanical room that consumes approximately 1,100 square feet. There are some seniors who feel that the issue should be brought before the City Council. He indicated that the seniors would like to see us try to find the extra funding necessary (approximately \$200,000) to bury that mechanical room into a sub-floor basement to capture more usable square footage on the main floor. Ms. Sitek asked what all of the rooms shown are going to be being used for? Mr. Keprios responded they will be used for a variety of programs during the day for the seniors. Ms. Sitek asked is there anything that they would like to have that they do not have to which Mr. Keprios

replied not at this time. The proposed plan currently meets their program needs, however, they are concerned about our ability to meet increased demand in the future. There is also concern about noise and vibration from the mechanical room. Mr. White commented that he thinks the consensus of the Park Board is that it is fine the way it is.

Mr. Keprios noted that what's really nice about the Activities Center is seniors can use it during the day and in the evening it can be used for other recreational programming, including Art Center classes, adult and youth recreation programs and meetings.

E. City/School Referendum Update - Mr. Keprios indicated that Ms. Presthus and Mr. Mooty have been attending the Blue Ribbon Committee meetings. He then handed out the information that Ken Dragseth handed out at the Blue Ribbon meeting which addresses the school's needs.

Mr. Keprios stated that at the last Blue Ribbon Committee meeting he handed out what he views as the City project priority list. He noted that it does not include any of the upgrades on school property such as pools, fields, gyms, etc. It just lists in order what the City owned park facility needs are. Mr. White asked how this list differs from the list they were given previously. Mr. Keprios replied very little has changed with the exception of adding more ADA access to existing playground equipment. Mr. Keprios pointed out that our approach is to fix everything that's worn and broken before we build anything new.

Mr. Keprios indicated that at the next Blue Ribbon meeting they have invited all of the athletic associations that are gym users. They really want to get a handle on the number of gym hours that we need and how many gyms that equates to. For the Blue Ribbon meeting being held on October 30th they are inviting all of the field user athletic associations to see how many fields short we are as well as what the conditions are. He indicated that everyone will have their day in court.

Mr. Keprios noted that right now the City's portion of the referendum is at 8.1 million, which is obviously a far cry larger than the original 4.5 million. He indicated that some of the items that are driving the cost up are trying to complete the master plan at the Edina Aquatic Center, build the private locker rooms at Braemar Arena, as well as, heating and dehumidification issues that the figure skating club came up with. Mr. Keprios commented that the Blue Ribbon Committee is working very hard at determining and validating the needs before determining where these facilities, specifically gyms, should be placed. Then the Blue Ribbon Committee will have to prioritize what should stay in and what should not be included in the referendum.

IV. OTHER

A. Braemar Pathway - Mr. Herring asked what happened to the Braemar path. Mr. Keprios indicated that the study has been completed and has now been submitted to Barr Engineering. As soon as we are given the green light we can start. It was noted that they

anticipate it will be completed by the end of June. Mr. Herring asked if the path will go all the way around the golf course to which Mr. Keprios responded yes.

B. First Tier Trail - Mr. Keprios indicated that the First Tier Trail went before the City Council and was approved in concept.

C. Master Plan for Aquatic Center - Mr. White commented that he has heard bits and pieces about the master plan for the Aquatic Center and asked if Mr. MacHolda could tell the Park Board a little more about it. Mr. Herring indicated that his suggestion is that in order to do this justice we really need to see the site plan. It was decided that Mr. MacHolda will talk about the Master Plan for the Aquatic Center at the next Park Board meeting.

V. **ADJOURNMENT**

George Klus MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:50 P.M. Karla Sitek SECONDED. MEETING ADJOURNED.