

EDINA PARK BOARD
7:00 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
OCTOBER 9, 2001

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tom White, Andy Finsness, Linda Presthus, Dave Fredlund,
George Klus, Karla Sitek, John Murrin, Mike Damman

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ardis Wexler, Floyd Grabiell

STAFF PRESENT: John Keprios, Ed MacHolda, Janet Canton, Susie Miller, Diana
Hedges, Ann Kattreh, John Valliere

OTHERS PRESENT: Jim Van Valkenburg

I. APPROVAL OF THE AUGUST 14, 2001 PARK BOARD MINUTES

George Klus MOVED TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 14, 2001 PARK BOARD MINUTES. Mike Damman SECONDED THE MOTION. MINUTES APPROVED.

II. RECREATIONAL FACILITIES REFERENDUM ANALYSIS – JIM VAN VALKENBURG

Jim Van Valkenburg explained that Fred Richards and himself indicated to the City Council that they would be happy to interview the “Vote No” people to find out what exactly they were upset about as well as see if they could learn anything that might be of help to them in the future. Mr. Van Valkenburg pointed out that he was on the “Vote Yes” committee as well as the “Blue Ribbon” committee.

Mr. Van Valkenburg indicated that they originally had set up five individual meetings with people from the “Vote No” group. However, three of them showed up together. He explained that quite frankly he was shocked at how little they knew about what was going on. Even though they didn’t understand the project that the Blue Ribbon Committee put together and how it worked, they were mad. Mr. Van Valkenburg stated that right there he knew they obviously didn’t do a good enough job of selling it and explaining it. He noted that one of their comments was there should have been a public hearing before the City Council which he didn’t understand because there was one where at least 500 people showed up. He wasn’t sure how many more hearings they wanted. Mr. Van Valkenburg indicated that obviously they felt there was too much recreation and not enough education. He noted that one comment was made that not every 5 year-old needs a soccer field. He indicated that they wanted to know where the need was. He stated that he explained to them that the associations try to stay away from playing on Wednesday

nights because of religion and Friday nights because that tends to be a family night. He commented that their attitude was they should be able to play on those nights and therefore new facilities do not need to be built. He noted they felt it was a small group requesting this.

Mr. Van Valkenburg pointed out that they felt the Blue Ribbon Committee should have listened more to the non-sport people. He noted that they also said there was nothing about user fees in the agreement and stated there was too much of a burden put on the schools. They also commented that they felt the city and school district were not forthright and didn't listen to the negative. In addition they didn't like the idea of the city building the facilities and the schools maintaining them, they were very concerned about the maintenance expense.

Mr. Van Valkenburg explained that another problem they had was that not all of the Edina residents were in the same school district. They felt park things should be taken care of through a city referendum and let the schools do their own since there are three different school districts within Edina.

Mr. Van Valkenburg indicated that their main issue was there was too much jock stuff and not enough stuff for education. He noted there were a lot of other comments as well, such as they didn't like the artificial turf and the dugout covers, etc.

Mr. Klus asked if any of the people they met with have any children who participate in the recreational programs to which Mr. Van Valkenburg replied that he is sure a couple of them did. Mr. White asked Mr. VanValkenburg who they met with to which it was noted: Cindy Ripple, Joni Bennett, Lane Barton, Dick Johnson and Lee McGrath. The first three all met together.

Ms. Presthus asked if they talked at all about the arts to which Mr. Van Valkenburg replied he thinks they were against that too.

Ms. Presthus asked why 9 million is the magic number for a future referendum. Mr. Van Valkenburg indicated that they asked the group how they would react to a 9 million dollar referendum, which would basically be only park things. He pointed out that Mr. Barton said no because he didn't want anything and Mr. McGrath wanted to see everything come out of private funds. The others didn't answer one way or another. Nine million dollars was just a number they suggested.

Mr. Finsness asked Mr. VanValkenburg if he felt this was a healthy thing to do with the "Vote No" people to which he responded yes, he thinks it was. Mr. White commented that if they are going to move forward with this they are going to need to try to involve the "Vote No" people. Therefore, we need to listen to their suggestions and take them into account as we move forward. Mr. White asked Mr. VanValkenburg if they had talked about how they envisioned getting some of the things done to which he replied no. They mostly discussed why they were against it. Mr. VanValkenburg commented that Mr. Johnson was interested in having the projects go ahead but not the school part of it.

He noted that he doesn't want to pay for that because he doesn't live in the Edina School District.

Mr. Klus indicated that it really sounds like what came out of this is to keep the city and school referendums separate to which Mr. Van Valkenburg replied yes. Mr. White thanked Mr. VanValkenburg for his help.

III. ADAPTIVE RECREATION PROGRAM PRESENTATION – SUSIE MILLER, ADAPTIVE RECREATION SUPERVISOR

Susie Miller, Adaptive Recreation Supervisor, explained that her main responsibility is to offer adaptive recreation programs to residents with disabilities. There are a variety of programs available such as computer classes, karaoke, basketball, music, going to the prom class, golf and teen camps, just to name a few. Ms. Miller indicated that they just started a new theatre program to which they have already raised \$10,000 to which Edina Rotary has been a large sponsor. She stated that there are 35 participants in this new program.

Ms. Miller indicated that her next main responsibility is to offer residents with disabilities a choice to participate in non-segregated programs, which is called inclusion. Inclusion is providing whatever accommodations are necessary to make sure that the program is successful to the participant with the disability as well as the other participants in the class. She explained that may include providing a sign language interpreter or it could be a one to one facilitator. She noted that it could also mean going out and presenting some disability awareness training. There are a variety of different ways to make sure everyone is included.

Ms. Miller commented that she also helps co-direct the playground program which last year had over 600 participants from ages 6 to 10. Each day the playground program does one game and one large art project in addition to special events such as the police and fire coming to the parks, chemical awareness, etc. There are 13 different playground sites where they meet twice a week from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm. Ms. Miller pointed out that last year was the first year they held the Fab 4 and 5 program, which is similar to the playground program except it's for 4 and 5 year olds. She indicated the program has been very successful.

Ms. Miller explained she is the staff liaison to the Fourth of July Parade committee. She indicated that this will be her fifth year working with the parade committee and she really enjoys it.

Ms. Miller noted that yesterday she was involved with the "Job Success Fair" to which 300 to 400 people with disabilities attend every year looking for jobs. There are different booths that help these people write their resumes, scan their resumes into the work force center internet, etc. They also try to inform employers that it doesn't cost a million dollars to hire someone with a disability. It's really an educational opportunity not only for the participants but for the employers as well.

Ms. Miller noted that she was also involved with the “First Day of School” event and is also on the committee that is planning the City Open House.

Mr. Keprios asked Ms. Miller to explain to the Park Board what the cooperative is. Ms. Miller informed the Park Board that the cooperative started in the late 1970’s where Bloomington and Richfield started offering adaptive programs for just people with disabilities. In 1991 Edina and Eden Prairie joined them. These four cities provide adaptive programs for people with disabilities ages three and older and everyone is considered a resident of all four cities.

Ms. Presthus asked Ms. Miller how she is doing with recreational facilities and if there is anything she needs that would help her program. Ms. Miller replied that they are doing fairly well. They use Edinborough a lot, especially the amphitheatre. Also, Arneson Acres and the new warming houses are facilities that work out well for them. Mr. Damman asked Ms. Miller if they use the facilities in the other cities to which Ms. Miller replied yes, that is part of the cooperative agreement.

Mr. White asked how many Edina residents participate in the adaptive recreation program to which Ms. Miller responded there are approximately 220 Edina residents on the mailing list. Mr. White asked where the mailing list comes from to which Ms. Miller responded through people registering for their programs. Ms. Miller commented that she doesn’t offer too many adult programs in Edina because there are only three group homes in Edina where in Bloomington there are a few hundred. A lot of children who grew up in Edina now live in these other communities but she does still have contact with their parents in Edina.

Mr. Murrin asked what is one of the most common disabilities they see a lot of. Ms. Miller indicated that they have a lot of kids with autism and Down’s syndrome. She explained that there are so many different ranging abilities that she needs to get to know every participant because each disability is unique.

Mr. Keprios indicated that this is such a fabulous program and one that he has been very proud of for many years. Mr. Keprios pointed out that Ms. Miller spends a lot of time doing both integrated programs and segregated programs. He stated that these four cities are under a joint powers agreement and are a fabulous model for communities who need to serve their special populations. Mr. Keprios stated that Ms. Miller does a wonderful job. He also noted that she has helped him with special projects as well, such as she put together the power point presentation for the Blue Ribbon Committee.

Mr. Keprios added that for the past 20 years Braemar Golf Course has provided one of the best adaptive golf events for the special population and he really applauds Mr. Valliere for his support and being so active with it. Mr. Valliere indicated that he would like to applaud Ms. Miller too, because she does a fabulous job.

IV. 2002 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Mr. Keprios indicated that he hopes the City Council will act on all of the 2002 recommendations at one of their December meetings. He then noted that now would be a good time to ask any questions, suggest any changes and make a recommendation.

Ms. Presthus indicated that it shows the patio garden is in the capital plan for the Art Center and noted that it was her understanding that it was going to be paid for through a fundraiser with the Garden Council. Ms. Hedges explained that there has been discussion on putting together a fundraiser with the Garden Council to raise \$20,000. The total cost of the project is estimated at \$25,000 and that is why \$5,000 is shown on the capital plan. Mr. Klus asked Ms. Hedges why they wouldn't just try to raise the whole \$25,000 because to him it seems the difference between \$20,000 and \$25,000 is not a whole lot for fundraising. She replied that they don't have a lot of time to do fundraising when they are trying to work with 7,000 students a year and run programs, etc. Mr. Keprios added that with this project they can phase things in. They don't have to spend the \$25,000 all at once. Mr. Keprios stated that with regards to the Art Center he would classify almost all the capital improvement items as maintenance items with the exception of the Epple Garden Patio.

Mr. Klus asked if there has been much fundraising at the Art Center over the years to which Ms. Hedges replied that currently the Art Academy is working on a silent auction at the Art Center. Mr. Klus asked Ms. Hedges if they typically get much from fundraising dollars for the Art Center. Ms. Hedges indicated that typically they make anywhere from \$15,000 to \$25,000 a year on fundraising. They receive money from the Rotary Foundation, the Dasburgs, the vegetable stand, the juried show and a few others. Mr. Van Valkenburg commented that Ms. Hedges spends a good part of her time raising funds for different projects and promotions. Mr. Klus asked if most of the money has gone for scholarships or capital needs. Ms. Hedges replied that most of the money for scholarships comes from the Dasburg and the Pat Van Valkenburg's Children's Scholarship Fund.

Ms. Kattreh indicated that they have made a couple of minor changes, however, the dollar amounts are the same. They had a couple of changes in priorities come up mainly because of mechanical failures. Therefore, the 4x4 truck is replacing an old truck at Centennial Lakes. Ms. Kattreh then broke down the miscellaneous equipment for Edinborough and Centennial Lakes.

Ms. Kattreh commented that another change they have is the roof at Centennial Lakes because it is leaking very, very badly right now. They are looking at a cost of approximately \$10,000. She noted that they are having a lot of problems with ice dams and have had numerous contractors come out to look at it to find a solution to the problem.

Mr. Keprios stated in the near future they are going to have to spend some time discussing the tot lot that is being proposed for 2003. It's a whole new vision for Edinborough Park, which will change the character of the park.

Mr. Fredlund indicated that he thought some of the holes were going to be reconfigured at Braemar Golf Course, however, he doesn't see anything in the budget for this. Mr. Valliere stated that it should be listed in his annual budget for 2005 for \$800,000. However, it is nebulous at this point because earth moving is a major item and as far as a dollar amount it may be less or it may be more. Mr. Keprios noted that the reason it is not listed in the budget is because the dollars are not anticipated to be available that year. Mr. Klus asked isn't the golf course capital budget funded through the golf course itself to which it was noted yes. Mr. Keprios explained that the golf course still has debt that they are paying on to which they are adding new debt with the current construction. Mr. Valliere commented that they have always taken the view that they will bite off what they can chew so as they look at the five-year window they will shoulder what they can pay for. He indicated that whenever they do undergo that project they want it to be healthy. Mr. Keprios added that he is not saying it's never going to be done, it just won't be happening in the year 2005.

Mr. Valliere pointed out that they turn over 1/5 of their golf cart fleet every year which is an annual cost of approximately \$50,000. He indicated that he wants to have a good product and with 45 holes of golf being played seven days a week they need to replace equipment every year. A lot of the numbers in the capital plan are for the replacement of old equipment.

Mr. Keprios indicated that Mr. Thayer is proposing something that has long been on the list to do, which is a fire protection system for the old west arena for approximately \$100,000. He noted it wasn't something that was required back when the arena was built in 1965. He stated that the other two arenas have sprinkler systems and that the system is really designed to protect the roof in case of a fire so we don't have a collapse. It's there for safety as well as building protection. All of the other items listed for the arena are basically maintenance items. Ms. Presthus asked wasn't the fire protection in the referendum to which Mr. Keprios responded yes it was.

Mr. Keprios indicated that the Aquatic Center was already passed by the Park Board for 2002 and noted that Mr. MacHolda is ready to go to bid the Aquatic Center projects for the 2001 – 2002 budget. Mr. Klus asked about when that project needs to get started in order for it to be done on time. Mr. MacHolda explained that they started with the architect on August 1st and his hope right now is to open bids on October 30th. Mr. Klus asked how successful this past season was to which it was noted very good. Mr. MacHolda stated that revenue wise they were real close to the previous year and income after expenses was approximately \$175,000. He noted that will be very helpful to them because they are projecting to be short approximately \$150,000 to \$200,000 on the bid opening from what has been approved. He indicated that something is going to have to be put on hold unless he gets authorization to spend the money that he has generated the

last two years. Mr. White indicated that he would rather delay the fire protection at Braemar Arena in order to do the whole job at the pool.

Mr. Keprios gave the Park Board a quick update on the 2001 dollars that have been appropriated. He noted that the pathway at Rosland Park will probably be under construction sometime next week. He indicated that the bid has been accepted and it came in approximately \$10,000 under budget. He noted that there will also be a new asphalt pad for the show mobile for the Fourth of July event as well as auxiliary paths that will go out to the tennis courts and the Art Center.

Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that the purchase order request to the City Council was just submitted to replace the siding on the Arneson Acres Park main building and noted that the amount came in under budget. He stated that they are now receiving final bids for replacing the roof at Arneson Acres.

Mr. Keprios pointed out that currently the architects are working right now on plans and specifications to renovate both soccer fields at Lewis Park. He noted that they have already started work on the field where the bandy rink existed and commented there will obviously be no bandy this year. He stated that they are also hoping to have a bid opening for all of the ADA paths for the playground equipment next month.

Ms. Presthus asked about the golf dome to which Mr. Keprios replied that in 2003 they are going to do some ADA restroom items. Ms. Presthus asked how everything is going over there to which Mr. Valliere indicated that they have been having some problems with kids climbing on the dome and cutting the top of it. However, they did catch three kids just this afternoon. Mr. Fredlund asked if this happened before to which Mr. Valliere replied yes.

Ms. Presthus asked if the golf dome is still rented out for soccer or is it used strictly for golf. Mr. Valliere replied that there is so much competition out there right now for soccer that there are more facilities better designed for soccer than the golf dome. Ms. Presthus noted that it seems everything is so overbooked, to which Mr. Valliere commented that they certainly would be open to any possibility of booking it if the demand is there.

Mr. Keprios stated that he just received a letter in the mail indicating that the soccer association is willing to put forward some money to look at a couple of things for field renovations as well as how they could raise money to turn the golf dome into a more multi-purpose facility. They indicated that they would be willing to donate Dan Rectenwald's firm's time to do the feasibility study. He noted that Mr. MacHolda and himself are going to talk about this and try to find a way that they can contribute towards the project. Ms. Presthus commented that the Edina Soccer Team spends \$50,000 a year renting space for just their soccer practices and they have to go outside of Edina to practice.

Mr. White asked what the status is with the walking path around Braemar Golf Course. Mr. Valliere explained that they had a couple of hang-ups with the easement contract,

which held them up a little bit. However, the construction of the pathway is underway right now. Mr. White asked if the path will go all the way around to which it was noted yes it will.

George Klus MOVED TO APPROVE THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR 2002 WITH THE PROPOSED CHANGES. David Fredlund SECONDED THE MOTION.

Ms. Presthus asked Mr. Klus what changes he was referring to. Mr. Klus replied he was referring to the changes Ms. Kattreh noted at Edinborough and Centennial Lakes where the dollar amount is the same but the items have changed.

George Klus MOVED TO AMEND THE MOTION TO SAY THE DOLLAR AMOUNTS ARE APPROVED BECAUSE THE ITEMS MAY CHANGE DEPENDING ON THE NEEDS.

Karla Sitek SECONDED THE AMENDMENT.

Ms. Presthus commented that she is still questioning the fire protection system at the Arena. Mr. White indicated that he thinks the fire protection is important, however, if we are going to do the pool we need to complete the whole project and not part of it. He noted he would like to see the completion of the pool somehow be incorporated into the motion. Mr. Klus stated that he would like to see that as a separate motion.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Tom White MOVED THAT THE POOL BE COMPLETED ACCORDING TO THE PLANS THAT WERE APPROVED BY THE PARK BOARD AT THE LAST PARK BOARD MEETING AND IF THE PROJECT IS \$100,000 TO \$150,000 SHORT HE WOULD LIKE THE PARK BOARD TO BE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO SEE IF THEY CAN COME UP WITH SOME ADDITIONAL DOLLARS.

Mr. Keprios indicated that before anyone seconds the motion he would like to point out that he did give a presentation to the City Council at the budget hearing and informed them that the Park Board is recommending that we do the whole project. Mr. Keprios indicated to Mr. White that an alternative motion that accomplishes the same thing would be to ask the City Council to not accept any deduct alternates. He noted that he has already informed the City Council that the Park Board is recommending the entire master plan, however, we have asked contractors to provide deduct alternates in their bids. Mr. White asked is there a time line on this to which Mr. Keprios replied yes, they are going to open bids the end of the month. Therefore, it will go to the City Council for their first meeting in November, which means they will be meeting before the next Park Board meeting.

Mr. White indicated that he would like to withdraw his motion until the City Council acts and if there is additional money needed the Park Board will discuss at that time possibly using the \$100,000 from the fire protection system at the arena.

Tom White MOVED TO ENCOURAGE THE CITY COUNCIL TO COMPLETE THE POOL AS APPROVED BY THE PARK BOARD TO COMPLETE THE WHOLE PROJECT.

Andy Finsness SECONDED THE MOTION.

Ms. Sitek commented that she would rather not take away the fire protection system at the arena to which Mr. White replied that this motion does not take away the fire protection system.

MOTION CARRIED.

V. OTHER

A. Golf Course Construction –Mr. Valliere gave a quick update on the golf course construction. He noted that they are not too far along right now but that the footings are in for the balcony on the south side. He indicated that there are a number of events that have been scheduled through the winter that should go on without a hitch. He stated that currently the date of the completion should be right around Christmas.

B. 2000 Census - Mr. Keprios indicated that he thought it would be very helpful for the Park Board to have a copy of the synopsis of the census data from the 2000 census that was taken. He indicated that there is some very interesting data about the population of Edina. He noted that he believes that the data shows that we are still a very vibrant, successful community because of the large numbers of youth.

C. Dog Park - Mr. Keprios handed out to the Park Board a copy of the final proposal from Edina and St. Louis Park to the Minneapolis Park Board regarding the dog park. He noted that the joint powers agreement with St. Louis Park is in place and they are just waiting to hear back from their attorneys and the Minneapolis Park Board. He commented that what he has heard from various people is that dog parks have been very successful.

D. NRPA Conference – Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that he just got back from the National Recreation Park Association conference in Denver. He indicated that he attended an all day institute on skate parks, which was fabulous and really reassured him that they are doing the right thing. Mr. Keprios then explained his current plan with the skate park. He noted that there is \$80,000 in the budget and will bring the proposal to the City Council for their approval in December. He stated that Bloomington and Richfield are both solid on their \$80,000 and that the YMCA has now committed to a minimum of \$30,000. Therefore, they are now \$130,000 short of accomplishing the whole project. He pointed out that they have a fundraiser campaign starting next month to help raise the

\$130,000. He noted that if they don't reach their \$130,000 goal the other two cities feel that they have other funding sources within their budgets to help make up the difference. Mr. Keprios commented that he also thinks we could contribute additional dollars if needed.

Mr. Murrin indicated that he thinks a lot of kids are going to get hurt at these skate parks. Mr. Keprios pointed out that statistics show that when kids wear the proper equipment skate parks have a less injury rate than hockey, soccer, swimming and football. Mr. Keprios added that it's no longer a trend, it is a sport that is here to stay and is reaching an age group they have been trying to reach for years.

Mr. MacHolda asked Mr. Keprios if there were any discussions about the use of BMX bikes. Mr. Keprios replied that was an issue that was discussed at length at the conference as to whether or not bikes should be allowed. He noted that there is a difference between BMX bikes and trick/stunt bikes. He stated that he doesn't think we should have a BMX track here, especially since we don't have the real estate for it in that park. Mr. Keprios commented that some parks allow trick/stunt bikes at the same time while others allow them at different times and some don't allow bikes at all. He noted that the fear is not bikes running into kids, but it's the runaway skateboards that turn into little missiles. Another problem with bikes is they tend to bring in more dirt, which means a little more maintenance. There has also been a concern of trick/stunt bikes carving up the concrete and that is something that will have to be addressed by requiring protection devices on the bikes. They are talking about requiring all bikes to have padding on their pedals to be sure they don't crack up and destroy the concrete. Mr. Keprios indicated that they would like to have both and we will learn as we go through the process.

E. Park Board Sub-Committee - Mr. Keprios indicated that he would like to attend the next meeting with the Park Board sub-committee because he has a great idea to help them with the survey. It was asked who is on the sub-committee to which it was noted; Linda Presthus, Ardis Wexler, Floyd Grabiell and Tom White. Mr. Klus asked what the time frame is on the committee to which Mr. White responded they are going to be meeting between now and the next meeting. Mr. Keprios stated that he has been in touch with a professional survey consultant whom he met at the National Conference in Denver. This firm does park and recreational needs assessment surveys for cities of all sizes. Mr. Keprios commented that he still doesn't feel confident that we know what the community at large wants and is willing to support.

F. Park Board Youth Member - Ms. Presthus asked what the status is with the youth member position that is open for the Park Board. Mr. White indicated that he wrote the Mayor a letter asking if anyone has been appointed to the youth member position because the Park Board would like to see it done soon. He noted that he has not yet heard back from the Mayor. Ms. Sitek commented that she does know someone who is interested in the position who is a junior. Mr. White noted that he will follow-up with a phone call to the Mayor.

G. School Referendum – Mr. White indicated that the school has a referendum coming up and asked Mr. Murrin if there has been any active opposition to which he responded he is not aware of any. Ms. Presthus asked what they are doing because she hasn't seen much on it other than newsletters to the editor. Mr. Murrin responded that they have formed a vote yes committee and they have an endorsement going out that they are trying to get everyone to sign. He stated that they have also had a lot of meetings with the PTAs and parent groups and believes all of the candidates are supporting it. Mr. Murrin also pointed out that would like to do some leafleting and phone calling. Mr. Keprios noted that he thinks it will pass.

H. Connecting With Kids - Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that they are going strong with the School District on the "Connecting With Kids" initiative and he is very proud of what they have accomplished. He noted that they all pitched in with the "First Day of School" event. He added that this was just the start of more things to come.

I. Thank You - Mr. Keprios indicated that Fred Richards and Jim Van Valkenburg spent a full day of their own time to interview the "Vote No" people and they did a wonderful job, which was very beneficial. Therefore, he would really like to see the Park Board thank them in some way. Mr. Keprios stated that he also feels that a thank you note is in order to the "Vote No" people who took the time to be interviewed. He said that it is important to thank them for their input because it really was appreciated and valuable, plus we want to keep the lines of communication open even though we don't always agree with everything they say.

Mr. White indicated that he would be happy to write Jim VanValkenburg and Fred Richards a letter thanking them for all they have done.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

George Klus MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:40 P.M. John Murrin SECONDED THE MOTION. MEETING ADJOURNED.