

EDINA PARK BOARD
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2006
7:00 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mike Damman, Ray O’Connell, Gordon Roland, Andy Finsness,
Todd Fronck, Jeff Sorem, George Klus

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mike Weiss, Karla Sitek, Jeff Johnson, Linda Presthus

STAFF PRESENT: John Keprios, Ed MacHolda, Janet Canton

OTHERS PRESENT: Steve Rusk, Jack Keegan, Heidi Dorfmeister, Sandy Fox, Bob
Shaw, Dianne P. Latham, Jean White, Suzanne Kerwin, Helese
Woelfel, David Lundberg, Jennifer Heinzl, Nancy Hall

I. APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 14, 2006 PARK BOARD MINUTES

George Klus MOVED TO APPROVE THE NOVEMBER 14, 2006 PARK BOARD
MINUTES. Todd Fronck SECONDED THE MOTION. MINUTES APPROVED.

II. NEW BUSINESS

A. Cable Television Filming Orientation – Jennifer Bennerotte – Ms. Bennerotte informed the Park Board that recently the City Council held a weekend workshop to try and start to establish some common visions and goals as they move forward. She indicated that one of the things they achieved a consensus on was the idea of starting to shed more responsibility at the board and commission level. However, to date they have not yet formalized what that new role and responsibility will be. She stated that she was just informed that the City Council is going to have another work shop sometime in January to formalize their decision. Ms. Bennerotte commented that at that point the City Council will then meet with all of the chairs of the boards and commissions to discuss the details of their decisions. She noted that there has been some talk that the public hearings for big issues would happen at the board and commission levels instead of vice versa. She explained that right now there seems to be a perception that the City Council public hearing trumps all public hearings below it. Therefore, they are moving toward a format where the public hearings will be emphasized at the board and commission level. Ms. Bennerotte pointed out that the City Council also decided that the Park Board and Transportation Commission meetings will now be televised over cable on the Community Channel 16. She noted that the January 9th Park Board meeting will be their first televised meeting.

Ms. Bennerotte went over meeting decorum of being on television. She explained that individuals will be limited to three minutes in length to which there will be a lighting system installed that indicates to the speaker and the chair when it's appropriate to cut the speaker off. She noted that they are asking the public not to repeat remarks or points of view that have already been presented because they are trying to get out of the repetition of some of the public hearings. She stated that they discourage cheering, jeering, clapping and even non-verbal communication such as signs, buttons and t-shirts. There needs to be a fair playing field for everyone. In addition, when the Park Board is deliberating they ask that the public not interrupt and ask questions unless the chair decides to take comment. Ms. Bennerotte indicted that staff, consultants and proponents for a topic be given a limit of 20 minutes and power point presentations can be no longer than 20 slides in length. She noted that any more than that may put the Park Board in a bad position of having to cut someone off half-way through their presentation. In addition, Ms. Bennerotte noted that the City Council is also moving toward being more formal in the conversations with each for e.g., Linda Masica would be addressed as Council Member Masica. She stated that the Park Board as a group can decide how they want to address each other but it's recommended not to use first names because the at home audience may not know who is being referred to.

Ms. Bennerotte asked the Park Board that they not give speeches to the cable television audience. She explained that if people are watching at home they will be watching the meetings from month to month and they will have the background information. She stressed that once people start making speeches to the at-home audience they start to lose control of the meeting and it starts to become more about a "show" than about a meeting.

- B. 2007 Capital Improvement Plan – Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that the City Council did have a couple of comments regarding the 2007 Capital Improvement Plan. He indicated that Council Member Masica was of the opinion based on the Needs Assessment Survey, as well as hearing from neighbors, that the playground equipment at York Park really should be moved up to 2008. Mr. Keprios explained that he is looking for a recommendation for the 2007 budget because the City Council only approves budget dollars one year at a time and the rest of it is visionary because it does change each year.

Mr. Keprios stated that one change he would request in looking at the 2007 Capital Improvement Plan would be to install protective fencing at the Pamela Park Softball Complex instead of protective netting. He explained that an architect was hired to come up with some figures on what it would cost to put netting over the area as well as see if there would be any ramifications. Unfortunately, the results showed that they would have to lose some very beautiful trees and therefore, that was not the route they felt they should go. Mr. Keprios indicated that he has asked Vince Cockriel, Park Superintendent, to try to secure some other quotes to see if they could protect just the spectator area as well as develop some permanent black vinyl fencing to match the backstops. The fencing would protect those who sit in the bleachers right

behind each of the dugouts as well as it would protect them from any fly balls. However, once they are out of that domain they would be exposed to some fly balls. Mr. Keprios pointed out if they were to do that it would cost approximately \$7,000 as opposed to their first quote which was \$60,000.

Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that he was recently informed by Mr. Cockriel that there is a bridge at Bredesen Park that is in need of replacement which was something that was unforeseen. He stated that the bridge is on the west side of the park and it will cost approximately \$20,000 to replace. Therefore, he would recommend instead of spending \$60,000 on netting at Pamela Park they will only spend \$7,000 on protective fencing and spend \$20,000 to replace the bridge at Bredesen Park.

Mr. Keprios commented that in looking at the results from the Needs Assessment Survey they may want to move the field renovation project at Todd Park from 2008 to 2010. He explained that by doing that it would allow them to move the replacement of the playground equipment at York Park from 2010 to 2008. Mr. Keprios explained that they may also want to consider moving the Countryside Park ball field renovation out a year or two and then move a couple of playgrounds up. He explained that if they were to do that they would essentially be able to replace six playgrounds in a three year period which would be in sync with the results of the Needs Assessment Survey. Mr. Keprios pointed out that the key thing is that they are all in agreement with the 2007 Capital Improvement Plan and in the future perhaps staff could come back with some follow-up recommendations.

Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that for the Aquatic Center they are recommending \$30,000 in upgrades and replacements which will stay consistent with 2008. However, the Flow Rider is being moved out as late as 2011. He commented that may be moved up sooner if Mr. MacHolda feels the pool is ready for that boost.

Mr. Keprios pointed out that for the next couple of years the arena is in a repair maintenance mode and commented that in 2009 they will have to replace the Zamboni. He stated that the good news for the arena is that on January 1, 2009 the 1988 issued bonds will be paid off at the arena. Mr. Keprios noted that the bad news is that the West Arena still has the original refrigeration system from the 1960s. Therefore, they are trying to be proactive and are hoping that they can wait until 2010 to spend a million dollars to replace the refrigeration system.

Mr. Keprios explained that at Braemar Golf Course they are still paying back bonds and interest on money that was borrowed to develop the new nine, expand the clubhouse and purchase and develop the Fred Richards Golf Course. Therefore, as a result of that they are cash flow broke and are unable to spend the capital dollars they would like to at this time. He noted that some of the bigger ticket items won't start coming into play until 2010 when a cart path renovation is being proposed as well as the parking lot will need to be resurfaced. Mr. Keprios commented that the big ticket

items that are scheduled for 2011 include redesigning holes 19 through 27, renovating the driving range and replacing the first phase of the irrigation system.

Mr. Fronек stated that there will still be a \$30,000 savings in the 2007 CIP due to cost reductions planned for Pamela Park protective fencing vs. protective netting. He noted that it will cost approximately \$138,000 to renovate the ball fields at Countryside Park in 2008 to which they are discussing pushing that out. Mr. Fronек pointed out that a while back it was stated that Countryside Park is a great place for a hockey rink because there is more adequate parking compared to Todd Park. However, the orientation of Countryside Park was bad. Mr. Fronек suggested that they look at taking a portion of the Pamela Park project reduction and put it into a feasibility study to look at redesigning Countryside Park where they could have a good hockey rink with good ice. Mr. Keprios replied that is a great recommendation and perhaps they could ask for some of the balance of that money to be spent on a feasibility study to explore some options to develop a master plan for Countryside Park. Mr. Keprios added that they are still in their second year of a two-year pilot project with the hockey rink at Todd Park and they are going to need to wait to see how that plays out. Mr. Fronек asked how much it would cost to do a feasibility study to which Mr. Keprios replied approximately \$15,000. Mr. Fronек recommended adding \$15,000 for a feasibility study of Countryside Park.

Mr. Klus asked about the needs of some of the other parks, such at Bredesen Park and the restroom situation they had there. He commented that maybe staff needs to look at some of the other needs before \$15,000 is committed to looking at Countryside Park. Mr. Keprios replied that the Bredesen Comfort Station is operable and the problems they had in the past were from vandalism. Mr. Keprios explained that what he does intend to do for Bredesen Park is see if there are any dollars available as part of any reserve fund that may be realized at the end of the 2006 budget, to spend on a one-time basis only, to upgrade the pathways at Bredesen Park. He noted that it was very clear from the Needs Assessment Survey that the number one thing is to maintain the pathways at a high quality level.

Mr. Finsness asked Mr. Keprios if staff has thought about how they are going to truly implement the results from the Needs Assessment Survey into the Capital Improvement Plan. Mr. Keprios responded that he views the Needs Assessment Survey as an ongoing tool that will play heavily into the Comprehensive Plan. In addition, it will also play a part in how they are going to plan out the Capital Improvement Plan for at least the next five years.

George Klus MOVED TO APPROVE THE 2007 CAPITAL PLAN. Mr. Fronек asked if that includes both amendments discussed; \$60,000 being reduced to \$7,000 and putting the remainder of that money towards a bridge at Bredesen Park as well as do a feasibility study of Countryside Park. Mr. Klus replied that is correct.

Jeff Sorem SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

- C. Update to “Priority Use of the Edina School District’s Gymnasiums” – Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that the main difference between the Priority Use Guidelines from September 9, 2005 and the Priority Use Policy from December 12, 2006 is the incorporation and adoption of the Youth Task Force recommendation. Mr. Keprios pointed out that the most significant change is the section “Organizations Which Request Special Permits to Offer Ongoing Programs in the Gymnasiums are Required to Comply with the Following Guidelines” has now been eliminated and has been replaced by the new guidelines and youth sports values document. The core values document will replace that whole section.

Mr. Keprios stated that Mr. MacHolda made a wonderful suggestion that under Priority Three where they list the associations that are recognized and can have access to the city’s gymnasiums they need to note that hockey and lacrosse are not allowed to use the gymnasiums. He explained that they have learned from the manufacturer of the gym floor that it would be wise not to allow these two groups to use the gymnasiums because they will ruin the floors. Mr. Keprios commented that they were hoping that wouldn’t be the case, however, it was a very strong recommendation from the manufacturer. Therefore, Mr. MacHolda and he suggest that the Park Board adopt this document that hockey and lacrosse be removed from Priority Three. Mr. Keprios commented that the School District does not allow that kind of play in any of their gyms either.

Ray O’Connell MOVED TO APPROVE THAT THE PRIORITY USE OF THE EDINA SCHOOL DISTRICT’S GYMNASIUM POLICY DATED 12/12/06 WITH THE EDINA HOCKEY ASSOCIATION AND EDINA LACROSSE ASSOCIATION BE EXCLUDED UNDER PRIORITY THREE. Mike Damman SECONDED THE MOTION.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

- D. League Of Women Voter’s Study – Suzanne Kerwin, member of the League of Women Voters in Edina, asked the Park Board if they had any questions or comments on the study that was done by the League of Women Voters. Mr. Finsness noted there were some interesting comments made with regards to the City Council and it seems as though something may be happening because of it. Ms. Kerwin stated that their study was very timely and it is interesting the way the City Council is starting to look at the Boards and Commissions. Ms. Kerwin stated that the study will be presented to the City Council in January.

Mr. Keprios commented that he would like to applaud the League of Women Voters for what they did. The study was very thorough, interesting and worthwhile. Mr. Finsness noted that he agrees that it is a great document. Ms. Kerwin thanked the Park Board members who filled out the survey for their study.

- E. 2007 Park Board Meeting Schedule – George Klus MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA FOR 2007. Jeff Sorem SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. Keprios pointed that the Park Board Tour is scheduled for the June Park Board meeting and will start at 5:00 pm. He noted that he will come up with a recommendation of what parks he thinks they should visit and asked for the Park Board's input before it is finalized.

III. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Needs Assessment Survey – Mr. Finsness asked Mr. Keprios if he had any further comments on how the Needs Assessment Survey will be implemented into the planning process for the upcoming years. Mr. Keprios replied that it will be a wonderful tool as they go down the road and update their Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Finsness asked Mr. Keprios to briefly explain the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Keprios explained that the Comprehensive Plan is a 10 year vision for the City of Edina with regards to all of the issues that it faces whether it be traffic, housing, parks, etc. He indicated that they currently have a comprehensive plan that was updated approximately 8 ½ years ago. He explained that it's a very lengthy and very public process to update everything including the parks piece of it. Mr. Keprios commented that he believes the city has hired a professional firm to assist the City with the comprehensive plan process. He pointed out that the Park Board will be involved in the process and asked if one or two Park Board members could be assigned to work with Mr. MacHolda and himself to present the park and recreation findings. He noted it may entail attending a few larger comprehensive plan meetings. Mr. Keprios indicated that Mr. MacHolda and he will do the leg work as far as updating the acreage and all of the detail part, however, a lot of the changes and additions will be due to the results of the Needs Assessment Survey. He noted that he thinks they will be inviting public input so that they can be sure they are on the right track and are in sync with what the vision should be based on the data received from the Needs Assessment Survey. Mr. Keprios explained that ultimately the Comprehensive Plan will be adopted by the City Council to present to the Metropolitan Council.

Mr. Keprios pointed out that the Comprehensive Plan is not a Capital Improvement Plan but rather a vision so they know what direction to follow for the next ten years and that is why the Needs Assessment Survey is such a valuable piece of data. It will help them generate that vision and will hopefully be reflective of the majority view. Mr. Finsness asked if the Comprehensive Plan will have more specific questions or will it be more general to which Mr. Keprios replied that he thinks it will address more general issues. However, it's up to the City Council and the community to come up with what they feel the answers are to those issues.

Diane Plunkett Latham, 7013 Comanche Court, stated that she found the survey outstanding. She noted that one of the things that came to the top was the bikes and trails. She stated that the city already has a bike trail task force and feels they now

need a trails task force. In addition, she would also like to see a task force for the natural and wildlife areas where they can find pockets of habitat to restore. There could be different examples of habitat which could serve as an educational purpose as well as there could be an oak savannah, a prairie area, a woodland area, etc. Ms. Latham commented that the task force could work with the neighborhood to determine where these could go and they could be adjacent to the walking paths.

Ms. Latham indicated that she thinks it's good that the City Council is recognizing that perhaps some of the meetings are going too long as well as perhaps many of the boards and commissions meetings are going too long. However, by limiting the amount of testimony each individual can give in order to expedite business it really does not give the community very much opportunity for input. Therefore, by having these task forces they could then put together and present a consolidated report to the various boards and commissions who would then give their report to the City Council.

Robert Shaw, resident of Nine Mile Village, informed the Park Board there are two points he would like to make. The first is regarding buckthorn and the second is the idea of an environmental commission or some sort of sub-committee to advise the Park Board. Mr. Shaw stated that as far as buckthorn is concerned residents from Nine Mile Village have been working for three years to eradicate buckthorn on their property. He noted that at their expense they removed all of the buckthorn and in the process they have increased the value of their property. Mr. Shaw indicated that they live right next to Bredesen Park and that is where the buckthorn came from. He stated that he looks for the day when the city will allow volunteers to get into Bredesen Park and start removing the buckthorn. He pointed out that he realizes it's a tremendous amount of work and it would take years, however, right now that park is a disgrace. Therefore, he hopes that the city will get serious about improving Bredesen Park and that it will become part of the city's vision.

Mr. Shaw pointed out that as far as an environmental commission the Park Board would be well served to have a body of people who study the air, water, natural plants, trees, shrubs, wildflowers, etc., and make recommendations to the Park board.

Mr. Klus commented that he would like Mr. Shaw to know that he doesn't think the city at any time has discouraged residents from going into the parks and taking out buckthorn. He stated that volunteers have been doing it for several years at Garden Park as well as other parks. Ms. Latham clarified what Mr. Shaw was trying to say in that it is true that volunteers are currently working to eradicate buckthorn in three or four parks within the city. However, volunteers have not yet been permitted into Bredesen Park because it is so large it would take an overall ecology plan to do it. Ms. Latham pointed out that Bredesen Park is a big park and until Mr. Cockriel gets an overall plan in place he cannot let volunteers work in Bredesen Park. Therefore, Mr. Shaw would like to start working in Bredesen Park now but the Park and Recreation Department is not quite ready to let the volunteers help.

Mr. Klus asked Mr. Keprios if that is correct to which Mr. Keprios replied that surprises him and he doesn't know the answer to that. Mr. Keprios stated that the city did hire a consultant to evaluate the buckthorn issue in Edina. The consultant put together a prioritized list of what seemed to make the most sense financially as well as what made the most sense with the resources they have available. Mr. Keprios stated that he believes the preference was to steer the volunteers to those priority areas and that's where staff intended to spend its resources. He indicated that he is not aware of any volunteers being told they cannot go into Bredesen Park. Mr. Keprios commented that he will look into it and will discuss it with this staff. Mr. Klus commented that he thinks if people in the community want to do volunteer work in their parks then they should be allowed to do that. Therefore, it concerns him if these volunteers are being told no. Mr. Keprios pointed out it's never just volunteers when these things happen, it actually does involve staff resources and time. Mr. Klus replied that is correct, the staff needs to pick it up. However, he's sure that staff could find a time that would work with someone's schedule to pick up the buckthorn. Mr. Keprios responded that he would be happy to make accommodations for volunteers to be able to work on removing buckthorn in Bredesen Park.

Mr. O'Connell pointed out that in the Needs Assessment Survey 14% of the respondents were interested in a nature center; however, only 3% were interested in paying for it. He commented that rather than looking at building our own nature center for two million dollars maybe they could work with Woodlake which is surrounded by Bloomington and even possibly look at adding Eden Prairie.

Jennifer Heinzl, Edina High School student, informed the Park Board that this year she is organizing the buckthorn removal at Edina High School. She explained how she likes the idea of having a trail from Creek Valley Elementary to the Edina High School, especially since both schools are working on restoration projects. She indicated that the Edina High School restored their wetland area and is now working on buckthorn removal.

Mr. Keprios stated that he would like to thank all of the Park Board members and all of the public who participated in helping to make the survey as valuable as it is.

- B. Lewis Park Hockey Rink Study – Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that the Edina Hockey Association (EHA) and staff met with the consultant they hired to do a feasibility study on whether or not they should consider building an outdoor artificially refrigerated rink at Lewis Park. He noted that we learned that it would cost approximately \$800,000 to build. Mr. Keprios pointed out with the addition of two new indoor rinks at Minnesota Made Ice Arena, at first glance it really does not seem to make sense to go forward with the project. Mr. Keprios noted that EHA has is interested in donating funds to purchase a downsized Zamboni that would fit in the existing garage at Lewis Park. He indicated that the EHA and staff are currently investigating that option.

Mr. Sorem pointed out that Lewis Park is one of the most heavily used rinks by non-Edina residents and if a Zamboni is going to be at Lewis park he would like to see the rink heavily scheduled with Edina programs.

Mr. Fronck asked if there has been any discussion about adding another rink at Lewis Park that does not have refrigeration. Mr. Keprios replied they have discussed the idea of building another rink that would be smaller and would accommodate the mites. He stated that they are also considering the thought of making the rink so small that they could put an oval skating rink around the perimeter of the smaller rink. All of these ideas will require more analysis.

IV. UPDATES FROM STAFF

- A. Gymnasium Construction – Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that the gyms are now operational and so far the initial feedback has been very positive. He commented that they are working very closely with the Edina School District to be sure they don't over schedule the campus as far as parking and traffic are concerned. Mr. Keprios pointed out that it's written in the Facility Use Agreement that Doug Johnson, Community Education Director, has the authority to pre-empt the City out of the gyms if there is a conflict or if scheduled events exceed the capacity of the campus and overburden the neighborhood.

Mr. Klus asked if there have been any complaints from people that say they still can't find gym space. Mr. MacHolda replied that for Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm, they could probably use three or four more gyms. However, the idea is to maximize the facilities. Therefore, they've shifted some of the times to Friday nights and Saturday mornings as well as the 10th through 12th grade boys basketball are playing on Sunday afternoons. Mr. MacHolda stated that he hasn't heard any complaints about people finding gym space.

- B. Courtney Fields Construction Project - Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that they are getting near the end of the Courtney Construction Fields project. He noted that they have not had one change order to date and are currently within budget.

V. ADJOURNMENT

George Klus MOVED THE ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:25 PM. Jeff Sorem SECONDED THE MOTION. MEETING ADJOURNED.