

EDINA PARK BOARD

7:30 p.m.

April 8, 1997

MEMBERS PRESENT: Beth Hall, Dave Crowther, Andy Herring, Becky Bennett, Michael Burley, John Dovolis, Bill Jenkins, Phyllis Kohler, Andrew Montgomery, Jean Rydell

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jim Fee

STAFF PRESENT: John Keprios, Ed MacHolda, Janet Canton

OTHERS PRESENT: Ed Noonan, Pete Anderson, Jon Edwards, Melissa Boughton, Kip Lundquist, Mark Anderson, Becky Pohlada, Kathy Haymaker, Patsy Clouser, Bob Pohlada, Jeff Stefani, Jim Donohue, Jeff Knapp

I. APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 11, 1997 PARK BOARD MINUTES

John Dovolis MOVED TO APPROVE THE MARCH 11, 1997 PARK BOARD MINUTES. Jean Rydell MOVED TO SECOND THE MOTION. MINUTES APPROVED.

II. BANGU SOCCER CLUB PROPOSAL

Mr. Keprios indicated there is a correction that needs to be made on his staff report. He noted that Melissa Boughton's and David Kerr's soccer titles were inadvertently reversed. Melissa Boughton is President of Edina Soccer Club and David Kerr is President of the Edina Soccer Association.

Mr. Keprios explained that the Bangu Soccer Club is an organization that has existed for some time. However, they are now at a point in time where the Edina Soccer Association has done such a good a job promoting their sport and that they now have approximately 2,600 kids participating in their programs. Mr. Keprios explained that the Park Board has an unwritten rule where they typically recognize one athletic association per group. If they divide out and become a separate entity as far as traveling that is also recognized. However, what hasn't been recognized are other conflicting organizations that might form off on their own because they don't like the existing association for one reason or another. Mr. Keprios pointed out that staff assists with scheduling and providing facilities. Staff manages at an arms length, however, the associations are independently incorporated and are recognized as the one sport in town.

Mr. Keprios indicated that they do not have the luxury, however, of having enough field space for everyone. Therefore, they have to go back to the basic philosophy of who gets

served first. Mr. Keprios commented that the two recognized soccer programs in Edina are the Edina Soccer Association (house league) and the Edina Soccer Club (traveling league).

Mr. Keprios explained that the school has been providing soccer fields to accommodate the Bangu Soccer program. Bangu has their own youth program which does include some Edina residents, as the staff report outlines. Mr. Keprios pointed out that because of the bond referendum some of the soccer fields are under construction and therefore field time is tight as well as numbers have gone up. We are not going to have enough fields to accommodate everyone's wishes and therefore the question comes down to who should have access to the facilities.

Bob Pohlada, Bangu Soccer Club, indicated they are here to try and secure a soccer field to play on. He explained that the Bangu Club was formed in 1988 and they have been using Edina fields since that time. Mr. Pohlada indicated that their Bangu team has a roster of 15 kids in which 7 of them are Edina residents. He commented that their point is they have no issue with nor do they see themselves as competing with the Edina Soccer Association or the Edina Soccer Club. He also noted that it is his understanding that the Edina Soccer Club is like Bangu in that they also do not have 100% Edina residents. Therefore, he feels they should be treated equally with the Edina Soccer Club and that is their proposal.

Mr. Burley asked if Bangu is just one team and it was noted that it is not one team but consists of ten teams. However, it is only one team that is looking at using an Edina soccer field. Ms. Clouser commented that the Bangu team has always played on the high school field the lower level and didn't think the Edina Soccer Association ever used it. Jeff Stefani, President Bangu Soccer Club, indicated that the other Bangu teams play and practice where the majority of their players reside and that is why this particular team has played in Edina. Mr. Jenkins asked what is the age group they are talking about and it was noted they are 13 year-old boys.

Mr. Burley asked why don't these kids play for the Edina Soccer Club. Ms. Clouser responded that several of their players would like to play Division 1 and did not make the Division 1 team. Mr. Burley asked if the kids tried out for these teams and did not make them. Mr. Stefani replied that kids move from team to team and commented that two kids just left his team to play with the Edina Soccer Club neither of which were Edina residents. He pointed out that there are different philosophies in the program and some people feel more comfortable with one program versus another. The fact that there are multiple programs actually provides more opportunities for kids to play, not fewer.

Mr. Jenkins asked if the construction problem were not going on this year would they be accommodated on our fields this year. Mr. Keprios indicated that once the Edina Soccer Association and the Edina Soccer Club have both their games and practices whatever is left over is open for rental. Mr. Keprios commented that Bangu has been using the high school field and does not know if they have been charged or not for it. The City views Bangu as another group who wants to utilize Edina fields. Mr. Montgomery asked if we will be utilizing those fields this year. Mr. MacHolda indicated that he cannot answer that

because he has not seen the number of teams for either house or traveling soccer. However, at this time he can see us needing to use everything.

Mr. MacHolda indicated that all of the school soccer fields have been permitted to Park and Recreation because Braemar is under renovation this year. It's a combination of the numbers being up and the renovations that are being done we need all of the fields for our programs.

Mr. Keprios indicated that the school and the city have a successful cooperative agreement that includes use of indoor gym time as well as outdoor field space at no extra charge except when overtime occurs. That has been the Edina School's priority list of distribution goes:

1. All school programs.
2. All Park and Recreation Department programs.
3. Others. (which is where Bangu or other outside interest groups fall in line).

Ms. Bennett asked what time in the day is soccer played and Mr. MacHolda replied that it is an evening program. Ms. Bennett asked if it would be possible to share the fields if it permits or have Bangu play in the mornings if that would work out. Mr. MacHolda stated that he would throw that back to the Soccer Club and the Edina Soccer Association to talk to the coaches and see if that is something that would work. However, he noted that most coaches use the space in the evening. Also, Mr. MacHolda pointed out that this year there are some soccer camps and clinics scheduled for this summer during the day.

Mr. Burley asked Mr. MacHolda to explain the resident issue. Mr. MacHolda commented that 40% of the participants on the ten Bangu teams are Edina residents. The Edina Soccer Club which has close to 400 participants of which 16 are non-residents. Ms. Boughton, pointed out that those 16 non-residents are only on Division 1 teams where there not enough Edina kids to fill the teams. Mr. MacHolda added that appears to be the norm with MYSA for Division 1 teams.

Mr. Keprios stated that this is not a new issue. The Park Board voted to have a maximum of 3 non-resident participants per team as long as it did not exclude an Edina resident.

Mr. Pohlad noted that what they would like to have a time on a field on Wednesday nights and Saturdays mornings, he is only talking about 15 kids.

Mr. Crowther asked Mr. MacHolda would it be that difficult to factor in one additional team so that Bangu would get the same amount of playing time as any other traveling team. Not give them an exclusive field but just factor in one more team. Mr. MacHolda stated that it wouldn't be so difficult what it comes to is the philosophy of the situation. We have always recognized one athletic association per sport and if we now recognize a separate association for the same sport it starts a precedent with the other sports such as hockey, baseball, basketball, etc.

Mr. Keprios indicated that after the scheduling is done they could probably find an hour here or there to accommodate a team, however, it really comes down whether or not the

Edina Soccer Club views these as competing programs. The Soccer Club replied that they do view Bangu as a competing team. Mr. Stefani asked why this is viewed as a negative thing when Bangu views it as a positive thing because it provides more opportunity for the residents of Edina to play soccer. Bangu is not exclusionary in any way, shape or form they are trying to provide opportunities for more kids to play soccer because the more clubs there are the more kids can play..

Mr. Keprios explained the reason this issue is before the Park Board is because we as staff are directed to provide for and recognize only one Edina Soccer program and if there are fields left after that, then we are more than happy to accommodate those other interest groups. However, the reason Bangu is here is they want that guarantee up front. Mr. Keprios stated that what he is suggesting is no, it doesn't work that way, if you allow this one team to do that then at what point do you stop letting other teams do it.

Mr. Pohlad pointed out that they have been using the high school field for the last 9 years and asked Mr. Anderson if he doesn't want Bangu to use those fields. Mr. Anderson, Edina Soccer Club, commented that the field Bangu used in the past was through the School and not through the City. He also stated that there should only be one association per sport. He also noted that there is opportunity for Edina residents to play with the Edina Soccer Club, it's just that they chose not to.

Mr. Dovolis asked for a little history on why Bangu was organized in 1988. Ms. Clouser indicated that she moved to Edina 6 years ago and they were looking for a strong soccer program with more than just parent coaches so they sought out Bangu. Mr. Stefani noted that the way he understands the Bangu history is that it was formed by a group of Edina and Bloomington residents who weren't part of the Edina or Bloomington program or didn't make their Division 1 team. They were Division 2 players who wanted to form their own team and improve through good coaching to create their own program. This is an offshoot of kids who didn't make a program that was existing so they created a whole new opportunity. Mr. Stefani stated that he also understands that six years ago Bangu made a proposal to the Edina Soccer Club to become the Division 1 option and work with Edina and that was rejected. He commented that it isn't like the two of us haven't tried to work together in the past but it just happens to be today that they are separate.

Mr. Dovolis indicated that when there are only so many times and fields available it becomes a hardship. He noted that he can understand Bangu's point in that they have operated since 1988 with no problems and now with the Park Board referendum and the program growing rapidly there is field shortage and not everyone can be accommodated.

Mr. Burley stated that his kids have participated in soccer and to him it seems like Bangu and the Soccer Association are like oil and water. In 1988 when Bangu was formed it was considered to be an elite group.

Mr. Keprios stated that the Park and Recreation Department will be happy to work with Bangu on whatever fields are left over and Bangu will be treated no different than any other outside organization buying for field space. Mr. Keprios pointed out they have turned away adult teams which have 100% Edina residents because we simply do not have

the space for them. He again explained that the City has not provided a field for Bangu for the last nine years, but the school has.

Mr. Noonan, vice-president of the Edina Soccer Association, commented there are just over 2,200 kids this year registered to play house league soccer. Their philosophy has always been every child who wants to play can play. He noted there are a little over 80 teams right now. Mr. Noonan pointed out that they have been discouraging practices at the U6 and U8 levels, which take up 50 to 60 of those teams, because of field space availability and time commitment. Mr. Noonan noted that they would like to offer the staff and Park Board anything they can do to accommodate the situation. Mr. Noonan explained that the Soccer Association pay their fees as required by the Park Board as well as they give back to the community by improving fields, etc.

Mr. Knapp, indicated that practice times are very important for the teams, however, right now almost all of the field time will be occupied with just games. Mr. Knapp stated that the program is growing and more kids are staying with soccer and therefore the situation is going to get worse before it gets better.

Ms. Boughton indicated that she would love to have the Edina Soccer Club work with Bangu. She stated that she doesn't know what happened in the past and she really doesn't care. Ms. Boughton noted that she thinks there is a unified front both groups can go to.

Mr. Herring stated that he is a little concerned in that for years Bangu has played on this particular field and because of construction there suddenly is no space for them. He noted that he would be inclined to seek some kind of accommodation for Bangu this year but have it be clear that they will not get this kind of priority and they will have to figure out how they are going to find field space. This will give them a year to figure out other arrangements. He is just concerned that they are going to be left high and dry at the last minute.

Mr. Keprios asked the Edina Soccer Association and the Edina Soccer Club how they feel about making some concessions to accommodate Bangu for one year. Mr. Noonan replied that the Edina Soccer Association will work with staff. Mr. Lundquist indicated that he has been associated with the Edina Soccer Association and Traveling Soccer for over 10 years and feels this isn't a last minute change and he wouldn't feel comfortable with this because they have never been accommodated by the Park Board.

Mr. Pohlad indicated that he made a few phone calls after Mr. MacHolda informed them of the situation. He noted that if he would have known this and made those phone calls in December he probably could have found field space somewhere else.

Mr. Dovolis noted that it seems to him that it would solve a big problem they can bridge the program back together. Mr. Keprios suggested the option of accommodating Bangu for one final year with the understanding that at the end of the season they either disband and those kids become part of the Edina Soccer program or they don't come back to this group again requesting field space. Mr. Herring commented that he is against that and

feels we have to go with the recognized association, his only question is does it make sense to accommodate Bangu for one year.

Mr. Keprios commented that he's not against accommodating Bangu for one year as long as the Edina Soccer Association and the Edina Soccer Club are okay with it. Ms. Boughton commented that her only concern is that the Edina Soccer Club and the Edina Soccer Association are taken care of because they have worked hard to upgrade the program. Mr. Keprios asked if it is too late to accommodate the seven kids from the Bangu program into the Edina Soccer Club and it was noted yes because they have already had their tryouts.

Mr. Herring MOVED THAT WE SEEK TO ACCOMMODATE ONE TEAM FROM THE BANGU CLUB THIS YEAR AND ACCOMMODATE THEM ON THE SAME BASIS THAT WE TREAT OUR OTHER EDINA TEAMS RECOGNIZING THE UNIQUE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE EXTREMELY LIMITED NUMBER OF FIELDS THIS YEAR BECAUSE SOME ARE UNDER CONSTRUCTION ON RELATIVELY SHORT NOTICE THAT THEY RECEIVED AS TO THE FACT THAT THEY WOULD NOT HAVE A FIELD THIS YEAR, A LIMITED AVAILABILITY OF FIELDS IF ANY AND THAT WE FURTHER PUT THEM ON NOTICE THAT ON A GOING FORWARD BASIS THAT WE WOULD NOT BE ACCOMMODATING ANY THIRD PARTY THAT WANTS TO USE ANY OF THE EDINA FIELDS UNLESS THE SOCCER ASSOCIATION WOULD BE GIVEN PRIORITY.

John Dovolis SECONDED THE MOTION.

IN FAVOR OF ACCOMMODATING BANGU FOR ONE YEAR: Becky Bennett, Andy Herring, John Dovolis, Andrew Montgomery.

OPPOSED TO ACCOMMODATING BANGU FOR ONE YEAR: Jean Rydell, Beth Hall, Bill Jenkins, Phyllis Kohler, Dave Crowther, Mike Burley

MOTION FAILED 4 TO 6.

It was noted that if there is any time left over Bangu will be accommodated.

III. EDINA BASEBALL ASSOCIATION PROPOSAL

Mr. Keprios indicated that there are some scoreboards at Courtney fields that need to be replaced, which right now would be the best time to do it because of the construction, however, we do not have the money to do it. Mr. Keprios stated that the Baseball Association does have the funding to do this, however, their proposed means of funding is through advertising which goes against the grain of the standing policy, which is what brings them here tonight. Mr. Keprios commented that isn't to say that we can't look at a plan that replaces the scoreboards through another means. He noted that we need to see how we do with the referendum spending. Mr. Keprios pointed out that this is one small

piece of a very large 39 park puzzle and we are going to hear a lot more of these types of additional requests and there isn't enough money to do everything.

Mr. Keprios stated that the Baseball Association has admirably given their share of money in helping out with fields, lights, dugouts, etc.

Mr. Edwards, President of the Edina Baseball Board, indicated that the scoreboards are quite old and now would be the one time opportunity to run the new line out and put in the new scoreboard because of the construction that will be going on. He also pointed out that in the same opportunity they will be able to put a jack in at every dugout and this way everyone can enjoy the scoreboards.

Mr. Edwards handed out pictures of the scoreboard advertising they are looking at and noted that their first choice would be to solicit from the local businesses in Edina. Mr. Edwards explained the scoreboard company they are looking at is in Plymouth and 80% of the scoreboards being installed are corporate funded as part of the package. Mr. Edwards indicated that the Baseball Association has already helped to improve the parks by adding batting cages and other items that will help the kids. He pointed out that the advertising they are talking about is only 2 ft. by 4 ft. This scoreboard would greatly improve the field quality at Braemar Park.

Mr. Burley asked if he understood correctly in that there is a policy in Edina that we do not allow advertising. Mr. Keprios responded that it is a fairly new policy set by the City Council. The only advertising that is allowed is what we call rolling stock, via pamphlets, brochures, Zamboni, etc. Mr. Keprios indicated, however, the Park Board can certainly make a recommendation to the City Council for a change in policy.

Ms. Kohler asked Mr. Edwards if they have looked at private funds from the Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis, Federated Womens Club, Edina Foundation, etc. She suggested it might be a good idea to check with these people first because this proposed form of advertising is probably something that we don't want to get into. Ms. Kohler stated that there are other sources of funding if organizations are willing to take the time to ask for it. Ms. Kohler questioned if we should be involved in this and asked Mr. Edwards if he has been to the High School Boosters. Mr. Montgomery indicated that this is something that needs to be done now since we are doing everything else at the ball fields.

It was asked if the staff believes the scoreboards need to be replaced and Mr. Keprios replied absolutely, however, there are no funds to do it at this time.

Mr. Edwards commented there are a lot of businesses in Edina that would jump at an opportunity like this and it would be a good way to advertise. He noted that he feels confident that the scoreboards, estimated at \$12,000, can be paid for by private businesses. The Baseball Association is a non-profit organization and we don't have hundreds of dollars to go out and solicit private funds. Also, time is not on our side because once those fields are dug up, we have to get the electrical and conduit in.

Mr. Burley commented that he happens to be a proponent of advertising at baseball fields and he would like to see that the Baseball Association somehow get the \$12,000. Mr. Burley asked if there are still team sponsors and Mr. Edwards replied they do still have team sponsors, however, that helps to offset the cost to keep the fees down.

Mr. Crowther pointed out that previous City Council did not want advertising at the facilities, therefore, it seems somewhat of a waste of the Park Board's time to discuss this if the new City Council indicates that is not the policy of the City. Mr. Crowther stated that he would like to see Mr. Keprios go to the City Council and ask them if they want to change their position on this issue before we spend a lot of time deciding whether or not we think it's a good idea just to have them turn it down.

Ms. Bennett asked Mr. Edwards if there is anyone on the baseball board who could make a few phone calls to the Rotary or Kiwanis, etc., just to get some feel. She indicated that she recently raised \$6,000 for the Creek Valley Carnival through donations and it wasn't that hard. Mr. Edwards replied they do not have anyone who could do that right now.

Mr. Montgomery noted that he hears Mr. Crowther very clear in that if they are not going to change the policy then the scoreboard goes in without advertising.

Mr. Herring MOVED THAT WE RECOMMEND TO THE CITY COUNCIL THAT WE CONTINUE THE EXISTING POLICY WITH RESPECT TO ADVERTISING. Beth Hall SECONDED THE MOTION.

Mr. Dovolis indicated that number one we have a need for a scoreboard that's a separate issue. Mr. Jenkins indicated we will get them a scoreboard but he doesn't think we are going to change the advertising policy.

Mr. Burley indicated that he disagrees with that, he thinks with baseball fields you need to be creative and have a lot of fun with advertising and we could generate a lot of money. This is not just for today but ten years from now there are going to be scoreboards that are going to fall apart and we are going to need to generate money and we are not going to have a bond referendum every ten years. Mr. Burley stated that he is not proposing to change anyone's mind but he just disagrees with it. He thinks baseball fields and hockey rinks should have advertising, and it will not ruin the aesthetics of the community park.

Mr. Dovolis pointed out that the facts today are the way money is generated is through advertising. We cannot go to the taxpayer every time we need something or hit the developer's fund. However, he does agree with Mr. Keprios in that he doesn't believe in advertising but the facts are that is how dollars are generated.

ALL IN FAVOR OF SUPPORTING THE CURRENT POLICY OF ADVERTISING:
Beth Hall, Dave Crowther, Andy Herring, Becky Bennett, Bill Jenkins, Phyllis Kohler,
Andrew Montgomery, Jean Rydell

ALL OPPOSED IN SUPPORTING THE CURRENT POLICY OF ADVERTISING:
John Dovolis, Mike Burley

MOTION CARRIED 8 TO 2.

Ms. Bennett indicated that if someone gave her a list of people to contact she would make some phone calls. Mr. Dovolis and Mr. Burley both stated that they would each donate \$500.00 for a new scoreboard.

Ms. Kohler suggested contacting the Edina High School Boosters. Mr. Dovolis suggested putting an article in the Edina Sun Newspaper.

Mr. Montgomery stated that he is still concerned that when we tear up that whole ball park are we going to provide the conduit for a new scoreboard. Mr. Keprios indicated that he will make sure that is taken care of.

Mr. Keprios indicated that the Park and Recreation Department has not asked the School District to help with any Park Referendum Projects mainly because the money has only gone one way in the past, from the City to the School. He explained that in some respect that's the right thing because there are tax increment dollars that should go towards the school. Even the youth athletic associations have also contributed significant dollars to the schools. Therefore, Ms. Kohler's suggestion to contact the High School or Booster Club is an excellent idea. Mr. Crowther indicated that he will go to the Booster Board.

Mr. Keprios indicated that they will work with the Edina Baseball Association and will try to come up with a way to fund a new scoreboard.

IV. PARKS REFERENDUM PROJECTS UPDATE

Mr. Keprios stated that the City Council approved the \$225,000 bid to go ahead with Arrigoni Construction Company to develop the Lake Cornelia Park playground. Again, an enormous thanks to the Federated Womens Club for their \$16,000 donation this go around and for over \$50,000 in the history of that park which came from that organization. Mr. Keprios indicated that they are going to find a plaque to give them the due recognition that they deserve.

Mr. Keprios indicated that the park fencing bid has been approved for the backstop at Birchcrest, Chowen and Countryside.

Mr. Keprios stated that they are down to one shelter building plan for all four sites.

V. OTHER

A. Community Development Grant Money - Mr. Keprios pointed out that the City of Edina has really been blessed with the over 1 million dollars worth of community development block grant money through the years. They have provided us a lot of removal of accessible barriers which gave us the elevator at the Senior Center, a lot of curb cuts throughout the city and the renovating of a lot of our restrooms. They have also given us a tremendous number of handicap parking stalls and parking lots. However, the

rules have now changed the money is all dried up and therefore all that we have requested this year, unless it has to do with housing, we are now on our own as far as removing accessible barriers. Mr. Keprios indicated that his idea of making the bathrooms at Lewis Park accessible through CDBG money is not going to happen. Mr. Herring asked how much is that going to cost and Mr. Keprios indicated that he has an architect working on it right now. He indicated that he hopes to have the facts and figures for this project at the next Park Board meeting.

B. Braemar Inspection Tour - Mr. Keprios indicated that the Braemar Inspection Tour is scheduled for Tuesday, July 8th at 1:00 p.m. and there will not be a Park Board meeting that night unless someone feels there is a need to.

C. All Volunteers Awards Reception - Mr. Keprios indicated that the All Volunteers Awards Reception will be on Tuesday, April 15th 5:00 p.m. at Edinborough. The Park and Recreation Accommodation from the Mayor for the All Volunteer Awards is going to be awarded to the Ben Peyton Committee.

Mr. Dovolis commented that August 20th is the Ben Peyton Golf Tournament at Braemar, \$100.00 per person, golf, cart, and barbecue meal and it will be a shotgun start.

D. Basketball Hoops - Mr. Keprios commented that all of our basketball hoops are now up on the new backboards.

E. Spring Clean-Up - Mr. Keprios indicated that "Spring Clean-up" has been delayed because of the weather. Also, the Adopt-A-Park signs will be going up this week.

F. Utley Park - Ms. Bennett asked what the status is at Utley Park. Mr. Keprios commented that the Mayor has some concerns with where we are looking at putting the basketball court. Therefore, they will be taking a visit there and see if there is another option.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Dave Crowther MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 9:15 P.M. John Dovolis SECONDED THE MOTION. MEETING ADJOURNED.