

PARK AND RECREATION
JANUARY 11, 2021 PARK BOARD
AGENDA

1. Meeting called to order
2. Approval of October 12, November 9, 2020 minutes
3. Reorganize park board 2021
4. Arena update
5. Parks update
6. Godel pier update
7. Old business
8. New business
9. Adjourn

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Park and Recreation Board Minutes

April 12, 2021

The Parks, Recreation and Forestry Board met on Monday, April 12, 2021 at 12:00 noon in the Council Chambers at City Hall. Park Board members in attendance: Tami Revering, Lynn Wolters (vice chairperson), April Thompson, Kevin Rogness (chairperson), and Chelsey Beilhartz. Others: Len Taylor, Pam Muxfeldt.

The meeting was called to order. The February 8, 2021 minutes were approved as submitted. A regular meeting was not held in March, 2021.

Summer Ice, Recreation program updates

Pam gave a hand out of the usage report in regards to park and recreation programs for the current season. These are booked through the end of September. The Hurricanes schedule is not included in this yet. The usage reflects 2,498.08 hours. Another schedule was handed out. It was a tentative schedule for summer ice that figure skaters and hockey have filled in. There are some off ice hours listed which are separate from the ice arena. Pam has had some inquire about filling in more of the open ice schedule. There is a possibility of an on line registration for open private time or open hockey time. These people would have to pre-register and pay a fee. Attendance would have to be taken in order to know who has been there. This is part of Covid rules. Summer ice will run from June 7 to August 5. There is ice right now until April 15. It may go into a dormant stage before the June 7 start. Staffing becomes an issue, as some of those that work the arena, also help with mowing, ball fields, etc. during the summer. It isn't feasible to bring in staff for 1 hour of ice. It is hoped that getting a minimum of 4 hours rented to open up. The park department is looking for 3 to 4 seasonal employees (10 to 15 hours) a week. The hours would depend on when ice is being scheduled. Employees would have to be 18 or over. There is going some trial and error. Pam explained that we are still at the mercy of the school with the chiller. The school can't really test its capacity until temperatures heat up outside to see how it will maintain.

Summer recreation registrations are still coming in. Kids Kamp filled all 5 sessions in about 8 minutes. Banner and sponsorships are good. Pam has received calls with questions regarding mask wearing. Right now it's whatever the CDC recommends. This could change between now and the June 7 start date. In door practices will not be available in the arena. It is allowed for a maximum of 50 at a time. If there are 12 or 13 teams, this could exceed the limit, with parents, Kids Kamp, etc. This will be monitored over time.

Pam has received phone calls in regards to the opening of the Delagoon camp ground. Generally it opens early May. Len explained that it will not be opening any earlier than previous years.

Dog Park Updates

Len explained the estimate he received for new fencing at the dog park. The amount was \$25,209.68. It was decided that even though there is plenty of used fencing, it needs to be done right. It will be Park capital budget money that will be used along with the about \$8,000.00 that

was fund raised. There is a water line that will be installed. The fencing will be done in mid-May.

Chelsey was asked a question of if there would be an issue for waste run off near the water (Grotto). Len explained the water isn't currently good, but that there is also a natural buffer that would filter anything like this.

Tami spoke with the Dog park manager (2 parks) from Duluth. She suggested a couple of signs. One in regards to the responsibility of a dog owner if their dog inflicts harm on another dog, that it is an issue between the owners, not the City. Another suggestion was to call animal control if unattended dogs are seen, and if there are any issues with the park. She wanted to be sure the correct number is on the sign. Len recommended the 332-5862 number (animal control). Lynn questioned how the age of the owner was decided. Right now it's 15 years old. She felt it could be lower. Tami was using Duluth's direction. It is still a guidance and still a direction. We are not going to kick out a 13 year old that is there obeying the rules. Len thinks that Duluth may have run this through the League of MN Cities (where Fergus Falls is also insured). Len will check with the League for some guidance. Kevin told the group that the dog park will be getting new neighbors. LB Homes is selling the building to Hillcrest. It will be used as a school (Morning Son). August 1st is the date this change will occur.

Len told the group that the Adams family (one's that donated the land) had a dog named "Higgins". A motion was made by Tami and seconded by Lynn to call the park "Higgins Dog Park". The motion carried. The sign will be as other park signs with the City log on it.

Chelsey questioned if there is an ability with the space for a "pop up" shop/station to sell dog treats from. Len explained the process of getting a permit (as food trucks do). It only allows for a 2 day permit. Right now there is no fee associated with it. If there is a request for using City water or electricity, there may be a fee associated. This is still being worked through and hopes there will be a decision made by May.

Tami was asked by a dog trainer if there is a possibility to reserve the entire park for a dog training session for about an hour at a time. This doesn't have to be decided today, but would like to see what those guidelines would look like to rent out. Len thinks it would have to run thought the renting of a park process. If they want it exclusive, then they would have to pay, or if they only use one portion of it, that would be fine. It is \$50.00 to rent. A suggestion was to also look for a good "down" time when there isn't a lot of usage or traffic, or use the smaller area.

Kevin Rogness offered a suggestion to have a sign for the siren that is at the Dog park location for the first Wednesday of the month at 1:00 p.m. Chelsey suggested a bike rack on location. It was questioned if handicapped parking is available. Len will make a courtesy call to the church. A grand opening date will be discussed at a later date.

New Business

Len was brought a request for the Park Board to discuss. He had a handout of a sign that asks people to not feed the geese/ducks bread. There are 3 locations that Len feels would be good areas to place them. Around Lake Alice (3), at the Levi, and on Benjamin lane, just south of the apartment building on S Sheridan. Chelsey asked of the possibility to place "gumball like" machines with corn that takes quarters. Len thought maybe the Friends of Lake Alice may have interest in doing this. He also mentioned the vandalism issues at the Lake Alice warming house.

This is about the 8th time there has been vandalism here. There are steel doors being put in when time allows. A master locking system to close at 10:30 p.m. is being looked at with potentially security cameras.

Len also brought up the tennis court at Athletic Park and getting them in the right shape (repair cracks in concrete) and to have lines painted for pickle ball. There is still definite interest from the group that attended a meeting previously to discuss pickle ball.

Len explained the numerous failures of the electrical system at Delagoon. It is all old infrastructure from when the Delagoon family donated the park to the City in the 1960's. Approval has been given by the Council for new services/updates. OTP at their cost will put all new wiring around the perimeter of the park for the City to tap into for those new services. This is a cost of \$275,000.00 for Otter Tail Power. This will give the City the capability to expand when the campground is updated. Len is meeting with an electrician today. It is hoped that it can be done early enough in the season as not to cause too much disruption. The State's legislative session ends at the end of May. They are considering the 3 sales tax projects of Old Smokey, Delagoon, and Aquatic Park. If the State gives the go ahead to ask the City voters to approve the sales tax, this would be a vote in 2022 for City residents.

The River Front project will be opening bids next week (Tuesday). A grand opening date will be discussed at a later date. Is hoped that prices come in favorably to be able to start in mid-June.

Chelsey questioned the benches that the City has in different areas. She wondered if there is a certain source that the City goes to for these. The City would like to keep with the style like the one in front of City Hall. It is a green composite material that does not require much maintenance. Chelsey is training in on the plastics machine at the OTC Recycling Center tomorrow. They have 5" x 5" tile molds that are part of it for possible bench seating, or mural /retaining walls. The City is not bound to any one source for its benches. Len would be open to keeping local if they can be similar. She spoke with the high school about classes, if the tiles were there and having students piece together and assemble for possible fund raisers they may be doing.

Lynne asked if there is a listing of all of the items that need to be done. Len found a park study that lists items from 2007 to 2020. He will get it out to the board for review and to work with and prioritize projects.

The Field 5 conversion is complete. On April 27 there will be a dedication at 3:30 pm before the first game played. He invited the board to attend.

There was no other business. The meeting adjourned. The next meeting date will be on May 10, 2021.

Submitted by Connie Petersen

Park and Recreation Board Minutes May 10, 2021

The Parks, Recreation and Forestry Board met on Monday, May 10, 2021 at 12:00 noon in the Council Chambers at City Hall. Park Board members in attendance: Tami Revering, April Thompson, Kevin Rogness (chairperson), and Chelsey Beilhartz. Others: Len Taylor, Pam Muxfeldt, Jean Bowman (CVB), and Brett Burch.

The meeting was called to order. The April 12, 2021 minutes were approved as submitted.

Disc golf expansion (Brett Burch)

Jean Bowman introduced Brett Burch, a very active disc golfer. He is interested in the possibility of adding 9 holes at the disc golf course at Delagoon. Currently the course is 27 holes. He feels that if it could be possible and is sloped properly and work well the course could be split and double the potential for participants and work towards an A-tier Event. There were 2 of these events held in Minnesota last year. There is an application process with the Professional National Disc Golf Association. You have to have 3 years of succession as a B-tier, showing growth and improvement to move to A-tier. This is the second year this course will be a B-tier. Brett issued a survey last year, he wasn't prompt enough on it to get a well- rounded response, but did receive 38 of 38 that did say they would return. Jean questioned if there are course ratings, similar to what golf courses have. Brett explained an app called u-disc. It gives anyone the ability to go in. He explained that this course was given a 4.4 out of 5. This goes back to when the course was not even completed. There are a couple of reviews that were given before the t-pads and signs were installed. That is still part of the rating. The additional holes would probably be a secondary numbering system. He gave different scenarios to where the additional holes could go. He may be asking for City's help in the design. After that he is good with coordinating the volunteer effort for installation. The likelihood of people traveling to play here can depend on the success of the course and the ratings. It takes on average 2 hours to complete a disc golf course. If there is a good course within a couple hours' drive, they will probably travel there more frequently. The minimum Brett would guess is about a 3 to 4 hr. drive. When it comes to a tournament some will spend more time and travel to different states. Jean explained that with this success the Forward Fergus Falls board has issued a second micro grant of \$1,000.00 this year. This money goes towards prizes, hiring a band at a reception for further fund raising. Jessie Thorstad will be at the course this week end to demonstrate and walk the course and give more information to answer questions and help people understand what it's about. Len thanked Brett and asked him to work with him to get some things drawn out for more discussion at a future meeting.

Park Bench Donations

Mick discussed the Fergus Falls Lions Club and their effort of getting behind the drive to recycled plastics. For every 500 pounds collected they earn a free trek bench. The materials are pretty much non destructible. Currently their 1 week average is about 300 pounds. They can get a bench once every 6 months. They currently have an order in for one bench. The second one

will be around October. They would like to donate to the dog park. The style is pretty close to what the City currently has and would like to keep with the dark green color. They would need to be assembled. Mick would like direction from the park board when they begin getting placed. They will eventually be anchored down to a simple concrete slab. Len asked if they would be open to other parks in the future. Mick had not discussed this yet. Pam has had a couple requests for other locations. The prices of the other benches are \$798.00. Shipping 1 is about \$250.00. 4 of them would ship for the same price. There were different locations within the dog park discussed. Mick suggested a couple of picnic tables to get through this season. Len also mentioned shelters that Kiwanis has donated. He told Mick to go ahead with accepting the donation from the Lions Club. A motion was made by Kevin to recommend accepting park benches for the dog park from the Lions group. The motion was seconded by Tami. The motion carried. There was no other discussion. Len suggested that Pam get the regular benches for the memorial one's that she has been approached about.

Dog Park Update

Tami reported that she saw 3 dogs using the park over the week end. There is clamping and wire-tying to do and gates to install. There are a couple of small spots to check on the ground to keep dogs in. The water will go in this week. Locates have been called in. Directional drilling will be done on Wednesday or Thursday. The main will be tapped after this by City staff. There will be a water fountain to be set into a slab. There is a hose that can also connect to this. Mick would like to be sure that there is drainage for this so there aren't puddles standing. He suggested a grate being over this that a regular storm drain could cause a paw to slip into. Tami will look into this, or possibly not do this (for safety of dogs) to fill the drainage area with pea rock. Signs have been ordered, some could be late June. Len questioned if the ribbon cutting should be done after the big sign is in. Tami felt that the rules being posted is important, and suggested moving the ribbon cutting to when the big sign is in. The street department will be doing the concrete.

Old Business

Pam gave a hand out of updated softball. Church league moved all to Tuesday. Co-ed softball will be played on Wednesday. There are 5 teams. There are 12 total teams on Friday men's league. Friday is the deadline for having teams registered. There is a \$25.00 late fee after Friday. Try outs are this week for the majors and the minors. People are still asking to be put on waiting lists for Kids Kamp.

Len reported that the arena is up and running. So far it is running good. Staffing has been an issue. The Hockey association has offered a sign on bonus of \$250.00. It is hard to schedule with the unknown amount of ice that will be used. Mick said it is coming together slowly. The seasonal park employment has been somewhat of a struggle. Only a couple returned from last summer. Mick said they are short for up to 2 or 3 kids. School is not out yet, so hoping some applications may come in.

The camp ground opened last Friday. The boat launch is hoped to be started this week. There will be a lot of electrical updates going on. This will include a street light at the boat launch that previously did not have one.

Len explained that the half cent sales tax is still at the legislative level and hopeful that it will pass. This will be voted on in November of 2022 if it passes at the state level. The pier at Godel Park / Hoot Lake is on track and should be delivered shortly. The path and parking lot to it are not quite ready.

There was no other discussion. A motion was made to adjourn.

Submitted by Connie Petersen

Park and Recreation Board Minutes August 9, 2021

The Parks, Recreation and Forestry Board met on Monday, August 9, 2021 at 12:00 noon in the Council Chambers at City Hall. Park Board members in attendance: Tami Revering, Chelsey Beilhartz, Kevin Rogness (chairperson), Lynn Wolters. Not present: April Thompson. Others in attendance: Len Taylor, Mick Johnson, Pam Muxfeldt.

The meeting was called to order by Kevin Rogness. The June minutes were approved as submitted.

Summer Program Update

Pam Muxfeldt gave updated registration numbers on the summer programs. A summary was handed out. It did not reflect the 29 softball teams. The programs are getting wrapped up this week. She also gave a handout of ball field usage for in town and Delagoon fields. This reflects April 1 through August 13. Pam will plan to get an update to include park shelter rentals. There were no rain cancellations. There was one cancellation on men's league due to a power outage at Delagoon. One youth (Thursday evening) of play was cancelled due to air quality issues and moved it to Monday. There were no complaints and received a lot of positive feedback overall. There was a positive COVID test last week at Kids Camp. Only those that had to quarantine were those that came into direct contact, which was 6 or 7 kids. Most of them got tested. Pam has not heard back on any results. There was some ice skating on Fridays of Kids Camp. The 2nd arena was also available for roller blading and roller skating. There was a Grandparent that donated a bunch of nerf items to the kids camp. The kids had a great time. They sat up boxes, garbage cans, etc. and had an obstacle course and nerf wars. The same Grandmother also sent over 500 more later.

Summer Parks Update

Mick reported that a group of the Fergus Falls class of 2001 graduates reached out to help with some volunteer work. They did misc. painting of playground equipment and shelters at Delagoon. City staff finished anything that they were not able to.

Big Friday wrapped up and went well.

The Archery range "rules" have been posted. The City is putting in a cement slab to shoot from. Staff is also cleaning out around the old farm area at Delagoon.

Lynne asked if there is a presentation or a board of some kind that highlights what our parks have in them. She thought it might be ideal to post at the Fair. There isn't anything outside of a spread sheet, or the individual city maps that list the parks and amenities on them. Len questioned where else besides the fair something like this would be used. Suggested locations included the Bigwood Event Center, Community Arena, Airport and Summer Fest.

Mick also explained that in wrapping things up, that the Broadway warming house needs some work. NP Park equipment has had discussion of some of the park equipment being taken out for the future project. Len explained that the City has been given 95% surety that the NP Park project will happen next year. He asked the board if they would be comfortable with taking out

all of this equipment based on the 95% surety and a 5% chance that it may not happen. The time it would take to removed it will depend on if the equipment will be reused, or just pulled out and destroyed. Chelsey asked if there were any pieces that could be reused at the dog park for the obstacle course. Mick felt that there could a couple pieces that could be used for this area. Len explained that it may have to be decided on soon. There is an offer / deal in the works with Bethel Church to possibly get some of the fill to put in at the NP Park site through Barry Construction. This would hopefully be a reduced cost for them to haul to NP location rather than haul out to a pit.

Mick explained that the native planting at Grotto is fenced off to protect from geese. It is all irrigated right now. He's not sure when the remainder of seed will be planted. There is work taking place at the Public Library parking lot in getting weeds all cleaned out and a tarp put over it to prepare for replanting. The United Prairie Foundation (through a DNR grant) will be responsible for the first 3 years for the Grotto Park area. It is hoped that this area will be well established when the City takes it over.

The hockey arena (ice operations) just wrapped up. It was a challenge on the facility side of things. It is hoped to be addressed in the next 6 to 8 weeks before ice goes back in for the actual season. Pam explained that due to the issues, the City did not reach out to outside groups not knowing what day to day facility operations and staffing would look like. There is some research being done on the whole system to see if we keep with the scenario as it is sharing the system with the school, or seeing if there should have a stand- alone system that the City would own and operate.

Chelsey questioned if there has ever been any talk or discussion of the sport of Lacrosse. No one in the group had heard of anything.

Mick reported that the pier at Godel Park is 90 feet long and is all installed. The DNR donated the pier. The Fish and Game club donated \$10,000.00 to complete with a path and parking area. It is waiting on Engineering.

Tami wanted to be sure that Mick was aware of the gap on the gate for the large dog area at the Dog Park. It appears to have a "pitch/slant" under the door. She suggested possibly a rubber piece connected to the door. Another suggestion was made to use something like the "brush" used on some mud flaps. A suggestion of a sign as a reminder to close the gate when leaving the last exit gate was made.

Len asked if the group would like an ordinance written on smoking in the parks. The City now has a policy that reads "no smoking" when youth are present. The board chose to not have an ordinance drawn up.

New Business

Len pulled up an aerial of the Old Dairy Property. He explained a LCCMR (DNR Grant). It is park land. A part of the area will need to include a path. The request to this committee is to try to find an alignment of a path. It will take engineering at some point. Looking for a path that would make sense, and keeping in mind that there is a pretty steep bluff. The path and a site for a little playground area. It would be hoped to keep as many trees as possible. Chelsey asked if there would be a possibility of a "free play" park. It is using items that are there vs more structured equipment. Chelsey will send Len some pictures with what she is describing. There is not guidance on what can be done here, except that there has to be a path. The access is on

Buse right now, but may change to come off of Broadway. The trail will be a multi-use trail. Len suggested that this item be placed on future meetings to get some things decided on. Another site visit may be necessary. They are currently still hauling out debris. It was questioned if there would be access to the water for kayaking. There would be parking somewhere. There is going to be more conversation about removing the old Waste Water Treatment Plant and incorporating with the park giving access to the river (near Pisgah Dam). Lynn asked if there is the possibility of a shelter to be put in. She would like for the Kiwanis group to be kept in mind for this to donate a shelter. The old WWTP has been idle for 16 years. There is an area with a nice gradual spot to the river. Len asked the group to keep in mind the trail, park name, and park area location to bring back to a future meeting. Len will find out how soon the group could get back in the area. There has not been any discussion in regards to sculptures. There isn't any money budgeted right now, but would probably be in 2023. There was no other business. The meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by Connie Petersen