

COON RAPIDS PARK & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES OF
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2012

The regular meeting of the Parks & Recreation Commission was called to order on February 6, 2012 at 6:30 P.M. in the Public Works Conference Room.

Members Present: Commissioners Tim Arntson, Mary Lou Hecht, Mike Jacobson, Gen Sand, and Ryan McAlpine.

Members Absent: Commissioners Steven Head and Neal Livermore.

Also Present: Gregg Engle, Parks Supervisor and Ryan Gunderson, Recreation Coordinator.

1. ROLL CALL

Gregg Engle acknowledged roll call.

2. APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 6, 2012 AGENDA

Mr. Engle suggested adding Gregg DeRusha who is here with the American Little League as new business.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER MCALPINE, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER JACOBSON, TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 6, 2012 AGENDA AS AMENDED. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 9, 2012 MINUTES

Mr. Engle requested a correction on page 3, paragraph 5: "There is a 50/50 grant of ~~\$18,000~~ \$36,000 for the trail by Home Depot..." "The city's portion of this is ~~\$9,000~~ \$18,000."

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER MCALPINE, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER ARNTSON, TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 9, 2012 MEETING MINUTES WITH THE NOTED CORRECTIONS. MOTION PASSED 2-3 (COMMISSIONERS HECHT, SAND AND JACOBSON ABSTAINED).

4. NEW BUSINESS

Greg DeRusha of American Little League from Sand Creek spoke about the city's website. He stated that the web site talks about National Little League and then talks about all three leagues. He stated that this should all just say Little League. He stated that t-ball information is hard to come by and he receives a lot of calls on it. He asked that this information be added to the website. He stated that the participation age has changed and was dropped down last year to four-year-olds for t-ball. He stated that the

city does not have to promote this but he is making them aware. He reported that they have a rookie league now with four and five-year-olds playing on it. He noted that 60 four-year-olds were signed up last year.

Chairman Arntson asked what time of day this is offered. Mr. Gunderson stated that it is in the morning. It was established to complement the Little League.

Mr. DeRusha stated that all three leagues have t-ball. Central Little League uses Aspen Park, National Little Leagues uses Riverview Park and American Little League uses Sand Creek Park. He reported that National and Central Little League had 700 kids total. He stated that American Little League includes Andover. Mr. Gunderson stated that Andover owns their own fields. He stated that National and Central Little League have had discussions of combining.

Mr. DeRusha reviewed the history of Little League organizations in Coon Rapids. He indicated that most revenue for American Little League is based on registration and one fundraiser. He stated that they began expanding into Andover to stay fluid. He reviewed that American Little League just gave Central Little League an area of their registration boundary to increase their participant numbers. He commented that Anoka does not have a Little League program. He explained that Andover has their own baseball leagues which includes traveling. He noted that people who come to play in Coon Rapids are looking for more of a recreational experience. He stated that their program is well run, is at one park and has concessions. He stated that many people think the Coon Rapids Little League is organized by the city and do not understand that it is multiple organizations. He reviewed that it is a nonprofit effort. Each league has its own funding. He commented that American Little League has liability insurance which costs \$3,200 a year. He commented that HOM Furniture is a big sponsor for their annual raffle. He stated that the Lions have helped them before as well. He added that softball field #5 has been used on some Saturdays which has been helpful.

Chairman Arntson asked if Mr. DeRusha had any other comments. Mr. DeRusha asked about Sand Creek reconstruction.

Mr. Engle stated that they will be adding trails and things are in the initial planning stages for reconstruction. He commented that over the next 1-1/2 years they will move forward on ideas. He stated that Mr. DeRusha and his organization will be considerations in the planning process.

Mr. Gunderson stated that a vote on the parks master plan is going before Council soon and they will move forward based on decisions that are made. He stated that consultants are being hired to look at the master plan process. He explained that the number of fields and the layout at Sand Creek will be reviewed.

Mr. DeRusha expressed his concern that the Little League space at Sand Creek will be taken over by the city. Mr. Engle stated that it is not in the best interest of the city to do this and he does not see this happening.

Mr. Gunderson stated that traffic flow and parking are considerations that will be looked at. He added that the number of practice fields is something they will be cooperating with the American Little League over. He commented that a consideration of the master plan will be that a majority of the youth who play sports live north of Sand Creek. He noted that there are no ball fields north of Sand Creek. He reported that they will look at whether a new complex should be added in the northern area of the city.

4. STAFF REPORTS

A. Update on Parks Master Plan Process.

Mr. Gunderson stated that staff was impressed with the Commissions input into selecting a consultant and with their questions in the process. He noted that the recommendation went out on Thursday. He reviewed that the Council meeting is on Wednesday. He noted that the appropriation for the Lions Park electronic sign is also on the agenda.

B. Ice Skating and Warming Houses.

Mr. Gunderson stated that the warming houses were closed on Friday after a forecast which called for three days of 40 degree weather. He stated that they visited the ice to make this determination. He agreed that the Coon Rapids Ice Center is still open. He noted that the schedule for the rinks availability is live on the city's website. He noted that many organizations are practicing at the refrigerated rink because other ice quality is poor. He added that the lights are off now as they are closed. He commented that he would like to have a followup meeting with the hockey association about their involvement. He added that positive aspects are that there were more eyes on the rink, and the warming houses were cleaner.

Mr. Engle stated that they will update the Board on the hockey association followup meeting.

C. Projects for 2012.

Mr. Engle stated that there is a new assistant city manager who will be with human resources. He noted that they had performance measures which are being implemented. He stated they are being asked to look at strategic areas to benefit the community. He provided a list which includes updating trails and open space. He added that this will be an ongoing goal which will enhance the community. He reviewed a list of 2012 projects. He stated that they will be installing the playground at Nelson Park. He added that this should be installed in April and May and is awaiting financing. He commented that they

will be changing over the Lions/Coon Creek sign to electronic which is being approved from Council. He noted that the Riverwind Rec Center would like a new community sign. He commented that soccer complex field 3 and 4 reconditioning are next in the schedule. He reviewed that improving conditions at ball fields is done on a regular maintenance schedule for conditioning. He commented that 15 tobacco free signs are to be replaced throughout the parks as they are aging. He noted that at Sunrise Pond the playground is in and a shelter and trees will be added. He indicated that the mowing schedule is being reevaluated to reduce operations costs. He stated that pulling out old skating rinks at Woodcrest Park has been a long term goal. He added that reconditioning the tennis courts is a goal he would like addressed because about 18 of them are in bad shape. He would like direction on which ones to resurface. He talked about using a new product at Wintercrest Park which would reduce the weed whipping schedule and reduce maintained costs. He stated that on April 28, 85 high school baseball players will be involved in a community service day to install the new fence guard. He noted that replacing buoys in the fishing peer is a project that was left from last year. He added that continuing to monitor trends in outdoor skating will be a goal. He stated that these are goals to be completed in 2012.

5. OPEN FORUM

Mr. Gunderson stated that he and Mr. Engle attended the meeting for the Polar Plunge at Crooked Lake Beach. He stated that over 400 people will be involved. He commented that there is street parking and two buss locations. Mr. Engle added that the sheriff's department and Special Olympics are involved. He noted that the Park Department is quite involved in this.

Mr. Gunderson commented that around 1000 people are expected total at the event. He noted that over \$50,000 has been raised. He noted that this is an event that focuses on their parks.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mr. Engle stated that the grant for Wedgewood Trail off of Round Lake Boulevard is to add a solar light that is activated by pushing a button. He stated that this is the first of its kind in Minnesota and area cities are taking note. He stated that this was funded by the DNR Ship Grant. He noted that this will be a trail enhancement.

Chairman Arntson asked for an update on the bridge at the Wexford trail. Mr. Engle explained that there is no information to report on this as no decisions have been made. He stated that it is a county project.

Commissioner McAlpine asked about Riverwind Park and the girl scouts who presented a project there. Mr. Engle stated that there have been more ongoing discussions and things are starting to move forward. He offered to provide a future update.

7. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER MCALPINE, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER HECHT, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 7:32 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Gregg Engle
Parks Supervisor