

**REGULAR MEETING
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
City of Oakdale
October 15 , 2019**

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Oakdale Parks and Recreation Commission was held on Tuesday, October 15, 2019, at Oakdale City Hall, 1584 Hadley Avenue, Oakdale, Minnesota. The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Cunningham at 7:00 PM.

CALL OF ROLL

On a call of roll, the following were present:

Vice Chair: Janet Cunningham

Commissioners: Jane Klein
Paul Lockhart
James Roettger
Jenny Nyberg
Debbie Xiong

Also Present: Colleen Swedberg, City Council
Brian Bachmeier, Public Works Director
Jeff Koesling, Parks Superintendent
Julie Williams, Recreation Superintendent
Melissa Turnquist, Resident

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES : Regular Meeting, September 17 , 2019

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER KLEIN, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER NYBERG TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 17 , 2019 AS PRESENTED.

6 AYES 0 NAYS

CITY COUNCIL UPDATE - Colleen Swedberg

Councilmember Swedberg is looking forward to receiving the five year plan for the budget from the Parks and Recreation Commission. She also is looking forward to hearing the OAA proposal that Commissioner Lockhart will be presenting tonight.

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Councilmember Swedberg replied to a question made by Commissioner Lockhart and said that there is no word yet on an additional member joining the commission.

Vice Chair Cunningham reported that a park tour was unable to be scheduled in September or October due to weather. The tour may have to wait until spring. If a date is decided sooner, she will inform Councilmember Swedberg.

OAKDALE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION (OAA) PROPOSAL - Paul Lockhart

Paul Lockhart informed the commission that he is the President of the OAA Board. He has held that position for one year, served two years as Vice President, and was the Director of Sports for seven years. He pointed out that some of the OAA's League Directors and Gambling Director are in the audience tonight.

The Association decided on their gambling side to spend any money within a 12 month fiscal year. With gambling doing well, there is an abundance of money. The City of Oakdale allows use of their fields to the OAA for free. The OAA wants to give back to the City of Oakdale by trying to help improve recreation in our parks at the ball, football, and soccer fields.

The Board and the City will choose a park or two per year, depending on what needs to be done at each of the parks. The OAA will donate the money for the improvements to those parks.

Bearth Field at Tanners Lake Park - Mr. Lockhart presented that the first location decided on as an Association is Bearth Field. It is a cleaner, newer field, but needs lots of work.

The first proposal is fixing the erosion areas behind the dugouts by adding a larger concrete slab with drain tile beneath. It is hard to use the dugout when it is underwater. The OAA is working with Parks Superintendent Jeff Koesling on the best, and most cost effective solution. Finding the source of the water will help stop the problem.

The second item is the fencing behind the backstops. Over time, with the field sitting on a pond, the pipes are pushing out of the ground and cement slabs are heaving upward. The fence can be replaced or removed and the dirt line be extended, or the area re-cemented. Or the other proposal would be to drive the pipes and fencing down to secure the ballfield, or loosen the fittings and slide the fencing down to grade level to keep the balls inside in the park.

There is also an eroded area in the third baseline dugout. We need to figure out why the erosion is happening and fix it, replace the earth, and add grass back.

In the infield area, black dirt needs to be added and leveled off to prevent a tripping hazard. The pitching mound also needs to be measured for the right height.

Lastly, is adding first and third base dugouts. Mr. Koesling had sent a catalog that included kits to build dugouts that include fencing around the first and third base bench. They look

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similar to the dugouts at the Walton Fields; they have a roof and fencing on the backside. Fence is desired over solid brick because there is less risk for spray paint vandalism.

The OAA has talked with Jeff Koesling, Public Works Director Brian Bachmeier, and the Mayor on starting the process and logistics; how to get the project approved, have the money funneled through the city, and protecting the OAA in their giving of money. The OAA's lawyers have cleared the project, as long as the money is given back to the kids.

The project will start in 2020, hopefully early spring. The project's start is at the mercy of the fencing company's schedule. It was attempted to begin in 2019 but rain pushed it out.

Mr. Lockhart replied to a question made by Commissioner Nyberg, and said that the next park the OAA will likely consider for improvements is Northdale Park. This is dependent on receiving commitment from the sports directors to utilize the field more. It is not worth investing if no one plays on it. If not Northdale, Walton would be looked at. Likely one field at a time at Walton, so the park can still be utilized. Decisions would be ran through Jeff Koesling and the City Council.

The next phase of this project is for the commission to ask any questions they may have, form a recommendation for the council, and then receive approval from Council.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER KLEIN, SECONDED BY VICE CHAIR CUNNINGHAM TO APPROVE THE OAKDALE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION PROPOSAL TO MAKE IMPROVEMENTS AT THE TANNERS LAKE PARK BEARTH FIELD FOR COUNCIL CONSIDERATION .

6 AYES 0 NAYS

2020-2024 PARK CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM - Brian Bachmeier

Public Works Director Brian Bachmeier followed up on August discussions regarding the draft five year CIP for years 2020-2024. In September, the City Council reviewed the draft, comments were shared at the October workshop with the Parks and Recreation Commission, and the revised CIP reflects those comments.

Projects Identified for 2020 - Generally, the changes made focus on Walton Park and are reflected in 2020. These include the warming house, rink resurfacing, ballfield repaving, repairs, and backstop replacements on complex fields one through four, and the suggestion to postpone the LED lighting upgrades to 2022 (a fiscal decision to balance expenditures).

Projects Identified for 2021 - Parking lot projects that are funded using GO Bonds and do not draw on the Park Reserve Fund.

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Projects Identified for 2022 - Resurfacing the Walton Park Skatepark, Walton Ballfield LED lighting upgrade, and acquiring the Brockman Property next to Bethke Park. The Brockman Property would be funded using the Open Space Fund.

Projects Identified for 2023 - Reroofing the three Walton Shelters. Replacement is recommended because of the age of the asphalt shingles and vandalism.

Projects Identified for 2024 - The Passages of Oakdale Park Development was programmed so as not to lose sight of the project. This project was studied, and a plan was developed in 2016. It was tabled, as it is a major investment of three to five million dollars.

Mr. Bachmeier informed that the revenue projections generate \$200,000 to \$210,000 each year. He explained the expenditures per year coming out of the Park Reserve Fund. In 2020, the starting balance is \$488,000, with expenditures totaling \$374,000, meaning that \$114,000 will carry over. In 2021, the starting balance is \$310,000 and there are limited expenditures. In 2022, the starting balance is \$310,000 and the expenditure of the LED lighting upgrade will result in a deficit of \$44,000. In 2023, the expenditures are a little less than the revenue, and a balance is coming back. In 2024, the major expenditure of The Passages of Oakdale is exceeding budget but is programmed for consideration as we move forward.

He elaborated on the deficit of \$44,000 shown in 2022. He said that the Parks without Borders Fund of \$15,000 per year for 2020, 2021, and 2022 is not designated for any particular park improvement but was made available in case something came up that the Park Commission wanted to address. In August, there was a request from a resident to install a swing set in Tilsen Park. The resident is in the audience to share her story tonight. That project would come out of the Parks without Borders Fund. With, or without that project, we are seeing a deficit two years out.

Vice Chair Cunningham asked what budget paid for the relining at the Eastside Tennis Courts.

Director Bachmeier replied that the project was paid out of the Operating Budget. Every month, expenditures are tracked compared to the budget for the year. Due to cost savings, a slight surplus was running in the Operating Budget. An identified project we could do this year was selected so it didn't carry over. It did not come out of the Capital Budget.

Commissioner Lockhart noticed that the Titan Park land had money in the budget for a tot-5 park. He asked where the unused funds went.

Mr. Bachmeier answered that the funds are reflected in the balance carried over from 2019. If the funds are not expended, the balance is a dedicated fund, so it carries over into future park capital projects.

Commissioner Lockhart asked if the Park Reserve Fund can be increased.

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Mr. Bachmeier replied that the Council is aware of the needs and recognizes they have to balance all the needs of the community.

Commissioner Klein asked if the parcel of land were sold, if the money would go into the Park Reserve Fund.

Mr. Bachmeier answered that was part of the commission recommendation, but is still a question that needs to be answered. The Council is considering the request. An appraiser was hired who is doing the appraisal now. We hope to get the results in the next several weeks. We are also working with the City Attorney.

Commissioner Roettger asked about the use of GO Bonds, how the bonds are retired, and what the purpose of the bonds are. His concern is having bonding used for maintenance. Generally bonding is used for purchasing new capital improvements. Are we using bonds the way we are supposed to?

Director Bachmeier explained that GO Bonds, or General Obligation Bonds, are paid back by the property taxes of all the residents within the community. The former Finance Director did identify that a very legitimate use of GO Bonds is to finance street reconstruction every year and expanding that into park reconstruction. It requires special assessments in order to sell GO Bonds. Partnering the street and park improvements gives us that opportunity.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER KLEIN, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LOCKHART TO APPROVE THE 2020-2024 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN AS PRESENTED AND DISCUSSED .

6 AYES 0 NAYS

Director Bachmeier will take the recommendation to, and continue discussions with the Council.

ADOPTION OF NEW BYLAWS - Julie Williams

Recreation Superintendent Williams presented the new changes to the bylaws, codes, and appointment policy that the Council approved during their September work session. The Council asks the commission to adopt these new bylaws. She discussed the three major changes.

- The quorum is now defined as a majority of members, rather than a specific number of members.
- A special election procedure now is in place for the Chairperson.
- The order of business categories are consolidated, and the pledge of allegiance is added.

Mrs. Williams will check on the specific number of days needed to post a quorum in advance of the meeting for Vice Chair Cunningham.

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A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER LOCKHART, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER XIONG TO ADOPT THE NEW BYLAWS .

6 AYES 0 NAYS

PARKS UPDATE - Jeff Koesling

Winterizing - Parks Superintendent Koesling reported that crews have been winterizing buildings and irrigation systems. There were some issues at the main complex with breaks and repairs. The last building to winterize will be completed as soon as the Oakdale Adult Softball Association wraps up. October 28 is the last day if the weather cooperates.

Soccer and Football Fields - Soccer and football will be ending in the next couple weeks. After the seasons wrap up, crews will take down and store the nets.

Park Clean Up - Parks Crews and Streets Crews will be coordinating their work again to clean streets and parks side by side.

Discovery Center Siding - The first week of November, the siding will be replaced at the Discovery Center. The cedar siding will be removed due to bird damage. Next week, City Forester Loren Cota and his crew will clear out five to eight feet around the whole building. What they cut down is okay to cut this time of the year as it will grow back. The completion of the project will be two to three weeks from tear off. It won't interfere with the Flashlight Pumpkin Hunt. The colors will match what is there with the garage; two tone gray and brown. This project is long overdue and the siding will be replaced with James Hardie Cement. The woodpeckers won't touch it.

RECREATION UPDATE - Julie Williams

Farmers Market - Recreation Superintendent Williams informed that the season wrapped up on October 2. The last Wednesday did not have ideal weather, but a few hardy vendors showed up and moved their products out. Overall, it was a good market season. Nathan Timmons does a fantastic job coordinating the market. A number of vendors will be returning to the Indoor Market in November.

Flashlight Pumpkin Hunt - The big Halloween event will take place Thursday, October 24, from 7 to 8:30 PM at the Discovery Center. The kids hunt for pumpkins along the luminary lit trails of the Oakdale Nature Preserve. Lots of different entertainment and activities are planned for kids. There are openings and registrations are being taken through Friday.

Pumpkin Carving Contest - Open to all ages and skill levels, the pumpkins will be displayed during the Flashlight Pumpkin Hunt where people will vote for winners at the event. Prizes are awarded in three categories; best, spookiest, and the 12 & under Bumpkin Pumpkin. Pumpkins are accepted at the Discovery Center beginning Saturday, October 19 through October 23 during building hours.

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Artist of the Month - Oakdale resident and photographer Les Larson is displaying his photographs of animals, birds, and a variety of farm scenes. Les does the Chicken Keeping classes at the Discovery Center a couple times a year. We are happy to have him.

Art Discovery Fair- On Saturday, November 2, from 10 AM to 3 PM, the 7th Annual Art Fair will feature the work of over 20 artists. There will be a variety of paintings, photographs, pottery, wooden ornaments, jewelry, crafts, hand dyed clothing, and more. With 23 vendors, the artist booths are all full. There will be live music by the 2 Sisters and Jennifer Lane Ensemble.

Indoor Market - The first market will be Saturday, November 23 from 9 AM to 1 PM. The market will run on a biweekly basis through March 21. A large number of returning vendors are expected, with a few new vendors depending on space. The vendor list will be added to the web in November.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Wellness 50+ Recipe Share - Vice Chair Cunningham informed that recipes can be emailed to oakdalewellness50@yahoo.com by October 31.

Wellness 50+ Living Well with Chronic Conditions - Vice Chair Cunningham informed that classes will take place starting Tuesday, October 22 through November 26 from 6 to 8:30 PM. Those interested do not need to be 50 plus (the 50+ events are open to all ages), and can register at www.oakdalefun.com or by calling 651-747-3860.

REQUEST FOR A SWING SET AT TILSEN PARK - Melissa Turnquist

Commissioner Nyberg invited a resident to approach the podium for comment.

Melissa Turnquist identified herself as a 22 year Oakdale resident. She resides on Upper 35th Street, across the street from Tilsen Park, and has been there for seven years. She had lived 15 years on Hale Avenue near Eberle Park prior. She shared her interest to add swings to Tilsen Park, as a lot of other Oakdale parks have swings.

Her belief is that the playground equipment is underutilized by residents because it does not lure passerbys with entertainment value. Kids of all ages enjoy swings. She asked for consideration of infant, adolescent, and platform swings. Those who have special needs, such as her daughter Nicole (age 22), benefit from swings because they help with balance, sensory integration, calmness, are self-soothing, and provide entertainment. She wrote to Public Works Director Brian Bachmeier on August 8, including images of the park, as she believes there is plenty of room to add swings.

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The ballfield at the park is used all the time for soccer and t-ball, but that use isn't seen in the playground. She hopes for consideration and funds to add swings. She is willing to do homework, speak to neighbors and start a petition, and answer any questions the commission may have.

Vice Chair Cunningham recalled the request for swings at Tilsen at their August meeting and said the next step would be to add the item to the agenda.

Director Bachmeier explained the Parks without Borders Fund to P. Lockhart. The fund is a dedicated fund, and unused money stays in the Park Fund. In response to the commission's questions if the money was used for the dog park this year, Mr. Bachmeier replied no, that there was a sufficient balance reflected in 2019 for the \$30,000 dog park. The total expenditures for 2019 were \$125,000; less than revenue for the year. So the \$15,000 Parks without Borders Fund is still available.

Commissioner Lockhart recalled that the bid for swings at Tilsen was approximately \$15,000.

Mr. Bachmeier expanded that the Oakfield Park swing set was \$5,000. When adding in the border and bedding, the total project would be approximately \$15,000.

Councilmember Swedberg asked if that price would include platform swings.

Mr. Bachmeier replied that the price would include swings, the structure, a border, and ADA accessible bedding.

Mr. Koesling added that new structures cannot be installed with sand because it is not ADA accessible. Wood mulch is okay.

Melissa Turnquist asked if there is a cost effective soft platform. Her daughter plays at Miracle Field for special needs individuals in Woodbury off of Bielenberg Drive. The soft field there has gotten a lot of attention, and other communities are adding soft fields in suit.

Mr. Koesling added that the poured rubber material is very nice. It is extremely expensive, but it is durable.

Commissioner Lockhart said chips may be appropriate at a smaller park. In the future, poured rubber could be considered at Walton Park.

Mr. Bachmeier observed that poured rubber is found in high use parks, such as the Washington County Lake Elmo Park Reserve.

Mr. Koesling agreed and added that the pool and swimming beach are located next to it. He replied to a request made by Commissioner Lockhart and said that the commission can receive a quote for the swing set and chips project at Tilsen for 2020.

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Melissa Turnquist said she would be extremely satisfied getting something like that; swings in at Tilsen, and she wouldn't want the barrier of an expensive platform to weigh in on the overall project.

Commissioner Roettger requested to add the Tilsen swings to the agenda for the next meeting with an emphasis on looking at the special needs aspect of it. For the most part, the commission is getting good at taking it into account, but the aging parks haven't addressed needs of special needs kids. This is something important in our parks; to have an area they have access to and the more we can include them in society to the extent of their capabilities. He shared that he has a special needs grandchild and sympathizes with exploring that aspect of the project.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER ROETTGER, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER XIONG TO ADD THE TILSEN SWING SET, EMPHASIZING THE SPECIAL NEEDS ASPECT OF THE PROJECT, TO THE NOVEMBER AGENDA.

6 AYES 0 NAYS

ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER LOCKHART, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER NYBERG TO ADJOURN THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION, DATED OCTOBER 15, 2019, AT 7:46 P.M.

6 AYES 0 NAYS

Respectfully submitted,
Laura Linzmeyer