

*Approved*

**CITY OF MENDOTA HEIGHTS  
DAKOTA COUNTY, MINNESOTA**

**PARKS AND RECREATION MEETING**

**November 13, 2008**

The November 2008 meeting of the Mendota Heights Parks and Recreation Commission was held on Thursday, November 13, 2008, in the City Council Chambers at City Hall, 1101 Victoria Curve. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 P.M.

The following Commissioners were present, Chair Paul Portz, Tom Kraus, Ray Morris, Larry Craighead, and Michael Toth. Excused were Commissioners Maureen Brackey and Liz O'Brien. Staff present were: Jake Sedlacek, Assistant to the City Administrator, Teresa Gangelhoff, Recreation Programmer, and Nancy Bauer, Recording Secretary.

**AGENDA**

Chair Portz added an item at the end of the agenda to discuss the clean water act that passed in the November election.

**MINUTES:**

Commissioner Craighead made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Morris.

**AYES: 5**  
**NAYES: 0**

**PARKS AND RECREATION REPORT**

Chair Portz reported on December 29th there is a winter youth trip for bowling and a movie. On December 30<sup>th</sup> there is a trip to Nickelodeon Universe at the Mall of America.

Ms. Gangelhoff responded there are 20 spots open with flyers going out the schools.

Chair Portz said there is a simple steps program.

Ms. Gangelhoff reported that it is a walking program for adults. There was a meeting today to discuss getting kids involved in a program called "No child left inside" and track a 5<sup>th</sup> grade class in Mendota Heights.

Chair Portz said there is a Jingle Bells event.

Ms. Gangelhoff said it is held at the South St. Paul with Mrs. Claus.

Commissioner Craighead asked about the holiday event at the Village.

Mr. Sedlacek said that it was being held on December 6<sup>th</sup> from 3:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M. with all the stores participating. There will be sleigh rides; tree lighting and Santa will visit.

*Approved*

Commissioner Craighead asked if the Village event should be promoted by the parks.

Ms. Gangelhoff responded it is not a parks program.

Chair Portz reported that there is “a learn to skate” program.

Ms. Gangelhoff responded that Mendota Heights is one of a few cities left that offers outdoor skating lessons.

Chair Portz reported that the Parks Celebration is in June.

Ms. Gangelhoff said she is working with Ms. McConnell who is running the school district’s 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary. They are trying to coordinate events. The Parks Celebration time might be moved from 11:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. instead of noon to 3:00 P.M. because of an event the school district wants to hold at 3:00 P.M. An alumni golf tournament at the Par 3 is being discussed. She is also looking for volunteers and ideas.

Chair Portz said that weather permitting the ice rinks are set to open on December 13<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Gangelhoff said the hours are 4:00 P.M. to 8:30 P.M. when school is in session, Saturdays are 9:00 A.M. to 8:30 P.M., Sundays are 12:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M. and on school vacation days the hours are 12:00 P.M. to 8:30 P.M.

Commissioner Morris asked if the hours were on the website.

Ms. Gangelhoff responded they were.

Commissioner Morris said the website is [www.mendota-heights.com](http://www.mendota-heights.com).

Ms. Gangelhoff reported that Steve Garvey the tennis coach resigned and moved to Florida. Today a she hired Terry Olson as the new tennis coach. He currently works at Harding and used to coach tennis at Highland High School. The tennis program will stay the same.

Ms. Gangelhoff said she handed out some information on new programs she is thinking about. One is the MinnAqua Fishing Education that she would like to hold with the fishing derby. Before the derby there could be a class about identifying fish. Another program is geocaching. There are items being hidden in Mendota Heights. Funding is needed to start the program.

Commissioner Craighead said he spoke at one of the meetings about six months ago because someone asked about it.

Ms. Gangelhoff said that geocaching is a treasure hunt with a handheld GPS system and you use the coordinates to find the hidden treasure. Once the treasure is found you sign a log and put it back for someone else to find.

Chair Portz asked what funding would be needed for.

Ms. Gangelhoff responded to hold classes and purchase the handheld GPS systems to borrow out with a damage deposit. These are some of the ideas that are being thought about.

*Approved*

Chair Portz said he and Mr. Sedlacek were talking about adding programs to the parks and this could be one of them.

Ms. Gangelhoff said she is thinking about this and wondering where to get started with it. It could be a family thing to do in the parks.

Commissioner Kraus said it would be neat to create a simple prize and establish locations in the parks.

Commissioner Morris suggested a plastic coin with the city logo.

Chair Portz suggested having a geocaching program at a park and hide a dozen things; everyone shows up at noon, gets the coordinates and tries to find the treasure. This could be one or two hour program.

Ms. Gangelhoff suggested hiding things in all the parks.

Commissioner Morris suggested having lists of buried treasure coordinates on the city website and kids could find it, turn it in their findings at city hall and win a prize.

## **VICTORIA HIGHLANDS PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT**

Chair Portz started the discussion saying that Mendota Heights has beautiful parks. The Parks and Recreation Commissions responsibility is to keep the playground equipment up to today's codes. The equipment at Victoria Highlands Park is getting old, timbers are breaking up, contains creosote and the pea gravel needs to go. The equipment should be a quality product that is functional and aesthetically pleasing. If a decision is made tonight on the equipment it could be bought at 2008 pricing.

Mr. Sedlacek said one playground is usually redone a year and this year it was Rogers Lake. It was suggested that Victoria Highlands be approved this year instead of waiting a year since it is the last playground to be done. It was suggested that proposals be submitted from different companies to get a fresh look at the equipment out there. No decision needs to be made tonight, but there will be a cost savings if we order it now instead of in 2009.

Chair Portz asked if the equipment was installed at Friendly Hills that was approved in September.

Mr. Sedlacek it will be installed in the spring of 2009.

Mr. Sedlacek showed some pictures that Commissioner Craighead took of Victoria Highlands Park.

Commissioner Craighead said there are already two picnic tables at the park that can be moved. There are also benches in the park. The benches are old and splintering. They could be refurbished by Public Works or it may be cheaper to purchase new ones. There is also a small child's spring toy horse that possibly could be used again. The old equipment has metal posts with rust showing. The equipment is showing its age. There are 30 foot tall maple trees. The shade shelter costs about \$4,000 and would be good for seven to ten years and is not needed at the park.

*Approved*

Commissioner Morris suggested that the maintenance crew could work on the benches over the winter and agrees with Commissioner Craighead that a shade shelter is not needed. Out of the two quotes the second quote by Minnesota Wisconsin did not include the shade shelter. It seems like with Minnesota Wisconsin you are getting more bang for your buck. We have a good relation with Earl F. Anderson but it might be good to try a new vendor. Competition is a good thing.

Commissioner Craighead reported that the new proposals were to include 2-5 year old play equipment and split out the cost of the shade shelter.

Commissioner Toth asked when the playground equipment was installed at Hagstrom King Park if a shade shelter was discussed since there are no mature trees there for shade.

Commissioner Craighead said it was not discussed.

Commissioner Toth said there is still a question whether or not a shade shelter is needed since there are already shade trees there.

Commissioner Craighead said some parks have a shelter with a roof. None of the parks have a canopy shelter. A picnic table would cost about \$250.00 and to plant a 2-1/2' tree would be about \$300-\$500.

Commissioner Toth asked if a canopy shelter could be put in at Hagstrom King Park where there is no shelter or shade.

Commissioner Morris suggested that a shade shelter be put in at Hagstrom-King Park and trees be planted and when the shade shelter needs to be replaced there will be shade trees growing.

Commissioner Kraus asked why the shade shelter was included in these proposals.

Chair Portz responded he thought it was included because it's a popular feature.

Commissioner Morris suggested that the shade shelter be thought about next year for Hagstrom-King Park.

Chair Portz asked the Commission how they felt about the 2-5 year old play equipment.

Commissioner Craighead said it's nice to have and maybe the old equipment could be kept and reinstalled. It's a plus having equipment there that meets a wider range of age brackets.

Commissioner Morris said both bids have 2-5 year old play equipment included.

Commissioner Morris said he didn't know if the old equipment for 2-5 year olds would be up to code.

Chair Portz said he is hearing the shade shelter is out, 2-5 year old play equipment should be included. Which vendor should we go with?

Chair Portz said Earl F. Anderson has been used a lot by the city and is used by the school district.

Commissioner Craighead said one plan has a cement border and one has recycled timbers.

*Approved*

Mr. Sedlacek said that Rogers Lake has recycled timbers. If the Commission was leaning towards Game Time (Minnesota Wisconsin) maybe the shelter could be taken out and concrete border could be used for mowing purposes.

Commissioner Morris said the concrete border is about \$4,000 cheaper than the recycled timbers.

Commissioner Craighead said he could go either way when picking a contractor for the playground equipment.

Commissioner Kraus said the 2-5 year old play equipment is a little more comprehensive in Earl F. Anderson's proposal than Game Time's.

Commissioner Morris said Game Time has more slides.

Commissioner Kraus said the slides are for older kids and said he prefers Earl F. Anderson's proposal.

Commissioner Toth said he prefers Minnesota Wisconsin Playground proposal because it looks nice.

Chair Portz said he prefers Earl F. Anderson's proposal because we have had success with them. Aesthetically it seems more complete and more polished.

Commissioner Toth said with Earl F. Anderson's equipment you can see the bolts. With Game Time (Minnesota Wisconsin) the bolts are recessed.

Commissioner Craighead said he was leaning towards Earl F. Anderson's proposal because there is more 2-5 year old play equipment.

Commissioner Morris made a motion to accept the bid from Earl F. Anderson for \$50,000, rehabbing some of the benches in-house if possible, reusing the 2-5 year old play equipment, if it meets code and is in good condition.

Commissioner Craighead asked if something should be said about Hagstrom-King Park in the motion.

Chair Portz said that should be saved for another day.

Mr. Sedlacek asked for which proposal was included in the motion.

Commissioner Morris responded 0095335 without the shade element.

Commissioner Craighead said they wanted the 2-5 year old play equipment.

Mr. Sedlacek said it was proposal 0096243 without the shade structure and with the concrete sidewalk. Total cost is \$53,999.00 minus the shade structure.

Commissioner Morris said Mr. Kullander should check with maintenance to rehab the benches at the park.

*Approved*

Commissioner Morris said the correct proposal number is 0096245.

Commissioner Morris restated his motion that Earl F. Anderson's proposal 0096245 be accepted, delete the three shade trees on the site, and direct Mr. Kullander to see if the old 2-5 year old play equipment can be reused, and have Mr. Kullander talk to maintenance about rehabbing two of the fixed benches at the park with new wooden seat elements and ½ of the funding come from the Cell Tower Fund and ½ from the Special Park Funds.

Commissioner Toth said with proposal 0096245 the amount is \$53,999.00.

Commissioner Morris said it would be less because the trees are being taken out of the proposal. It will have a concrete sidewalk which would be easier to mow around.

Commissioner Kraus said that the bump up in price is the 2-5 year old play equipment.

Commissioner Craighead seconded the motion.

Commissioner Kraus asked if the bench rehab needed to be included in the motion.

Commissioner Morris said he would delete that part of the motion because that could be worked out with staff.

**AYES 5**

**NAYS 0**

### **PAR 3**

Mr. Sedlacek reported that the Mendota Heights Par 3 was closed for the season on Tuesday, November 4<sup>th</sup>. The number of rounds play decreased in October. Money was lost in the month of October. Expenditures exceeded revenues by \$11,145.00. Bills paid were work done in September for aerating, fertilizing, and bunker rehabilitation. There was also a third payroll for the month. At the end of October there were \$120,645.20 in expenditures and \$184,852.66 in revenues leaving a net total of \$64,207.46. Administrative costs will be figured for the year and should be about \$23,344.00.

Commissioner Morris asked if administrative costs were included in the cash flow worksheet.

Mr. Sedlacek said they were not, but the amount is for the year is 2008. It would have been good to have those costs in the cash flow worksheet. There was a new mower purchase for \$7,000.00. Four trees were planted near Dodd Road for \$1,300.00. The total operating expense for 2008 will be close to \$131,000.00.

Commissioner Morris said there were a lot of capital expenses for improvements.

Mr. Sedlacek said it was hoped to carry over \$40,000 a year but this year it will be \$30,000. The maintenance budget will go down next year. 551 rounds of golf were played in October up from 473 in October 2007. Year to date 12,164 rounds played, slightly up from last year which was 11,970 which does not include leagues, camps and lessons. The clubhouse improvements are being finalized which took longer than anticipated. There are landscape issues and installing the alarm system correctly with bills coming in for these items.

*Approved*

Chair Portz says it had been a successful year.

Mr. Sedlacek said the annual report should be out in January.

Commissioner Craighead asked what expenditures were anticipated for next year.

Mr. Sedlacek responded more tree work needs to be done. Diseased trees need to be removed. The roof is bad on the club house. A question that will come up when the roof is being redone - would be whether or not the clubhouse should be insulated. Mr. Murphy would like to continue work on the greens in the spring. A mower should be replaced. Tee signs are in terrible shape. The monument sign should be fixed or replaced. The irrigation system was installed in 1981 and is old. The well is also old, needs to be maintained and was enclosed in the maintenance building.

Chair Portz said the Par 3 sign top is broken off, faded and something with better quality is needed.

Commissioner Craighead said work on the sign could be done over the winter such as the design and getting it built so that it could be installed in the spring.

Commissioner Toth asked the cost of the tee signs.

Mr. Sedlacek responded that there have been quotes received, one is for \$2,500 (from the ones who originally did the signs) the signs are a sand blasted poly styrene that lasts a little longer than wood. There was a \$1,000 quote for aluminum signs. There was a \$5,000 quote for a redwood blasted sign. The greens committee has asked for samples materials so they can make a recommendation to the Parks and Recreation Commission. A quote has not been received for the monument sign yet. The landscape architect would like a wish list of items for plantings at the golf course. She would like to meet soon to get ideas to the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Chair Portz said the pond was overgrown looks like a jungle and something needs to be done with it.

Mr. Sedlacek said the pond is a foot deep all the way across and holds its water well.

Chair Portz said that it needs to be upgraded.

Mr. Sedlacek said he received a quote for working on the pond from Top Notch Tree Care that works with water features. Top Notch Tree Care would like to come in and talk to the Parks and Recreation Commission about ideas and costs.

### **PAR 3 FEE INCREASES**

Mr. Sedlacek reported that the weekday average cost of golf is \$12.36 for courses similar to the Par 3. The Par 3 rate is \$9.00 a round during weekdays. We came under target for the amount of money carried over to the next year. Our rounds of golf were up this year, but nationwide it was down. Staff recommends some kind of rate increase for standard golf players. The Greens Committee also agrees. If the fees are increased by \$1.00 Par 3 would still be under the average to play a round of golf.

*Approved*

Commissioner Morris said he wouldn't recommend raising the fees for seniors or juniors especially with the recession. The course does have needs. Depending on the economy next year, there may be fewer players next year.

Commissioner Craighead supported Commissioner Morris' comments and asked if the golf course is suppose to make money or be a break even enterprise. This year there was a \$2.50 to \$3.00 per round profit looking at the amount of money at the end of this year.

Mr. Sedlacek responded that according to the City Council it is suppose to be a break even enterprise. Any money the golf course makes stays with the golf course. If we pulled in more money than the rates can be decreased.

Commissioner Craighead said that this year ended with \$30,000.

Mr. Sedlacek that there is \$30,000 from operations and around \$11,000 left from the capital that will be sent on the siding and roofing.

Chair Portz reported that it was hoped to have a \$40,000 reserve. The \$1.00 increase not affecting children or seniors might total only \$4,000 or \$5,000 which is not a lot money.

Commissioner Kraus asked about making money or being a break even operation - what period of time is being talked about because one year could be good and the next year could be a bad year. If the bar is set at being at zero there may be a rainy season the next year and money may have to come from the city budget to make improvements.

Commissioner Toth asked what would happen if there was no money from the golf course to pay for expenditures at the golf course.

Mr. Sedlacek said it would have to be decided if the city would pay for the golf course expenditures.

Commissioner Toth said the well and irrigation systems are being talked about and they are huge items.

Mr. Sedlacek said if the golf course were operating at a deficit than it might be discussed whether or not to keep it as a golf course.

Commissioner Kraus made a motion to adopt the proposed fee schedule.

Commissioner Craighead seconded the motion.

Commissioner Morris asked whether the junior or senior fees on the weekends would change.

Mr. Sedlacek said it does not change.

Commissioner Morris said that the Commission has to be careful and City Council needs to monitor the process if people aren't playing golf because of the economy.

**AYES 5**

**NAYS 0**

*Approved*

## **PILOT KNOB EVENT - VERBAL PRESENTATION**

Mr. Sedlacek showed pictures of the Great River Greening event at the Pilot Knob site. Volunteers were cleaning out weeds, planting seeds and moving rocks.

Chair Portz said it was a great day and a tour was given of the site by Mr. Buck who gave a talk about the plants, where they are going to go with them and showed the volunteers the snake hibernacula. At the end there was food, a nice presentation and songs.

## **DECEMBER PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTION MEETING**

Chair Portz said he was pleased with the business done at tonight's meeting and the Commission deserves December off.

Mr. Sedlacek asked Commissioner Morris if his term was up.

Commissioner Morris believes it is.

Commissioner Craighead said his term limit was up and asked if he attended the January meeting.

Mr. Sedlacek said he needed to be at the January meeting and asked if Commissioner Morris would be interested in sitting on the Commission next year.

Commissioner Morris said he would be interested.

Mr. Sedlacek topics for the January meeting would be the annual report for the Par 3 and a macro view of the parks systems.

Commissioner Morris made a motion to cancel the December Parks and Recreation meeting.

Commissioner Toth seconded the motion.

**AYES 5**

**NAYS 0**

## **CLEAN WATER ACT**

Chair Portz said the clean water act passed in the general election which he thought wouldn't pass because of the tough economic times. It shows what Minnesotans thinks of the great resources that the state has and shows that people want to take care of the great amenities we have in the state. There should be great things done with the money raised. All this money will be spent on natural resources; parks and trails. There will be a commission to allocate where the money is going. There have been 80 applications for the commission. This could benefit Mendota Heights and the city should keep its eyes open for any opportunities for grants.

## **COMMISSION COMMENTS**

Commissioner Toth asked Mr. Sedlacek if he had any updates on Hagstrom King Park for the fence and backstop.

*Approved*

Mr. Sedlacek said he would check with Mr. Kullander.

Chair Portz commented that he saw the presentation Mr. Fefercorn made to the City Council regarding the retailers and activities going on at the Village of Mendota Heights. He learned that there is underground parking. The community should support and enjoy the Village. He tried Tommy Chicago's pizza and liked it, bought cheese at the cheese shop and bought wine at the wine store. The clock is going to be put in soon which will change colors. It is a great amenity for the community. The Parks and Recreation Commission made sure there was open green space for people to enjoy.

Commissioner Craighead said he enjoys the village also.

Commissioner Kraus made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Commissioner Morris seconded the motion.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 P.M.

**AYES 5**

**NAYS 0**