

**City of Inver Grove Heights Minutes of the Proceedings
Of The Park and Recreation Advisory Commission
Wednesday, July 11, 2012**

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Eiden called the July 11, 2012 Park and Recreation Advisory Commission Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL:

Present: Chair Al Eiden; Vice Chair Dennis Schueller; Commissioners: Chris Solberg, Jim Huffman, Joe Boehmer, Willie Krech, and Mary Hapka
Parks and Recreation Director Eric Carlson

Absent: Commissioners Stan Johnson and Desta Meyer; Recording Clerk Sheri Yourczek

Park and Recreation Director Eric Carlson stated that Commissioner Meyer did not contact him about attending or not attending this evening's meeting, but she did inform him that she will be moving out of Inver Grove Heights soon. She has not resigned or moved yet, but he does expect her to do both in the near future.

3. PRESENTATIONS:

A. Minnesota Recreation and Park Association Award of Excellence

Director Carlson stated the Park and Recreation Department recently received two awards from the MN Recreation Park Association under their Award of Excellence Program. One of the rewards was given for the Random Acts of Fitness Program. City Staff goes out in the Community occasionally and looks for people that are doing something healthy, like using the trails, playing tennis, using the parks system, etc. We want people out and doing healthy things for themselves, once we find someone doing so, they are awarded and attention is brought to them for partaking in a form of physical fitness. The second award was from the Park and Facility Portion of the award program for the Rock Island Swing Bridge. As you know, it was recently closed due to the construction of 66th Street. That is now complete. Water and sewer are now in place for the future building that will be constructed by Dakota County. All trails planned are now in place. The overlook is in place. The stairs are coming and construction will start next week. These two awards are awarded annually by the MNRPA and we were lucky enough to receive them this year.

Chair Eiden showed the awards and asked where they would be shown?

Director Carlson commented they are displayed in the Park and Recreation Office at the Community Center.

Chair Eiden thinks the Random Acts of Fitness is a great program to have so we catch people doing things that are good for the Community. He also wanted to comment about the fact that Commissioner Huffman got in the paper awhile back in an article that was done on the pier. If you haven't been down there yet, you should stop by and see it. He thanked the Staff and congratulated them on the progress that has been made in town.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

A. You can find information regarding the City of Inver Grove Heights by visiting our Web Site at:

www.invergroveheights.org

B. Next Meeting: Wednesday, August 8, 2012. Regular Meeting 7:00 p.m.

5. CONSENT AGENDA:

A. Approval of Agenda

B. Approval of June 13, 2012 Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Solberg, seconded by Commissioner Huffman, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Aye: 7

Nay: 0 Motion carried.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None

8. REGULAR AGENDA:

Director Carlson suggested they move Agenda item "C" up as the first topic.

C. Review Park and Recreation System Plan Consultant Recommendation

Director Carlson stated we are interested in doing a Park and Recreation Plan Report. We made that an issue during the joint meeting with the City Council. They approved an RFP for the process. We received three proposals. They were from the following:

1. TKDA
2. HKGI
3. Brauer and Associates

The subcommittee consists of Chair Eiden, Commissioner's Solberg, and Meyer, himself, Park Superintendent Mark Borgwardt, and Recreation Superintendent Tracy Petersen. After reviewing all three proposals it was decided we hire HKGI to help us prepare this report. The group felt this was the best group for the position. They had a lot of creative ideas in how to engage the public. Their price was competitive and they happen to have the most hours to put toward the project.

Commissioner Solberg felt that HKGI was the best company that they interviewed. They did have the most hours allotted, and they had the lowest cost overall. We felt it was a very good deal. As a bonus they have done a lot of work with the City. They are familiar with us and our parks plan and the Staff. He felt it was a good choice for the long run.

Commissioner Huffman asked when the City Council said to go forth and look for a consultant, was there a price they were looking at?

Chair Eiden responded yes. It was at \$75,000.

Director Carlson commented we submitted proposals that stated we would be willing to spend up to \$75,000. They could submit proposals up to or less than that amount.

Commissioner Krech stated there was about a \$6,000 difference between the other bids. We have used the other groups before.

Chair Eiden stated we received these three proposals. Looking at these proposals, TKDA was actually his first choice on paper. All three have done work out here. We had them come in for interviews. We felt that HKGI was best suited to what we wanted done. TKDA's frame of reference was with smaller cities. He didn't think that was what we were looking for. Brauer has had good people, they were very close. It was a conversation among the committee members after. We felt we made the best choice.

Vice Chair Schueller stated when they had the assessment of the golf course there was hope that those suggestions would be better at producing revenue due to the assessment. What says this assessment will make things better?

Chair Eiden responded it won't be in terms of a revenue stream, but the purpose behind this is because of the park system. This will aid us with our over 26 parks and miles of trails, etc. Having a plan, the way it will pay for itself, it will tell us what to do and give us some priority as to what to do.

Commissioner Huffman stated he has worked with Superintendent Borgwardt on the trails and sees how they have to upkeep them. He feels they are correct in doing this.

Chair Eiden stated one of the focal points for this is that we want to get feedback from a variety of places in the public sector, organizations, people that are interested, etc. Input from the public sector is what we want.

Commissioner Krech felt that none of us are going to have time to look at all this, and then decide what we do next. Superintendent Borgwardt does do a good job of prioritizing what gets done and when. This is a great way for another to take look at what we have. This would help with the possible bandshells and Dog Park, which is what people have been asking for. This company can help with all that.

Chair Eiden commented there may be a possibility that some amenities that people want, may turn out to be revenue producers after all.

Commissioner Huffman stated one good suggestion was the trail off 66th Street. The overlook, the bike trail, etc. People are going to come.

Commissioner Hapka asked about the cost. How did you come up with that number? Did you go out to other Cities for research?

Director Carlson responded they spoke to a few other Communities that have done park system plans for their Community. They tried to price accordingly. When the RFP was sent out, they made some calls and asked if the price was competitive. A lot agreed it was. If you look at the fee structure, we are awfully close to that amount.

Commissioner Hapka asked when the proposal is completed. Would there be a portion of it that can concentrate on how to raise revenues?

Director Carlson was sure that will be part of the process going along. We are also going to ask for the public's input that might say something to that effect.

Chair Eiden stated this will probably take about a year to get the final report out. They will be talking to groups in town to find out what is going on. We will be getting some ideas in the final report.

Vice Chair Schueller stated he noticed in their report that they do have an action plan and tools for approval at the end of their process. He thinks it is important that we have good follow up on what they suggest be done, rather than take the report and leave it. He would like to see follow up committee or an oversight committee

established to make sure it is done. This can consist of people from the Community, from this Commission, and people from the Council, can be on the committee to make sure it's not being wasted.

Commissioner Krech commented that we usually don't get a lot of people to give us information on Park and Recreation. Nobody comes to Council meetings, etc. Hopefully this will help with that.

Chair Eiden stated one of the things we need to talk about in further detail was "friends of the park". You build a group of people who are interested in Parks and Recreation to help this Commission on an on-going basis. Having something like that ensures that there are always people involved that want to put things into action.

Commissioner Solberg referenced Page 12, bullet point 2.03, which talks about the funding to Commissioner Hapka.

Motion by Commissioner Solberg to move this forward to the City Council and that we hire HKGI. Seconded by Commissioner Krech.

Aye: 7

Nay: 0 Motion carried.

A. Review Playground Equipment Recommendations for Oakwood Park

Park Superintendent Mark Borgwardt stated they would like to recommend to the City Council that they replace the Oakwood Park Playground by accepting the lowest bid from St. Croix Recreation in the amount of \$54,859.00 with funds coming out of Park Maintenance Fund 444. Additional funding of \$7,000.00, also from the same fund, will be needed for additional new concrete curb and engineered wood fiber for playground surfacing. The fund was started in 2001 and Director Carlson has been instrumental in getting additional funding for that. \$150,000 from the General Fund goes into the Park Maintenance Fund. We try to budget to replace those pieces of park equipment when they are due. The Oakwood playground equipment was placed in 1997. We usually try to replace them every 15 to 20 years, so it is due for replacement. We sent specifications out to six playground vendors. We received back five quotes. Mike Carter, lead maintenance worker and playground inspector, Tracy Petersen, Recreation Superintendent, and himself reviewed the quotes. St. Croix Recreation rated the highest and had the lowest bid. We are recommending that this go to the City Council.

Commissioner Huffman asked if this is the same playground equipment that will be going in at Skyview Park?

Superintendent Borgwardt responded that is the next agenda item. All of it will all be ADA compliant and meets all Consumer Products Safety Commission Guidelines.

Commissioner Solberg asked what they do with the old equipment?

Superintendent Borgwardt responded his crew removed Skyview's, as it was getting to the point as it was dangerous to be there. That was recycled. He had a call into the League of Minnesota Cities and participated in a Webinar through them. Some of the vendors have different organizations that come in and remove, reuse, and recycle them. The League suggested not to do that as it has a liability that follows that equipment. We usually remove them and recycle them.

Commissioner Krech asked what makes engineered woodchips?

Superintendent Borgwardt responded it is double ground so that it is stringy and long so it binds together. It has been tested to be child friendly and ADA Accessible for a walker or wheelchair.

Commissioner Krech stated the reason he asked was because there is a place down by the Sportsman Guide in South St. Paul that manufactures that rubber chunk material.

Superintendent Borgwardt responded they checked into that and it is very expensive. There were concerns with the sanitary aspect of the rubber. Woodchips allow water to run through, with the rubber chunks, it kind of sits.

Commissioner Huffman asked if the playground is at the end of the cycle?

Superintendent Borgwardt responded it is. This park currently does not have an age 2 to 5 structure, as some of the other parks do. We scheduled meetings with residents and had good attendance, and great advice. One of the comments was that they wanted that age structure there as there are some daycares in the area. They heard they wanted swings, as well as play features that emphasize upper body and core conditioning. We used that in our criteria. These items would be in place of platforms. Platforms allow kids to hang out. Tube slide allows people to hide inside. We will be having more open slides with more visibility. The designs we chose are between the traditional equipment and then we have more overhead bars and climbing walls. The kids really seem to like these for upper body strength and balance. This was one of the designs the neighborhood preferred.

Motion by Commissioner Huffman to approve the playground at Oakwood Park. Seconded by Commissioner Hapka.

Aye: 7

Nay: 0 Motion carried.

B. Review Playground Equipment Recommendations for Skyview Park

Superintendent Borgwardt stated they went through the same process for equipment at Skyview Park. They got five bids and St. Croix rated high and was also the lowest bid at \$62,895.00. This playground equipment was installed in 1995. After being deferred a few times, we would like to replace that. The funding comes from a Grant from the DNR. This park will have a bigger structure. The budget there is \$78,000 as we need to replace the concrete curb. We feel this park will be a more of a Community park, because of the irrigated soccer field that will be drawing a lot more people to the park. There will be an age 2 to 5 structure and an age 5 to 12 structure. They will work with the vendor to fit it in there in a way that makes the most sense of the site, with the trees, the parking lot, etc. The neighbors also asked for some trees on the West side of the playground.

Commissioner Huffman stated the trees by the playground should be sufficient instead of a fence. It will add to the park feature.

Commissioner Hapka thanked Director Carlson for getting the Grant. It is wonderful to be looking for outside sources for revenue. Her daughter plays soccer. A lot of the kids need to go out to Rich Valley to play. With this here, kids can ride their bikes out to Skyview as it is more centrally located. It's a great place to have a field to practice on.

Commissioner Solberg asked if we would get a deal from the company since we are using them for both projects?

Superintendent Borgwardt stated that both were sent out at the same time. They did mention that since we were doing two, and if they got both bids, there would be a substantial discount. We feel we got a lot of equipment for the money. He likes the designs and the pricing. This is a reputable company.

Commissioner Huffman commented we spent a lot of money on irrigation for the field. This is to be used for soccer, lacrosse, and football. He would like to see some goalposts put in for football. Heritage Village was supposed to get a field, but they didn't. Lacrosse and soccer shouldn't push the football field away.

Superintendent Borgwardt commented the irrigation should be finished tomorrow. We are going to spray it with roundup on Friday. We have a grading contractor coming to do some work. Compost is supposed to be delivered soon. They hope to seed it the first week in August. And then they will be watering and growing it in.

Commissioner Boehmer asked what type of trees are around the tennis courts? Are those Ash trees?

Superintendent Borgwardt responded they are Silver Maple.

Commissioner Krech asked how they grade that?

Superintendent Borgwardt responded they flag the heads of the irrigation. It will be seeded with about 600 pounds of seed in two directions.

Commissioner Huffman stated there are a couple of Associations that are going to donate there. We need to make sure they are cared for.

Superintendent Borgwardt responded yes. Both Football and Soccer Associations.

Motion by Commissioner Huffman to approve the bid as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Boehmer.

Aye: 7

Nay: 0 Motion carried.

D. Review Cahill Trail Re-Construction

Superintendent Borgwardt stated as part of the 2012 Bituminous Trail and Parking Lot program, this is for the section of bituminous trail along the west side of Cahill and College Trail to Concord. That section of trail should be considered after reviewing the data that they have from a reading of the trails. \$138,000 was spent on the Highway 52 Trail, and that is completed and finished. Next on the agenda is this section of trail which was scheduled for a crack fill this year and sealcoat next year, but looking at sections of the trail, we are recommending a few parcels be done. We recommend those sections be done and the rest of the trail be crack filled and seal coated next year. He received two quotes to do the work, from Ace Blacktop and Pine Bend. Ace was \$21,015 and Pine Bend was \$22,200. We are recommending this work to go for \$22,015 to Ace taking money from the Park Maintenance Fund 444.

Commissioner Solberg stated we know how old this trail is, how old is the other portion we are not doing?

Superintendent Borgwardt stated you get about seven years on it. After 14 years we look at the trail and decide whether we want to put more money into it. We are trying to get between 20 and 25 years out of these trails. We are hoping to get on a regular maintenance program similar to those of the streets.

Commissioner Solberg asked what the remaining lifespan was on the black part of Cahill?

Superintendent Borgwardt responded that part was probably about 18 years ago? Some of Cahill Avenue just got redone due to bad soils. Not all trails are the same. Some of the soils are different depending on where you are. We hope to get another 14 years out of the section of trail we are not doing. We should get another 20 to 25 on the black section you see on the map. If you look at the trail you can see where it was constructed in different phases. It's been patched, but now it is at the point where the red sections need to be reconstructed.

Commissioner Huffman has been down in the area recently and agrees with the plan.

Motion by Commissioner Krech to accept the bid given by Ace Blacktop. Seconded by Commissioner Huffman.

Vice Chair Schueller felt that most people that walk the area tend to walk on the other side of the street. Will this be plowed in the winter? Can bikes go on this? He felt like this was a good idea.

Superintendent Borgwardt responded yes it is plowed in the winter. Bikes are allowed.

Aye: 7

Nay: 0 Motion carried.

E. Review Skyview Soccer Fence

Superintendent Borgwardt stated this is from the Skyview Grant and the Soccer Field irrigation project. There are two fields out there. One is pretty close to the south and the street, the other is close to residents on the west. We are suggesting a six foot chain link fence running from the northwest corner of Skyview Park, running it all the way down to about the street right of way, down by the rain garden. Then having another six foot fence run from there, over to approximately the other rain garden. Part of the suggestion was to put a forty five foot section of 25 foot fence behind one soccer goal, and another on the other side goal to keep balls from going into the neighbor's yards. There is some four foot fencing now on the west side on the north end. All three neighbors would want that fence removed, so we don't create a zone where we can't get in to mow and they can't into the park from their side due to their fence. Part of the proposal is to remove their fence and tie it into our six foot fence. One neighbor would like the fence to terminate at the property corner. He has a gate there that he accesses the Park with, and he doesn't want that gate removed. He is good with this as long as we don't close off his access gate. There are a couple of neighbors that do not have fencing right now, but they will then have this six foot fence. During the public meeting, some asked that we not fence off the park completely. Due to that we will have three walk-throughs so that the fence leaves space to get through. We have two proposals before you. One from Century Fence for \$19,772, and Just-Rite Fence for \$16,800. We are recommending Just-Rite Fencing for approximately 775 linear feet of 6 foot and about 90 linear feet of 20 foot high fence. Funding is from Park Acquisition Fund 402, Park Maintenance Fund 444, and the DNR Grant.

Commissioner Hapka asked if the side entrances be ADA Accessible?

Superintendent Borgwardt responded yes. It has to be wide enough to get a wheelchair through.

Motion by Commissioner Krech to spend the money to get the fencing. Seconded by Commissioner Huffman.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

9. ADMINISTRATIVE PRESENTATIONS:

A. Department Happenings

Director Carlson highlighted that August 28th is the 20 year Anniversary Celebration at Inver Wood Golf Course. He would like the Commission to attend either the 11:30 or 5:30 timeframe. There will be refreshments, as well as events, prize drawings, and food. The City Council will read a proclamation at the 5:30 time slot.

Vice Chair Schueller asked if there was a rounds and revenue report for the Golf Course? He commented it seems the weather is cooperating for people to come out and play.

Director Carlson responded the report was not ready in time for the meeting. In regards to the weather, the heat turned a lot of people away. Our rounds for the month of June were down a bit from the previous year, but our revenue is up from the previous year.

Vice Chair Schueller felt it would be good to take a look and see when there is inclement weather, when we are closed and others are open, maybe we can see if it is necessary for us to be closed when other courses around us are open. He received a comment about the course being closed when play could happen. The assessment stated we may be a little restrictive than other places. If we are closed we should call other courses and see if they are open and determine why we are not. He understands safety first, but maybe we are missing out on more tee times than others do.

B. Future of Our Parks Report – Park & Recreation System Plan

Chair Eiden stated it was recommended that we send a recommendation to the City Council. July 23rd is when they will consider that.

Director Carlson mentioned that at the beginning of the meeting he mentioned that Commissioner Meyer is intending to move out of Inver Grove Heights, which will require her to resign her position on the Commission. As you are aware she is also on the subcommittee that is working on the Park and Recreation System Plan. We recommend that the vacancy be filled by the newest Commissioner Mary Hapka. After speaking to her regarding that she is amenable to the idea.

Commissioner Hapka looks forward to it.

Chair Eiden stated they will officially appoint Commissioner Hapka to the subcommittee.

Vice Chair Schueller asked what the process was to replace someone on the Commission after someone steps away mid-term.

Director Carlson responded once she submits her resignation it goes before the City Council and it would be up to them to appoint a replacement. The City Council appointed Commissioner Huffman mid-term years back.

Vice Chair Schueller asked if they go through other applicants that applied before? If there are people out there that are interested in the position, it would be nice for them to know to apply.

Director Carlson was unsure.

Vice Chair Schueller noticed the fountains at Simley Lake are now on. What was wrong?

Superintendent Borgwardt responded the motor burned out on one of them. Flair Fountains came out and pulled the motor, and replaced it.

Commissioner Huffman asked if they light red, white, and blue like Councilmember Klein wanted them to?

Superintendent Borgwardt responded they should. Due to the storms we have had, they are on a timer, so the timer has had to be reset a few times due to power outages. It does not run all night long.

Director Carlson commented they spend about \$5,000 annually just on electricity for those fountains.

10. COMMISSION COMMENTS:

Commissioner Solberg stated you have heard we have a lot going on in the Inver Grove Heights Park and Recreation System. It won't be long before you are asked for your input on what you like and want to see in the future. He asked everyone watching, "What is your favorite part of the Inver Grove Heights Parks and Recreation System and why?" Please send us an email and let us know. Go on the City Website, look up contacts, and send your response to Director Carlson. Please take the time to let us know what you do or do not like about the system. We like to hear from you.

Commissioner Krech was happy Commissioner Hapka is serving on the Parks Commission. He thanked her for serving.

Commissioner Huffman had no comment.

Commissioner Boehmer commented the weather is nice, enjoy the parks.

Vice Chair Schueller would like to reiterate about the Grants that Director Carlson was able to get for the parks. It makes a big difference to get those funds. We appreciate that. Also, at the last meeting he forgot to mention something about Commissioner Silvi. Mr. Silvi put in a lot of hours and a lot of work. With his help, we have come a long way. We appreciate all he has done throughout the years. We welcome Commissioner Hapka to this Commission.

Commissioner Hapka thanked Superintendent Borgwardt for his presentations and all the work and research he does. She hopes the residents enjoy the new parks.

Chair Eiden commented that former Commissioner Silvi did watch last month's meeting. Marty if you are still out there, you are welcome back anytime.

11. ADJOURN

Motion by Commissioner Solberg, seconded by Commissioner Huffman, to adjourn the meeting at 8:23 p.m.

Aye: 7

Nay: 0 Motion carried.