

**City of Inver Grove Heights Minutes of the Proceedings
Of The Park and Recreation Advisory Commission
Wednesday, February 13, 2013**

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Eiden called the February 13, 2013 Park and Recreation Advisory Commission Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL:

Present: Chair Al Eiden; Commissioners: Chris Solberg, Jim Huffman, Joe Boehmer, and Stan Johnson
Parks and Recreation Director Eric Carlson

Absent: Vice Chair Dennis Schueller, Commissioners Willie Krech and Mary Hapka: Recording Clerk Sheri Yourczek

Chair Eiden mentioned they do have another new Commissioner on board but they will not be starting until next month.

3. PRESENTATIONS:

A. Presentation from Parks & Recreation Staff

Parks and Recreation Director Eric Carlson stated there are no presentations this evening.

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, March 20, 2013. Regular Meeting 7:00 p.m.

Director Carlson stated this is not the normal date for the meeting. He will be on Spring Break that week so they changed the date, but he has spoken with Recreation Superintendent Tracy Petersen and she may be able to run the meeting for him if they needed, on its original date of March 13th.

5. CONSENT AGENDA:

A. Approval of Agenda

B. Approval of Minutes of December 12, 2012

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

Aye: 5

Nay: 0 Motion carried.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None

8. REGULAR AGENDA:

A. Discuss Renewal of Fairway Flyerz discs, Inc. North Valley Disc Golf Operations Agreement

Director Carlson mentioned Tracy Petersen, our Recreation Superintendent, is here to speak regarding this item:

Recreation Superintendent Tracy Petersen stated she wanted to discuss the renewal of the Fairway Flyerz Disc Golf agreement at North Valley Park. They have operated a mobile sales unit at the facility selling passes, disc golf products, and concessions, as well as being a presence at the course.

She referenced a memo comparing the 2011 and 2012 seasons.

Fairway Flyers would like us to keep the season the same as it was 2012. They are asking to change the revenue split to 80/20. 80 being Fairway, 20 being the City. She has outlined the benefits and disadvantages to keeping the arrangement or not keeping the arrangement.

Benefits:

-Having someone out there in terms of maintenance issues, vandalism, as well as curbing unwanted behavior.

-Generates some money for the Park and Recreation Fund.

-Having a vendor there provides people that come to become educated about the course, where the holes are, where they need to go, and where the score cards are, etc.

-It also has helped with course improvements.

The 80/20 split isn't unfamiliar to us. We have done it with other situations such as contractors.

South St. Paul also has an agreement with Fairway. They have renewed it for 2013. Keeping Fairway here in Inver Grove Heights allows us the benefit to sharing the cost with South St. Paul. We have the same annual pass program, same daily pass program.

Disadvantages:

-Lost revenue. 50% potential change in revenue that Inver Grove Heights would receive.

-The season changed. We were one month less in 2012. The number of users went down and we had some warm summer months. Continuing with them you are offering a service to a limited number of players.

-Because the course is pay to play, the expectations for users has increased. We may get some pressure to continue to make improvements and keep the course in better play if it had not been pay to play.

Commissioner Johnson asked if South St. Paul renewed for 80/20?

Superintendent Petersen responded their volume is higher than ours so their arrangement is different. They are getting more, but that figure was reduced from 2012 to 2013. They are not getting the same 80/20 as is requested here. She thought they may be at 65/35 now, but isn't sure exactly.

Commissioner Solberg asked how it has worked with Fairway Flyerz. Do you like working with them?

Superintendent Petersen responded they have been great to work with. They have a vested interest in the success of disc golf in Inver Grove Heights. The relationship has been successful.

Commissioner Huffman asked how much money they would earn at 80/20? Do you also advertise the course?

Superintendent Petersen responded if we made \$6,000, we would probably make about \$3,000. We do advertise the course whether it is pay to play or free. The kids that come out there actually play the game, instead of just hanging out the course.

Commissioner Huffman felt 80/20 was pretty high. Would they go 70/30?

Superintendent Petersen responded they are running a business so they have to make it work on their end as well. This was their proposal.

Commissioner Huffman asked what they were going to do more of down there?

Superintendent Petersen felt that because we changed the age a bit, perhaps we should give it one more year and see how the players, numbers, and revenue stand out. If after a third year it isn't successful and/or benefitting both parties, it would be an option to not do it at some point. Or we don't do it and the course would go back to being free. We tried to negotiate. For them to be successful and not lose money, they need the 80/20.

Commissioner Huffman felt that giving it a year would be fine and see how it works.

Commissioner Boehmer felt it was great to have the eyes and ears down there. He asked if they do any maintenance on the course at all?

Superintendent Petersen responded they do not do any maintenance down there, but they have been great about alerting us to any vandalism that goes on down there, or if something like a basket is broken, etc. We are then able to get the Staff down there right away to address it rather than having Staff find it a week or so later. They point out things they see down there that we can't see on a daily basis. Her recommendation is to give them one more year to see how the numbers play out. After this year if we don't feel it's beneficial we can stop.

Commissioner Johnson felt Superintendent Petersen's recommendation was all they needed. \$3,000 is better than nothing.

Commissioner Huffman agreed.

Commissioner Boehmer felt the increase was high. They went from 60/40 to this.

Chair Eiden agrees with the Commissioners but looks at the tradeoff. They are doing a lot to help out with maintenance and security, which is beneficial to the City in that sense. Disc golf is catching on. That is an amenity that some Cities won't do. Having this makes us distinguishable.

Motion by Commissioner Solberg to approve as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Huffman.

Aye: 5

Nay: 0 Motion carried.

B. Review 2013 – 14 VMCC Ice Rates

Director Carlson stated each year, as is outlined in the lease agreement with the School District; we do a market study of ice rates for the coming year. We have to do that by March. The market study is in front of you. We can charge no more than 5% above the average so that number would be \$205.00 per hour. We are currently charging \$200.00 per hour. We are recommending that we do not raise the rates for the 2013/2014 season and keep the rate at \$200.00. We do recommend a \$5.00 increase from what we are currently charging for non-prime rate from \$130.00 to \$135.00.

Commissioner Solberg asked if this is different from the turf hours there?

Director Carlson stated this is just ice time. Our turf rate is \$75.00 per hour.

Commissioner Johnson asked if all the ice time is taken up? What percentage?

Director Carlson responded they have been able to sell a consistent amount of ice year after year. Revenue has increased a bit due to rate increases. With the hockey season we are in right now, we have approximately 30 to 50 hours of sellable ice that has not been sold. People are able to find the ice they are looking for in other locations. We are doing the best we can, but it is challenging to sell ice time. We do sell ice time to Rosemount and Eagan. Woodbury does a little bit. He sent out a list of available ice before the hockey season. At that time there was about 150 hours, however most of them were not interested as they had their ice needs met at other locations.

Motion by Commissioner Johnson to proceed with the rates as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Solberg.

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

9. ADMINISTRATIVE PRESENTATIONS:

A. Department Happenings

Director Carlson stated he had nothing specifically to report but can stand by for questions.

Commissioner Huffman asked about the Friends of the Mississippi doing vegetation work. What will they be doing down there?

Director Carlson responded that last year we hired Friends of the Mississippi River to put together a National Resource Management Plan for the 17 acres down by the Rock Island Swing Bridge. Recently Parks Superintendent Mark Borgwardt and himself, sat down with the Friends of the Mississippi River to review a draft of the report. In that outline they provided a four year plan to remove invasive species and to enhance the landscape with native plantings. The estimate to do this was roughly \$100,000. They stated they had access to grant dollars and that they would fund 50% of that over four years if the City could fund the other 50%. Since then they put together a memo of understanding but have backed off what they can bring to the table financially. We are going to go year by year for right now, and bring it to the City Council a proposal to do ¼ of the overall plan in 2013. When The Friends of the Mississippi River has secured additional grant dollars, we can discuss what years 2014-2016 would look like.

Commissioner Solberg asked if the County finalized their plans for the Trailhead Facility.

Director Carlson stated they presented a 30% plan to the City Council two work study sessions ago. The next time we get together with the County it would be at 60%. We continue to make positive progress. The scope of the project still includes the 40 car parking lot, restroom facility, picnic shelter, etc. He anticipates in April or May we would have a complete set of plans we can share with the Commission and then the City Council. Our goal is to have construction happen this year and to have it finished by November or December of 2013.

Chair Eiden asked how close they were with the LED Lighting Plan?

Director Carlson responded we are still gathering information from the contractor. We have not seen some of the math behind the energy savings, and until we can be convinced it will actually save us money, we won't be ready to bring anything forward yet. One portion of the project would be to change the lighting at Rich Valley Park. At this time we don't know of anyone that has done lighting at athletic fields and we don't want really want to be the guinea pigs of that either. We will continue to look for other examples, or possibly even try it on one field and see how it works out.

Chair Eiden asked about Skyview Park and the field that was just done. Do you have someone who keeps in touch with teams about playing football and lacrosse there? Will those fields be ready for play this summer or fall?

Director Carlson responded Superintendent Petersen meets with all of our Youth Athletic Associations. Those include: Heat Soccer, the Football Association, and Lacrosse players, as well as our own internal programs. We have communicated that we hope the field is ready for play by the fall of 2013. We will see what condition the field is in this spring. We want good established turf for play before it is being used.

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

Chair Eiden was not at the meeting and asked Commissioner Solberg to update them.

Commissioner Solberg stated they have been meeting bi-weekly. They are making great progress and have received some great ideas out of it. They are meeting again on February 19th at 6:30 at the Community Center. Come up and visit us and get involved.

Director Carlson stated the Park Champions Group is the group that is meeting frequently regarding our parks. . They will be looking at what our vision is for the park service area for the entire City, and what the vision is for the Northwest area. They will ask to get feedback on options. They will also be looking at what our vision is for trails in the future. Other meetings could include amenities in the parks. Their goal is to develop a vision for the park system and present them back to the Park and Recreation Commission who then adds anything they felt they needed before presenting it to the City Council.

Chair Eiden asked what the participation was like at those meetings?

Director Carlson responded they had about 25 at the first meeting. Maybe about 15 at the last meeting. He hopes to keep the group at about 15 or more.

Chair Eiden stated this is an ongoing process. If anyone wants to join the Champions, we can use all the help we can get.

Director Carlson wanted to add that he gave everyone a copy of the power point that was discussed with the City Council on Monday night regarding the Golf Course.

10. COMMISSION COMMENTS:

Commissioner Boehmer had no comment.

Commissioner Huffman had no comment.

Commissioner Solberg stated he was out at Inver Wood Golf Course over the weekend on snowshoes. It's nice to be out there in the winter; however, if you are looking for golf balls, it's a tough time out there.

Commissioner Johnson had no comment.

Chair Eiden asked everyone to keep in tune with the City Parks and Recreation Department. They will be doing a lot of activities coming up as we get closer to Spring. Please watch the news and come participate.

11. ADJOURN

Motion by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Solberg, to adjourn the meeting at 7:31 p.m.

Aye: 5

Nay: 0 Motion carried.