

MINUTES

City of Lake Elmo Parks Commission December 21, 2020

Members Present: Commissioners- Olinger, Weeks, Nightingale, Ames, Schumacher

Staff Present: City Planner- Prchal, Public Works Director- Powers

The meeting was called to order by Weeks at 6:30 PM.

Announcements

None

Approval of Agenda

Agenda was unanimously approved as presented (5-0).

Approval of Minutes

Schumacher motioned to approve the September 21, 2020 Parks Commission Minutes, Weeks provided a second; passed 4-0 with Olinger abstaining.

Public Comments

None

Hunting in the City.

Prchal provided a presentation on the proposed city code changes for allowing/not allowing hunting on public lands within the city. 2013 was the last time hunting language was reviewed by the City. Currently, Lake Elmo follows the MN State Statute 97B and DNR regulations. The County and the City worked in tandem on the last managed hunt by selecting hunters by a lottery system. The selected hunters required a class with the County, provided proof of a hunting license, completed a safety course, and was a resident within city limits. Sunfish Lake Park and the 180 acres are the two largest parcels of city lands. Staff suggested the addition of language to the city code to govern hunting in the City. The commission discussed the pros and cons of partnering with Metro Bowhunters to manage a hunt in the future. DNR does not manage hunts but could assist with the city code language should council adopt it. Ames questioned including the 180 acres (location is north of the PW building) because it is not a city park. Powers expressed his concern for the need of language in the city code to support city regulation and only be allowed with council resolution. Weeks would like to see hunting as a way of population control. The commission discussed what conditions should be met when a hunt would be needed, use of weapon, insurance, and requirements for hunting. Ames stated that if the goal is to thin the herd, he is not concern with who does it, as long as the goal is met.

Ames motioned that there be no hunting allowed in city parks or on city land with the exception of when it has been determined that a controlled hunt needs to be conducted and will be passed by City Council with a resolution to be posted in the parks stating that the parks are closed for a controlled hunt; seconded by Schumacher. No discussion, motion unanimously passed 5-0.

2021 Parks Work Plan

Prchal provided a presentation on the 2021 Parks Work Plan. Some parks have started to age.

This would be the time to look at identifying changes for the needs of the neighborhoods. Examples would include a dog park, pickleball, and trail connectivity. Prchal provided the parks budget information. Schumacher stated that buckthorn has become more prevalent in other parks, not only Sunfish Lake Park. Ames would like to focus specifically at where the trails connect and had funding questions. Weeks questioned how much money will be spoken for by Washington County on their trail project and when the city is responsible for their contribution. Should we conserve money? Powers stated that he has been attending the County meetings and it is on the radar. The County suggested saving \$500,000 for this project.

Weeks motioned to recommend approval of the parks commission work plan; Olinger provided a second. Discussion focused on having a more specific plan and timeline to stay accountable. Demontreville Park needs to be added to the work plan. Weeks would like to see everyone try to visit the parks on their own throughout the year. Olinger suggested two commission members be assigned to certain parks. Powers requested feedback on the Demontreville Park playground. The slide will be brought to the next meeting for a decision. The CIP will be revisited in April or May. The commission agreed to evaluate buckthorn in all the parks. Nightingale suggested using Survey Money to see how the residents want to see the parks used. Powers also needs feedback for the Pebble Park tennis court. **Motion unanimously passed 5-0.**

Schiltgen Farm Concept PUD

Prchal provided a presentation on the Schiltgen Farm Concept PUD. It was denied back in June mainly due to a proposed roundabout. The plan has been amended. There is a trail plan by the developer and proposed townhomes on narrow lots. Prchal went into more detail on the proposed sidewalks, trails, and requirements. Staff believes it would be worth inquiring about an undeveloped 32 acre parcel located east of the VFW Park from the property owner on the site that could possibly accommodate a 10-15 acre Community Park. Weeks suggested having the developer provide an HOA Park, "I don't know if it is feasible for us to recommend purchase of private property to meet their land dedication requirement. With land sitting idle until funding became available takes away from the tax base with lost revenue due to more property we set aside for park land." The commission continued discussion on the trail system and agreed that it is more a connectivity issue. Olinger would like to see the main barn preserved as a historical marker. Ames stated that some of this is outside our purview, such as sidewalks and barns, which is code or for the Planning Commission. The commissioners were in agreement that they need more clarity.

Ames motioned to send the Concept Plan back to the developer for clarity around planning for trail connectivity to existing city trails and to the old village, as well as, planning for park recreational needs of the expected residents of the neighborhood so the commission can adequately guide the developer in this proposal; Schumacher provided a second. Discussion regarding the third bullet item on the presentation that states 'all trail shown on the development are available for public use'. **Olinger friendly amended the motion to include: all trails shown on the Concept Plan should be**

available for public use and recommend that future trail systems are required to be public, not private, as a city standard. Motion unanimously passed 5-0.

SHIP Grant

Prchal provided a presentation on the grant. The granting was for bike repair stations possibly at Sunfish Lake Park and Ivywood Park or Hammes Park. The project cost is estimated at \$3000 with a 10% financial match from the City. It is a stand with tools to allow you to tighten your chain or break and does have an air pump. Ames feels it would be great at Sunfish but suggested the other be installed at Lions Park. Weeks suggested installation at Reid vs. Lions. Olinger stated that she would feel it would be beneficial downtown, such as the library. Prchal stated that we should hear next month if we were awarded the grant and if we receive two repair stations.

Ames motioned to recommend the placement of two bike repair stations contingent on the awarding of the SHIP Grant with one location at Sunfish Lake Park and the other location to be determined among several locations that the parks commission is evaluating; Olinger provided a second. This was recommended by a 5-0 vote.

January 20, 2021 Meeting Agenda

- 1) Park Name – St. Croix Sanctuary

Communications

- a) Sally Manzara Nature Center Budget
- b) Attendance Record and Term schedule. There is one vacancy on the commission.
The Commission had a discussion between themselves about buckthorn and the ice skating rink. Warming house will remain closed due to COVID regulations.

Meeting adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

**Respectfully Submitted,
Rebecca McGuire, Deputy Clerk**