

MINUTES

City of Lake Elmo Parks Commission

June 17, 2019

Members Present: Commissioners- Ames, Olinger, Schumacher, Weeks, and Zeno

Absent: Mayek and Nightingale

Staff Present: Public Works Director Powers, City Planner Prchal

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

Announcements

Weeks acknowledgement of the passing of former Parks Commissioner David Steele. Former Public Works Director Mike Bouthilet had some major surgery, but is doing well.

Approval of Agenda

Ames added a new item 9- Sunfish Lake Park Mowing.

Weeks asked to move Nature Center Patio request ahead of By-Laws on the agenda.

Ames motioned to approve the agenda with the changes, seconded by Olinger.

Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Weeks, asked for clarification on the measurements for the bike trail width from the last meeting. Prchal clarified the width and went into details about the RFP for specifications of the plan.

Ames and Olinger stated that the minutes captured distilled bare essence of comments made by the commissioners and the public, but they are adequate for the near future. Olinger stated that there was a misspelling of Ann Buchuck's name in the previous minutes.

Schumacher and Weeks asked for clarification about archives and retention for videos and minutes.

Ames motioned to approve the May minutes, seconded by Zeno.

Motion passed unanimously.

Ames raised an issue about public comments toward commissioners at breaks that were not very friendly and approaches on how to fix the issue.

Public Comments

Paul Gardner, 3216 Linden Lane North. Large circle development with a park in the middle of the neighborhood. Gardner is looking for installation of a Soccer net at the park in Easton Village. If funding is not an option, he would consider go-fund me to raise the money, but understands approval would be needed for that. Gardner states there is a playground there right now with a lot of wide open green space, councilman stated that the developer put plans in front of residents that may not align with parks commission plans. Local Facebook group of neighbors that are interested in this soccer net, Gardner

was in contact with Jaime Colemer regarding this issue, and she advised him to go to a parks meeting. Prchal will take contact info and will look into adding it to a future agenda. Plan a park visit to see what the space looks like. Gardner would not be requesting a full size net, just something for kids to practice soccer. General discussion on how to proceed with this request. Prchal will start looking into this park. Powers, talked about portable nets and he will look into costs of nets for the next meeting.

Nature Center Patio Request

Prchal presented on a request for the Nature Center is asking to put in a 525 Sq. ft. patio and may reduce size. Packets included for the public to look at with updated financial section. Additions came from lease agreements for the patio that states they can go ahead with the project with approval from the City. It also goes into detail about what it would cost to remove the patio, the plan has budget forecasts for what removal would cost. \$3 per Sq. ft. for a total of \$2,100 for removal of the patio. Patio will be south of the Nature Center. The City had recommended for the Nature Center to clean up the site, erosion control, and add in a rain garden. City staff recommendation stays the same, recommending for approval. On Page 2, it states that the project needs recommendation from the Commission and approval from the City Council.

Ames stated that there was a disconnect between what Kristina had found in the document and how the Nature Center interpreted the document for a requirement on how to seek approval for changes to this site. The Nature Center believes they have a lot of autonomy for what happens on this site, but that is not how the document reads. Prchal interprets that there is a need the approval for any changes made to the site.

Schumacher questioned if this project meets ADA requirements. The upstairs of the building is difficult to get a wheelchair up to. Commissioners asked for the City to look into ADA requirements. This should be the responsibility for the Nature Center and not the City, but it would help the process to raise this concern with the Nature Center.

Weeks has concerns if this is a multi-phase construction project. That this will lead to more and more additions. Asking for clarification that the commission is just approving the patio and not a long term project. Prchal states that this is just approval for the patio, nothing in this agreement to approve any other constructions plans.

Ames is understanding that this is approval for just a patio, but he wants to see more transparency from the Nature Center.

Ames motioned to approve option 2 to approve the patio with increase to escrow account contingent upon clarification if ADA accessibility requirements will be necessary. Seconded by Olinger.

Becky Tempas, 11330 50th Street, Lake Elmo. Current Executive Director at the Nature Center. Wants to have the total amount adjusted based on the actual square footage of the patio because they are going to reduce the size just because they do not want that much concrete. Zeno raised the point about Nature Center utilizing green space and how concrete is not the best green practice and that they should entertain looking into alternatives over concrete. Other thoughts on how the patio could be used, it may not change the activities, but it will be easier to maintain. Tempest said the surface was chosen because the concrete was donated. Weeks asked about the sidewalk from the

second floor to the patio, which does not have any ADA accessibility. Tempest said that the only way to the patio is up the stairs or walk around the building on a gravel path. Weeks said he would not vote in favor for the motion as is because of lack of information for ADA accessibility, future plans, and learning opportunities. Zeno agrees with Weeks that there needs to be more information on this plan. He likes the idea of this patio, but wants more clarity. Tempest stated that the new size of the patio they want to put in will be 18ftX24ft which will reduce it by 100 sq. ft. Ames wants this project to really tie into teaching experiences. Schumacher asked if they have to make a decision on this tonight. He suggested bringing Tony to a meeting to clarify some of these questions. Ames withdrew his motion to approve option 2 to approve the patio with increase to escrow account contingent upon clarification if ADA accessibility requirements will be necessary. Ames motioned to table this discussion until they get clarification about the raised issues. Seconded by Zeno.

Motion passed unanimously.

By-Laws

Prchal talked about how the City went through the by-laws and updated Chapter 32. They updated the language regarding the Parks Commission ordinance. The by-laws are a guidelines that they would like to see and follow as a commission. Prchal gave an overview of the chapter going through the by-laws and explaining the processes. Weeks was wondering if they would notice a difference because they have already been following these by-laws. Prchal explained how staff have been telling the commission what to do and now there is a document that lays out how meetings should be run. Weeks said that this structure will help the public too, understand the structure of meetings. Schumacher referenced the Sandia by-laws which states that the Chair of the commission would be the main vocal person for the commission to the public. He would like to see that added into the proposed by-laws. Olinger stated that in the public comment section the topic of repetitiveness could be addressed better. Olinger motioned to pass the drafted by-laws as stated. Seconded by Weeks. Ames asked for clarification on if the ideas brought up in discussion were pertinent in the motion. Olinger stated it was not in her motion. Schumacher wanted the language stating that the Chair would represent the commission to the public on matters relating to the Park Commission activities. Olinger motioned to pass the drafted by-laws with the addition of language stating that the Chair would represent the commission to the public on matters relating to the Park Commission activities. Seconded by Weeks.

Motion passed unanimously.

Pebble Park Lighting

Powers explains that public works went out to explore quotes for security improvements for Pebble Park. Powers found 3 quotes to add, 2: 30 foot poles with LED lights, quotes have included an outlet on the poles. Electrical service coming from north of the pavilion. There are 3 existing light poles in the southern part of the park that are 15 feet off the ground and are incandescent lights. This proposal is to raise them up to 40 feet off the ground and convert them to LED lights. Goal is to reduce excessive dumping which occurs frequently in this park.

3 quotes: Killmer Electric-\$12,880 with 10 year warranty. TM Electric- Quite a bit more. Stabner Electric- \$14,650 with 5 year warranty.

Olinger asked if the Killmer quote stated that the poles are metal. Powers said yes it is stated in the RFP.

Ames raised a question on the light pollution from the fixtures. He also raised concerns about neighbors if there would be any light intrusions on the properties. Powers said that they are all downward cast and that it will not affect any of the light rays. The hours on the lights would be from dusk until dawn.

Weeks raised a point about Killmer electric. He noted that they installed lights in Lions Park and the old lights lit up that neighborhood. The LED lights helped reduce some of the brightness.

Olinger asked that the purpose of the light post by the parking lot was to focus the light on the parking lot. She mentioned it would be better to have it set to focus more on the west corner rather than the center. Powers explained if the post was moved to the west corner it would not light the east side, so the middle is the best option.

Zeno asked about the outlet and how much wattage that could support. Powers said they have 20 amp breakers on them.

Olinger asked about fixing a leaning panel in the park, Powers said it is not a part of the proposal, but a quote to fix the panel on a concrete slab would be about \$10,000.

Ames motioned to recommend that City staff move forward with the bid from Killmer Electric to install lights as proposed. Seconded by Zeno. Weeks raised a point that the proposal included a clause saying the project should not exceed \$15,000. Marty said he would like that buffer of \$2,120 in the event of unknowns. Ames added at the end of the motion that the project should not exceed \$15,000.

The motion passed unanimously.

Sunfish Park Mowing

Ames proposed to the commission to ask City staff to mow parts of the trails at Sunfish Park that have regular growth of grasses and weeds on a regular basis. To keep the weeds down and reduce the number of ticks and tick borne illnesses. In the past, parts of the park have been unusable because grasses and weeds are too overgrown.

Powers stated that City staff have been mowing it about twice a year. He would like to see it done monthly. Powers and Commissioners agreed that the City would mow monthly this year and assess the situation next year.

Review of the Subdivision Code-Park Dedication

Prchal explained that the City had recently approved two new zoning districts, being the Mixed Use Commercial and the Mixed Use Business Park. These two classifications are not covered in the park dedication section so staff are looking to insert these two sections into the code. Park dedication fees must be established by ordinance or a fee schedule that meets the requirement of state statute. Prchal references the League of Minnesota Cities for deciding how to set these fees. He showed a table with the existing parks dedication requirement that have categories for fees at 10%, 7%, 4% and fees that are set by a Council Resolution which are \$4,500/acre. The proposed changes would be to combine categories and average percentages for the rural districts creating a 10% and 5% fee. Keeping the \$4,500/acre for non-residential land.

Ames raised a concern that the \$4,500/acre for commercially developed land was low compared to residential development. Prchal said that it could be changes, but that is not in this proposal.

Weeks asked Prchal how much we could increase the commercial land fee. Prchal has not looked into specifics, and is not sure how much the City could raise the fee. Ames asked if they could approve this proposal and then look into raising the commercial fee, Prchal said if they would like to pursue that, they could do it at the same time.

Schumacher asked if the difference in the percentages would be noticeable and be skewed one way or another. Prchal said it probably will not be noticeable.

Ames asked how many acres that we have would be in the fee schedule. Prchal said he would be able to calculate some of it but not all of it. Ames read a section from page 30 of the park plan and wants to add credits for sections of trails that are built if they are designed as part of the Commissions park plan. Trails are just looping and Ames would like trails to fit into the park plan. Ames discussed how Woodbury has required developers to build trails so that they all connect and don't end up looping. Prchal explained that maybe the fees could be based off of Sq. ft. rather than acres.

Weeks asked if the 36 corridor could look like the 94 corridor in terms of development. Prchal explained that not with the current comprehensive plan.

Ames asked Prchal for how he would like the commission to proceed with this proposal. Prchal recommended that if the commission likes the current proposal for the subdivision code that they move it forward to the council. Then in the future they can look into wording for park dedication regarding trails. But if the commission wants to combine the trail language they would have to table this and bring it back at a future meeting.

Ames motioned to table this proposal for the park dedication fee to allow staff time to research information for trails. Zeno seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

July 2019 Meeting

Easton Village soccer nets

Subdivision code for park dedication

Nature Center Patio

Communication

Zeno stated that the volleyball courts in Lions Park are getting heavily used. The people are loving the courts and the new sand. He asked if there will be a fence put around the pickle ball courts and Prchal stated that those will be a hockey rink in the winter so boards will go up around the area. Zeno said that residents have been asking for improved lighting, create a hedge on the south side to prevent runaway balls, and a low rail to stop runaway balls. Prchal stated that the City is looking for names for the Village and Wildflower Park and there have been to recommendations yet.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

**Respectfully Submitted,
Alex Saxe, Deputy Clerk**