

**MINUTES**  
**WEST ST. PAUL PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**September 10, 2019**

**Park & Rec. Members Present:** Bonnie Bellows, Jay DeLaRosby, Brad Erickson, Dave Lynch, Rachel McNamara, Mike Petrasek

**Non-voting Members Present:** Sharon Hatfield, Administrative Specialist, Dave Schletty, Assistant Parks and Recreation Director

**Presenters:** Kevin Hendricks, Carol Swiszc

**1. ROLL CALL**

**2. ADOPT MINUTES**

Chair Petrasek called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

The committee approved the minutes from the August 13, 2019 meeting.

**3. OLD BUSINESS**

**a. Art Park Subcommittee Update**

Kevin Hendricks updated the committee regarding plans for the Art Park. The subcommittee formed their plan into a single idea: to create a city gathering place where “art can happen.” The park can host formal or informal events. Ideas included mosaic art, sculpture, planters, more seating, and a mural. Residents would also be encouraged to participate. Examples of community art included residents building a snow sculpture, sidewalk chalk art and community gardening. The advantages of the idea are that it encourages community engagement and is “grant-friendly.” The chance of failure is not high. The idea is more budget friendly than a sculpture. The disadvantage is that the idea is a “hodge-podge.” Moreover, the location of the art park may not be ideal. Hendricks said, “There are a lot of voices in the hodge podge.” An artist will need to bring a lot of ideas together. There is a need to address the noise problem at the location with either a wall or shrubbery.

Petrasek commented that this is a gateway to the City. He would like to see if [Hendricks] can establish [an idea] that could be carried out throughout the City and maybe on Robert Street. Lynch agreed and added that the park is built to have something permanent in the middle and to have dynamic events around the center

**A motion was made to support what the subcommittee has done so far and moving forward with the grant application. The motion passed. All Ayes.**

Schletty said that the grant application would be a consent item on Council agenda.

**4. NEW BUSINESS**

**a. Halloween Extravaganza 2019 Planning**

Schletty said that there is not much to change from last year. The event will take place on October 31, 6-8pm at Harmon Park. The baseball fields will be used for the trick-or-treat trail. The costume contest will be held in the infield space. Judges will give out goody bags to the winners. Schletty will try to obtain at least twenty local business owners to sponsor the trick-or-treat trail. The event will again have hot dogs, the fire pits, hay bales and a coloring contest. The coloring contest will be used to advertise the event; winners will be announced during the event. Member Erickson said that the plans sounds good.

He hoped that more committee members would volunteer for the event. The precooked hot dogs worked well.

**b. Park Inventory/Master Plan Discussion**

Schletty talked about the City Master Plan that was adopted 20 years ago. Petrasek commented that he did not think the archives went back that far. He did not believe he was chair at that time. Schletty said that in August 2000, a complete inventory of park system was done. It included a needs assessment, goals and policies, an implementation and development plan, and a dollar figure for funding, capital expenditures. Petrasek said that the city planned to go out for a referendum at that time. Schletty would like to update the plan with committee members for future CIP planning.

Schletty suggested that the committee review each park to see if the needs assessment is still accurate. Bellows noted that a skate park was called for in the Master Plan. Schletty agreed and said that a skate park has been “in the background at one point or another.” Schletty said that Albert Park is a good park to start; all the improvements were completed for the park. Lynch asked about the realignment of Smith Avenue and Dodd; he wondered if Albert Park was going to be relocated. Schletty said that he was unsure. Nothing has been settled regarding the redevelopment. Dodd Park is in the same neighborhood. The park has a skating rink and a warming house. For the last two years, the City has not opened the warming house. The City may build a three-sided shelter to replace the current warming house. Improvements included new play equipment, landscaping, trash receptacles, a new sign, and a picnic shelter (not done). However, most of the improvements have been done. Bellows remarked that the park is being used by families with very young children.

Schletty said that he would update the park inventory sheets with any improvements that have been done and send the sheets to committee members.

Schletty showed the CIP plan to the committee. He gave the example of the playground equipment budget. Money is allotted every year to replace old equipment. The money can be redesignated to other projects if the committee decides it is needed elsewhere. The amount of money spent however, is the “bottom line” and will not change. Schletty will send out the CIP budget and the individual detailed CIP for each park. Lynch asked if the park dedication money changed the budgeting. Schletty said no, the dedication money has not been allotted; it is for future use. The committee decided to work on Dodd and Emerson for their first discussion.

**5. OTHER**

**a. Art Park Discussion Presentation Continued- Carol Swiszczy –**

Carol Swiszczy presented her idea for the art park. She is a painter and printmaker who has lived in West St Paul for eighteen years. She creates “zines”, which are self-published booklets. She published a zine of Neil Baker, the owner of Buttonworks. She also make a zine about the Art Park, describing it as a “sad park.” She wondered about the [deferred] plans for the park and citizen accountability for the project. She has deep appreciation for the work done for the park. She is working with Hendricks and would like to apply for a grant from the Visual Arts Fund. She would like approval to apply for a grant of \$5,000 for the “2020 Zine Project.” She would conduct a series of zine workshops for one year in the City. The workshops that would feature four different artists from (idealy) diverse communities. Her idea is to have zines [stations] in three different locations in the City. One of the locations would be in the Art Park. The grant would cover honorariums, materials for the workshops, and marketing and refreshments

for the events. She envisions doing a shaded structure that would hold the zines at the Art Park. Swiszc said that if she did not receive the grant, she would pursue doing a scaled down version of the project. Erickson like her passion for the project. Bellows said she loved zines. As a former English teacher, she had students do zines all the time. Lynch said that he liked the idea of a free library at the park. Petrasek said that it looks like full steam ahead.

**A motion was made to accept the Zine 2020 Plan. The motion carried. All Ayes.**

**b. Staff Updates**

- i. Marthaler Project**- Schletty said that the project at Wentworth is slowing moving forward and the new pond is being carved out. The area around the pond and the parking lot has “opened up.”
- ii. Thompson Oaks**- The foot golf is done for the year and probably permanently. Council is looking at a new apartment complex to be built in in the western part of the property. The plan will go to the Planning Commission next week and then to Council. If approved, the project would start next spring, (Phase I). Phase II would be the County Trail project. (The last third of the golf course land would be used for single-family homes.) Schletty said that he could bring general plans of the layout of the project once Council approves the plan.
- iii. Mud Lake**- Lynch reported that he and Robin Rainford worked at the lake for about 1 ½ hours clearing the trails. Rainford is part of the West St. Paul gardening group.

**6. ADJOURNMENT**

The committee members adjourned at 6:34pm. The next Park and Recreation Committee meeting will take place on Tuesday, October 8, 2019 at 5:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sharon G. Hatfield