

EAST BETHEL PARK COMMISSION MEETING

April 8, 2015

The East Bethel Park Commission met on April 8th, 2015 at 6:30 P.M at the East Bethel City Hall for their regular monthly meeting.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bill Zimmermann Tim Hoffman Sue Jefferson
Kenneth Langmade Bonnie Harvey

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Stacy Voelker Denise Lachinski

ALSO PRESENT: Nate Ayshford, Public Works Director
Tim Harrington, City Council
Sue Irons, Recording Secretary

Adopt Agenda Mr Hoffman motioned to adopt the agenda. Mr Zimmerman seconded; all in favor, motion carried unanimously.

Approve Minutes – March 11, 2015 Minutes Ms Harvey made a motion to approve the January 14, 2015 minutes as submitted. Ms Jefferson seconded; all in favor, motion carried unanimously.

Park Financial Information & Capital Funds Summary Mr. Ayshford presented the current fiscal year Park Maintenance financial status for member’s review (Attachment 4.1). He reported the purchase of ball field lime that has been applied with practice expected to begin next week. The fields are in good shape this year and the frost is out of the ground. The buildings are still winterized and irrigation has not been started yet. This will be done when the weather warms up a little more.

Mr Hoffman motioned to approve the financial report. Ms Harvey seconded; all in favor, motion carried unanimously.

Ice Arena Board Replacement Mr Brad Kaehler and Ms Jen Smith presented a proposal to replace the dasher boards inside the East Bethel Ice Arena (Attachment 5.1).

Mr Kaehler is the President of the St Francis High School Boys Hockey Booster Club and shared some of the history of the Ice Arena. The current dasher boards came used from the Columbia Ice Arena. They are the second set of boards in the East Bethel Arena. There have been at least two incidents in the last year where the glass broke and could have injured a participant or audience member. Other sections of the current boards are broken and cannot be repaired. A new complete set of dasher boards would cost over \$100,000. Arena Warehouse has a 2009 pre-owned complete set of dasher boards that would fit the East Bethel Ice Arena for \$54,750. They would supervise the installation of the boards with one staff member for 40 hours to work with 3-4 skilled laborers. The installation would take about a week. See attachment for additional details. A decision is needed by the end of April or the boards will go out for public bid.

Mr Kaehler also stated they are very appreciative of the opportunity to use the East Bethel Ice Arena and are willing to help in any way they can to improve the facility. Mr Hoffman

asked what amount is being requested from the City for the new boards. Mr Kaehler related that they would like at least a verbal commitment for the full amount so that they can put the boards on hold by the end of the month. If the City can't fund the entire amount, the youth groups are willing to do fundraising for whatever additional funds are needed. He also asked if it might be possible for the City to pay for the boards and let the youth groups repay the amount over time. Mr Kaehler stated he anticipates they could pay back the amount owed within 12 months.

Ms Smith is the President of the St Francis Youth Hockey Association. She stated they understand that the total amount is a lot for the City budget but that the investment could be considered a Capital Improvement for the City. She listed possible ways that the Hockey Association and High School teams could help with fund raising, volunteering and marketing. They would also be willing to help with the installation of the boards.

Mr Kaehler noted that the current boards could be traded in for \$8-10,000 bringing down the overall cost of the new (used) boards. Mr Hoffman asked if the current dasher boards could be used for the outdoor rink. The boards are currently secured with bolts mounted into the cement floor of the arena. Ms Smith reported doing research and found that the dasher boards are used at other outdoor rinks, specifically Coon Rapids has a "refrigerated" rink that has the same kind of boards. Members planned to discuss the outdoor rink later in the meeting and Mr Kaehler and Ms Smith agreed to remain for the discussion.

Mr Ayshford explained that the Ice Arena has its own funding category. The fund is considered an enterprise fund and is self-funded through the operation of the facility itself such as ice skating fees and rental fees. The arena is finally operating in the black. There are many other projects that need to be funded for the facility. They would like to have more events and activities there year round to help keep the money coming in. Mr Kaehler stated he felt he could bring in advertising revenue to help with this.

Mr Harrington brought up the concern that there have been comments that St Francis is planning to build their own ice arena. He wondered if there would be less use of the East Bethel arena if this happens. Ms Smith responded that she does not anticipate a rink in St Francis any time in the near future. She also stated that they are always short of rinks for the number of groups they have needing practice and game times.

Ms Harvey asked about "Mighty Duck" Grants being available. Ms Smith was aware of these "Mighty Ducks" grants and stated they had not been funded the last time she had checked on them. She also reviewed a "Kraft Cheese" grant for \$150,000. There were several additional details that made it less desirable such as that there must be matching funds. She did submit the Youth Association for the grant. It was mentioned that many of the grants have been awarded to organizations that had to replace R22 refrigerant.

Mr Zimmerman made a motion to recommend the City Council work with the Youth Hockey groups to fund the proposed purchase of a new set of (used) dasher boards for the East Bethel Ice Arena. Ms Jefferson seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried unanimously. Mr Ayshford will request time to present the proposal to the City Council at their meeting next week. They will also be discussing new management for the Ice Arena at this meeting.

Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

projected projects, evaluates priorities and establishes funding for these works for the coming year and for each of the subsequent years for a five year period. This plan is presented to City Council for their approval and use for preparing the coming year's budget.

Attached is the 2015-2019 Parks CIP (Attachment 6.1). Members discussed the projects that listed for 2016 to determine if they need to stay in their current funding year or be rearranged to reflect any changes in park priorities. Other projects could be added and existing ones could be deleted if the schedule needed restructuring.

Members also reviewed a draft 2016-2020 Parks CIP (Attachment 6.2) based on discussions from the March Park Commission meeting. The capital improvement plan will need to be finalized at the May Park Commission meeting.

The Park Commission and City Council have approved the 2015 Park Capital Improvement Plan. Members discussed specific items planned (noted in **bold**)

\$35,000 has been identified to Upgrade the outdoor ice rink.

Planned improvements for the outdoor ice rink include upgrading the boards, resurfacing the blacktop under the rink, improvements to the fence and adding new lighting. There is no warming house since the last one was destroyed in a storm.

Mr Ayshford stated they looked at what other cities had for outdoor rinks and options for a warming house. If the old dasher boards are used for the outside rink, the footprint is set because of how the lights are situated. It might be possible to move some poles but it cannot be extended south due to the Met Council easement on that end. The current rink dimensions are approximately 175ft. by 75ft. It is on an asphalt slab but the center is low and requires extensive filling before the water is level with the boards. Other cities have rinks on dirt surface. The plan is to remove the asphalt and use a gravel base. If the dasher boards are used it might require a concrete perimeter or other foundation to attach the boards securely.

Oak Grove built a stand-alone warming house and outdoor rink for \$35,000. Much of the work was donated by the Youth Hockey Association and they have a contract to use the rink and manage the warming house. It is difficult to schedule use of the outdoor rinks due to weather changes.

Andover rents construction trailers for two of their four outdoor rinks at a cost of about \$2600/season/rink. Buying a used trailer and mounting it more permanently on the ground with the cost of purchase about \$4,000 may be the best option until an option is available for a stand-alone permanent structure. The area between the trailer and the rink could be flooded to allow for skating in and out.

Green treated boards for the outside rink and all supplies for construction would cost approximately \$6,000. An asphalt pad underneath the rink was found to be cost prohibitive. Ms Smith suggested a liner under the rink to prevent melting from sunlight.

Mr Zimmerman asked how long the dasher boards might last for an outdoor rink. The answer to this will require more research as well as cost and use of a possible liner

underneath the rink. If the dasher boards turn out to be less than optimal for the outdoor rink they can still be traded to the company that would sell the new dasher boards. Mr Ayshford stated that the current boards on the outdoor rink lasted about 20 years.

If the current dasher boards can be used for the outdoor rink, the planned improvements might not cost as much as currently budgeted. Any left-over funds could then be put towards other requirements for the arena. These may include repair/replace front doors, upgrade plumbing, bathrooms, locker rooms and possible placement of scoreboards at both ends of the rink. Mr Kaehler mentioned that the Zamboni has very few hours of use on it and may not need replacement for awhile. Mr Harrington reported that there has been a suggestion to identify a line item for funding capital improvements for the Ice Arena in the future but no decision has been made.

\$25,000 has been identified to upgrade and/or add to the skateboard park equipment at Booster West Park.

Members reviewed the current skateboard park. The “tabletop” is a concrete structure. There are two “quarter pipes” about 3 ft tall by 6-8ft wide and two “rails” as well as a “half pipe”. These structures are at least 12 years old and are getting rusty.

Options for new equipment with costs are on Attachment 6.3. When compared to the amount budgeted for the park, it became apparent that a larger amount would be required to make real improvements/additions to the park. Many companies are no longer selling skateboard park equipment due to liability issues. Some nearby cities are building poured concrete parks with the structures all built in. Members reviewed pictures of this type of park and agreed they seemed more desirable with less maintenance and a longer useful life.

The current park is still serviceable but will continue to require ongoing maintenance. Mr Zimmerman suggested putting off the project for a year or so in hopes of additional funding. Mr Harrington stated he felt there will be increased funding in the near future. Members agreed to wait on the project until more funding is available.

\$65,000 has been identified to begin construction and irrigation of Bonde Park for soccer/lacrosse field

Plans for Bonde Park include adding irrigation and building a soccer field. Right now this area is not being used for anything. Mr Ayshford sent emails to almost everyone involved in North Metro Soccer but has not heard back from anyone. It was suggested that the interested parties might wish to attend a meeting with the Park Commission to discuss use of the fields. Ms Lachinski had also mentioned contacting the LaCrosse Associations in the area at a previous meeting.

This year the plan is to begin irrigation and adding topsoil for two fields. The two baseball fields would still be useable and two more soccer fields could possibly be added in the future as well as additional parking if needed.

Mr Ayshford reviewed the updated Park Acquisition and Development Fund plan for 2016 – 2020. The fund would actually start out with a balance of over \$26,000 due to moving the skateboard park project to the Capital Fund for 2017. Norseland Park improvements would be the primary focus for 2016 – 2017.

Members reviewed the Park Capital Fund for 2016 – 2020 which acquires funds from the General Fund when available. The City Administrator has stated he hopes to increase those funds as much as possible. The playground equipment at Rod and Norma Smith Park is the primary item for 2016 as the current equipment is very old and has been severely vandalized.

Mr Harrington asked about usage of the ball park at the lake. Ms Harvey related that it was being used often but in recent years a requirement for insurance caused people to go to different fields. Mr Ayshford related that he has encouraged use of the field for scheduled games but they have not required additional fields.

Mr Ayshford stated he will update the CIP based on the discussion and present for approval at the next meeting.

**Council Report
& Other
Business**

Staff and the Parks Commission will continue discussions on the future direction of the City's Parks and projects with the City Council liaison Tim Harrington. The purpose of this discussion will be to formulate goals and objectives for the park development program and to update the commission on issues currently before the City Council.

Mr Harrington reported that the Council approved refinancing the 20A bond saving \$1.2 million for the City. The results of the 2014 financial audit show the City is in "good financial shape".

The Seniors are having a garage sale at the Senior Center on April 11th and 12th. There will be a Town Hall meeting on April 23rd at 6 pm at the Senior Center.

At the last City Council meeting East Bethel received the Tree City USA plaque for 2014 from the Arbor Day Foundation. Road signs are now located near the City Limit signs on Highway 65. There will be an Arbor Day celebration with the Scouts on Recycling Day, April 25th. There will be a tree planting in Booster Park on that date as well.

Mr Ayshford suggested that the next meeting of the Park Commission be held at the Cedar Creek Ecosystem and Scientific Reserve with representatives from the CCECSR. They would like to do a presentation and possibly a tour weather permitting. Members agreed to this and to forgo the Parks Tour this year and meet at the CCECSR with another at the Ice Arena or maybe a park.

Adjournment **Ms Harvey made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 p.m. Mr Hoffman seconded the motion; all in favor, motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted by:

Susan Lori Irons
Recording Secretary

Attachments:

4.1) Park Financial Reports

5.1) Dasher Board Proposal

6.1) 2015-2019 Parks CIP

6.2) 2016-2020 Parks CIP Draft

6.3) Skate park Price List