



# PARKS and RECREATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes of June 11, 2014

Central Hillside Center  
12 E 4<sup>th</sup> St



## 1. Call Meeting to Order

Commissioner Hall called the meeting to order at 5:02pm.

## 2. Roll Call

- a. PRESENT: Commissioners Hall, Albright, Viken, Braun, Schraepfer, Crosby, Wells, Torch (ABSENT: Commissioner Holak).
- b. Chair Hall acknowledged the new commission members; Mr. Erik Torch who is serving as the Education Representative, and Ms. Amanda Crosby who is serving as the Disabilities Commission Representative (official term to begin pending approval at the June 23 City Council meeting).

## 3. Approval of May 14 and 28, 2014 minutes

- a. May 28<sup>th</sup>: Torch made the motion, Welles seconded, approved unanimously.
- b. May 14<sup>th</sup>: Wells made the motion, Torch seconded, approved unanimously.

## 4. Presentations – Updates from City Staff

### a. Dale Sellner, Buildings and Grounds Maintenance Supervisor

- i. Staff Ms. Bergen shared an update on behalf of Mr. Sellner. Mr. Sellner sent a list of projects that are being worked on by City crews. The list included (1) trail construction and realignment at Lester Park (2) planting of 150 boulevard trees (3) damage repair at Bayfront Park because of Bentlyville (4) new surfacing, nets, posts and fencing at Longview Tennis Courts (5) completed sealcoating of cracks along Lakewalk (6) landscape and playground design for Central Hillside Community Club to be completed this summer (7) Enger Park pathway to gazebo restoration and construction (8) culvert replacement at Lester River Ski Trails due to normal wear and tear (9) flower planting and beautification (10) beach clean-up at Lakewalk
- ii. Pertaining to the sealcoating of the Lakewalk, Commissioner Viken asked about the feasibility of removing small sections in poor shape and replacing them. Ms. Bergen will relay the question/suggestion to Mr. Sellner.
- iii. Commissioner Albright asked about the status of Memorial Park. Ms. Bergen shared that the building has been taken down and the resulting hole has been filled in and seeded, however other park developments have been put on hold until the St. Louis River Corridor visioning is completed by the Mayor and community.

### b. Judy Gibbs, Trails and Bikeways Coordinator

- i. Ms. Gibbs shared that May was “Bus, Bike, Walk” month, which included 26 different community events aimed at increasing human powered transportation. The event is in the third year and has expanded from a one day event, to a one week event, to the one month event this year.
- ii. There will be a four day horse trail training beginning June 19<sup>th</sup> in Duluth. City staff will take part.
- iii. Scheduled completion of the Cross City Trail through Lincoln Park is June 30<sup>th</sup>.
- iv. College Street will be repainted with a reduction of four lanes to three lanes in order to allow car parking on one side and two bike lanes on the other.
- v. Three crews are working on COGGS trails in Western Duluth.



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- vi. There are two public meetings regarding bike trails. Next Tuesday the 17<sup>th</sup> from 5:30-7:00pm will be the second meeting on the Denfeld section of the Cross City Trail. Lowell to Lakewalk will have a public meeting shortly after the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. That meeting has yet to be scheduled.
- c. Shawna Mullen Eardley, Tree Inspector (Shared by Kathy Bergen)
  - i. Ms. Mullen Eardley prepared a report that is attached.
    - 1. Commissioner Albright asked about ash tree removal in anticipation of emerald ash bore. Ms. Gibbs shared that the City has about 3,500 ash trees within the City. The City is attempting to manage the ash bore and minimize tree removal through the use of injected insecticide.
- d. Kathy Bergen, Parks and Recreation Manager
  - i. Ms. Bergen has developed a spreadsheet of all capital projects, wayfinding, and mini-master plans that the Parks Department is working on. Once City staff add the final details, the spreadsheet will be shared with the Parks Commissioners.
  - ii. Ms. Bergen shared a summary of a meeting held for City Councilors and Parks Commissioners on the topic of Duluth's two public golf courses. The courses, in particular Lester Park, are struggling to break even and are in need of capital investment. Options will be explored including Lester being sold to a private golf course management company, or Lester being sold to be developed for housing.
  - iii. Wade Stadium has had an engineering company hired in response to the City's 3.2 million project made possible through State bonding money. The project will put in turf, improve lighting, and improving the brick structures. The goal is to complete the project by November 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - iv. Commissioner Schraepfer volunteered to serve as the Parks Commission liaison to Park Point's small area planning committee that will be meeting before the end of August.

### 5. Commission Committees

- a. Parks and Facilities – meeting date: TBA
  - i. Chair - Joel Braun – Jon Welles, Ed Hall, Michael Schraepfer, [Dale Sellner]
- b. Administrative (E-Board) – meeting date: Friday, June 20 at noon at Parks office
  - i. Chair – Ed Hall – Eric Viken, Tom Albright, [Kathy Bergen]
- c. Trails and Bikeways – meeting date: TBA
  - i. Chair – Tom Albright, - Eric Viken, Andy Holak, [Judy Gibbs], [Art Johnston]
- d. Recreation Programming (youth and adult) – meeting date: TBA
  - i. Chair – Jon Welles – Andy Holak, Erik Torch [Pamela Page]
  - ii. \$30,319.12 is now available for the grant program. Commissioner Welles made a recommendation that eight grants, at a maximum of \$2,000, be made available. Commissioner Braun seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. The goal is to accept applications until approximately July 20<sup>th</sup> and have approval of applications at the Parks Commission's August meeting.
  - iii. Commissioner Welles agreed to chair the Recreation Programming committee.

### 6. Commissioner & Liaison Reports

None given

### 7. New Business

- a. New appointments to the Parks Commission approved at the May 27 City Council meeting: Ed Hall and Jon Welles were reappointed; Erik Torch was appointed for the Community Education position.



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b. Orientation for new members will be scheduled soon.

## 8. Old Business

a. City Council Committee of the Whole meeting on June 9 on Golf Courses

- i. Ms. Bergen shared that a meeting was held for City Councilors and Parks Commissioners which detailed options for future use of Duluth's two public golf courses; Enger and Lester. The two courses are in need of approximately \$13 million in upgrades and improvements but are operating at a net loss. Options include selling Lester, or portions of it, to a private course manager, or to have it rezoned for housing.
- ii. Enger is not able to be resold due to classification of the land when originally acquired by the City. Any money made through action on Lester Park Golf Course would be invested in Enger.

b. Trail Damage Ordinance

- i. Ms. Bergen noted that the attorney's office has a draft of the ordinance, which will be shared with the Trails Committee for review.

c. Chester Mini-Master Plan

- i. A letter was shared from Dan Proctor, a community member who is actively involved in Chester Park.

d. Dog Parks

- i. Ms. Bergen shared a map of proposed dog park locations and modifications to Observation Park. A letter will be sent out to neighbors to invite them to a meeting discussing the proposed plan.
- ii. There is a proposal to build a dog park on the western edge of Brighton Beach. This change is in response to strong neighborhood concern about a dog park near houses in Lester and Lakeside. Commissioner Welles shared concerns regarding usability of a Brighton Beach park in the winter.

## 9. Division Manager's Report

No additional report given

## 10. Public Comment

## 11. Adjournment

Commissioner Albright made motion, Wells seconded. Adjourned at 7:12

## 12. Next meeting

5 pm, Wednesday, July 9, at Central Hillside Center.

### MOTION(S)

Commissioner Welles made a recommendation that eight (\$2,000 maximum) grants be made available. Commissioner Braun seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. The goal is to accept applications until approximately July 20<sup>th</sup> and have approval of applications at the Parks Commission's August meeting. (\$30,319.12 now available for the grant program.)

## UPDATE ON FORESTRY IN PARKS AND REC

### **Tree Inventory:**

Inventory was completed last fall, and you may have seen the report of the results that was included in the year-end report. We will get printed copies of the inventory report to make it available to the public. The completion of the inventory was timely with the confirmation of EAB in Superior. Because of the inventory, the parks maintenance tree crew can better prepare for the arrival of EAB, because they know the exact locations and quantity of our boulevard ash trees. The inventory results report was also used in a meeting between the MN Pollution Control Agency and State representatives of the DNR as an example of how the two agencies can collaborate on urban forestry projects, as well as to encourage the DNR to expand their forestry focus to include *urban* forestry (not just wilderness forests).

Also, our inventory was requested by researchers from the National Forest Service. They are doing a study of urban forests around the country, and our inventory results will be included in their national study. I don't know many other details than that, but when the study is complete, I am on the list to have the results emailed.

Lastly, the inventory results are also being used to create educational and community outreach materials as a part of the MPCA forestry grant that parks and rec received (more on that shortly). All in all, the results of our inventory are proving useful on the local, state-wide, and national level! The tree maintenance crew is planning to keep the inventory updated as they plant and remove trees.

### **Grants Update:**

We are in the final year of two grants: a bonding grant from the DNR and the MPCA grant: *Building Duluth's Community Resiliency Through Urban Trees*. The DNR grant just involves planting trees, so parks maintenance will be doing that. Through the MPCA grant, we planted about 150 trees last year (many by volunteers) along bike paths (multiple spots along the Lakewalk, Irving bike path, Depot Bike Trail), and in boulevards along bike routes. We also planted trees near 4 City buildings that will act as wind breaks and reduce energy use by shading as they mature. This coming year, we will be planting about 100 trees along the Cross City Trail in September (by both volunteers and parks maintenance), and implementing the educational outreach component of the grant. We will install 3 kiosks along Cross City Trail and Lakewalk that talk about the relationship between urban trees, climate change, and biking/walking. We also have "citizen forester" volunteer opportunities:

- Citizen pruners that would prune off the suckers of boulevard trees (the sprouts that grow out of the base of trees) that are missed when parks maintenance prunes because they are under the snow, and that pose visibility issues, as well as encroaching in pedestrian space on the sidewalk.
- Community outreach volunteers that could table at various events, give powerpoint presentations on the benefits of urban trees (and specifically, the benefits that Duluth's boulevard trees offer). Presentations will be given at area clubs and organizations, as well as for the general public.

Volunteer training and kick-off of these volunteer opportunities will occur as soon as MPCA grant amendments are approved. As of June 3, the amendments are in the process of being signed by City of Duluth officials, and then they will be routed to the MPCA for their signatures.

## Kathy Bergen

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**From:** Dale Sellner  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 11, 2014 9:32 AM  
**To:** Kathy Bergen  
**Subject:** parks commission meeting

Kathy, I am not going to be able to attend this meeting.

In following is some info on what we are working on etc.

1. Trail construction at the Lester river ski trail, (trail realignment)
2. Have planted 150 blvd trees.
3. Damage repair at Bayfront Park because of Bentlyville
4. Longview tennis courts – new surface, nets, posts, and fencing
5. Cracked sealed all of lakewalk, will sealcoat soon.
6. Landscape and playground design for CHCC
7. Enger park pathway to gazebo restoration and construction.
8. Culvert replacement at Lester river ski trails
9. Currently we are doing a lot of flower planting and beautification.
10. Beach cleanup at Lakewalk

Kathy, please encourage the members to contact me by e-mail with, thoughts questions or concerns. We are presently not engaged in any major / visible projects. We are scrambling to catch-up with normal and routine maintenance.

Thanks Dale