

**COMMUNITY EDUCATION & RECREATION
JOINT POWERS BOARD MEETING
AUGUST 28, 2015**

Present: Dave Baumgart, Matt Dawson, Scott Guptil, Tim Johnson, Audrey Nelsen
Rachel Skretvedt, Darin Strand, Liz VanDerBill

Staff Present: Steve Brisendine, Rob Baumgarn, Justin DeLeeuw, Scott Ledeboer, Becky
Sorenson, Jena Tollefson, Pam Vruwink

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Darin Strand. Darin called on Justin DeLeeuw from the Public Works Department, to discuss the playground equipment report he had compiled for all the city parks. Justin said that he and Rob Baumgarn had attended a playground safety seminar earlier which trained them to review playground equipment and determine the condition of the equipment using the 2011 National Parks and Recreation playground standards. Rob stated that he looks at playground equipment in a totally different way after attending this seminar.

Justin stated that the seminar presented a rating system from 1-5 to use in determining playground safety.

- 1 - Equipment needing immediate removal or replacement.
- 2 – Major issues which should be addressed in a timely matter
- 3 – Minor things which should be fixed
- 4 – Very minor risks
- 5 – No issue

Justin stated he had checked all the playground equipment in every park. There are 230 playground units among 28 parks. 43 of these units are a Priority 1 (19%), 22 units are a Priority 2 (9%). Most playground equipment has a life expectancy of 15-20 years. 80% of our playground equipment is 20 years or older.

Liz VanDerBill asked if the 43 playground units would be removed. Steve responded that the purpose of Justin's presentation was to get the Joint Powers Board to recommend to the Public Works Committee their concern regarding the unsafe units and request removal. It was stated that removal of all 43 playground units from the various parks would probably generate many calls from residents. Liz stated that, since we are now aware of the unsafe playground equipment, we definitely need to remove it before an accident happens.

Darin Strand asked if there was money set aside in the budget for this expenditure. There is \$150,000 budgeted for this budget year, some of which will be used to remove the equipment. Liz VanDerBill asked about a replacement plan being in place when the old equipment is removed. This will be a priority for staff along with implementation of the Park Plan.

Rachel Skretvedt talked about the need to downsize the number of parks because there is not enough money allocated in the budget to allow for adequate park maintenance in every park.

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Jena Tollefson asked if some equipment could be moved. Justin responded that yes, that is a possibility but equipment would need to be looked at to see if it would be moveable. The likelihood of this taking place is not real great; as anytime you dismantle equipment the integrity of the unit could be compromised.

Park Committee Meeting Report

Steve called upon members of the Park Committee to discuss the meeting. Dave Baumgart said he thought it was a good meeting but some goals have to be created. Rachel Skretvedt stated her concern regarding the City Council's stance on park improvements/maintenance. She would like the committee to be a team effort, working with the City and residents of the City to come up with a plan for the parks and the funds necessary to make improvements.

Steve reported that the final budget from the Mayor will be presented to the City Council soon and staff will provide information on the budgets as this process continues through the fall.

One of the discussions at the meeting was meeting times. It was suggested that, instead of having additional meetings, that the park committee be made a part of the regular Board meeting. Steve stated that we would keep the last Friday as the meeting date and have a short meeting together before breaking up into committee assignments. Since everyone seemed to be in agreement about this; **Scott Guptil moved and Dave Baumgart seconded a motion that the CER Joint Powers Board and the CER Committees would meet every other month going forward. Motion carried.**

City 2016 CIP & Operations Budgets

Steve listed the four items on the budget list:

1. Rice Park – new shelter and splash pad
2. Aquatic Center – new heater for the pool
3. Civic Center – replace the cedar shakes
4. Civic Center – reverse osmosis water system

Civic Center Manager Opening

Steve stated that interviews for the position of Arena Manager were held earlier this week. Four individuals were interviewed. An offer was made and we are waiting to hear back from the individual. Steve hopes to have someone on board by the end of September.

Staff Updates

Pam Vruwink talked about the Aquatic Center. The season was a good one for this summer. She stated we had as many closed days the last week as we had the full season. Liz VanDerBill asked about attendance and revenue. Steve stated that report will be handed out at the September meeting.

Pam also talked about the grand opening of the dog park this past Wednesday. Between 200-250 people attended. The dogs are enthusiastic about the park. A question was asked about the

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funding for the park. Pam stated that the City paid for the fencing. We did not win any grant money from the dog park contest. GVL Poly from Litchfield donated a bench for every bench we ordered.

We received \$2,000 from Vision 2040 and \$212 from Northland Group. With this money, we were able to purchase 3 benches (receiving an additional 3) along with signage for the park and pet waste stations.

Jena Tollefson talked about Cardinal Place – summer has gone really well and they are gearing up for school and looking for additional staff. Liz VanDerBill asked about the status of sign in sheets. Jena responded that she has been working with Affinity on this issue and that the goal is to implement this process in early fall.

Rob Baumgarn said that summer leagues went well and fall softball leagues have started. He stated that there are 50 girls registered for Middle School Tennis which is twice the number that other schools have. He said the seed and fertilizer program we are on has improved the field conditions.

Steve said that Community Ed & Rec is looking at how we can provide more rec opportunities for kids.

Steve talked about the yellow bike program. We have about 60 bikes in the program. There have been some glitches and the need to pick up bikes from back yards. Audrey Nelsen asked if we were going to do a program at the schools regarding the yellow bikes. Steve responded that we are trying to educate people that this is a “share” program, not a “free, take it home with you” program.

Liz VanDerBill asked if we hand out surveys at each class so individuals can let us know if they like the program or if they have any concerns or questions. She stated she has never received a form to fill out. Steve stated that he knew Tammy Rudningen handed out those types of forms to the adult classes but wasn’t aware if the youth programs were included. Pam Vruwink mentioned that there was talk of creating survey forms more in tune with a class instead of using a generic form.

Rachel Skretvedt asked if we would do a press release with regard to the playground removal to avoid public back lash. It was felt this was a good idea.

Audrey Nelsen stated that she hopes that we could have something like a “Friends of the Park” to help with fund raisers, working on the parks, etc. She also asked about the Community Service Officers, if they were a Community Ed & Rec position or a Police Department position. Steve stated that they were Police Department positions.

As there was no further business, the meeting adjourned. Committee meetings will be held on September 25th.