NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE
ANOKA PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

DATE: Tuesday, August 18, 2020
TIME: 7:00 PM
PLACE: Anoka City Hall – Council Work Session Room
        2015 First Avenue, Anoka

AGENDA

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. APPROVE MINUTES

3. OPEN FORUM

4. NEW BUSINESS
   A. Community Education – Budget Request / Program Update

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
   A. Rudy Johnson
   B. Amphitheater

6. COMMUNICATIONS
   A. General Updates

7. ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING
   A. Invasive Species Update
   C. Single Track Bike Trail

8. ADJOURNMENT

If unable to attend, please call the Parks Department at 763-576-29803.
Auxiliary aids for handicapped persons are available upon request at least 96 hours in
advance. Please call the Administration Office at 763-576-2740 to make
arrangements.
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
OF THE
ANOKA PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
TUESDAY, JULY 21, 2020
COUNCIL WORK SESSION ROOM OF ANOKA CITY HALL
2015 FIRST AVENUE, ANOKA MN

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairperson Steve Nelson, Joseph Anderla, Mary Blankenship, Mark Beckenbach

MEMBERS PRESENT VIA ZOOM: Julie Huspek, Sam Scott, Derek Sebesta, Terri Poe, and Tim Watson

MEMBERS ABSENT: NONE

STAFF PRESENT: Lisa LaCasse, Public Services Administrator and Jon Holmes, Public Services Supervisor, Nickie Jenks, Recreation Manager

GUESTS: Michelle Olson

APPROVE MINUTES
There being no changes or corrections to the June regular meeting minutes, a motion was made by Beckenbach, seconded by Anderla to APPROVE THE JUNE 16, 2020, REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD AS PRINTED.

9 ayes – 0 nays. Motion carried

OPEN FORUM
Chairperson Nelson welcomed our guest and invited her to speak to the park board. Michelle Olson lives on the 900 block of Cross Street and has been a resident for 45 years. She has two children ages 17 and 22. What prompted her to come to the Park Board was noticing picnic tables in the park. Her suggestion is to have a community project to paint the picnic tables in creative, colorful designs. She suggests local businesses might sponsor a table and civic organizations such as Women of Today, Boy/Girl Scouts might want to participate to make the tables more colorful and inviting.

Blankenship asked if Olson would like to take on painting a table. Olson replied maybe, if it could be delivered to her house. She thought that maybe a civic organization, local businesses might want to sponsor or maybe a neighborhood block would sponsor. Nelson suggested the city might want to spec what type of paint you use.
LaCasse said all the tables are painted with oil based paint for durability and probably have several layers of paint on them. They are collected from the parks in the winter, repaired/repainted. Nelson suggested people could present their proposed painting to for staff approval. Holmes expressed concern that once people see the creative painting, they might be encouraged to add their own creativity in the form of graffiti.

Olson said that she recently called City Council to report vandalism. LaCasse said issues like that should be reported to the Public Services Department so we can quickly respond to correct the issue. LaCasse and Holmes were at the Anoka Nature Preserve and observed graffiti that had been there for a few days unreported. Hundreds of people probably walked by that and no one called to report it.

This prompted a discussion on residents volunteering assistance to the park department in reporting graffiti, picking up litter at parks and trails, pulling weeds, cleaning signs, etc. Blankenship took on cleaning up park signs and said it took her about an hour. She thought it would be a good project for a family to take on. Jenks suggested we could have a system similar to our metal detector check out where residents could stop by and check out a cleaning kit or painting kit.

LaCasse said these are all good ideas and maybe we can tie in with our Adopt a Park program. And staff will be sure to include information in the city newsletter about how to report issues/vandalism.

Blankenship commented that the flower baskets look especially good this year. Olson also said she loves the flower baskets and appreciates that they all the way down towards Hoffman. She suggested people could also sponsor a basket of flowers. Blankenship said the flowers really add to the ambiance of downtown.

NEW BUSINESS

Riverwalk Project – Amphitheater
Anderla has requested this on the agenda and expressed frustration that the amphitheater seems to have been a discussion with the Park Board for as long as he has been on the board. We have two reports indicating that it is unsafe and estimate for restoration will cost millions of dollars. Actual use is probably not feasible, parking is limited, and access is limited.

LaCasse referred to the information in the packet and July 2019 meeting minutes regarding the on-site meeting held to discuss options. The city invited a State Historical Society representative to visit the site to help determine what our next step should be. Based on that discussion, Lisa has spoken with Bolten Menk to discuss options for grants to have an architect from the state historical society review the site and make an official determination about rehab/restore/preserve or demo. There are $10,000 grants available that this evaluation would fall under.

Discussion followed regarding the tunnel proposal and how that would affect the amphitheater. LaCasse indicated that the amphitheater will not hold up the tunnel or trail construction by the river – the impact is specific to the sidewalk along Ferry Street.
Anderla suggested that we turn this over to the HPC and see if they can build a display to show how it was originally used and along with whatever artifacts remain.

Poe said that Kimley-Horn and the LHB report were both in agreement that it was dangerous and one recommended fencing it off. The State Historical Society stopped it from coming off the National Registry of Historic Places in the 1980’s. They should be included in any decision we make. But she agreed that it didn’t seem feasible to spend 8 million dollars to restore something that would not even be usable. They could stop us from tearing down a historic site. Beckenbach said he thinks it is definitely a safety concern.

Anderla suggested we provide photos to have the site un-listed. It is a danger to the public. Sebesta said back in 1984 the site was in better condition. He wonders if the Historical Society would still want to preserve it now that it is in worse shape. LaCasse said we have not asked about un-listing it. Anderla said we should tell City Council it is not worth trying to preserve and the City has to write a letter to have it “D” listed.

Anderla talked about the Riverwalk trail alignment – suggesting from the air think about as an “A shape” with the legs of the “A” being the east/west sides of the river and the top of the “A” by the dam, center of the “A” is the pedestrian bridge. A discussion followed regarding the dam and dam improvements. It is very expensive to update the system for raising the upper Rum River from our current method of installing the boards.

LaCasse said the State Historical Society offers small grants that could be used to pay for additional review. She suggests this may be the best way to answer the questions about what we can do with the amphitheater without affecting the historical status or whether is still qualifies. Anderla asked who can write a letter to un-list it. LaCasse suggested maybe the Council or Historic Preservation Commission. LaCasse said we can put this on the agenda for August and hopefully have more information from Bolten Menk.

Riverbank Issue by Woodbury House
LaCasse reported that at the beginning of June it was called to staff’s attention that a portion of the riverbank is sloughing into the river just south of the house. The bluff has a slope estimated at about 75%. It is being undercut every time it rains and trees are falling off the hillside into the river. Staff from the Anoka Conservation District and reps from the Rum River Watershed board have been out to look at both short and long term fixes. Staff were hoping that a storm water grant maybe available to help pay for repairs. Staff asked the DNR hydrologist to weigh in as well as options for repair. All options for long-term repairs are costly – some are impractical (like re-grading the slope to less than 20%). LaCasse said repairs could cost a million dollars to fix and we don’t know where this money comes from at this point. Blankenship asked if this has been going on for a while and is especially bad this year. Holmes said before the trees fell over you couldn’t really see what was happening.

Nelson asked if the DNR is the only group LaCasse has to work with. LaCasse said Conservation District and Rum River Watershed will likely have a say, not sure about the Army Corp of Engineers. Our area hydrologist from the DNR is very knowledgeable and is willing to work with us and help make recommendations but we will need to hire
an engineer to develop plans and get cost estimates before we can apply for any grants. LaCasse will bring this back to the agenda when she has an update.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Rudy Johnson Park
LaCasse reported on the progress at Rudy Johnson Park. The grading and fill is complete; 4,000 yards of dirt was hauled in to raise the level of the park. The route for the ¼ mile trail loop is graveled in and the prep for the hockey rink is done. Irrigation quotes have come in and LaCasse is still working on the playground modifications. Hopko will seed the whole park once the irrigation system is installed. We are also waiting on blacktop quotes. About a dozen trees are earmarked throughout the city to move in once the park is ready. It will be a diverse canopy. We are in good shape to have grass seed by mid-August and get the turf established. There will be daynight hockey this year with a temporary warming house. No lights or permanent building until Phase 2.

Akin Riverside Park
LaCasse reported that the new tables are in and restoration is about 95% complete. Blankenship asked about the swings and LaCasse replied they are ordered but not shipped yet. People are renting and using the new facility. Blankenship said the improvements are pretty dramatic change and it looks good.

Poe asked if the city has a state guide for ordering trees. LaCasse responded that Jerry Tri follows a MN planting guide and plans a variety of species in the parks so that there is a mix of native species in the parks. Poe is concerned because she has beautiful old oaks in their neighborhood and worries about replacing the native habitat. LaCasse assured her that Jerry takes that into account. Nelson stated the city also participates in the state shade tree program.

COVID-19 Update
Jenks reported updates on the Aquatic Center and concerts in the park. To date they have sold 4800 daily passes to the pool out of a potential of 9900 tickets. People are purchasing but not in mass quantities. The pool has sold out of non-resident daily passes several times. The daily max for day passes is 200 to allow for season pass holders to attend as well. Jenks reported that they have not exceeded capacity of 400 on any one day. She has sold 399 individual passes and 19 senior passes. She has also partnered with a dive club for Monday and Wednesday mornings.

Swimming lessons have had decent registration. Less students are allowed to sign up – so we will not be able to serve the numbers of kids like past seasons. The classes are spread out among 4 to 5 different time slots in each session. There is a max of 55 people in the pool per class period counting students, parents and instructors.

Blankenship had a question about nonresidents being able to use the pool. Jenks explained that the daily passes are available for both residents and nonresidents. People are encouraged to purchase online, but can buy at the pool or at city hall without processing fees. Nelson asked if they have had to turn anyone away from entering. Jenks replied not due to temperature but we have sold out and had to turn people away because of capacity.
Blankenship had to educate someone who was upset about the pool opening. She pointed out all the precautions in place and that staff is following guidelines by the governor and CDC. The person was glad Blankenship informed her. Nelson cautioned that it is still dangerous but he is glad Jenks is doing a good job looking out for everyone’s safety. LaCasse pointed out that we are no longer the only pool open as St Louis Park has opened and several beaches have opened as well.

Jenks reported on the concerts in the park and said we have had at least 150 people at each. They come by bike, car and even boat. Signs are posted encouraging people to practice social distancing and wear masks. Jenks did ask if any park board members were available to assist on August 2nd by giving the band access to power and locking up after the concert. Beckenbach offered to do this.

COMMUNICATIONS

Website & Civic Rec Demo
LaCasse presented the new City web site and highlighted the parks page. She highlighted the news and announcements on the bottom of the page which are interactive and direct you to more information. Jenks logged on to demonstrate the reports available in Civic Rec. She reported that the staff really likes the new system and find it very efficient and much easier. Jenks brought up the point of sale system for the concession stand and showed that it tracks inventory and runs great reports. There is a feature that we can use next year that will allow parents to put money in an account for kids to use at the pool – so they don’t have to carry cash.

She showed a feature on the web site that has the title “How do I?” It was suggested this feature could include an option to report vandalism. LaCasse said if you are looking for something on the web site and cannot find it, please let her know. LaCasse and Jenks were responsible for moving everything on to the new site so if something isn’t there, they would like to know and will correct it. The new web site address is: www.anokamnnesota.com

LaCasse and Jenks are still adding information to the web site like archery permits and information on waterfowl for warriors. It is possible that next year our boat slip rental will be available through the web site.

Items for Next Meeting
Conservation District – September
Amphitheater – August

Miscellaneous
Jenks is working on holding a community life jacket swap. She also has scheduled a book swap for November 1st.

Items for Next Meeting
Adjournment
There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Anderla, seconded by Beckenbach to ADJOURN THIS REGULAR MEETING.
7 ayes – 0 nays. Motion carried. (Huspek and Blankenship had left earlier)

Time of adjournment 9:20 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa LaCasse
Public Services Administrator

Jenny Spooner
Public Services/Recording Secretary
Date: July 28, 2020
To: Greg Lee, City Manager and Lisa LaCasse, Public Services Administrator
From: Kristin Keller, Community Education Program Supervisor
Re: 2021 City of Anoka Community Education Budget Proposal

Anoka-Hennepin Community Education is requesting the support of the City of Anoka for the Community School Program during the 2021 budget year. The funding provided by the City of Anoka and the Community Education program helps us employ staff to set up enrichment programs and increase participation opportunities for students in athletics and performing arts activities through sliding fee subsidies.

Afterschool programs keep kids safe, inspire them to learn, and give working parents peace of mind. They help children learn, grow, and reach their full potential, offering new learning opportunities that help students do better in school and in life. Children in afterschool programs attend school more often, get better grades, and are more likely to graduate.

Youth Programs:
- Franklin Community School-$12,000
- Lincoln Community School-$8,000
- Wilson Community School-$10,000
- Anoka Children’s Theater- $3,000

Teen Programs:
- Anoka Middle School for the Arts Teen Program and Anoka Halloween Celebration-$8,000
- Sliding Fee Funds $27,000

Total: $68,000

We thank the City of Anoka for the support and the opportunities it brings families. If you have any questions, ideas or suggestions for collaborations, please feel free to call me.

In partnership,
Kristin Keller, Program Supervisor
763-506-1263
kristin.keller@ahschools.us
Summary Report

Anoka-Hennepin Community Education-Anoka Cluster

2019-2020 Highlights

Anoka-Hennepin Community Education and the City of Anoka partner to provide after-school, evening, weekend and non-school day activities for preschool, elementary and middle school youth. Our staff provide programs that include: enrichment classes, recreation and middle school athletics, as well as support for community access to school facilities. The average free and reduced lunch rate for Anoka schools is 46%.

Enrichment classes, activities and athletics- Fall 2019 and Winter 2020

- 972 elementary students did science projects, learned a language, played chess and floor hockey learned how to swim and went on field trips.
- 110 families attended our winter elementary dance
- The Leo Clubs at Franklin and Wilson raised $5,702 for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society and raised money for 15 thanksgiving baskets with turkey and trimmings for 15 Wilson families.
- 72 children ages 4 to 6 year played T-Ball
- 774 middle school students participated in athletics and enrichment classes
- 168 students attended teen nights
- 142 community groups used our facilities in the Anoka cluster

Participation during the last three years has shown an upward trend thanks to our ability to provide staffing and offer direct fee assistance and keep overall fees low, made possible by your support.

Spring and COVID 19

Due to the Stay Safe order we were unable to hold our programs and activities in the usual manner. We did provide some classes online, notably language and music, we also assembled learning and project kits with materials and instructions. Families would pick up the kits and do the projects at home.

The cast and crew of Shrek the Musical worked since December on rehearsals, building sets and sewing costumes. Final performances were to happen just days after the emergency order went into effect.

Our staff also served as subs and tutors in the mandated emergency childcare program which provided childcare to tier one workers. We also created and pushed out videos like this for our parents/students:

Community Schools: Earth Day - How to make a ... - YouTube
www.youtube.com › watch

Community Schools: Inspire creativity while staying ... - YouTube
www.youtube.com › watch
Middle School Project
This fall and winter, Community Education, formed a Middle School Athletics Steering Committee and worked with the District’s Research and Evaluation team and Morris Leatherman to develop and administer a survey to all 6,000+ middle schoolers and a representative sample of parents in order to:

- Understand both community and school-based programs currently offered
- Analyze data from surveys, focus groups, reports and other sources
- Gather additional information from other stakeholders on trends, opportunities and concerns
- Develop recommendations for programmatic changes that would benefit middle school youth and families

We’re still digging into the data and arranging meetings with stakeholder groups. Here is a sampling of what we have learned so far.

General information:

- 1/3 of middle school students have participated middle school athletics annually, with ½ participating sometime in middle school.
- 97% of parents feel there is enough choices and programs in the community.

Who plays and why:

- The top benefits reported by both students and parents of participating in Community Education include have fun, make friends, learn new skills and gain confidence.
- More kids play in school-based programs than other options (clubs, associations). Proportionally more kids of color play in school-based programs.

Opportunities:

- Both kids and parents want more open gym/pick-up opportunities.
- Skating, fencing, martial arts, archery and trap shooting appeared to be wanted along with current programming.

Why students didn’t participate:

- Busy at home (36%), not interested in what’s offered (35%), more interested in other things, costs too much (13%), wanted better coaches (5%).

For the coming Fall of 2020

We will adapt to the hybrid model which requires more staff working with fewer students in more spaces. This will require more resources.

- We are offering 77 classes at the elementary level, many of which we will be able to pivot to on-line versions if necessary.
- We will be offering a full slate of sports-flag football, volleyball, cross country, and tennis along with enrichment at the middle school level.
- Will need to provide more engagement and resource opportunities that support mental wellness for students and families.
- Provide programs and celebration that highlight the 100+ anniversary of Anoka Halloween.
- Continue the collaboration and cross training with our aquatics programs.
There is a typical process for determining the appropriate treatment of historical sites, and that is developing alternatives that are consistent with the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties*. The property is in very rough shape, and what I would consider to be the “character-defining elements”, the retractable covering and the classical steps, are either removed or in a state that is probably beyond repair.

**Step 1: Evaluation**

Before even going down the path of identifying a treatment method (below), I recommend hiring an architectural historian or historian to complete a re-evaluation of the site. See talking points below:

- Nomination is what we call an early nomination where standards for listing were permissive and consideration of past alterations and condition were very flexible.
- At the time of listing, important elements were already removed
- Since listing the site has undergone further deterioration, compromising the historic Integrity
- New evaluation will help determine if the site still qualifies for listing and, if so, what extant site features are its character-defining elements

In sum, the re-evaluation will lay out whether the site is too deteriorated, or what elements need to be considered in future treatment. This would also inform whether demo should take place with minimal mitigation/documentation.

**Step 2: Historic Structure Report**

If the site continues to be eligible for listing, or there are elements present that can be carried forward for future site planning that would be consistent with the Secretary’s Standards, then there is a lot of flexibility in the standards, but it usually comes down to the following range (with variations at each level):

- Reconstruction (rarely completed, now usually a treatment reserved for the nation’s most significant sites)
- Restoration (e.g. partial reconstruction, replacing missing features)
- Rehabilitation (e.g. making repairs and making available for compatible uses)
- Preservation (e.g. taking measures to stabilize, preserve in place)

This study would develop alternatives meeting these Secretary-established forms of treatment and consider the feasibility of each. It will rely, in part, on:

- Level of site significance
- Existing condition
- Potential future use and site/code needs
**Funding**
The Minnesota Historical and Cultural Heritage Grants Program is sales-tax funded extension of the Legacy Amendment. I expect all grants to be very competitive for the next year due to the likely fiscal conditions.

**Small grants**
- Offered four times a year
- Next deadline in October (project start in January)
- Funding up to $10,000

**Large grants**
- Offered once a year
- Pre-app deadline is typically in May (project start in December)
- Funding over $10,000

I recommend self-funding the first step, if possible, with an eye toward positioning the city for a strong application to complete the Historic Structure Report, using either a small grant with a local match, or a large grant. Matches are not required, but are supposed to make applications more competitive.