

**Park Board Meeting - October 1, 2001
Minutes**

The October 1, 2001 City of Lino Lakes Park Board meeting was called to order at 6:30pm, by Chair Lindy.

Roll call was taken, members present were Paul Montain, Chris Welsand, Bill Kusterman, George Lindy, Michael O'Connor, and Pam Taschuk. Members absent were Pat Huelman.

Also present were Rick DeGardner, Public Services Director, Sandie Wood, Office Manager.

APPROVAL OF JULY 30, 2001 MINUTES:

Chair Lindy asked if the matching funds for the Clearwater Creek Grant could be made in both labor and cash. Rick advised a small portion of the matching funds can be labor but the bulk has to be cash.

Paul Montain made a motion, seconded by Bill Kusterman, to approve the July 30, 2001 minutes. The minutes were approved.

SETTING THE AGENDA:

The agenda was passed as presented.

OPEN MIKE:

Ms. Sue Walseth, resident of Lino Lakes, came forward and stated she has worked for many years to get the access to Birch Park completed. She presented a petition with 79 signatures indicating their support for the trail. She stated she has done a lot of research and has transcribed tapes from previous Park Board meetings regarding this issue. She distributed copies of the transcriptions and noted that when the process started in 1994 the Whitcomb's were very supportive of selling a portion of their land for the trail access.

Ms. Walseth continued stating the only option for children in the area is Birch Park. Developers in this area have contributed to the cost of the trail. Condemnation costs will not exceed what has already been dedicated. The owners of the property were willing to have an access and the kids need a place to play. The ditch in the area is dangerous and access is needed. There are no trails in the area and 12th Street and Birch Street are too narrow and dangerous to use for access.

Ms. Walseth added that everyone in the area wants to know why the trail is not there yet. There are a lot of young children in the area and they need a place to play.

Ms. Michelle Sylvander, resident of Lino Lakes, came forward and asked for an update on Clearwater Creek Park.

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Rick advised the City did receive final grant approval from the DNR. There are some minor grading issues that should be resolved this week. It is anticipated that the rough grading will be completed this fall. The site plan may be altered slightly in relation to the location of a backstop. Bids for the playground equipment will be obtained in the winter with the help of neighborhood input.

No one else was present for open mike.

SKATE PARK UPDATE:

Rick advised the skate park is being used extensively. There have been some issues that the Park Board needs to be aware of.

At the September 10, City Council meeting, the resident located west of City Hall Park expressed concern regarding the noise generated by users of the skate park. It was indicated that the City had been planning on installing a wooden fence along the western edge of the skate park to help minimize the noise. Staff subsequently installed the 80' x 6' high privacy fence as well as several Norway Pines and shade trees around the skate park area. The area around in the pad has also been seeded. The adjoining property owner also feels the skate park is an attractive nuisance and is just a passing fad. Rick stated he indicated he does not agree with that assessment.

The City has experienced some vandalism at City Hall Park. Last week two slides were damaged and need to be replaced. An article in the Quad also identified issues with the skate park in Centerville.

To date, the City is aware of one serious injury. The police department has been very helpful in patrolling the area. Officers have encountered several situations of juveniles not conducting themselves appropriately (i.e. climbing on warming house roof, riding bikes on ramps, etc.).

Staff is continuing to monitor the new skate park and will keep the Park Board Members informed of any new developments.

Paul asked if the skate park will be closing the first of November. Rick advised tarps will be put over the equipment and the area will be fenced off. It is anticipated that the skate park will be closed around the first of November, depending on the weather.

Mr. Adam Kieger and Brian Featherstone came forward to show their appreciation to the Park Board for the skate park.

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Mr. Featherstone presented a signed thank you card from those who utilize the skate park.

Pam asked if Mr. Featherstone's wrist was broken at the skate park and asked for their perspective on what is going on at the skate park.

Mr. Featherstone stated kids are hanging out there and skating. He indicated he did hurt his wrist at the skate park.

Mr. Kieger stated there are kids from all over the area that are using the skate park. There are seniors that are driving their cars there and young kids use the skate park also. He indicated the age mixture is not a problem.

Paul asked if they have been to the Centerville skate park.

Mr. Kieger stated he has been to the Centerville skate park and there are similar conditions at that park. The Centerville skate park has a larger area for skating but the skate park here has more mini ramps.

Chris inquired about the number of kids using the skate park.

Mr. Kieger stated there is anywhere from 10-40 kids using the park at one time. Friday night and Saturday morning are the busiest times.

Rick stated there are kids that are taking responsibility in the cleaning up of the park. On one occasion there was a mess from paint ball pellets and the kids who use the park cleaned it up.

Paul asked if the fields at City Hall Park are being used in the fall. Rick advised the fields there are only used in the spring and summer.

Bill inquired about the amount of noise created from the skate park.

Mr. Kieger stated there is not a lot of screaming but the kids do talk to each other. The kids using the park are not trying to be annoying.

Chair Lindy stated the City does not have anything else that draws 40 kids of this age at one time. The Park Board wants to keep the park but the City has received complaints. He asked the boys present to take the complaints back to their friends so everyone can be aware of the problems. The skate park needs to be a self-policing area.

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Pam added that if the boys hear who is responsible for the vandalism, to let the Police Department or Park Board know. Paul stated the skate park has turned out to be very popular but it does have a nuisance factor. The skate park is coming to the end of its season but the Park Board has to consider the complaints during the winter so the City can keep the skate park.

Mr. Dan Kieger, resident of Lino Lakes, came forward and thanked the Park Board for their help noting they did a good thing. There was an incident on the first day and the City closed the park for a few days. He stated he would like to thank the following organizations for their donations to the project:

Lino Lakes State Bank	Community Bank
Custom Remodelers	Card Club
Forest Lake Athletic Association	Friends of the Park
Tom Thumb at Lake and Main	Lino Lakes VFW
Lino Lakes Lions Club	Lino Lakes Black Top
Lino Lakes Women's Auxiliary	

Mr. Kieger thanked everyone else that was involved with the project.

Ms. Carol Featherstone came forward and thanked the Park Board for the skate park. She stated it is very nice to have it there and she would rather her kids go to a park then somewhere else. She stated her son did hurt his wrist at the skate park but accidents do happen and he could have hurt his arm anywhere.

Chair Lindy thanked everyone for coming and giving the Park Board positive feedback regarding the skate park.

OLD BUSINESS:

Discuss Birch Park Trail - Rick advised at the July 30 Park Board meeting, staff was directed to put the Birch Park trail item on the October Park Board agenda for discussion. He indicated copies of past meeting minutes were included in the packets relating to this issue.

Chair Lindy advised that from 1994-1998, when nothing happened regarding the trail, the City believed it had the property at Holly and 85th for an athletic complex. He reviewed the background of this issue noting that it was discussed at every meeting and was stonewalled until the Park Board considered condemnation proceedings.

Ms. Walseth stated she understood that the property owners had always indicated they would only sell their land for homes and or townhomes. She stated she also called their attorney and he never returned her calls.

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Chair Lindy stated the land is perceived as more valuable than it really is because it is unbuildable. The City cannot purchase the whole parcel. The City did try to purchase a portion of the parcel for the trail.

Paul added that the property owners do not want to lose two acres. The City has pursued many angles and have not been able to make any progress.

Ms. Walseth stated it is very unfair and frustrating because they had agreed to sell the land at the very beginning in 1994. They should have to stick to that.

Paul noted the Park Board has kept the dollars in the budget for the trail.

Chris inquired about the basis for the petition that was submitted and options that the City has. Rick read the petition that requests a trail be developed to gain access to the park that was agreed to in 1994.

Rick stated the options include condemnation or to look at some other proposal that might interest the property owners. It seems as though money is not the issue. The City does want to prevent the remaining land from being landlocked, which is why the City pursued the purchase of two acres. The City can look at condemnation costs and make another offer, or also wait until the property is sold to a developer.

Chair Lindy stated there seems as though there is no contiguous property that can be developed. The highland on the property cannot be accessed.

Paul stated the two acres should not affect the remaining property that much. The land is in trust so it may not be acquired for quite some time. He stated he does not like condemnation but he does feel the City has to move forward because there are more residents in the area now and safety is an issue. The City can't wait any longer and the condemnation figures need to be obtained.

Bill stated the minimum for condemnation is approximately \$30,000.

Chair Lindy stated the City needs to negotiate in good faith and offer them more than the land is worth. The jury would look at the City's offer more favorably.

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Ms. Walseth stated the property owners talked about selling the parcel to a developer in 1994. The developer indicated he was not interested because it is swampland. She stated she believes the property owners want the City to buy the entire parcel.

Paul stated he does not believe taking 1½-2 acres will affect the remaining property. The City has been pushed to condemnation and/or a combination of condemnation and an offer. The City Attorney needs to be involved.

Chris inquired about the time frame for condemnation and who pays for it. Rick advised the City gets the right to the property right away during the condemnation process. The award process can take a long time. The condemnation process would be paid for out of Park Dedication fees. He noted that finances have never been an issue. However, the City needs to be reasonable on how Park Dedication funds are spent. There are dollars in the fund for the trail. The Park Board can recommend to the City Council to proceed with condemnation for a parcel of property for access to the park. Prior to that, the Park Board should have a recommendation to purchase the property for a specific amount of dollars. He added that the construction of the tiered steps, boardwalk, and pavement will be very expensive.

Paul Montain made a motion, seconded by Pam Taschuk, to recommend that staff pursue land condemnation with the City Council with one more proposal to be made by the City Attorney in the maximum amount of \$20,000. Motion passed.

Rick clarified that the Park Board is directing staff to serve notice to the Attorney, if the City Council approves, to proceed with condemnation unless the City can purchase the property for \$20,000. Staff will also confer with the City Attorney regarding options if it is determined that the purchase of the two acre parcel will effect the remaining property and the City must purchase the entire parcel.

REVIEW NORTHEASTERN PHEASANT HILLS TRAIL PROPOSAL: Rick advised Mr. Vaughan, the developer for Pheasant Hills, has recently submitted a proposal to provide a trail connection from the northeastern portion of Pheasant Hills to the Regional Trail.

Mr. Vaughan's proposal is to provide the grading and necessary fill. The City would be responsible to pay for legal expenses, a culvert, Class V, bituminous, and engineering necessary to complete this project.

Park dedication for all phases of Pheasant Hills amounts to \$110,240 plus the three acres of land, which is currently identified as Pheasant Hills Park. Estimated costs of existing

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park and trail improvements including playground, overlook sitting area, and basketball court amount to approximately \$50,000. The cost estimate for the Timberwolf Trail connection is \$45,000. Future park and trail improvements include the bridge and trail directly north of the playground equipment. The estimated future park improvements amount to \$40,000.

Rick stated he feels this trail connection would provide a tremendous benefit to residents in the Pheasant Hills Development and he supports working with Mr. Vaughan to acquire a trail easement and allow him to perform the grading work. The City would then have to commit to funds to complete the trail segment which may include park dedication funds, general fund dollars, or future bond referendum.

Rick added that it appears there will be the need for extensive boardwalking. He indicated he is meeting with Mr. Shoenbauer next week regarding this issue.

Chair Lindy asked how far to the north/east the trail connection will go. Rick advised the trail will go between the 6th and 11th Additions east of Sherman Lake.

Paul inquired about the easements for the Timberwolf Trail. Rick advised staff has not yet received the documents from the property owners. After the survey work was done it was determined a big chunk of the trail was on the St. Paul Water Utility Company property. Anoka County is in the process of purchasing the property. Staff has requested the St. Paul Water Utility grant the city permission to construct the trail.

Paul stated that when the figures are added up, the City is \$25,000 short. Rick advised the intent of the memo was to make the Park Board aware of the history of revenues and expenses in the Pheasant Hills development. The \$40,000 figure is for a future trail need. This trail connection could also be a part of the referendum. He stated he will provide more information when it is available but the City should get the grading done if possible.

Chair Lindy stated there may be other boardwalk needs within the City that may have to be addressed first.

TRAILS UPDATE:

Rick provided the following trail updates:

Black Duck Trail

The Black Duck Drive cul-de-sac to the Regional Trail along Reshanau Lake has been graded and Class V has been installed.

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Staff will allow the base to settle for a few weeks before the bituminous is installed.

Timberwolf Trail

The trail segment from Timberwolf Trail to the Regional Park Trail has been encountering a few obstacles. Staff is attempting to resolve the issues to permit grading activity to begin yet this fall.

Clearwater Creek Development

There are two trail segments that have been damaged due to construction traffic. The adjoining property owners and developer have been sent letters indicating the City's position that the damaged trail segments must be replaced yet this fall.

Centennial Middle School Trail

A few weeks ago, there was an incident in which two bicyclists collided near the extreme western portion of the trail. Staff has since installed cautionary signs indicating the limited visibility near that particular trail area.

Pam stated some people do come around the Middle School trail fairly fast and she hopes the signs will help.

Paul added that the more accesses available to the County Park the better. It is beneficial to all residents within the City.

RECREATION DEPARTMENT UPDATE:

Rick referred to the Program Highlights Flyer from September 2001. He noted that 266 children were registered full-time in the Summer Playground Program this year and 138 children participated in the program through the daily rate option.

The fall Youth Instructional programs will be starting soon. A few classes have filled already and many are close to being filled. There are approximately 625 participants in the Fall Soccer program and 350 participants in the Tackle Football program. This is up from 219 players last season when the program was operated by a local association.

Two field trips are planned for the Clubs "WAFD" Trips, a trip to the Afton Apple Orchard and the Science Museum.

The fall softball season concluded in September. The combined total of adult softball teams for summer and fall was 74. This is fewer teams than in the past.

The Family Turkey Shoot will be held on Saturday, November 17, 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. at the Centennial Middle School. The City is looking for volunteers for this event.

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Rick noted that the winter activities guide is due in homes the last week in November.

PARKS DEPARTMENT UPDATE:

Rick reviewed a memo from Mike Hoffman, Parks Supervisor, which summarizes the maintenance highlights for August and September 2001. Rick noted the activities included ballfield preparation and the fall softball will conclude this week. Maintenance of two fields for the Fall Football Program and the interior and exterior of the Lino Park Warming House have been painted. Other activities included improvements to the players bench area including concrete pads and aluminum player's benches with backs at Rice Lake Elementary Field #2. A lot of work has been completed at the south end of Marshan Park and the City Hall Skate Park. An old sign was removed at Country Lakes Park and a new site was prepped and landscaped. Trail maintenance included flail mowing and brush trimming of trail edges.

Paul asked if anything has been done this year regarding to the heaves and roots on trails. Rick advised not much has been done this year on the heaves and roots. This is an ongoing battle although it is much better this year than last year. The trail system is currently in pretty good shape.

OLD BUSINESS:

Referendum - Chair Lindy inquired about the status of a possible referendum. Rick advised the Council did indicate support to pursue a referendum. Dollars have been put in the 2002 budget. An analysis relating to the tax impact on property owners will be discussed with the City Council and it is probable a committee would be formed to work on the referendum. Park Board Members and 8-10 residents will be needed to form a committee.

Pam asked if the Park Board should start talking to people about the referendum and possibly recruiting people for the committee. Rick stated the Park Board should be talking about this and recruitment for the committee should not be limited to organized sports participants.

Michael advised the head of the Centennial Soccer Program indicated he is interested in participating.

Rick said he would keep the Park Board informed about any new information relating to the referendum.

Chair Lindy stated the referendum should be on the November agenda for an update.

NEW BUSINESS:

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Dr. George Lindy, Community Service Award Recipient - Rick advised Dr. George Lindy was presented the Community Service Award at the September 24 City Council meeting. This award is designed to recognize individuals who have made a significant contribution to the community.

Dr. Lindy, a Lino Lakes resident for 24 years, has served as a member of the Park Board since 1980 and has served as chairman for the past 12 years. During this time Dr. Lindy has provided hundreds of hours of his time through many, many meetings guiding the City through one of the finest park and recreation programs in the northern suburbs. In addition, through Dr. Lindy's leadership and foresight, he helped put in place a trail system that will serve Lino Lakes citizens for years to come. Planning and developing is only one part of Dr. Lindy's efforts. He has also worked with an eye on the future to make sure future space will be available for public parks and recreation use as Lino Lakes grows.

Not all citizens are willing to serve as tirelessly as Dr. Lindy has in an unselfish way for the benefit of all the citizens who live in Lino Lakes today and in the future.

Rick presented Chair Lindy with a trophy on behalf of the City Council and thanked him for all his efforts.

SCHEDULE NEXT PARK BOARD MEETING:

The next Park Board meeting will be held on Monday, November 5, 2001, 6:30pm, at Lino Lakes City Hall.

ADJOURN:

Pam Taschuk made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Paul Montain. The meeting was adjourned at 8:10pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kim Points
Recording Secretary