

**Lake Elmo Park Commission
Minutes of the Regular Meeting
March 17, 2008**

Vice Chairman Bruchu called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. COMMISSIONERS
PRESENT: Blackford, Bruchu, Dunn, Larson, Wagner and Zeno.
STAFF PRESENT: Project Assistant Kriegler

Agenda

Agenda was approved with 2 additional agenda items:

1. Washington County request to conduct deer harvest in Sunfish Lake Park
2. Heights Park Neighborhood Planning Meeting

Minutes

January 23 Minutes: M/S/ P, Blackford/Larson, move to approve as presented. Vote: 7:0
February 20 Minutes:M/S/P. Dunn/Blackford, move to approve as amended:
Commissioner Wagner was in attendance, and informational item provided by
Commissioner Dunn reported that 2 signs for Sunfish Lake Park had been installed on
State Highway 5.

**Request from Washington County to conduct deer harvest in Sunfish Lake Park in
November of 2008**

Peter Motts, Washington County Parks Manager, presented a request to conduct a deer
harvest in Sunfish Lake Park in November of 2008. Peter explained that the county has a
15 year partnership with the city in managing the deer population in the area. The DNR
recently counted 153 deer in a fly-over the area, the most ever recorded. The DNR
factors in that approximately 30% of deer are not counted in a fly-over. Based on this,
the DNR estimates that the current population is double the recommended population of
50-80 for the area.

Peter reported that the harvest would be a “shotgun hunt” and that a number of safety
precautions would be put in place including signing the park the week before as well as
extensive signing of the park throughout the harvest weekend - - including a large electric
sign at the entrance of the park.

Commissioner Blackford questioned whether deer hunting zones and regulations had
changed for the upcoming year, potentially impacting the harvest. Mott indicated that he
would research this question.

Commissioner Zeno questioned why the harvest wasn't being conducted during the week.
Mott responded that a weekend ensured adequate numbers of hunters for an effective
harvest.

Bruchu questioned whether there was an upper limit of deer taken. Mott responded that
one hadn't been set, but that one could be.

Motion: That the City and County work together in proceeding with the proposed hunt, with the County establishing a maximum take and determining whether any changes had taken place in DNR hunting regulations that should be factored into the harvest.

M/S/A:Wagner/Larson. Vote 7:0

Minnesota Land Trust / Sunfish Lake Park Presentation

Sarah Strommen of the Minnesota Land Trust thanked the commission for establishing a “foundation” from which the land trust easement will be drafted. Dunn expressed the interest in expediting the process as much as possible.

Stommen reported that the purpose of her presentation was to report to the Land Trust’s interpretation of the “foundation” to the commission in an effort to avoid any misunderstandings. She provided a hand-out with definitions so that both parties have a mutual understanding of the terminology. Sarah then went through the draft outline provided.

Commissioner Larson expressed concern about the degree of flexibility / control over Area 3. Strommen responded that Area 3 won’t be a part of the legal description. Commissioner Dunn expressed that she wouldn’t want to exclude paved paths in area 2. Commissioner Blackford questioned whether there are limits on numbers and lengths of trails. Strommen responded that they wanted to allow flexibility in that regard.

Commissioner Larson expressed the desire for allowance of trimming and management of vegetation to retain scenic views

Commissioners Blackford and Dunn expressed the desire to prohibit mountain biking. Commissioner Dunn expressed the interest in allowing activities such as orienteering.

Stommen reported that she would be taking comments from this meeting, refining the outline and reporting back to the commission in May. She would also be producing a project summary, an outline of what’s valued in the park, and begin developing a legal document.

Commissioner Zeno questioned whether the easement was reversible. Strommen responded that the easement was not considered reversible and could only be reversed by a judge if proven that the easement no longer has a purpose.

Heights Park Neighborhood Planning Meeting

May 7 and May 8 were identified as potential meeting dates.

Commissioner Blackford requested that staff provide an overview and history of the park at the April meeting.

Review of 2008 Work Plan

The revised 2008 work plan was approved.

Motion: Approval of the 2008 work plan.

M/S/P, Dunn/Wagner Vote 7-0.

Comprehensive Signage

Reid and Pebble Park were identified as priorities for sign development. Commissioners requested that 3 conceptual park & trail logos be developed and brought forward for consideration.

Lowes Partnership Program

Project Assistant Kriegler reported that a marketing representative from Lowes contacted staff about the opportunity to obtain an in-kind grant in the amount of \$7,000 to 10,000 for a city park improvement of some kind. Given the nature and the types of materials being offered, and the fact that the city currently does not have any picnic shelters, staff proposed a picnic shelter project.

Given the possibility that the city will be successful in securing this grant, it was suggested that the commission begin exploring what process or criteria might be employed to determine a potential location for the shelter.

Commissioners expressed that they were most interested in considering a shelter to be located in Lions Park or the Old Village area based on the high level of use it would get in these areas.

Motion: The Commission is supportive of pursuing the Lowes Partnership Program grant and is most interested in seeing a shelter project for Lions Park or the Old Village area.

M/S/P: Dunn/Blackford. Vote 7:0

Buckthorn Initiative

Project Assistant Kriegler reported that she and Kathy Widin, the City's Forester, had established an outline for moving forward in developing a buckthorn initiative for Sunfish Lake Park and Pebble Park. The commission expressed support for the initiative.

Park Partners Reports

Commissioner Dunn reported that the air stripper behind Hagbergs was operational and that the project was well done.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Kriegler
Project Assistant