

**Lake Elmo Park Commission  
Minutes of the Regular Meeting  
August 20, 2007**

Chairman Steele called to order the meeting of the Lake Elmo Parks Commission at 7:00 p.m. COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Steele, Booher, Blackford, Larson, Ames, T. Bouthilet, Dunn, and Bruchu. STAFF PRESENT: Planner Matzek and Public Works Superintendent M. Bouthilet.

**Approval of Agenda**

Chairman Steele added the following items to the agenda:

10A – “Lions Park pollution abatement project”

M/S/P, Dunn/Ames to approve the agenda as amended. Vote: 7:0.

Commissioner Bruchu arrived at 7:03 p.m.

**Approval of Minutes**

*July 16, 2007*

Commissioner Blackford said on page four, two thirds of the way down the page, she would like to add that the Park Commission spent three years discussing mountain bikes and there is an ordinance in place. It should be added where the thick file is mentioned. She would like it clarified it was the first time she was on the commission.

Chairman Steele would like the year Commissioner Blackford joined the commission the first time.

Commissioner Blackford would like the minutes to reflect that an official vote was not taken on including the word “bicycle” in the Sunfish Lake Park report.

Commissioner Booher on page five would like to see “but” replaced with “and.”

Commissioner Dunn said she would like it in the minutes on page five to show that Public Works Superintendent M. Bouthilet was not aware that the water was not working and that he was glad to be made aware.

M/S/P, Booher/Larson to approve the minutes as amended. Vote: 8:0.

**Draft Park Plan**

Chairman Steele asked that this item be postponed until later in the meeting.

**Lake Elmo Arts Center – Clarification of building status and Park Commission responsibilities**

Chairman Steele said that the land and building where the Lake Elmo Regional Arts Center is located was bought with park funds. The Arts Center has a lease for the site until 2011.

Commissioner Dunn commented that the park principles talk about natural areas and she thought the house and land was purchased to conceptually be a part of Lions Park.

Commissioner Ames said he would like to work with the City Council in the future on the potential use of this site.

**Park Partners**

Commissioner Dunn said she visited Carriage Station Park and there is one dead pine tree and one looks sickly. The equipment looks to be in good shape. She thanks Public Works Superintendent M. Bouthilet for getting the woodchips in at Lions Park.

Public Works Superintendent M. Bouthilet said he plans to replace the dead tree this fall.

Commissioner Booher said there was quite a bit of growth in the field at Stonegate Park.

Public Works Superintendent M. Bouthilet said that games were not played on the field, so they quit grooming it for the fall.

Commissioner Larson and T. Bouthilet both would like to look at Reid Park.

Public Works Superintendent M. Bouthilet said it had been cleaned up.

**Reports – Sunfish Lake Park Uses – Draft Report**

Chairman Steele asked that this item be discussed later in the meeting.

**Area West of Sunfish Lake Park**

Planner Matzek said at this time, there is no update.

**Park CIP Discussion (Part 1)**

Chairman Steele asked that this item be discussed later in the meeting.

**Heights Park Update**

Planner Matzek said the city has recently hired a part time person who will be working with the parks in the future. She said it is her understanding she will undertake projects such as Heights Park and the trail along Klondike Avenue.

**Klondike Trail Update**

Planner Matzek said she expects the new part time employee to undertake this type of project.

**10A Lions Park pollution abatement project**

Chairman Steele said he and Commissioner Bruchu were at a meeting with engineers to hear about the treatment of contaminated water at the Hagberg Market site.

Commissioner Bruchu said the MPCA has studied the contamination and found it originates at the Hagberg site. They would like to dig deep holes and put in perforated pipes and a drainfield system underground. The water will be pumped out at 100 gallons

per minutes. It would be cleaned and put back into the groundwater and should not affect the surface water.

Chairman Steele said the Hagberg site used to be an auto shop, which is where the contamination originated. The whole plume was polluted with just ten barrels. The trenches are planned to be placed along the third baseline of VFW park.

Planner Matzek said the PCA will come speak to the commission in the future.

Public Works Superintendent M. Bouthilet said he suggested the water be used for irrigation at VFW and Lions parks. The city may be able to sell the water to nurseries and not have to use the drinkable water.

Commissioner Blackford said the plume from the landfill changed direction after they started the effluent spray.

Public Works Superintendent M. Bouthilet said there are concerns with noise from the treatment. The treatment building would be approximately 14 feet by 20 feet and 12 feet tall. The city said the noise could not be louder than 50 db.

Commissioner Ames suggested the water could be used for a fountain at a city gathering space.

#### **#8 Park CIP Discussion A**

Chairman Steele said he would like to be proactive in the approach to the planning for the parks. It was suggested by the City Administrator to identify priority parks and to work with the neighborhoods. He said it would be helpful to work with the appropriate neighborhoods in creating the CIP.

Commissioner Ames asked how this would address trails.

Commissioner Larson said the process sounds like a lot of work.

Chairman Steele said the vast majority of the work would be done by the new part time city employee Carol Kriegler. It may be as easy as one meeting a year. He is hoping for a partnership between the commission, staff, and the neighborhoods.

Public Works Superintendent M. Bouthilet said that the work would be done in developing parks, not redevelopment of existing parks.

Chairman Steele said the process would involve bringing neighborhoods together and discussing ideas for future years. He said maybe two or three parks could be addressed a year. A CIP still needs to be developed each year.

Public Works Superintendent M. Bouthilet said that depending on the size, some maintenance items do not go through the CIP process.

Commissioner Ames suggested the commission proactively identify priority trail segments.

Commissioner Bruchu asked if trails counted towards park dedication in developments.

Public Works Superintendent M. Bouthilet said it did.

### **#8 CIP Discussion B**

Chairman Steele said the commission had allocated approximately \$251,000 to be spent this year, but only \$12,134 has been spent. He asked Public Works Superintendent M. Bouthilet which projects had not yet been done.

Public Works Superintendent M. Bouthilet said that he had been talking to the manufacturer regarding the merry-go-round due to liability issues. The tennis court resurfacing could be moved out to 2008. Extending the parking lot in Reid might still happen. He said Carol Kriegler may play a part in the item for Sanctuary. The work in Tablyn Park might not be done, but it is dependent on the contractor bids. He received pricing for the drinking fountain at the VFW Park, but is holding off on the project. It may be a timing issue with the pipes the PCA might install.

Commissioner Bruchu said a net would be beneficial at VFW park, he would still like to see it pursued and will come back with a recommendation in the future on location.

Commissioner Ames said he sees the parking area being maximized during the winter and there are some pretty substantial potholes.

Public Works Superintendent M. Bouthilet said their department is considering renting a paver to do the work themselves.

Chairman Steele asked the commissioners to think about the items for the CIP and the item can be brought back in September or October for further discussion.

M/S/P, Dunn/Ames to continue the CIP discussion at a future meeting. Votes: 8:0.

### **#3 Draft Park Plan**

Chairman Steele said he made only cosmetic fixes to the document. He asked that the discussion be on the substantive issues that need to be changed and that additional grammar and punctuation changes to send those to staff.

Commissioner Booher asked if the city is look to have an active future community park.

Commissioner Larson said there may be one included in the village area.

Commissioner Booher asked if tennis courts would be included in the sports complex. He would like to see the picture of the Lake Elmo School on page 3-4 removed as it is not reference.

Commissioner Dunn said she will email text for addition to page 2-8.

Commissioner Blackford said she would like to see those wording changes added back into the plan that were previously approved by motions such as “quiet/solitude” on page 2-8 and 2-2.

Commissioner Booher asked that a description be added by staff to the diagram on page 3-11.

Commissioner Dunn said she would like to see the regional park continue to be referred to as a Regional Park Reserve.

Chairman Steele suggested on page 3-13 to change the last bullet from “Preserve” to “Reserve.”

Commissioner Larson suggested a fourth bullet saying that “Lake Elmo will work to develop links with the Park Reserve to discuss points of common interest and to work on projects in a joint manner.”

M/S/Withdrawn, Larson/Booher to approve the addition of the language identified above. No vote was taken. Commissioner Larson withdrew his motion.

Commissioner Larson suggested the following language to be added to page 3-13, “The city will seek to collaborate with Washington County to discuss points of common interest and to work on projects in a joint manner relating to the Lake Elmo Park Reserve and Lake Elmo’s parks.”

M/S/P, Larson/Booher, to approve the addition of the language as identified above. Discussion occurred.

Commissioner Blackford said she is concerned the previous city staff had talked with the County to potentially trade city and county owned land. She said she does not trust the County as they get heavy-handed with the Lake Elmo Regional Park Reserve. She had attended a meeting in Woodbury where a County official made a comment about the transaction having occurred. She does not want to have language included in the report that would commit the city to anything.

Public Works Superintendent M. Bouthilet said that it had not occurred and it was not planned to occur. He said the official may have spoke out of turn.

Vote 6:2.

Commissioner Blackford voted against because Washington County is heavy-handed with what they wanted to do with the city’s parks.

Commissioner Dunn voted against because she thinks city parks are city parks. She said the city is already involved in the system and the city does not need to go looking for it.

Commissioner Bruchu said he would like to add the words “full sized” on page 2-10 and that the park is predominantly used by organized youth ball programs. He asked that lighted tennis courts be removed from the list on page 2-10, but batting cages should be added.

M/S/P, Ames/Booher to approve the Park Plan with changes made at the meeting and any pending final edits coming from the commission and assuming no changes are made to the maps. Vote: 8:0.

Commissioner Blackford requested copies of the Park Plan after it is approved and copies of the already approved Comprehensive Trail Plan.

### **Sunfish Lake Park Report**

Chairman Steele said at previous meetings, the commission had gone through page eight of the document. He would like their recommendation separated from the staff report and shown as two different documents. He said on page eight, within Area One, point two, there was previously discussed the issue of bicycles. He asked Commissioner Blackford to give a historical background on how the issue of bicycles was brought in previously.

Commissioner Blackford said the item had been worked on previously by the park commission. An ordinance was put into place in 1992. In 1994, the park commission asked the council to specifically enforce the ordinance at Sunfish Lake Park. She said a document signed unanimously by the commissioners at the time, letters from other agencies, a DNR letter regarding the nature conservancy, letters from residents, and letters from the Sierra Club were provided to the Council. The City Council made a recommendation accepting the document in 1994 that passed 5:0. The Comprehensive Trail Plan document from November 2005 says on page 31 that there will be no biking within the park. See attached document.

Chairman Steele said biking has not been allowed in the park since 1994.

Commissioner Blackford said the language in the draft report should stay in there.

Commissioner T. Bouthilet said on the staff report that the words “recommending unanimously” were added, but it is not being recommended unanimously.

Chairman Steele said if the commission can not come to an agreement, then that wording will be changed.

Commissioner Ames said he does not hear any suggestions that bicycles be allowed at this time or in the near future. He said he would like to be careful in putting things down as forever. A good example is looking at how the suggested needs for parks have changed since the 1990 Comprehensive Plan.

Commission T. Bouthilet said future park commissions might want something different. He said he does not want something that absolute. He said he would be comfortable with no expansions of trails in the future. Bicycles are already not allowed by ordinance.

Commissioner Blackford said she would like to see a sentence saying that currently bicycles are not allowed.

Chairman Steele said the language would not allow expansion of the usage from what is allowed today.

Commissioner Ames said he is not looking to leave a loophole in the future. He said the commission needs to be judicious about what they are including.

Chairman Steele asked the commission if the year 2007 should be included as the date from which the allowed uses would maintained.

Commissioner Blackford suggested a motion on part two, that there shall be no expansion of uses within Sunfish Lake Park.

M/S/Withdrawn, Rolf/ Dunn to recommend there shall be no expansion of uses within Sunfish Lake Park.

Public Works Superintendent M. Bouthilet said he thinks it is too broad. He said he thinks a clear distinction should be made for mountain biking and other uses.

Commissioner T. Bouthilet asked that the discussion be tabled until the next meeting.

Commissioner Blackford retracted her motion.

**Adjourn**

M/S/P, T. Bouthilet/Booher to adjourn at 9:13 p.m. Vote: 8:0.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelli Matzek  
Planner