

**FINAL
Lake Elmo Park Commission
Minutes of the Regular Meeting
April 18, 2011**

Chairwoman Hartley called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Ames, Blackford, Steele, Larson, Dobbs, Hartley, DeLapp, Zeno

STAFF PRESENT: Project Assistant Kriegler

Agenda

Agenda was approved as amended. Item concerning the *review and acceptance of Sunfish Lake Park history* moved back to item 7. (M/S, DeLapp / Dobbs, 8-0)

Minutes

Due to late receipt, March minutes to be reviewed and approved at May meeting.

Proposed Eagle Scout blue bird house / bat house project at Pebble Park

Eagle Scout candidate Max Fritsch outlined a proposed improvement project involving the construction and placement of blue bird and bat houses in Pebble Park. Max's presentation included an overview of the project including descriptions / general construction of the houses, identified locations within the park for the respective houses, and other details regarding implementation of the project. Max also reported that he had not yet secured funding for the project or official project approval from BSA.

Members expressed their support and appreciation for the project and offered some comment and suggestions. They encouraged the use of gravel around the post to ensure proper drainage, and the used of low maintenance materials. They also asked for consideration of protection from predators, particularly raccoons.

Motion: Recommend approval of the proposed project with placement of the houses in locations as noted. (M/S, Ames, Zeno; 8-0)

Review and follow-up discussion on April 11 park visits

Members of the Parks Commission informally visited Sunfish Lake Park and Pebble Park on April 11. The purpose of the visits was to increase familiarity with the respective parks so that members might be better positioned and prepared for any future discussions. The following comments were made:

Sunfish Lake Park

Park entrance sign- Ames requested that a budget be established for future discussions related to consideration of sign replacement. Commissioners also provided comment and suggested revisions for planned regulatory signage at this location.

Parking lot updates. Kriegler reported that sign grading and boulder placement would be scheduled for shortly after the lifting of road restrictions.

Prairie restoration seedling planting – Kriegler reported that 2,000 prairie seedlings need to be planted in the prairie before the DNR grant period ends June 30. Given the recommendation that seedlings be planted before June 1, a prairie seedling planting

event was scheduled for 10:00 a.m. Saturday, May 14. Various ways of publicizing the event were suggested, including posting at the park, contacting scout / youth groups and Tri-Lakes Garden Club.

Pebble Park

Request was made that the concrete blocks be replaced with something less unsightly - boulders. Advisement from the City Attorney regarding potential liability of boulder placement was requested.

Concern was expressed about the lack of visibility into the park. Suggestion was made to consider taking down some trees.

The potential placement of fake cameras in the parking area for the purpose of discouraging vandalism and unlawful activity was also discussed. The question of liability was raised. Concern was expressed regarding the potential for the false sense of security and the associated liability for the City. Advisement from the City Attorney was requested.

John Ames, Rolf Larson and David Steele agreed to serve on a Park Commission subcommittee for the purpose of conducting a crime assessment of the park.

Further information regarding the wells was requested.

Request was made for researching the possible use of automatic lights for the tennis court lights.

It was requested that Mike Bouthilet and Administrator Messelt attend more meetings. Mike's attendance was requested for the next meeting.

Update on MPCA landfill remediation project / grading landscape plans and discussion related to potential recreational uses of Sunfish Lake Park West and possible survey soliciting community input.

Kriegler provided an update on the grading and landscape plans for the site, including the MPCA's recent proposed revision to the grading plan base on their discovery of unanticipated high levels of waste in the northwest corner of the landfill site. Major changes to the grading plan included 1. the relocation of the runoff holding area from the southeast portion of the turn-back area to the southwest portion of the turn-back area, 2. The dramatic slope and associated lack of visibility into the site from Jamaca.

The Commission strongly expressed alarm at the proposed grading plan for the area and described it as simply unacceptable.

Motion: The grading plan as presented is utterly unacceptable. Staff is directed to urgently act on behalf of the citizens of Lake Elmo. We request a meeting with the MPCA to make it acceptable. (M/S, Ames, DeLapp; 8-0)

Discussion on possible Hudson Boulevard landscape improvements

Members expressed the desire to consider Hudson Boulevard as major non-motorized route. Zeno identified the boulevard as currently providing a critical route for bike commuters. It was requested that Engineer Stempski be consulted for general input on the road layout and locations that might be available for tree planting. It was also suggested that MnDot might have funding available for projects that provide natural snow "fencing".

Adjourned 8:45

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Kriegler,
Project Assistant