



**MINUTES  
PARK ADVISORY COMMISSION  
CITY OF WHITE BEAR LAKE, MINNESOTA  
THURSDAY, APRIL 18, 2024  
6:30 P.M. AT CITY HALL CONFERENCE ROOM  
AT 4701 HWY 61 NORTH**

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE**

Chair Bill Ganzlin called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Bryan Belisle, Mark Cermak, Anastacia Davis, Ginny Davis and Bill Ganzlin

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Victoria Biehn, Mike Shepard

**STAFF PRESENT:** Andy Wietecki, Parks Working Foreman; Paul Kauppi, Public Works Director/City Engineer

**VISITORS PRESENT:** Matteo Miranda – Observing meeting for Civic Engagement Political Science class (PSEO)

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

It was moved by member **Ginny Davis** seconded by member **Mark Cermak**, to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion carried, 5:0.

**3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

Minutes of March 21, 2024

It was moved by member **Ginny Davis** seconded by member **Mark Cermak**, to approve the minutes of the March 21, 2024 meeting.

Motion carried, 5:0.

**4. VISITORS AND PRESENTATIONS**

Nothing Scheduled

**5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Nothing Scheduled

**6. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Arbor Day**

Andy Wietecki reminded the Commission that the May meeting will incorporate the Arbor Day event. The Commission needs to be prepared to plant trees and shrubs at Jack Yost Park at the May meeting. They will be planting understory trees where the City's Horticulturist Sadie Loose removed buckthorn over the winter. The plan includes planting 4 trees including an ironwood, quacking aspen, basswood and possibly a Kentucky coffee tree. The Commission will also plant 3 shrubs including a nanny berry,

grey dogwood and a red snowberry. Andy explained that planting trees in the existing woods will help diversify the species in this area and help choke out the invasive plants and trees that were removed.

#### B. Marketfest Scheduling/Plans

Andy Wietecki created a calendar of Marketfest dates that don't interfere with Parks Advisory meetings. He asked the Commission to sign up for the dates that fit their schedule and mentioned he would send out the calendar so both Mike Shepard and Victoria Biehn can sign up as well. The Commission reviewed what was presented in the past at Marketfest events including the map of City parks that shows what amenities are available at each park. Andy would like to expand on what is available at the Marketfest booth and invited input on new ideas. Some of the ideas that were mentioned were mini brochures of City parks map/amenities, QR code, or a simple handout. Paul suggested a small handout that mirrors the larger amenities/parks map. He will also work to get the QR code active again. Anastacia Davis mentioned making a collage of pictures that showcases the new amenities that have been installed in City parks over the past few years. Some of the new amenities that have been added to the parks include: trails at Hidden Hollow and West Park, the retaining wall at Memorial Beach, Lion's Park Pavilions and restrooms, and the All Abilities Playground at Lakewood Hills Park. Anastacia stated the City parks are beautiful and pictures would be a great way to showcase them. Bill Ganzlin asked about a laptop for a slideshow instead of a picture board. Paul Kauppi stated that a laptop is too expensive especially with the weather changes. If a picture board gets wet, a new board can always be created.

Paul asked the Commission about the swag and about their thoughts for this year. Mark Cermak really liked the frisbees and they were popular. Paul and Andy will order more frisbees and look for another swag item. Paul also mentioned that the Commission needs to design a banner to hang on the tent. In previous years, people walk by without knowing what the booth is about. Paul suggested using one of those standalone feather style banners as they are great attention grabbers. Bill Ganzlin suggested handing out candy since that is always popular for booth visitors. Bryan Belisle mentioned a spin the wheel game for the candy. Bryan also suggested we combine the Parks Advisory Commission tent with Public Safety to help improve our presence at Marketfest. Paul Kauppi stated that Public Safety would overshadow the Parks Advisory Commission. He believes having a stand along spot is much more beneficial.

Bill Gazlin asked visitor Mateo Miranda if he uses the City parks. Mateo stated he spends most of his time on mountain biking tracks and trails around the metro area. Mateo suggested that the City install a track as he feels it would be a great investment and one similar to Cottage Grove would fit into White Bear Lake. Andy and Paul gave Mateo a little background on past conversations on this topic. The issue is that there is not enough space in any of the City parks besides Lakewood Hills to install one. Most City Parks neighborhood style parks with established amenities.

#### C. MnDNR Grant

Andy Wietecki updated the Park Advisory Commission members on a grant the City applied for through the MnDNR Outdoor Recreation Grant Program. The grant, if received, will help with this year's project of installing the paved trail system at Lakewood Hills. The City should receive notification in June on the grant status. The grant will allow the City to pave all of the trails in the park instead of whatever fits in the budget.

## 7. DISCUSSION

### A. Staff updates

#### a. Seasonal Update on Parks and Marina

Andy Wietecki reported that the City parks opened on April 15<sup>th</sup> but the beach will remain closed until the weather is nicer. The mooring buoys are in along with the navigation markers and the boat skids. The Parks Department will finish opening City parks but the focus will soon shift to mowing and spring clean ups. Andy also reported that the damage from ice to the boardwalk has been completed and that the marina will be put together and ready for boats in a couple of weeks. There are a few more repairs remaining on the actual marina itself.

#### b. Vandalism

Andy updated the Commission to the amount of vandalism already this year throughout the City parks system. The City has had extensive damage to 3 doors at Spruce Park costing over \$7,300 to repair, graffiti on the playgrounds at Hidden Hollow and Bossard, graffiti to the men's room at Podvin Park plus damage to a window shot with a BB gun, and graffiti to numerous standalone items like garbage cans and benches throughout the City. Bryan Belisle asked about security cameras. Andy advised that it is part of a long term plan but the cost is high so it will take some time to get coverage at all our parks. The plan is to start at the City's higher profile/troubled areas.

#### c. Public Works Open House

Paul Kauppi advised the Commission that Public Works is having an open house event on May 22<sup>nd</sup> from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm during Public Works week. This open house is intended to showcase each department in Public Works and the equipment used in the daily operations. This will also be a great opportunity for the community to tour the Public Works facility.

### B. Commission member updates

None.

## 8. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Commission, it was moved by member **Mark Cermak** seconded by member **Bryan Belisle** to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 pm.

Motion carried, 5:0