

Public Works Department

Donald J. Theisen, P.E.
Director

Wayne H. Sandberg, P.E.
Deputy Director/County Engineer

**DRAFT
PARKS AND OPEN SPACE COMMISSION MINUTES
Thursday, November 16, 2017**

Members Present: Andy Joyce, Jyneen Thatcher, David Ratte, Susan Lindoo, Meghan Bernard, Mary Hauser, Virginia Pleban, Ben Meyer, James Kelly, Glen Bearth, Michael Kraemer

Others Present: Commissioner Stan Karwoski, Sandy Breuer, Wayne Sandberg, June Mathiowetz, Connor Schaefer, Dan MacSwain, Sara Armstrong, Robin Nelson, Chris Amley, Carolyn Krampe

Called to Order: David Ratte called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

ROLL CALL

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Mary Hauser, Seconded by Jyneen Thatcher

To approve the September 22, 2017 Parks and Open Space Commission minutes as written.

Motion carried.

INTRODUCTION OF THE NEW PARKS DIRECTOR – Sandy Breuer

WELCOME NEW MEMBER

a. James Kelly – District 3

OPEN FORUM

Lake Elmo Park Reserve Snowmaking Study

Dan MacSwain, Natural Resources Coordinator, outlined the snowmaking study. It included background, feasibility study outcome, project goals and overview of the project timeline.

The background included the Master Plan from 2006 – present. In 2013, the Nordic Center was built with a lighted ski trail, in 2015 the Piston Bully was purchased, in 2017 meetings with skiers and local community members, and recently a proposal was received from Wenck and Associates to complete a feasibility study for snowmaking at Lake Elmo Park Reserve.

The feasibility and project goals include, providing recreational opportunities for multiple users and age classes, evaluating all impacts of a snowmaking system to the parks natural resources and operation of the park, design configurations that maximizes previous investments, and evaluating snowmaking requirements for a 2.5K ski loop and sliding hill. Some of the challenges include water resources, surface water vs ground water and water purity. Permits, which not only affect the park, but the community within the watershed. Infrastructure, which includes power, roads and drainage. Staffing, preventative and long term maintenance. Project costs of purchasing snowmaking equipment.

The timeline is aggressive from now until spring. It includes researching other parks that have snowmaking operations, power requirements, working with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Minnesota Department of Health and Valley Branch Watershed District and gathering input from a technical advisory committee. In the spring, the project will be submitted to the Parks and Open Space Commission.

Dan opened for questions and comments.

INFORMATION / UPDATES

a. Land and Water Legacy Update

June Mathiowetz, Senior Planner for Washington County, stated that there are 11 Land & Water Legacy projects in motion. The big one, Wilder-Warner Forest Project has been stalled due to turnover on the board and issues with the funding package but she is still moving forward. The National Resource Management System Plan is being discussed internally and there is nothing to report yet.

b. Program Update

Sara Armstrong, Program Coordinator, reminded everyone that the 25th Annual Christmas at the Courthouse Gala Restoration Fundraiser is tomorrow evening and the Holiday Bazaar is Saturday and Sunday. The Historic Courthouse will also be piloting a new program on January 26, 2018 a Murder Mystery with a 3 course meal catered by the Lake Elmo Inn, tickets on sale for \$65.

c. Pine Point Update

Dan MacSwain discussed the winter recreational barriers and the work that has been done to improve those. Multi-use trails have been developed with increased accessibility, trees thinned, re-alignment of trails, trail development and updated map and brochure. Major work has been completed and continuing work will be done before snowfall. Dan passed out maps and asked for suggestions and feedback. Jyneen Thatcher discussed development of single track mountain bike trails.

d. Comprehensive Plan – Greenway Update

Connor Schaefer, Public Works Planner, had two brief updates. The goal strategies that the Commission helped with for the Comprehensive Plan were the framework for the rest of the content of the plan. The consultant is compiling the plan's chapters.

The next step will be engagement with the cities of Washington County. Connor requested a nomination from the Parks and Open Space Commission for the Citizen Advisory Board for the Lake Elmo Central Greenway Master Plan. Susan Lindoo nominated Jyneen Thatcher with Virginia Pleban as a backup and James Kelly offered help if needed.

e. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be December 21 for the annual potluck and business meeting. Sandy Breuer will also invite the Historic Courthouse Commission. Everyone agreed to the date. The agenda will include membership review and 2018 meeting dates and locations.

ADJOURNMENT

David Ratte Adjourned the meeting at 8:20 p.m.