

BRAINERD PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT
Regular Park Board Meeting
March 24, 2020 at 4:00 p.m.
Brainerd Public Utilities Conference Room, 8027 Highland Scenic Road, Brainerd

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the regular meeting of the
Parks and Recreation Board was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

Present were Vice President Kevin Yeager, Tim Boeder, Dale Parks, City Council Liaison Dave Badeaux and Park Director Tony Sailer. President Kara Schaefer and Troy Rushmeyer teleconferenced into the meeting. Mr. Yeager facilitated.

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

None

**MOVED AND SECONDED BY BOEDER AND PARKS,
DULY CARRIED TO APPROVE CONSENT CALENDAR AS PRESENTED**

- A. Approval of the minutes of the regular meeting held February 25, 2020**
- B. Approval of the disbursements for the month of March 2020**

OLD BUSINESS

A. Outdoor Recreation Grant

Mr. Sailer's February Director's Report to the Park Board included information about applying for an Outdoor Recreation grant in the amount of \$248,623 for the Memorial Park redevelopment project. He worked with a grant writer from WSN and followed City policy to have the grant application presented to the City Council. The City Council approved the grant application at its March 16 meeting upon the authorization of the Park Board. If awarded, the grant amount could be from \$10,000 to \$250,000. It was asked and noted that there will be a \$1,300 fee to WSN for grant writing assistance, and this fee should have been approved by the Park Board. Mr. Sailer noted that funds would be taken from the Park Department's miscellaneous budget. Mr. Parks made a motion to approve the submission of the grant application and the \$1,300 fee. Mr. Rushmeyer seconded and board approval was unanimous. Mr. Badeaux added that any grant money received will be added to, not taken away from, the \$1.3M the City Council has dedicated to the project.

B. Memorial Park Request for Proposals

Staff was directed by the Park Board at the February 25 meeting to seek Requests for Proposals for the Memorial Park project. The City Administrator and City Engineer suggested that staff hold off on RFP's until the status of the parking lot purchase and grant request are determined. Staff agreed and notified the Park Board president and vice-president of this. Item tabled; no board action necessary.

NEW BUSINESS

A. City Procedures Regarding Coronavirus

In response to the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic, the City Council determined that City offices be closed to the public effective March 17 with staff still reporting for work, and special events and gatherings be cancelled until at least May 12. Staff compiled a list of proposed cancellations and postponements for Park Board discussion and approval, prior to posting the information on the department's website and Facebook page. The Bicycle Clinic scheduled for May 3 is run by Essentia Health. Ms. Schaefer reported that organizers are still planning to hand out the helmets, but will probably not conduct the clinic.

Park staff is recommending to cancel special events scheduled before May 12, which include the Easter Egg Hunt, the Easter Tennis Ball Hunt and Arbor Day. Candy already donated for the Easter Egg Hunt will be distributed at the Fishing Clinic at the request of the event sponsor, the Brainerd Rotary Foundation. The Early Bird softball tournament will be cancelled, with refunds issued to three teams already registered. Ms. Schaefer made a motion to cancel special events scheduled before May 12, and refund Early Bird tournament fees. Mr. Boeder seconded and board approval was unanimous.

The adult softball season will be delayed until at least May 12. Per Park Board policy, teams would be refunded on a per game basis for any games not played or re-scheduled. Ms. Schaefer made a motion to refund adult softball teams on a per game basis, Mr. Rushmeyer seconded and board approval was unanimous. Teams will also not be allowed to schedule practices until at least May 12.

Staff would like to postpone the registration deadline for the youth competitive baseball and softball leagues to May 1 or May 8. The skills clinics will need to be postponed until at least May 12 or cancelled, with new players possibly being assigned to teams rather than going through the skills clinic and draft process. Mr. Parks made a motion to extend the deadline for the youth competitive leagues to May 8, Mr. Boeder seconded and board approval was unanimous. The May 15 deadline for non-competitive programs is not affected at this time.

City Administrator Jennifer Bergman noted that the CDC's COVID-19 recommendation for no group gatherings greater than 50 people was quickly changed to no more than 10 people, and changes are coming about sometimes on a daily basis. Staff is working hard to stay ahead of this ever-changing situation.

Staff would like to open the Lum Park Campground as scheduled on May 1, as RV units are self-contained. The restroom/shower facility would be closed until at least May 12, along with all other park restrooms. Ms. Schaefer made a motion to close the campground along with all other park facilities until at least May 12. Mr. Boeder seconded and board approval was unanimous.

The question of playground usage was discussed. The Park Board directed staff to place signage at all park playgrounds advising caution when using playground equipment due to the COVID-19 coronavirus. A motion to place cautionary signage at City playgrounds was made by Mr. Boeder, seconded by Ms. Schaefer and passed unanimously.

Upcoming park maintenance was discussed. At this time a few garbage cans are being placed in the parks that will need to be emptied regularly, and Mutt Mitt dispensers will be checked and stocked as needed. Looking ahead, water will be turned on and mowing will need to be done.

B. Baseball Association Merger

Mr. Rushmeyer reported that the Brainerd and Baxter baseball associations will be merging, but he didn't know if baseball is even going to happen this year. Tryouts have already been delayed. The proposed name for the combined association is Warrior Traveling Baseball Association. Staff requested discussion regarding field usage fees for traveling teams. Current policy doesn't charge youth traveling teams if all team members are registered in the Brainerd Parks and Recreation Department's leagues. Standard field rental fees are \$25 for a two-hour practice or game. Mr. Rushmeyer stated that other communities typically charge associations an annual field usage fee. The associations also run the tournaments, including field maintenance and concessions. Mr. Sailer commented that only City employees can operate the field maintenance equipment. The board took no action at this time because of the tentative status of the baseball season.

C. Timberwolves Basketball Court Grant

The Minnesota Timberwolves organization will again be awarding a new basketball court to each of four regions throughout the state. Staff would like to apply again this year. If Brainerd were to be selected, staff would like to recommend replacing the Gregory Park basketball court. There would be no cost to the City. Mr. Boeder made a motion to approve the Timberwolves application, Mr. Parks seconded and board approval was unanimous.

D. Facility Use Requests

The Mid-Minnesota Women's Center is requesting the use of Lum Park Pavilion 1 on August 16, 2020, from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., for its 3rd annual Family Fun Day, which was a huge success last year with no issues reported. This community gathering for 800-1000 people offers free food, games, activities and interaction with local emergency

response personnel. The Women's Center also partners with the Brainerd Ski Loons, who has a show at 5:00 p.m. the same day. Extra garbage cans are requested. Mr. Parks made a motion to approve the facility request, Ms. Schaefer seconded and board approval was unanimous.

The Remnant Ministry Center is requesting the use of the Gregory Park facility on June 27, 2020, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., for a church fundraiser. The group expects 30+ people and requests to play amplified congregational music at an appropriate volume while selling brats and soda. The Park Board was unable to approve this request because it conflicts with the set-up date for the annual Arts in the Park event. Staff will contact the event organizer with other date and location options. Item tabled.

PUBLIC FORUM

None

CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Ms. Bergman reported that staff has been meeting internally to determine how to maintain the continuity of operations in anticipation of a Shelter in Place order from the governor. Staff continues to monitor incoming updates from federal and state agencies.

She reported that at the March 16 meeting, the City Council voted to discontinue the Transit Department's Transit Express route for the time being but will continue the "Dial-A-Ride" service. In other action the Council approved a letter of intent to share in the cost of a Master Plan for the proposed Children's Museum at Lum Park. She stressed that the City Council has committed to a Master Plan, not a Children's Museum. The Master Plan project is delayed due to the virus pandemic, but organizers will want a volunteer from the Park Board to be on the task force when the Master Plan project begins.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Joe Pfeffer, a student studying Sports Management at the University of South Dakota, has been offered the intern position. His starting date of May 4 may need to change, depending on the pandemic situation. If programs aren't yet up and running, the intern could learn other areas of parks and recreation such as field maintenance.
- The warming houses were closed March 1.
- The maintenance staff built 12 picnic tables and constructed a metal and wood dock extension for the Kiwanis park pier. The Kiwanis Club will reimburse the department for dock material expenses.

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, April 28, 2020, at 4:00 p.m., location and meeting method to be determined.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 5:15 p.m. was made by Mr. Parks and seconded by Mr. Boeder. Motion passed 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Finch, Administrative Specialist