

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the meeting of the Brainerd Park Board was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Board President Miller.

Upon roll call, the following board members were noted present: Schaefer, Shipe, and Chair Miller. Member Rushmeyer was noted as absent.

Also noted as present, Mayor Badeaux, Public Works Director/City Engineer Dehn, and Interim City Administrator Wussow. Recreation Specialist Blank viewed the meeting being broadcast on the 2nd floor, returning to Council Chambers at 5:06 pm.

Board President Miller opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

Approval of Agenda

MOVED AND SECONDED BY MEMBERS SHIPE AND SCHAEFER, DULY CARRIED, TO APPROVE THE AGENDA.

Approval of Consent Calendar

MOVED AND SECONDED BY MEMBERS SHIPE AND SCHAEFER TO APPROVE THE CONSENT CALENDAR.

Upon roll call, members Schaefer, Shipe and Miller voted “aye”. No member voted “nay” in approval of the consent calendar.

New Business

Ski Loons Discussion and Public Hearing

Public Works Director Dehn explained the item is a continuation of the information provided by a work group undertaking during the past few months. The Park Board elected to move forward requesting a presentation from the Brainerd Ski Loons on the potential facets of an agreement as well as holding a public hearing for comments and suggestions from lake area residents as to what the facets to a future potential agreement might be as the Park Board continues to gather more information. Director Dehn then introduced Chris Dens, Ski Loons President, to present to the Park Board on the proposed agreement.

In Chris Dens’ absence, Andy Rangen represented the Ski Loons organization and mentioned that the Ski Loons organization has grown in both popularity and participation. Mr. Rangen stated they are committed to learning from their mistakes, growing in wisdom and putting their best foot forward. This presentation is to share a vision that not only expresses the Ski Loons passion for show skiing, but also acknowledges the importance of open dialogue, community feedback, and sustainable co-existence with neighbors and the environment. The contract presented is to help alleviate past issues and define clear processes and expectations.

Mr. Rangen explained that Lum Park provides excellent visibility, is a central location within the City, and can handle large crowds. It is critical for practices to be held at the same location used for hosting the shows when dealing with timing, location, and boat patterns when executing the show skills. Mr. Rangen thanked the Park Board for considering the Ski Loons’ proposed agreement and is looking forward to the next step.

Jill Lewis, Ski Loons member, highlighted several positive benefits arising from involvement with the Ski Loons organization. Benefits mentioned included the importance of safety and what is required of boat operators, inclusivity of all age groups, family atmosphere, high talent levels, and a positive influence on the community as well as being financially self-sufficient.

Ski Loon participants Reef Sampson, Grace Rangen, and Natalie Lanemann gave testimonies to their involvement with the Ski Loons.

Matt Holmstrom, Ski Loons member, referenced Item 4A and 4B in the proposed agreement emphasizing efforts made to reduce practice schedules and having four shows scheduled in advance for public awareness. Distance from the shore was also addressed and having the buoys placed on the lake by the Sheriff's Department sets a good boundary for both the Ski Loons and the residents and it is proposed that this be considered a "best practice".

Chair Miller opened the public hearing at 4:20 p.m.

Chair Miller emphasized the public hearing was for constructive feedback on items they would like to see considered if the Ski Loons were to continue to operate at Lum Park.

The following citizens spoke on items for consideration by the Park Board in deciding if a new contract between the City and Ski Loons will be created. Items discussed consisted of limiting practices, removing the ramp when not in use, size of lake being too small, rotation of lakes, boats staying closer to middle of lake, penalties imposed, communication improved, and the possibility of rebuilding the dock.

Tad Schoerding, 14785 Wonderland Park Rd, Brainerd
Cynthia Gibbs, 1410 14th Ave NE, Brainerd
Phil Philbin, 1415 O St NE, Brainerd
Tony Grant, 18782 Rock Bay Rd, Brainerd
Wayne Harting, 14813 Wonderland Park Rd, Brainerd
Chris Dens, 4784 Gull Lake Dam Rd, Brainerd

Chair Miller closed the public hearing at 5:06 p.m.

Chair Miller set in motion a three-minute recess.

Approve Event Application – Arts in the Park

Brainerd Community Action Executive Director, Dave Badeaux, stated the Arts in the Park event information is the same as prior years, with the size being like last year. The north side of the park will be used for the classic cars.

Member Schaefer asked for clarification on the placement of the classic cars and food trucks and use of the carts to unload items.

Member Shipe questioned if Community Action staff would be guiding artists in dropping off their wares to help avoid chaos. Mr. Badeaux explained that it would be controlled chaos for about an hour.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY MEMBERS SCHAEFER AND SHIPE, DULY CARRIED,
TO APPROVE THE ARTS IN THE PARK EVENT APPLICATION.

Approve Events – The Center 2024 Performances in the Park

Public Works Director Dehn referenced the letter from The Center for the Park Board to approve utilizing Gregory Park's bandstand for The Center's 2024 Performances in the Park events throughout the summer. Performances would begin June 6 and continue each Thursday through August.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY MEMBERS SHIPE AND SCHAEFER, DULY CARRIED, TO APPROVE THE CENTER 2024 PRFORMANCES IN THE PARK.

Approve Easter Egg Hunt Event at Gregory Park

Recreation Specialist Blank referenced the scheduled Easter Egg Hunt to be held at Gregory Park and requested input regarding a possible alternative location for the 2024 event.

Chair Miller commented that he enjoyed the Easter Egg Hunt being held at Gregory Park and felt it would be a good choice for 2024.

Member Shipe commented on the fact that the children would be easily separated into age groups by using Gregory Park.

Mayor Badeaux mentioned his appreciation in using Gregory Park for the Easter Egg Hunt in the fact that while his children trench through the snow for the event, he can remain on the sidewalk with dry shoes.

Member Schaefer agreed that Gregory Park is a good fit for this event.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY MEMBERS SCHAEFER AND SHIPE, DULY CARRIED, TO APPROVE THE EASTER EGG HUNT EVENT AT GREGORY PARK.

Approve Food Delivery at Memorial Park

Public Works Director Dehn informed the board that a food delivery semi-truck and trailer goes to Bethany Lutheran to deliver food to individuals who need to pick-up food ordered through a delivery service. Due to outgrowing the space of the church, they are requesting to utilize the west parking lot in Memorial Park to do this pick-up on a once-a-month basis.

Member Schaefer questioned if the deliveries were something like Second Harvest or if the orders were placed by an organization and then delivered to people in need. Director Dehn commented that he wasn't sure, and he assumed that they ordered it through a vendor.

Chair Miller mentioned that the request is for utilizing the parking lot and that restrictions would not need to be placed on the request.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY SHIPE AND SCHAEFER, DULY CARRIED, TO APPROVE THE FOOD DELIVERY AT MEMORIAL PARK.

Approve Letter of Support – TH 210/Lum Park Pedestrian Bridge

Public Works Director Dehn referenced a feasibility study done last year and the City Council recommended moving forward with an LCCMR grant application. Director Dehn is requesting additional letters of support to send with the grant application.

Member Shipe questioned the Park Board's responsibility in maintaining the bridge.

Director Dehn indicated that if the bridge is turned over to the State's trail system, then maintenance would be limited to winter operations.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY SCHAEFER AND SHIPE, DULY CARRIED, TO APPROVE THE LETTER OF SUPPORT – TH 210/LUM PARK PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE.

Approve 2024 Tree Plantings

Public Works Director Dehn referenced a \$25,000 budget for tree plantings in the capital budget. Staff recommended planting new trees in Lum Park that were lost in summer storms of 2022 as well as some ash trees damaged by the Emerald Ash Borer.

Member Shipe questioned if the Park Board would get to select where trees are planted and how many trees would be purchased.

Director Dehn explained that the trees are about \$1,000 each so a total of roughly 24 trees would be planted according to the master plan.

Member Schaefer asked to add to the motion the concern of the heavy trucks driving through the park.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY SHIPE AND SCHAEFER, DULY CARRIED, TO APPROVE 2024 TREE PLANTINGS WHILE ASKING STAFF TO GET QUOTES FOR NON-TRUCK BASED MAINTENANCE.

Approve Mills Field Fencing Quote

Public Works Director Dehn shared that after speaking with vendors, the \$50,000 budgeted would allow for all fencing around Mills field to be done. Dehn recommended moving forward with the quote from Oberg Fence for the replacement of the entirety of the Mills Field fencing.

Member Schaefer wanted clarification that all the fencing to be done around the field is a necessity.

Mayor Badeaux explained that an assessment was made last summer and with the issue of the fence being wood, it was found that the posts and panels were failing and in very poor shape. The costs of maintaining the current fence in wood would be very high.

Director Dehn mentioned being approached by the Public Works Association of Minnesota and they are holding their conference here this spring. This would be a good opportunity, once the fence is completed, for them to do some additional volunteer work in painting some of our facilities as well as planting some additional trees along that first base fence line. We would coordinate with the contractor to ensure that the work gets done.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY SCHAEFER AND SHIPE, DULY CARRIED, TO APPROVE THE MILLS FIELD FENCING QUOTE.

Approve Self-Service Kayak Rental Details

Public Works Director Dehn explained the areas of the kayak rental decisions that need to be addressed include location, rental fees, memberships, and stock. Staff are recommending the kiosk be placed adjacent to the new sidewalk that leads to the lower beach. Rental fees are recommended to be \$15 per hour. Staff recommended offering memberships of \$75 per year with a 100% rental discount, and the stock to include 3 kayaks and 1 paddleboard.

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Discussion was held regarding the membership aspect of the rentals, the possibility of theft, and City branding.

Director Dehn explained that according to Rent.Fun there would be an individual checking on the kiosk daily to ensure it was being used properly and items were being returned. Dehn also pointed out that a credit card would be used to check the equipment out from the kiosk so there is a record of who used the equipment. Director Dehn mentioned that the City logo will be on the kiosk sign.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY SHIPE AND SCHAEFER, DULY CARRIED, TO APPROVE SELF-SERVICE KAYAK RENTAL LOCATION, RENTAL FEES, MEMBERSHIPS OF \$50 PER YEAR WITH 50% RENTAL DISCOUNT, AND STOCK OF THREE KAYAKS AND ONE PADDLEBOARD.

Request Forming Work Group to Develop a 30-Year Parks Capital Plan

Public Works Director Dehn referenced the spreadsheet prepared in 2023 showing assets prioritized by year of estimated replacement. Staff requests assistance from 1-2 members of the Park Board to organize the spreadsheet into a 30-Year Capital Plan. The Plan would then be presented to the Park Board for formal approval and presentation to the City Council for long-term budgeting.

Chair Miller and Member Shipe volunteered to assist in crafting the 30-Year Plan.

Public Forum

Chair Miller opened the Public Forum at 5:54 p.m.

No one came forward.

Public Forum was closed at 5:54 p.m. by Chair Miller.

Staff Reports

Recreation Specialist Blank commented on the weather causing a short hockey season and the cancellation of the skating party. The Smooch-a-Pooch event was successful, and softball registrations are underway. Eleven donations for park events have been received to date.

Director Dehn reiterated the Public Works Association wanting to do a volunteer project in our community and the new fence work would be an ideal opportunity for this with painting and tree planting.

Board Reports

Chair Miller thanked everyone for their time regarding the Ski Loons conversations and is confident a compromise will be achieved.

Member Shipe mentioned being excited to see the new Buster Park gazebo (pavilion) going up this spring.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY SCHAEFER AND SHIPE, DULY CARRIED, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 5:57 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Johansen, Administrative Specialist

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