

Medina Park Commission Meeting Minutes
October 19, 2011
Medina City Hall
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The Park Commission of Medina, Minnesota met in regular session on October 19, 2011 at 7:07 p.m. in the Medina City Hall. Park Commissioner Ben Benson presided.

1) Call to Order

Commissioners Present: Ben Benson, Madeleine Linck, Ann Thies, Jean Beaupre and Bill Waytas

Commissioners Absent: Paul Jaeb and Janet White

Also Present: City Administrator Scott Johnson, Public Works Superintendent Steve Scherer and Assistant to City Administrator Jodi Gallup

2) Additions to the Agenda: None.

3) Approval of Minutes:

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- Page 4, 7th paragraph: Add “to help with fragmentation” to the end of the sentence.
- Page 4, 10th paragraph: Delete “Benson”; add “The Park Commission” to the beginning of the sentence.
- Page 6, 3rd paragraph: Delete “raised up”; add “separated” to the last sentence.

A motion was made by Thies and seconded by Linck to approve the minutes with the noted changes. Motion passed unanimously.

4) Public Comments (on items not on the agenda): None.

5) City Council Update:

City Administrator Johnson updated the Park Commission on recent City Council actions.

6) Tobacco Free Parks Presentation

Emily Anderson with Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation introduced herself and the Orono Youth and Action Group. She summarized their common goal to get communities to adopt tobacco free parks policies or ordinances. She stated that the Youth and Action Group from Orono High School most recently was involved in getting tobacco free park ordinances passed in Orono, Spring Park, Long Lake, and Minnetonka Beach.

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Elizabeth Fossen, Senior at Orono High School, stated many reasons why they want this policy including the importance of a tobacco-free environment and how it promotes positive community role modeling.

Jake Poepping, Senior at Orono High School, directed the Park Commissioners to a map in their packet that showed all 141 communities throughout the state that have adopted tobacco free park policies. He also noted that a study from the University of Minnesota found that 90% of park directors in cities with policies report that they would recommend policies to other communities and 58% report less litter. He also addressed the issue of second hand smoke.

Jack Ellis, Freshman at Orono High School and Medina resident, stated that cigarettes are the most littered thing in the world and addressed the level of toxicity cigarettes produce. He also discussed the issue with adults smoking in the parks and children seeing them might create an idea of it being a "social norm" when in fact it is a minority of people that smoke.

Elizabeth Fossen stated that a tobacco free parks policy or ordinance could be promoted in park brochures, community newsletters, and the city website, but the most effective way would be to post signs that say "Tobacco-Free Grounds". These signs are free to communities with tobacco free park policies or ordinances.

Thies questioned if communities that had adopted these policies had noticed any repercussions on not being able to smoke outside of rental halls that are being used by parties for wedding receptions and family reunions.

Derek Larsen, Program Director for Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation, stated that he follows up with all the communities that have these policies and had not heard of any problems. He said the only complaint he has received is from adult softball leagues that serve beer.

The Park Commission questioned how other communities enforce these policies.

Emily Anderson stated that there are no fines attached to a policy, but an ordinance can be written to allow for fines and other means of enforcement.

There was some discussion amongst the Park Commission whether to recommend a policy or an ordinance.

Waytas stated that he would like to see an ordinance with a fine adopted.

Beaupre suggested that a policy be adopted first and if the city has problems with people not following the policy, an ordinance could be considered.

Waytas questioned if a policy would carry any weight and noted that enforcement would be easier with an ordinance.

Thies noted that a policy would at least allow the person smoking to be ejected from the park.

The Park Commission questioned if there were very many people that even smoked in the parks. It was noted that a few people had been spotted smoking in Medina parks in the past.

A motion was made by Linck and seconded by Beaupre to recommend to the City Council approval of a tobacco free outdoor recreational facilities policy. Motion passed unanimously.

7) Park and Trail Master Plan Discussion

Beaupre updated the Park Commission that she had met with Paul Jaeb and City Planner Dusty Finke to begin the process of creating a park and trail master plan. She had stated that Finke would like to see this plan incorporated into the City's Comprehensive Plan.

Thies clarified that she did not think it was appropriate for this plan to be included in the Comprehensive Plan because it makes it too restrictive. The plan should be a separate document that just complements the Comprehensive Plan.

Discussion took place regarding any progress made on working with Orono to get a trail built down Willow Drive to County Road 6.

There was a general consensus to continue the park and trail master plan discussion at the November 16th Park Commission meeting.

8) Staff Report

- a.) Park Compliments – Scherer noted that the City had received a couple compliments from residents in Medina Morningside on the work that is being done in the park.

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- b.) Medina Morningside Park Update – Scherer stated that the Public Works crew was planting the Dogwoods today at Medina Morningside.
- c.) Independence Beach Parks – Gallup reported that Park Commission Chair White had talked to a few residents in Independence Beach and they would all like to see the ice skating rink stay in Walnut Park. It was suggested that the Park Commission visit the parks in Independence Beach at the spring park tour.
- d.) General Items – Scherer noted that a new entrance sign for city hall had been ordered to match the uniform park signs. He stated that the dock will be coming out at Independence Beach for the winter. Linck noted that the bird houses were working, except for a few were leaking. Scherer noted that the benches that were built by the Eagle Scout had been installed in Medina Lake Preserve and in Rainwater Nature Area. Discussion took place on the issue that there is no public access to drive into Medina Lake Preserve. Waytas noted that he had walked on the trail in the new Lennar development off Hunter Drive and thought it was a great addition to our parks system.

9) Adjourn

A motion was made by Thies and passed unanimously, to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Jodi Gallup.