

Medina Park Commission Meeting Minutes  
December 20, 2017  
Medina City Hall  
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The Park Commission of Medina, Minnesota met in regular session on December 20, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. at Medina City Hall. Park Commission Chair Steve Lee presided.

**1) Call to Order**

Commissioners Present: Steve Lee, Elizabeth Weir, Lori Meehan, Michelle Beddor, John Jacob, Lisa Cole, Jeff Rumsey, and youth member Lauren Lubenow.

Commissioners Absent: Youth member Ella Kingsley.

Also Present: Assistant City Administrator Jodi Gallup, Public Works Director Steve Scherer, and City Council member Lorie Cousineau.

**2) Additions to the Agenda**

Rumsey requested to discuss buckthorn removal and Japanese beetles at the end of the agenda.

Gallup requested to add a discussion on the \$45,000 grant that the City received from the Twins Community Fund for Hamel Little League Field Safety Improvements. This will be discussed following the approval of the minutes.

*A motion was made by Rumsey and seconded by Beddor to add these additions to the agenda. Motion passed unanimously.*

**3) Approval of the Minutes from:**

• September 20, 2017 Regular Meeting

*A motion was made by Weir and seconded by Jacob to approve the minutes from September 20, 2017 with the correction of one small typo on page 3. Motion passed unanimously.*

**4) Twins Community Fund Grant for Hamel Little League Field Safety Improvements**

The City of Medina applied for a grant in the amount of \$100,000 from the Twins Community Fund for a \$200,000 project to complete field safety improvements at the Hamel Lighted Field. The City Council committed \$50,000 to the project and the Hamel Athletic Club committed \$50,000. The City recently received notice that we were awarded \$45,000 from the Twins Community Fund for our project. This agenda item has been added to discuss the funding gap.

Andy Wahlquist with the Hamel Athletic Club (HAC) introduced himself to the Park Commission stating he has been with HAC since 2007. He was excited to share that HAC will have a 15U team for the first time in 2018. He stated that HAC recently invested in

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their pitchers by donating 100% of the funds to build pitching mounds at the quad field in 2017.

Wahlquist stated that HAC has been members of Little League International since 2010, which has strict safety requirements. He stated that the existing lights are 30+ years old with burnt out bulbs, which do not meet the insurance requirements through Little League International. He stated that the \$45,000 from the Twins Grant, \$50,000 from the City of Medina, and \$50,000 from HAC is enough money to install new lights per the bid received from Musco Lighting.

Wahlquist stated that the other main safety concern from Little League International is the existing aging dugouts without covers. He stated that he worked with HAC's President Mike Mohs and Medina staff Gallup and Scherer to put together a quote to remove the existing fencing, dugouts, pour new concrete slabs, and install new dugouts for approximately \$30,000 total.

Wahlquist stated that these improvements could make Hamel ballfields a showcase park. He stated that HAC also intends to host a tournament in 2019 after these improvements are completed. The revenue from the tournament and increased sponsorship from the community can go towards the remaining ballfield improvements. He also explained the larger economic impact a tournament will generate for the community from the increased visitors and teams staying in local hotels and eating at local restaurants.

Scherer reiterated to the Park Commission the importance of updating the aging lights and dugouts at the same time, but noted that the City has already committed \$50,000 to the project, which is 25% of the total \$200,000 project cost, but closer to 33% of just the cost of the lights. He stated that if the City commits more money, it is making an exception to our existing funding policy of 25%. He confirmed with Wahlquist that HAC could commit another \$10,000 towards the dugouts today if the City would be willing to contribute the remaining \$20,000. He suggested that the City contribute the \$20,000 as long as HAC agrees to cover the remaining safety improvements that were outlined on the grant application as funds become available. Wahlquist agreed that HAC would take responsibility for the remaining \$25,000 of field safety improvements such as the outfield fences and additional bullpen areas as funds become available.

There was a consensus of the Park Commission to make an exception to the 25% funding policy for the needed safety upgrades to the dugouts. The Park Commission agreed to further review the funding policy at a future meeting.

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There was discussion if there were any additional improvements needed to this field that were not outlined on the grant such as bleachers. Wahlquist stated that the existing bleachers are adequate and many families use folding chairs along the third baseline.

*A motion was made by Weir and seconded by Beddor to recommend using an additional \$20,000 from the Park Dedication Fund to install new dugouts at the little league field in Hamel Legion Park. Motion passed unanimously.*

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

**6) City Council Update**

Lorie Cousineau gave the Park Commission an update on recent City Council actions.

**7) Mark of Excellence Homes – East of Mohawk Drive, North of Highway 55 and 1952 Chippewa Road – PUD Concept Plans for Weston Woods & Hardwood Hills – Park Dedication Review**

Gallup provided a brief staff report. She stated that the applicant has requested a Planned Unit Development (PUD) Concept Plan for a proposed development of two properties north of Highway 55 and east of Mohawk Drive. The northern property is proposed to have 74-twinhomes on 80 acres (approximately 28 net acres). The southern property is proposed to have 36-single family homes, 24-townhomes, a 5-acre wooded park with some open space, and 5.75 commercial/business on 53.5 acres (approximately 27.4 net acres).

Gallup stated that these properties are proposed to be changed in the draft 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The northern property is staged to be developed in 2025 and the southern property will change from LDR to Business under the draft 2040 Comprehensive Plan. She noted that the Planning Commission and City Council indicated a desire to protect the planning process and allow the draft 2040 Comprehensive Plan update to become effective, which is anticipated in the spring of 2018.

Gallup described the properties stating that the northern property was mostly tilled farmland with a few trees. The southern property includes 13 acres of wooded area with high quality maple-basswood forest on the knoll to the south and oak forest with significant buckthorn to the north. The applicant proposes to protect approximately 5 acres of the highest quality wooded area, which they are requesting park dedication. She noted that both sites have large areas of wetlands. She also noted that the northern property is in the Rockford School District and the southern property is in the Wayzata School District.

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Gallup explained the park dedication ordinance in terms of this application, noting that the city could require up to 10% of the buildable land, which would equate to about 7.5 acres, 8% of the pre-developed value, potentially \$600,000 to \$800,000, or a combination.

Gallup stated that the applicant has proposed to dedicate a 5-acre passive park area, trail easements and construction, and a smaller cash fee for the remainder.

Gallup stated that the Park Plan identifies the need for a neighborhood park in the area. She stated there is a potential location on 30 acres to the west, which the Park Commission reviewed earlier this year as the Excelsior Concept Plan. This land would only provide a 3-acre park, which is not enough for the entire area. She reminded the Park Commission that they had previously discussed the possibility of obtaining a smaller neighborhood park (3-4 acres) at both the Excelsior site and the site that is being reviewed tonight.

Gallup stated that the Trail Plan shows a trail along Chippewa Road and the Park Commission previously discussed their desire to create trail connections between the neighborhoods and to any future park areas.

The Park Commission discussed the concept plan and generally agreed with the previous feedback they had provided to the applicant that they would like to preserve as many trees as reasonable in the maple-basswood forest with a small active park space. They indicated their desire to have trails connecting the neighborhoods to the park land and to construct a trail along Chippewa Road. They also stated they would still like a park on the other proposed residential lot west of Mohawk Drive. These two parks would have complimentary uses.

**8) Friends of the Park Program**

Weir stated that she revisited the suggested edits to the Friends of the Park Program and has made a few additional changes to address the comments from Park Commissioners at the last meeting. She stated that she feels these edits make the program feel more welcoming and less daunting for a resident to volunteer.

*A motion was made by Weir and seconded by Lee to recommend approval of the amended Friends of the Park Program. Motion passed unanimously.*

## 9) Staff Report

- Gallup stated that we have three Park Commission seats with expiring terms this year. John Jacob has indicated his desire to renew his term. Lori Meehan and Michelle Beddor have indicated that they will not be renewing their terms. Lee thanked Meehan and Beddor for their years of service. Gallup requested that the Park Commissioners solicit any residents that they know who would be a good fit to serve on the Medina Park Commission.
- Scherer stated that he had received the new snow machine and began making snow on the sledding hill in Hamel Legion Park that morning. He showed the Park Commission pictures of the snow machine. He stated that the City is currently leasing the snow machine. If we like it, we can purchase it. Weir proposed that the City name the sledding hill in Hamel Legion Park “Dillman Hill” in honor of the previous Public Works Director Jim Dillman’s initiative in creating that sledding hill.

*A motion was made by Weir and seconded by Lee to recommend naming the sledding hill in Hamel Legion Park “Dillman Hill”. Motion passed unanimously.*

## 10) Buckthorn and Japanese Beetles

Rumsey stated that his neighbor had sent him an email inquiring if the city does anything to help educate residents on how to identify and remove buckthorn?

Scherer stated that the City has one Buckthorn puller that they loan out to residents that inquire. He stated that he will look into buying additional pullers so we can advertise that they are available to residents.

Gallup stated that she had put together a one page spread in the fall city newsletter on buckthorn education.

Rumsey stated that his neighbor also mentioned that Japanese Beetles harbor in buckthorn in the winter. He questioned how to get rid of the Japanese Beetles. Others stated that if you treat your yard, they will just go to your neighbor’s yard so it is best to have a homeowner’s association treat the entire neighborhood to remove them from the area.

## 11) Adjourn

*A motion was made by Weir, seconded by Beddor and passed unanimously, to adjourn the meeting.*

The meeting was adjourned at 8:27 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Jodi Gallup