

Open Space & Recreation Commission

June 22, 2020 – 6:30 pm
Virtual WebEx

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm by Cornelius.

2. Roll Call

Commissioners present: Roger Bergman, John Cornelius, Bill Delaney, Kelly Kuebelbeck, Bob Mattison, Matthew Sanders, Dawn Speltz, Linden Weiswerda, and Brian Wright

Commissioners absent: Della Daml

Staff present: Rick Birno, Director of Parks and Recreation, Greg Simmons, Recreation and Facilities Supervisor; John Stutzman, Recreation Supervisor; and Sheila Van Sloun, Administrative Assistant

3. Agenda Changes or Additions

None.

4. Approval of May 18, 2020 Minutes

MOTION moved by Bergman and seconded by Mattison to approve the May 18, 2020 meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Introduction of New Commission Member Brian Wright

Wright gave a brief introduction stating he's a lifelong resident of Minnesota and has lived in Golden Valley since 2013. The Commission then gave brief individual introductions of themselves.

6. Golden Valley Girls Softball Association Update

Lenny Segal introduced himself stating it's his first year as the Golden Valley Girls Softball President, but has been on the board for three years. He grew up in Golden Valley and has been active within the association since the 1980's.

Segal said the league takes participants from all communities in grades 3-12, and in 2019 they had over 350 registrants. The league typically plays 16-18 games with two weekend tournaments per season, which runs mid-April thru the end of July.

He said registration for the 2020 season really came to a halt when COVID-19 hit. After lengthy consideration, he said the Board decided to cancel the 2020 season, issuing refunds to all registered. He said most families have been very understanding and cooperative. They are going to discuss options for getting on the fields at some capacity in July or August. He mentioned the board will work



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closely with the Golden Valley Parks and Recreation Department in keeping with COVID-19 restrictions to try to make play possible.

Kuebelbeck asked if the league will offer out of state options, like other organization, to keep kids interested and engaged. Segal is very much concerned about keeping kids interested and engaged, but said that would not be an option because it's primarily a local league without travel. He mentioned pick-up game options as a possibility.

He said the league has a great relationship with Golden Valley Parks and Recreation, primarily Rick Birno and Greg Simmons. Birno thanked Segal and the Board for all their work and support to the City and said the Board has the full support of the Parks and Recreation Department in pursuing options for play this season.

7. 2019 Brookview Building Review – Greg Simmons

Simmons shared the 2019 Brookview Golden Valley overview. The Backyard had 36,000 paid visits with 30% of those living or working in Golden Valley, New Hope, or Crystal. Both Crystal and New Hope residents are given the resident rate based on reciprocity agreements. The Backyard also hosted 520 party rentals, which is a 20% increase over 2018. He said the Backyard can host up to eight parties per day on a weekend and it can be very busy.

Simmons said Brookview Golden Valley hosted about 650 unique room reservations in 2019, which is up about 100 from 2018. Those reservations include groups ranging from 2-220, not including weddings. He said about 60% of those reservations are those that live or work in Golden Valley. He also said they hosted 17 weddings, which is equivalent to 2018.

Simmons said the 2019 budget for Brookview Golden Valley was very successful, exceeding the projected revenue of \$450K by an estimated \$50K. He noted staff did a great job keeping expenses in check allowing for the expense side of the budget to be approximately \$12K under budget. He shared the excess revenues are utilized for the capital improvements needed for the building. Birno added that the building budget operates as a revenue fund and pays for all building repairs, maintenance, and supplies, as well as three employee salaries. Birno complemented Simmons for his leadership and continued successful operation of Brookview.

Weiswerda said with the revenues not coming as projected, he asked if the reserve fund is able to help support the operating expenses through the end of the year. Simmons noted that all though revenues were down, so were expenses with the closure of the facility. He went on to say that direction will come from the City Council and City Manager regarding any budget shortfalls in 2020. Weiswerda also asked what areas are available to make up funding if necessary. Simmons said there are unused daytime rental hours when the building is open and operating. Staff is working with the Communications Department to market the facility to corporate groups looking for this type of facility. Simmons also noted that we hear from Discover St. Louis Park that there are many businesses looking for offsite training, sales, and general planning meeting spaces and that

Brookview is a great fit. Greg believes the potential is looking really positive for numerous new and repeat corporate customers to fill those gaps when Brookview reopens.

Mattison asked if the building budget supports the golf course in any way. Birno said the building budget is a revenue fund and does not support the golf course operations budget. He added that the golf course budget is an enterprise fund. The golf course pays rent to the City for building space, supports an annual general fund transfer, and is expected to pay for all golf operation expenses. All expenses are paid through golf operation revenues.

Bergman asked if staff has heard from residents being disappointed that the building does not include gyms, courts, or a pool. Birno acknowledged that from time to time he does hear from residents that it would be nice if there were additional amenities included in the Brookview facility. He also noted that Golden Valley has an agreement with Hopkins Schools for the indoor gyms at Davis Community Center and the city has reciprocity agreements with Crystal, New Hope, and St. Louis Park for use of their pools.

8. COVID-19—Parks and Recreation Services Update

Birno said Three One Six Bar + Grill is now open inside for food with social distancing in place. He added that it's been very busy and very much appreciated the support from the community.

The Golf Shop is open with glass barriers at the registers. Birno said there is a maximum of five people at a time allowed in the Golf Shop with social distancing and safety procedures in place.

The Brookview building remains closed. Birno said there will be several capacity restrictions in every room as well as social distancing and safety procedures in place.

Simmons said the Backyard opening date is still to be determined. Park pavilions are set to open early July with limited capacities.

Stutzman shared an update on recreation programs. He said several youth recreation in-person programs begin on June 22 with modified structures and smaller capacities to accommodate COVID-19 restrictions. He said registration numbers are very strong even with the restrictions.

Cornelius asked if drop-ins will be welcome if capacities allow as programs begin. Stutzman said yes and added that most programs are at or near full capacity. Cornelius also asked if there's an option to extend programs through the end of August and going forward depending on school openings and restrictions. Stutzman said Camp Valley is offered for three weeks in August and will require his entire limited summer staff to operate. Extending any programs will probably not be an option with the restrictions in place and the limited staff available.

Stutzman remains optimistic that adult softball and sand volleyball leagues will begin in early July. He also noted a decision on the youth fall soccer league will be made once the program partners meet to discuss options.

Simmons gave updates on youth athletic associations. He said Golden Valley Little League began practices last Friday following COVID-19 guidelines. Park Valley Soccer also started practices last week with no intention of offering league games. Armstrong Cooper Baseball is still working on plans for a summer league. They are on hold at this point with practices and games until all plans are in place.

Mattison said the Parks and Recreation Department has done a great job continuing to offer programs through the pandemic.

9. Commission and Staff Update

- **Staff and Commission Updates**

Mattison suggested taking a closer look at crosswalks within the city. Cornelius asked for Commissioners to share areas they feel are in need of crosswalks or improvements. Birno said he would ask a representative from the city Engineering Department to attend the July meeting to discuss the issue.

- **NRPA Innovation and Health Award for the HomeREced Program**

Stutzman announced that the Golden Valley Parks and Recreation Department was awarded the National Recreation and Parks Association Innovation and Health Award for their HomeREced Program, a free virtual online program with simple and fun activities for all ages, offered in residents home. Stutzman noted how appreciative he was of all the support from staff, Commissioners, and the City's Communications Department. The Commission congratulated Stutzman and the entire department.

- **Summer Concerts**

Birno said they are discussing possibly offering two or three concerts during July and August. The music events will only be possible if they can develop an appropriate plan that allows for social distancing.

- **DeCola Ponds Virtual Public Input**

Birno shared how to take the virtual survey. He said after all the input is received, a representative from the Engineering Department will come to a future meeting to present and discuss.

- **July Park Tour Discussion**

Birno said due to the pandemic, the annual park tour will not be taking place this year.

- **Next OSRC Meeting Date is July 27, 2020**

Birno said a regular WebEx meeting will be hosted on July 27.

10. Adjournment

MOTION moved by Bergman and seconded by Wright to adjourn at 8:15 pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Sheila Van Sloun

Sheila Van Sloun, Administrative Assistant

John Cornelius

John Cornelius, Chair