

## Medina Park Commission Meeting Minutes

January 17, 2007

Medina City Hall

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### 1. Call to order 7:03 p.m.

- A. **Commissioners present:** Galen Bruer, Ann Thies, Madeleine Linck, Bob Pastor, Gerry Dykhoff, Ben Benson, Brian Kingsley
- B. **Absent:** None
- C. **Also Present:** Chad Adams, Carolyn Smith, Jodi Wunsch, Steve Scherer, & Susan Seeland
- D. **Additions to agenda:**
  - 1. Acknowledge Randy Hughes' service to the City of Medina (after item 3)
  - 2. Open Space Task Force Luncheon (add at end of meeting)
  - 3. Format of the Park Commission Agenda (add at end of meeting)
  - 4. Metro Greenway Grant Opportunity (add at end of meeting)

### 2. Approval of last meeting's minutes:

The November 15<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes were approved with the following change:

On the bottom of the second page:

Delete: ~~Galen Bruer thought it was a good idea to charge park dedication fees from the assessed value of the land.~~

Replace with: Galen Bruer thought it was a good idea to use the assessed value of the land to determine trail acquisition offers.

*A motion was made by Ann Thies and seconded by Madeleine Linck to approve the minutes with the above change. Motion passed unanimously.*

### 3. Introduction of Park Commissioners

Existing Park Commissioners first introduced themselves to the two new Park Commissioners. Gerry Dykhoff has been on the Park Commission since day one. Ann Thies' family homesteaded in Medina in the 1850's. Galen Bruer has served on the Park Commission since 1996. Madeleine Link lives in an 1870 farm house and Bob Pastor has been on the Park Commission for four months now.

The two new members are Brian Kingsley and Ben Benson. Brian Kingsley is from a small town in California and moved to Medina seven years ago into the home where his wife grew up. Ben Benson has lived in Medina for 21 years and all three of his kids took advantage of the park facilities in Medina especially the Hamel Ball fields.

### 4. Acknowledge Randy Hughes' Service to the City of Medina

Ann Thies suggested that the Park Commission formally thank Randy Hughes for his service to the City of Medina, since we did not get a chance to do it before he finished his term.

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*A motion was made by Ann Thies and seconded by Gerry Dykhoff to direct city staff to draft a formal thank you letter to be signed by the Park Commission Chair to Randy Hughes for his years of service to the City of Medina. Motion passed unanimously.*

**5. Election of Officers**

**A. Chairperson**

Gerry Dykhoff nominated Galen Bruer and Galen Bruer nominated Ann Thies. Ann Thies received five votes and Galen Bruer received two votes for Chairperson. Motion passed 5 to 2 for Ann Thies to become 2007 chairperson.

(At this time, Ann Thies stepped in as chairperson to facilitate the rest of the meeting).

**B. Vice-Chair**

Gerry Dykhoff nominated Madeleine Linck and Bob Pastor nominated Gerry Dykhoff (Dykhoff respectfully declined). Motion passed unanimously for Madeleine Link to become 2007 vice-chair.

**C. Secretary**

Galen Bruer nominated Bob Pastor and Dykhoff second. The motion passed unanimously for Bob Pastor to become 2007 secretary.

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

**7. Basketball Hoop and Bench Donation – Medina Morningside Park**

Medina resident Pam Farmer was present at the meeting to express her interest in donating a basketball hoop and bench to Morningside City Park in honor of her husband.

There was some discussion if the cost of the hoop and bench included installation. Steve Scherer mentioned that Pam Farmer was seeking the City's support for the installation. Scherer also mentioned that he would put down the concrete portion. The existing hoop would be replaced with the donated hoop from Pam Farmer and put in a more centralized area. Instead of having the hoop face west, it would face north and the bench would go across the driveway.

Dykhoff asked about the current condition of the court. Scherer stated it was just blacktop. Bruer clarified that the court surface was in decent condition and did not have any loose stones.

Pam Farmer has a choice on what size bench she would like to donate. Dykhoff recommend a 6 foot bench and Bruer made a comment that the two benches donated

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by the 4H club were 8 foot benches. It was decided that the Park Commission would be happy with either the 6 or 8 foot bench donation.

*A motion was made by Ben Benson and seconded by Galen Bruer to accept donations as proposed and allocate city staff and resources to install the basketball hoop and bench. Motion passed unanimously.*

### **8. Selection of Park Commissioners as Representatives to Council Meetings**

Ann Thies reminded the Park Commission of the importance in having a Park Commissioner present at each Council Meeting to give an update and to act as a liaison between the various city government bodies. City Staff created a 2007 schedule of all the City Council Meetings and Park Commissioners were asked to volunteer for three meetings each. The Park Commission received volunteers to act as representatives to the council meetings through the middle of April. City Staff, Jodi Wunsch will contact Park Commissioners individually to make sure we fill the dates for the rest of the year.

### **9. Review of Draft Park Commission Orientation and Training Manual**

City Staff was directed at the November 2006 Park Commission meeting to draft an orientation and training manual to be used as a tool to help train new Park Commission members with the organizational structure of the City of Medina, functions of the Park Commission, and the responsibilities of each Park Commission member. This manual will also serve as a reference point for long time Park Commission members.

The Commission reviewed the draft manual page by page and requested the following changes:

**Page 4:** Thies mentioned that the term “Open Spaces” sometimes has a negative connotation and should be called greenway areas. It was decided to wait on changing the term until we determine how the Comprehensive Plan will refer to “Open Spaces”.

**Page 7: Section 2A1:** Change five to four additional commission members. Also, add the responsibility of the recording secretary.

**Page 8: 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph:** There was a discussion on why the Park Commission would need to consult the Council before scheduling a special meeting. In practice, special meetings have been called at the prior Park Commission meeting without the consultation of the Council. Adams mentioned an example of when the planning commission wanted to set a special committee/meeting for something that was not their responsibility. It was decided to strike out the council, but still consult the city administrator.

During this discussion it was also brought up if the Park Commission should be adding additions to the agenda on the night of a meeting. Bruer asked the Park Commissioners to consider the agenda item and if it was something that could be

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added without consulting city staff to prepare material in advance. Another idea was to vote at each meeting if the proposed additions to the agenda should be added to the agenda.

**Page 9: Quorum/Open Meeting:** Bruer questioned the notion on what is an open meeting. He wondered if emails are going back and forth violated the open meeting law. The answer was yes and it was decided to reword the example to add a fourth person to the chain (add D).

**Conflict of Interest:** Bruer also questioned conflict of interest and weather the Park Commission dealt with judicial or legislative issues. Legislative matters are issues on policy and Judicial matters are issues on property tax appeals (for example). Benson used example that if he owned property and it dealt with an easement of a trail on his property, he would have a conflict of interest. Adams and Smith also gave examples. It was decided to leave the conflict of interest section as is, but look back at it in the future.

**B. Function:** Thies suggested adding open space and natural space with parks and trails to be consistent with the beginning.

**Page 11: C: Conducting additional research:** Linck asked if the Park Commission was allowed to talk to Planning Commission members, Council members, and residents in conducting additional research. Adams said nothing prohibits that and it could be added to the research section.

**Page 12: Educational Resources:** Linck requested adding website links for Three Rivers Park and Parks & Trails. Thies requested added a link to the Embrace Open Space website. Benson requested adding a link to Hennepin County's website.

*A motion was made by Madeleine Linck and seconded by Bob Pastor to adopt the Park Commission Orientation Manual with the above suggested changes. Motion passed unanimously.*

## **10. Three Rivers Park District**

Ann Thies explained to the Park Commission that the City of Medina does not have a liaison to Three Rivers Park District, but it is important that someone is keeping track of monthly meeting dates and staying updated on agenda items that may pertain to Medina, especially turf trails.

## **11. Trail Easement Acquisition**

Thies stated that this agenda item was a continuation from discussion from the fall of 2006 relating to the County Road 116 Trail. Thies mentioned that she has talked to a couple people on how to go about appraising a trail for the fair market land value. She suggested having an appraiser come to a meeting to go through the mechanics of the process.

The subject then switched to discuss if the Park Commission was willing to condemn properties if the people are unwilling to give up their land for a trail easement and

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how it should be done. It was agreed upon that the Park Commission needs to look at the best interest for the city as a whole rather than the one or two land owners that are holding things up. Bruer said that he is supportive of condemnation if it is for road side trails, but not through back yards. Benson requested reasonable compensation for the trail easement. There was discussion on how much the city typically paid for a 15 foot trail easement and Adams said he does not believe the city has paid for a trail easement to date.

An example was given if the City needed three easements and two land owners donate, but the third will not; how does the city pay one and not the other two? Adams suggested formally recognizing the people who donate the trail easements. Bruer said it is important that we educate and give them the options to either donate and get a tax deduction or get paid fair market value.

Thies brought up the issue of the width of an easement. She said it was currently 15 feet, but it is important to have enough buffer room for plowing and mowing. Thies also emphasized the importance of getting the trails off the road in order to make them useful. People need to be separated from the road to feel safe.

There was also talk about how critical it is to look at trails and easements now for 20 to 30 years down the road.

The options that were discussed by the Park Commission were to educate property owners about donating trail easements, give recognition by placing a plaque on trail, and having city staff create a formula, which city assessor already does for park dedication. It was important to keep it equitable and consistent.

It was confirmed that the formula is only on the land, not the house. There was discussion if shrubs could be planted on the 15 foot easement.

When deciding on a motion, there was discussion if we should make a motion for a priority trail or a roadside trail. Some trails can go cross-country and still not cross through a back yard or a road.

*A motion was made by Galen Bruer and seconded by Ben Benson to recommend to the City Council to use condemnation when necessary to establish trail connections for roadside trails that serve the city's best interest. Motion passed unanimously.*

*A motion was made by Madeleine Linck and seconded by Ann Thies to establish a donation recognition program and create a fair pre-developed land market rate for trail acquisition as determined by the city assessor. Motion passed unanimously.*

## **12. Hamel Legion Park Plaza**

Gerry Dykhoff began a preliminary discussion on the construction of the Hamel Legion Park Plaza. He showed the Park Commissioners drawings of where he would like the plaza to be located. Public Works Forman, Steve Scherer mentioned that the proposed location would go over a number of utilities including power, gas, sewer, and water pipelines.

Dykhoff requested having a Veterans Memorial at the plaza that would be paid for by the Hamel VFW and the American Legion. He suggested putting the memorial on the base of a lighted flag pole.

The Park Commissioners felt it was important to find out where the utilities are located and go around them. Dykhoff did not see a problem with putting pavers over the utilities because they could easily be dug up if there was a problem. There was a general consensus that the pavers would need to be drainable.

Brian Kingsley volunteered to work with Gerry Dykhoff and a few people from Uptown Hamel to determine the design, location, and cost estimate for the plaza.

## **13. Staff Report**

### **A. Comprehensive Plan Update**

Landform was appointed by the City Council as our Comprehensive Plan Consultants. Ann Thies and Madeleine Linck were chosen to represent the Park Commission on the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Panel. The first meeting will be scheduled in a few weeks.

### **B. Discussion of joint meeting with the Open Space Task Force**

This meeting will be postponed until after the first Comprehensive Plan Advisory Panel meeting.

### **C. Winter Tour of Parks**

Instead of having a summer tour, it was decided to schedule a tour of the Medina Parks in March or April on a Saturday morning.

## **Additions to the Agenda:**

## **14. Open Space Task Force Luncheon**

Thies mentioned that the Open Space Task force was invited to attend a luncheon on the economics of open space planning on January 26<sup>th</sup> that the Park Commission might find informative. Contact her if you are interested in attending.

**15. Agenda Format**

It was requested to change the agenda format to include an old business and new business section. Other Park Commissioners brought up the fact that a number of those items overlap and it would be easier to have it explained in the staff report. Adams mentioned that Jodi Wunsch would be drafting agendas for the following meeting after the previous meeting to make sure all topics get covered.

**16. Metro Greenways Grant Opportunity**

Metro Greenways is a division of the Department of Natural Resources that provides grant money to Cities (or others) to acquire land in fee or easements for natural resource protection. The City needs a willing land owner. The application deadline is March 31, 2007 and money, if the applicant is approved, would be granted in June or July. Thies suggested creating a sub-committee to meet with certain Medina land owners to find out the level of interest in a discussion on protecting the natural resources on their property. Adams advised to have staff research the grant opportunity and if approved by council act as the fiduciary. If the city does decide to submit a grant, we should work with Dave Thill at Hennepin County.

*A motion was made by Ann Thies seconded by Gerry Dykhoff and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting.*

**The Meeting was adjourned at 9:36 p.m.**

Minutes prepared by Jodi Wunsch