

City of Winsted
Park Commission
Monday, December 10, 2012
7:30 p.m.

Park Commission Members Present: Amanda Alguire
Petie Littfin
Kimberly Moen
Bonnie Quast, Council Liaison

Park Commission Members Absent: Steve Ebert

Staff Present: Brad Martens, City Administrator
Raquel Kirchoff, Administrative Assistant

1) Call the Meeting to Order

Ms. Alguire called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

2) Approval of Minutes – October 8, 2012

Ms. Littfin made a motion to approve the minutes of the Park Commission Meeting on October 8, 2012. Ms. Moen seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

3) Staff Report

Mr. Martens gave the following City of Winsted Staff Report related to the Park Commission:

- The parks have been closed for the season.
- The skating rink will be on Winsted Lake for this winter season if ice conditions allow for a rink. The City is researching the option of a permanent rink placed in the Westgate Park in the future.

Ms. Littfin suggested that the City talk with surrounding cities about their permanent ice rinks, especially Watertown because they have a nice rink. She stated that a permanent rink would provide activity opportunities for both children and adults, including hockey, broomball, and skating.

Council Member Schulenberg stated that he likes the idea of a permanent rink in the Westgate Park.

4) No Old Business

5) New Business

a) Luce Line State Trail Project Update

Mr. Martens stated that at the December 4, 2012 City Council meeting, a cooperative agreement between the City of Winsted and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) was approved committing \$100,000 towards the paving of the Luce Line State Trail. The commitment of funds is part of an agreement between the DNR who committed \$500,000, City of Winsted who committed \$100,000, City of Hutchinson who committed \$750,000, and McLeod County who committed \$500,000 to fund \$1,850,000 towards the project in 2013. A remaining commitment of approximately \$1,650,000 remains to complete the improvement. The DNR has agreed to place the project at the top of their priority list for 2014 funding.

Mr. Martens stated that the work will begin in 2013 with the widening of the trail from Hutchinson to the McLeod County line, including a parallel horse trail. In 2014, the plan would be to pave the trail with bituminous. Mr. Martens stated that Winsted City Council members have envisioned the promenade as a trail head for parking for the Luce Line State Trail that would bring people to the downtown area of Winsted.

Mr. Martens stated that the Luce Line State Trail improvements will be maintained by the DNR because it is a state trail. No additional funding will be required after the improvements have been made.

Martens stated that the trail will allow snowmobiles on it when paved including metal traction devices or “studded snowmobiles”.

Mr. Martens stated that the Park Commission has previously looked at improved directional signage for the trail through Winsted and this signage should be revisited by the Park Commission in the near future now that the DNR has determined exactly where the trail will run. This directional signage should be installed prior to the completion of the trail improvements.

Mr. Martens stated that he will be speaking with Minnesota State Senator Newman and Minnesota State Representative Gruenhagen again regarding the trail. He continued by stating that Representative Gruenhagen has stated that he is in support of bonding for the additional funding needed for the trail now that the local communities have made a commitment to the trail.

The Park Commission members discussed where the trail would run through Winsted, and through the downtown area of Winsted.

Ms. Littfin stated that in the past, the Park Commission has discussed if a new trail could be developed from Main Avenue to the Grass Lake Farms development to connect to the Luce Line trail, with a portion of that trail running through private property. Ms. Quast stated that the City has not been able to acquire land from the private property owner so this option is not possible.

Ms. Moen asked if the crossing of trail traffic over County Road 1 is still being planned near the Winsted Fire Department Building. She stated that in the past, it was discussed that the trail running close to the Winsted Municipal Airport was a problem. Mr. Martens stated that in the past, the City Council had considered the possibility of paving the runway at the Airport; however, that is not being considered now. Because the runway will not be paved, the Airport should not have concerns about the trail location.

b) Campbell Field Improvement Request – Winsted Wildcats

Mr. Martens stated that the Winsted Wildcats have approached the City of Winsted requesting financing be made available to support improvements to Campbell Field. The improvements proposed are related to the third base dugout, additional storage, and the third base seating area in which a “deck” would be installed over the dugout. The improvements would result in a field that could better accommodate larger crowds associated with hosting tournaments according to the Winsted Wildcats.

Mr. Martens stated that the request initially was directed to the City Council for the financing of the project. The City Council directed staff to begin initial engineering work and has also asked that the Park Commission review and comment on the project as it is located in a City park.

Ms. Littfin stated that the deck capacity should be compared to bleachers to see if bleachers would be a better option that could actually seat more people. Ms. Moen suggested the possibility of adding both bleachers and tables and chairs with the deck to give the deck option plus additional seating.

Ms. Alguire stated that she liked the design of the proposed improvement and thinks that it would be a good fit for the park and hopes it would draw more people to Winsted.

Ms. Quast asked if the water issues along the third base dugout would be fixed by this proposed improvement. Mr. Martens stated that the City paid for tiling to be done along the third base line in the recent past and that the plans for this improvement have a drain placed in this area; however, there has not been enough rain since the tile was installed to test if it has alleviated the water issues. Mr. Martens stated that it is uncertain if this improvement to Campbell Field could be completed for the 2013 Winsted Wildcats season, and that by not having it completed right away, there will be more opportunity to test the tiling that was installed if there is rain in the 2013 season.

Mr. Martens stated that he would pass the feedback from the Park Commission on and that the Park Commission would likely review this item again at a future meeting.

c) Park Capital Improvement Fee

Mr. Martens stated that the City of Winsted is considering establishing a Park Capital Improvement Fee to be charged monthly to each property in Winsted through utility bills. A monthly fee of \$1.50 has been

recommended which is the same amount as the existing Waste Removal Administrative Fee on the utility bill that will be eliminated in 2013 once Waste Management takes over waste removal billing.

Mr. Martens stated that the proposed fee would raise approximately \$15,000 each year that would be dedicated toward Park Capital Improvements such as playgrounds, ball field improvements, trail improvements, and more. Mr. Martens stated that this would help to build the Parks budget since equipment for parks is very expensive.

Ms. Moen asked if Waste Management would adopt the Waste Removal Administrative Fee on the bill that they send when they start billing for waste removal. Mr. Martens stated no.

Ms. Littfin stated that she feels the fee is a good idea because citizens may respect the parks more if they are paying a fee. Ms. Moen stated that citizens may feel that they have more input on what happens for the parks.

Ms. Alguire stated that she would like more discussion on this fee and asked if the Park Commission could decide their recommendation at a future Park Commission meeting. Alguire stated that she had not looked into the fee and was not in favor of having to decide on recommending a fee at this current meeting. Mr. Martens stated that the fee consideration came up recently and that the City Council would be considering a City Fee Schedule for the year 2013 at their December 18, 2013 meeting. If the fee is adopted by the City Council, the fees collected in 2013 could be used in the year 2014 for park improvements.

Ms. Littfin stated that she feels that people may respond well to this fee because they will appreciate the funds being used for parks.

Ms. Alguire stated that she is in favor of park improvements but wants to consider the fee because it will be on each person's monthly bill.

Ms. Moen motioned to recommend that the City Council establish a Park Capital Improvement Fee. Ms. Littfin seconded the motion. Motion carried 2-1. Ms. Alguire opposed.

d) Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson Recommendation

Mr. Martens stated that each Commission shall annually recommend a chairperson and vice-chairperson to the City Council for formal approval. Mr. Martens stated that he did speak with Mr. Ebert before the meeting who said that he is willing to serve in any capacity on the Park Commission.

Ms. Alguire stated that she is resigning from the Park Commission and that this meeting is her last Park Commission meeting. Ms. Alguire thanked the Park Commission members and stated that serving on the Park Commission was a great experience for her.

Ms. Littfin stated that she has recently become a Park Commission member and so would prefer not to serve as a Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson.

Ms. Littfin motioned to recommend Ms. Moen as the Park Commission Chairperson and Mr. Ebert as the Park Commission Vice-Chairperson to the City Council for 2013. Ms. Alguire seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Mr. Martens and the Park Commission members thanked Ms. Alguire for her caring, thorough service on the Park Commission and for her service as the Park Commission Chairperson.

6) Announcements

a) January, 2013 Park Commission Meeting

Mr. Martens stated that the January Park Commission meeting could be earlier in the evening because the Planning Commission has rescheduled the date of their meeting for January. The Park Commission members stated that 6:30 could work for a meeting start time.

b) Open Park Commission Positions

Mr. Martens stated that anyone interested in serving as a Park Commission member should submit a letter or email of interest to him.

7) Adjournment

Ms. Moen motioned to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Littfin seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

The meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Brad Martens

Brad Martens,
City Administrator
City of Winsted

ATTEST:

Raquel Kirchoff

Raquel Kirchoff
Administrative Assistant
City of Winsted