

City of Winsted
Park Commission
Winsted City Hall – Council Chambers
Tuesday, March 13, 2012
6:30 p.m.

Park Commission Members Present: Amanda Alguire
Steve Ebert
Kurt Landin
Petie Littfin
Kim Moen
Bonnie Quast, Council Liaison

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

1) Call the Meeting to Order

Ms. Alguire called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2) Approval of Minutes – December 13, 2011

Ms. Moen made a motion to approve the minutes of the Park Commission Meeting on December 13, 2011. Mr. Ebert seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

3) Staff Report

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

- Welcomed Ms. Petie Littfin as a new Park Commission member.
- Stated that there was not an ice rink within the City of Winsted during the past winter due to the mild temperatures.
- Stated that there may be the possibility of a permanent ice rink created in Winsted and that the Park Commission may be looking at location options in 2012.
- Reviewed the status of the Luce Line Trail, the bill that has been introduced to help with funding, and the opinions of Representative Shimanski and Senator Newman regarding the trail. Mr. Martens asked those in attendance to visit the Herald Journal website to complete a survey in support of paving the Luce Line Trail. He reviewed that paving the trail would not restrict snowmobile or horse traffic because the bill would be written to state this.

4) No Old Business

5) New Business

a) Athletic Field Use Request – Bob Mochinski

Mr. Martens stated that Bob Mochinski, who coaches a softball team with players from the Winsted area, would like to reserve athletic fields for his team. Mr. Martens reviewed the Athletic Field Use Policy which reserves fields in the following priority:

- Priority 1 City of Winsted; City sponsored meetings/events (Summer Festival, Winter Festival, etc.)
- Priority 2 Community groups which have at least 50% Winsted residents or are approved by the Park Commission (examples: athletic associations, community education, scout groups)
- Priority 3 Winsted residents and businesses, non-profit organizations, religious organizations.
- Priority 4 Non-residents and businesses

Mr. Martens stated that Mr. Mochinski would need to wait until all Priority Two (2) teams have reserved their fields since the team he coaches does not meet the 50% Winsted resident requirement to qualify for Priority Two (2); however, the policy does allow for the Park Commission to approve other groups to receive Priority Two (2) reservation authority. Mr. Martens introduced Mr. Mochinski and stated that he has requested that the Park Commission grant his team a Priority Two (2) status.

Mr. Mochinski stated that he is the General Manager for the Hollywood Fast Pitch 18 and Under (18 U) Softball team. Mr. Mochinski gave a brief history of himself stating that he has been a long time resident of Winsted, an original member of the first Little League board in Winsted, as well as a board member of many leagues, a 25 year fast pitch member, a coach for many years, and a past Park Commission member. He stated that he understands the business surrounding the parks.

Mr. Mochinski continued by giving a brief history of the Hollywood Fast Pitch team, stating that Winsted has not had enough girls interested in an 18 U team for some time. Most girls quit softball at the age of 16. The team was named after Hollywood because their booster club funded the team. Mr. Mochinski explained that there were several Winsted field improvements that were funded by the Hollywood Fast Pitch team including the dug outs and the fence at Barrett Park. He stated that Barrett Park is one of the nicest complexes that the 18 U teams play at. Mr. Mochinski further explained that in addition to the work and improvements for the parks that the Hollywood team has done, they bring a lot of people to Winsted to play and watch the games which is good for Winsted business. He stated that he believes the Hollywood team is a Winsted team.

Ms. Moen asked how often the team practices and plays games, and which field they were requesting use of. Mr. Mochinski replied that he has requested Barrett Field for approximately five (5) Mondays during the summer and explained that this field is set up with the rubber plate on the pitcher's mound at forty-three (43) feet, and that changing this distance between games is not convenient. This is the distance that is needed for older girls.

Mr. Ebert stated that the only issue that he was aware of regarding the Hollywood 18 U Fast Pitch team using Barrett Field in the prior year was that there was no chalk left at Barrett Field after the Hollywood team had used it.

Mr. Mochinski responded that he had not heard this issue previously and stated that he paid for ten (10) bags of chalk for Barrett Field with his own personal money and left them in the shed at Barrett Park. Unfortunately, the shed is not locked and chalk disappearing or being moved to other parks is a common occurrence. Mochinski stated that this resulted in the Hollywood team using one (1) bag of the ten (10) that he personally had purchased. After this chalk disappeared, Mochinski bought five (5) more bags and stored them at his house.

Mr. Martens stated that the Park Commission has previously discussed that the shed is not locked and the City of Winsted will be purchasing a lock for the shed at Barrett Park.

Mr. Mochinski questioned Martens if there was a need for an Athletic Field Use Policy. Mr. Martens stated that he was formerly a Parks and Recreation employee and the policy that Winsted adopted is similar to the policy that he developed in his previous position. Martens stated that Mochinski is able to receive Priority Two(2) status from the Park Commission.

Mr. Ebert asked Mr. Mochinski who the coach was for the Hollywood 18 U Fast Pitch team. Mochinski responded that Todd Olmen is the coach. Mr. Ebert also asked if there were Winsted girls on the Hollywood team and Mochinski replied that he was unsure of the current roster but stated that if there are, there are not enough to meet the 50% Winsted resident requirement within the policy.

Council Liaison Quast stated that she hopes the Park Commission will grant a Priority Two (2) status to the Hollywood Fast Pitch 18 U Team due to their work on the fields, the improvements they have made, and the willingness of Mr. Mochinski to spend his own money for supplies. Ms. Littfin and Ms. Moen agreed with Ms. Quast.

Parents and other supporters of Mr. Mochinski and the Hollywood Fast Pitch Softball team were present at the Park Commission meeting to show their support of the request to make the Hollywood Fast Pitch 18 U team a Priority Two (2) status. They stated how grateful they were to Mr. Mochinski and this team to give the opportunity to their daughters to continue to play softball at an older age, and to play for a quality team that has made it to Nationals placement. Mr. Caouette stated that he owned Jimmy's Pizza in the past and thanked the team for the business they brought to his restaurant after games and practices.

Mr. Martens asked Mr. Hausladen if scheduling conflicts occurred for the Winsted Little League if the Hollywood Fast Pitch 18 U team used Barrett Field on Mondays. Mr. Hausladen said no.

Mr. Ebert motioned to grant Priority Two (2) status to the Hollywood Fast Pitch 18 U team. Ms. Moen seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

Mr. Martens asked Mr. Mochinski if the Hollywood team used the temporary fences at Barrett Park. Mr. Mochinski responded that they did use them, and that the Hollywood team had raised the money and had purchased the temporary fences at Barrett Park. He continued by stating that if the City is considering funding the purchase of new temporary fences, there needs to be a strict set of rules to keep the fences in useable condition. Every team that uses the fences should be required to take them down after each use.

b) Request for Funding to Purchase a Fence for Barrett Park – Tony Hausladen

Mr. Martens stated that Tony Hausladen is requesting the City's help to fund the purchase of a fence for Barrett Park. Mr. Martens stated that the fence was damaged last summer and at that time a similar request was made. The City elected not to spend the funds toward the purchase of a fence in 2011 due to other priorities.

Mr. Hausladen stated that the current fence was approximately eight to ten (8-10) years old, but was vandalized and thrown away. The cost of a new fence is \$1,400. The Little League received \$900 compensation for the damaged fence and is requesting \$500 from the City, and also asking that the City consider owning the fence so that the City's insurance would cover damages if the new fence gets damaged.

Council Liaison Quast asked if the fence was taken down after every game in the past and Mr. Hausladen replied that it was not. The Park Commission discussed that maybe a policy should be formed regarding the new fence that will be purchased.

Mr. Hausladen stated that a tool to help set up and take down the fence should be acquired because once the fence is rolled up, it weighs approximately 200 pounds and is cumbersome to move.

Ms. Littfin asked if the City's Public Works Department would be responsible for setting up and taking down the fence. Mr. Ebert stated no, that it is the responsibility of the coaches. Mr. Landin asked if something could be developed to assist the coaches in taking down the fence and storing it. Mr. Hausladen replied that he could contact Millerbernd or Scherping Systems to see if they are able to develop a tool. He stated that Millerbernd's has created tools for them in the past to hang equipment, etcetera.

Mr. Ebert asked about other improvement plans that the Winsted Little League has. Mr. Hausladen replied that they want to apply for a grant from the Minnesota Twins but one of the stipulations with the grant is that you have to be a non-profit organization or a City. The Little League would like to apply through the City and have Mr. Marten's help. If grant funds were received from this, they would be used for improvements at Southview, Westgate and Barrett fields.

Mr. Martens stated that the City Council would need to approve the grant application. He stated that he would work with Mr. Hausladen on the grant application and present it to the City Council. Mr. Martens continued by stating the fence at Barrett park is a high priority because of its use by many teams and that the City could additionally help to pay for a cart to haul the fence, over the \$500.

Mr. Hausladen stated that the Little League would also like to add a small shed at Southview Park, install an outlet at Southview to enable a pitching machine to be used there, add some landscape rakes and a mounting system for rakes.

Ms. Littfin asked if the Winsted Little League did fundraisers to fund improvements. Mr. Hausladen replied that they instead ask for corporate sponsorships, allowing them advertisement. He continued by stating that the fees collected from players are not enough to pay for improvements.

Mr. Landin asked how long it will take to receive the fence. Mr. Hausladen replied that it must be received by May 1, 2012, so there is an urgency to ask for the money now and a system to put up and take down the fence needs to be developed soon.

Ms. Littfin asked if parents would volunteer to help put up and take down the fence on game days. Mr. Hausladen and Mr. Ebert replied that there is not a great amount of parent involvement. Ms. Littfin suggested that the Little League stress the need for their help to the parents.

Dan Dickhausen was present at the meeting and asked if the City's Public Works Department would be able to put the fence up before the games, and then the coaches would take it down after them. Mr. Martens replied no, that this would not be a high priority for the Public Works Department, as they are working on their other duties. Mr. Martens and the Park Commission recommended that the Little League strongly encourage parents to volunteer to help with the maintenance of the fence, to avoid higher participation fees.

Mr. Martens also stated that a policy is not needed for the new fence at this time and that it would simply be a requirement of whoever is using the fence to take it down after their game is finished.

Mr. Landin motioned to recommend approval to assist in the purchase of a new fence for Barrett Park for an amount up to \$650 if the purchase includes a cart. Ms. Moen seconded. Motion seconded 5-0.

Mr. Hausladen asked what the amount would be if only the fence was purchased. Ms. Alguire responded that the approved amount would then be \$500.

c) Park Entrance Sign Update

Mr. Martens stated that at the December, 2011 Park Commission meeting, it was mentioned that Commissioner Alguire would be working with staff to receive a quote on updating the park entrance signs in Winsted. A meeting was held with the Herald Journal, and Mr. Martens displayed the sign options they provided to the Park Commission. The first sign option is a whitewood sign to replace or cover existing park signs at a cost of \$1,937. The second sign option is an alumacorr sign to replace or cover existing park signs at a cost of \$2,312.

The Park Commission members discussed the sign options and were not in favor of either option. They felt that they were very similar to the current signs in the parks, and they wanted a different look. They were not in favor of the scroll design of the signs. They asked if there were any restrictions on design or color. Mr. Martens stated no. The Park Commission suggested that the Herald Journal provide different options that have a different design. Mr. Martens stated that he would contact the Herald Journal and provide the Park Commission with different options to view in the future.

6) Announcements

Mr. Landin asked when the next Park Commission meeting would be held. Mr. Martens replied that the next meeting would be held Tuesday, April 10, 2012 at 6:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.

7) Adjournment

Mr. Landin made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Littfin seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Brad Martens

Brad Martens,
City Administrator
City of Winsted

ATTEST:

Raquel Kirchoff

Raquel Kirchoff
Administrative Assistant
City of Winsted