

# **Parks Committee Minutes**

Tuesday, July 16, 2024

8:00 am

5920 Tahoe Dr. SE

## **ARTICLE 1. Call to Order**

Members in attendance: Chair Mike Reese, Vice Chair Eileen Boekestein, Supervisor Grace Lesperance, Ryan Bruneau, Bill Otten, Ken Kaiser

Absent: Matt Douglas

Others Present: Planning Administrative Assistant Nick Govan and others listed on the sign-in sheet.

**Chair Reese called the meeting to order at 8:00am**

## **ARTICLE 2. Approval of Agenda**

**Motion by member Bruneau to approve, seconded by Member Otten.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

## **ARTICLE 3. Public Comment (5 minutes/individual)**

Wayne Meulendyk (2468 Burton Woods Court), requested removal of both sides of the masonry structure at the entrance, suggested expanding grading limits along Burton Street, and recommended removing chain link fences along park borders.

Todd Blosser (6801 Burton Street), asked about removing the two boulders at the park entrance, suggested removing an old driveway stub and planting grass,

inquired about repaving the park drive, and requested improved communication about issues related to park proposals.

Molly Webb (6799 Burton Street), expressed concern about handicap parking in its current location at the park specifically the Burton Street parking lot and requested minimizing opportunities for people going to the park after hours due to the areas residential nature.

Bill Horn (7120 Dorset Drive), inquired about stormwater management plans for the proposed parking lot.

David Nadernejad (6793 Burton Street), requested to be added to the communications list and asked about fencing plans along his property line, due to people walking through his property.

#### **ARTICLE 4. Approval of May 21, 2024 Minutes**

Correction to the spelling of Member Boekestein last name

Article 3. Correction to Jeff Hugh to be Jeff Hughes

Article 6. Correction to Kent Garden Club

**Motion by member Otten to approve with the edits to spelling of names, seconded by Supervisor Lesperance.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

#### **ARTICLE 5. Director's Report**

Director Manion provided updates on various projects and activities. She highlighted the Kent Garden Club's work at Memorial Park, noting significant improvements. She also mentioned Kent Conservation District's control efforts on bittersweet plants and plans for it at Peace Park as well. Manion reported on garlic mustard removal totals, highlighting nearly 8-9,000 pounds removed. She discussed Cascade Rec Park improvements, including ordered paddle racks for pickleball

courts, and an upcoming meeting with AYSO and Rapids FC about field conditions and potential redesign. Manion outlined Memorial Park cement removal plans to prepare for Kent Garden Club plantings and reported on the Friendship Park dedication event, which had over 100 attendees despite weather challenges. She concluded by mentioning Tassel Park volunteer efforts, including additional native plant installations.

## **ARTICLE 6. Old Business**

### a) Burton Parking Lot Plans

Township Engineer Aric presented preliminary plans for a new parking lot at Burton Park, focusing on improving grades to prevent vehicles from getting stuck. The committee discussed parking lot materials, number of handicap spaces, and plans for buffer plantings and native prairie installation. Director Manion emphasized that the plan may be cost-prohibitive, and alternatives might need to be considered. She noted that board approval would be required, and actual costs were yet unknown. She also mentioned plans for buffer plantings and native prairie installation to improve aesthetics and assist with water management.

## **ARTICLE 7. New Business**

### a) Memorial Park Landscape Improvements

Director Manion presented plans developed with Kent Garden Club for renovations at Memorial Park. She explained the multi-phase approach focusing first on areas immediately around the museum. Manion described how plantings are designed to reflect a late 1800s Victorian garden style, aligning with the historical context of the museum. She outlined plans to remove cement areas and replace them with plantings. Manion discussed seeking DDA funding to

support the project and outlined maintenance plans involving volunteers and potentially township staff. Member Bruneau inquired about themed areas for pollinators or specific historical references. The committee discussed the potential for QR codes to provide historical information about the park and its features, with Director Manion mentioning possible collaboration with the Historical Society.

b) Cascade Recreation Park Plan Discussion

Director Manion presented information on the master planning process for Cascade Recreation Park. She reviewed public input gathered at the Independence Day event, showing voting results for various park amenities. Manion discussed plans for an online survey to gather additional community feedback and explained the inclusion of both maintenance issues and new amenities in the planning process. Chair Reese provided additional information on the process for gathering and analyzing public input. He discussed the timeline for draft concepts and a public input, emphasizing the importance of a comprehensive plan for phased improvements and potential grant applications. Supervisor Lesperance cautioned about managing expectations for costly amenities, noting budget constraints. Member Bruneau stressed the importance of maintaining a diverse range of amenities to serve all community members, even if usage of some facilities is currently low like that of the baseball and tennis courts. He also made mention of Grand Rapids Pickleball Club and their \$500 donation to communities to present and educate on pickleball.

**ARTICLE 8. Other Business**

No other Business

**ARTICLE 9. Adjournment**

**Vice Chair Boekestein motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:29am, seconded by Member Otten. Motion carried unanimously.**