

**MAHTOMEDI PARKS COMMISSION
MINUTES
MAY 20, 2020**

Chair Charlesworth convened the special Park Commission meeting telephonically at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 20, 2020.

Present were Commissioners: Vice-Chair Eldredge, Commissioner Metz, Commissioner Lindberg, Commissioner Fischer and Commissioner Strehlow

Also present were: PW Director, Bob Goebel, PW Office Asst., Jeannie Novak; Council Liaison Schneeweis and Kate Andersen, Mahtomedi Community Ed Director

Absent: Commissioner Thompson

AGENDA

Upon motion by, Commissioner Fischer; seconded by, Commissioner Lindberg, all members voting in favor, the agenda was approved as presented. The motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote. Yea: Charlesworth, Eldredge, Metz, Lindberg, Fischer, Strehlow. Nay: None

MINUTES

Upon motion by Commissioner Fischer, seconded by Commissioner Lindberg, all members voting in favor, the April 28, 2020 Park Commission meeting minutes were approved as presented. The motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote. Yea: Charlesworth, Eldredge, Metz, Lindberg, Fischer, Strehlow. Nay: None

STAFF REPORTS

Director Goebel gave a brief update on current public works activities. He stated that the crew is very busy, a lot of construction going on in town. The Memorial Day parade has been cancelled. The Farmer's Market will happen at Veterans Memorial Park, just waiting to hear when it will begin. He also stated per the City Attorney's recommendation that we post signs at the basketball courts, playgrounds and porta-potty's stating use at your own risk and that the park bathrooms are not open as we cannot sanitize them often enough per the CDC guidelines.

OPEN FORUM

Kate Andersen, Mahtomedi Community Ed Director, stated the schools are still doing distance learning. Budget changes are happening, fields are closed for needed maintenance, and 8, 9 and 10 upper Lacrosse fields are open to the public. OH Anderson fields are open. The Athletic Director is in contact with the MN State High School League regarding the Spring sports season.

Council Liaison Schneeweis briefly updated the Commission members on City Council activities. Director Goebel stated that there is a possibility of doing a transfer of budget funds to help cover the costs of Aaron's Playground with Council approval.

NEW BUSINESS

- a. Community Gardens** – The City Council is asking for input from the Commission on this subject. A lengthy discussion was held regarding a resident request for a community garden in Wedgewood Park. The discussion involved locations, irrigation, soil type, fencing, maintenance as well as feasibility in the parks. Several park locations were discussed. Each park had its limitations. Wedgewood Park, for instance has a very sandy soil. Not one park has irrigation in an area that would be suitable for a garden. The parks that had an area suitable outside a play field were also too shaded. The question that arose was how was the garden going to be protected from the deer and rabbits? A fence in a neighborhood park has its own concerns. Commissioner Lindberg asked how was the garden going to be built and who would pay for it? They did not believe the city should use park funds to support a community garden. The Commission asked who would be responsible for maintenance. Chair Charlesworth stated that the City would be setting a precedence if this were allowed to happen. Chair Charlesworth suggested the requesting resident trim his trees, do a raised bed garden or plant on his deck or porch.

The Commission finally decided that it would be in the best interest of the city parks to direct anyone desiring a garden plot to the Mahtomedi Community Education garden at the District Education Center. Mahtomedi Community Education has had a community garden for several years. They have a lottery system established for those interested in a garden plot. They also have a fee established for the use of the garden. The garden also has an irrigation system set up for use.

Upon motion by, Commissioner Metz; seconded by, Commissioner Lindberg, the motion was approved by the majority via roll call vote to deny the use of City Parks for locations of community gardens. Yea: Charlesworth, Eldredge, Metz, Fischer, Lindberg, Strehlow.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a. Update – Aaron’s Playground SW Park** – The bids were over budget and have been rejected. We are in the process of re quoting the project and will purchase the equipment off the state contract.
- b. Update - Hallam Park Improvements** – Construction will begin soon, the trees have been taken down. The Commission Members discussed the various color combinations for the playground equipment and the majority really like the Zephyr color combination.

NEXT PARK COMMISSION MEETING

The next Park Commission meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 17, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. via telephonically.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion by, Commissioner Lindberg, seconded by, Vice Chair Eldredge, all members voting in favor by roll call vote. Yea: Charlesworth, Eldredge, Metz, Lindberg, Fischer and Strehlow. Nay: None. The meeting adjourned at 7:34 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Jeannie Novak

Jeannie Novak, PW Office Assistant