

MINUTES
Parks, Recreation & Community Education Advisory Board
August 2, 2010

Members present were Jim Waldron, Jay Bartholomew, Chad Czmowski Mary Christensen, Mike Retterath and Deane Dietel. Also present were Dolf Moon and Karen McKay.

The meeting was called to order at 5:15 pm.

A motion was made by Chad Czmowski and seconded by Deane Dietel to approve the minutes dated April 5, 2010. The board unanimously agreed.

OLD BUSINESS

City/School Advisory Committee – The advisory committee will meet to review facilities and information on financial issues.

Summer Wrap Up – The board reviewed statistics from summer participation. There was a good turnout for youth athletic camps and swim lessons. A comparison of participants from '09 to '10 will be available at the next meeting. The requests for getting fees waived increased in '10. There is some compensation from United Way of McLeod County to cover the waived fees.

Ice Resurfacers Legislation – Nothing has happened yet at the legislative level that would require ice arenas to have stricter air quality standards.

NEW BUSINESS

Budget - City – City staff is working to reduce the proposed budget for 2011. Twelve possible positions will be eliminated. PRCE has been asked to reduce its budget by \$95,000 on top of a \$190,000 reduction in 2009 and \$350,000 in 2003. A permanent part-time position will be cut in the PRCE office and there will be a 10% reduction of wages at the Event Center. Programs will not be reduced; the quality of maintenance may suffer as more green space is added to the park maintenance schedule.

Projects:

-West River/Utilities – City staff and the Chamber's Leadership group planted landscape materials at the Hutchinson Utilities building on the corner of Highway 7 and 15. Hutch Utilities provided the materials. Phases two and three will be done some time in the future.

-Rotary Park – A swing set was added to the playground. The picnic shelter had electricity installed.

-Lions Park West– A swing set was added; wood chips will replace the sand this is currently there.

-School Campus – The baseball field and fencing have been removed. A soccer field will be developed in the old baseball field area. It is hopeful that the turf will be seeded before winter. The new baseball field, located north of the Middle School, will have an irrigation system installed soon.

Blue Zone – Minnesota Author, Dan Buettner, studied the people of the world living to the age of 100 years. There were nine keys to living a longer life some of which include exercising more, eating better, finding a purpose in life and becoming a part of a community (groups/organizations). Blue Zone is a trademark process and Mr. Buettner charges \$15,000 for a one-hour group session.

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Hutchinson is trying to pilot its own “Blue Zone” by focusing on three key elements and educating the community by eating right, exercising more and connecting to community. Representatives from the community include the school district, city, hospital and fitness groups.

Crow River Dam – The water flow is down from last year. City staff is happy with the performance of the dam’s design. The landscape material is doing well.

Volunteerism – There is a lot of volunteering going on in Hutchinson. PRCE used to pay coaches for its youth programs, now parents volunteer and have their child’s registration fee waived. Parents volunteer for advisory boards and coach the Junior Baseball, Girls Softball, and Hockey Associations as well as run their tournaments.

Volunteerism does require preparation and supervision by city staff.

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

A board member received an e-mail complaining about tall grass under park benches.

Four board members are no longer on the advisory board. Two member’s terms expired; Deane Dietel and Beth Hepola. Scott Scholl and Lora Muilenberg accepted new jobs out of town. Dolf thanked former board members for their service. There will be an advertisement for new members in the Hutchinson Leader and on the City website.

Deane Dietel invited board members to the annual clean-up of the Crow River on September 18th.

There will not be a board meeting in September due to the Labor Day holiday.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:20 pm by a motion made by Mary Christensen and seconded by Mike Retterath. The Board unanimously agreed.

MINUTES
Parks, Recreation & Community Education Advisory Board
October 4, 2010

Members present were Jay Bartholomew, Chad Czmowski, Mary Christensen, John Rodeberg, Elizabeth Hanninen and Eric Opland. Also present were Dolf Moon and Karen McKay.

The meeting was called to order at 5:15 pm.

A motion was made by Chad Czmowski and seconded by Mary Christensen to approve the minutes dated August 2, 2010. The board unanimously agreed.

Three new board members were introduced John Rodeberg, Elizabeth Hanninen and Eric Opland. One vacant position remains.

OLD BUSINESS

City/School Advisory Committee – The advisory committee has meet twice and will continue to meet every other month rather than quarterly as originally planned. School and City representatives will seek opportunities to share and compare financial and volunteer resources that could benefit the community.

Crow River Dam – The Crow River Organization of Water donated \$1,500 for plant materials to help stabilize the south bank of the Crow River near the dam.

Project – School Project – The area of the former baseball field near the High School has been graded, seeded and is greening up. The new baseball infield has been over seeded in preparation for spring use. A batting cage will be installed near the Middle School. Soccer, football, track and baseball activities will be taking place in the area of the High School and Middle School.

Summer Program Comparison – The Board reviewed a comparison of 2009 and 2010 participant numbers. Youth program participation remains strong while adult enrichment numbers have declined some.

NEW BUSINESS

Budget - City – The Board received a budget comparison from 2008, 2009 and 2010 showing revenue expectations and expenditures. Personnel costs are the largest expense in the Parks and Recreation budget. Parent volunteer coaches have reduced expenses by \$30,000 since 2003. Participant fees were adjusted to reflect the savings.

John Rodeberg shared his concern that if fees are raised too much will programs lose participants. Dolf told the Board that fees are held as long as possible and are raised on a three year rotation.

New Ulm, a city similar in population to Hutchinson has a budget of \$2.9 million and is expected to generate \$750,000. They have two thirds less park acreage as Hutchinson and the same number of park maintenance employees. New Ulm currently receives \$2 million more in Local Government Aid than Hutchinson. There has not been a cut in services despite cuts in personnel in Hutchinson.

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Riverside Park/Jaycees Project – The Jaycee’s fundraiser concert in the spring generated \$20,000 for new playground equipment in Riverside Park. The proposed project will cost \$44,000 the remainder of the cost will be taken from the parkland dedication fund. The request is on the next City Council Agenda. Once approved, the structure will be installed before winter. Mulch will be used under the play area. Most playground equipment has a life expectancy of 15 years. The old play equipment is refurbished by the distributor and sent to third world countries. Riverside Park is heavily used.

Recreation Center Schedule – The Recreation Center will be closed on Friday beginning November 1st due the recent layoffs of city staff. It will be open for private rentals and also open at 2:30 pm for after school activities. The Indoor Playground will be set up Monday through Thursday; versus the current Monday, Wednesday and Friday schedule. Open basketball will be available Monday through Friday 9 am to 2:30 pm. An adult group that usually gets together Fridays has been surveyed and will try to reschedule.

A noticeable reduction has been seen at the Senior Center. Revenues are down \$12,000 from this time last year. The number of trips being held is down.

Fall Program Registration – The Board received a comparison of 2009 and 2010 fall program participant numbers. Several of the programs have not started and are still receiving registrations. It is a good indication of interest.

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

Mary Christensen has received many inquiries regarding lights at the skateboard park near Second Avenue SE. A group has been formed to discuss the issue.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 pm by a motion made by John Rodeberg and seconded by Chad Czmowski. The Board unanimously agreed.

MINUTES
Parks, Recreation & Community Education Advisory Board
December 6, 2010

Members present were Jim Waldron, Elizabeth Hanninen, Jay Bartholomew, Chad Czmowski, Eric Opland and Mike Retterath. Also present were Dolf Moon and Karen McKay.

The meeting was called to order at 5:15 pm.

A motion was made by Chad Czmowski and seconded by Jim Waldron to approve the minutes dated October 4, 2010. The board unanimously agreed.

Byron Bettenhausen will be appointed to the PRCE Advisory Board at the next City Council meeting. Mary Christensen will be the City Council representative on the board in 2011 rather than Chad Czmowski and there will be an opening for a community member at large.

OLD BUSINESS

Ameresco Project – The Burich east and west rinks and the Recreation Center Gym lights have already been replaced with energy efficient fluorescent lights. The locker rooms at Burich Arena and the PRCE Office will be done by March 1st at a time that will not disrupt business. \$150,000 of the \$330,000 cost will be rebated back in state grants.

Community Education Audit – The Community Education fund balance is at its maximum, options will be explored to reduce it. 82 classes/programs were offered in the fall and 67 were held.

Skate Park/Tunnel Lighting – It could cost \$5,000-6,000 to light the pedestrian/bike tunnel under Highway 7 West and the skate park. Dolf will meet with the new City Council in January with a proposal. There will be park rules for the skate park enthusiast to follow or lights will not be engaged.

Riverside Park/Jaycee Project – A new playground structure was installed in Riverside Park with funding of \$15,000 from the Jaycees this year. A \$5,000 donation is expected from the Jaycee in 2011. The Jaycees plan a ribbon cutting ceremony at their button kick off night next summer.

The hospital has started their senior campus, Harmony River. The parkland dedication fee of \$28,000 will be used to make improvement in Elks Park next year.

NEW BUSINESS

Hutchinson Huskies Improvements – Dolf met with Huskies representatives. They are interested in making improvements to Veterans Memorial Field along with the city. They would contribute \$15,000 towards a \$60,000 project. The balance would come from the parkland dedication fund. Improvements would include the right field line out of play fence, staircase and backstop improvements, steel siding on the press box, and addressing the deteriorating railroad ties. Plans need to be solidified by spring; these improvements need to be completed before any state amateur baseball tournament.

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Comprehensive Plan 2011 – The last comprehensive plan was created in 1979. The document, which has been quite accurate, included park development, trails, walkways and sidewalks. The City's Planning and Zoning Department will create a new plan. Advisory and focus groups along with city staff will be defining, and inventorying existing assets. Completion of the 20-year plan with five-year benchmarks is expected by May, 2012. School facilities will be included within the process.

Community Education Legislative Platform – Dolf meets on a monthly basis with a group of individuals from throughout the state. There will be a new legislative group to work with in 2011 following the elections.

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

The next meeting will be Monday, January 3, 2011.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 pm by a motion made by Chad Czmowski and seconded by Jim Waldron. The Board unanimously agreed.

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