

**OSSEO PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
October 6, 2015**

1. WELCOME & CALL TO ORDER

The Osseo Parks and Recreation Committee meeting was called to order by Chair Kerstin Schulz at 6:00 p.m., Tuesday, October 6, 2015.

Present: Committee members Dee Bonn, Brittney Quant, Kerstin Schulz, Larry Stelmach, Sloan Wallgren, Alden Webster, and Anne Zelenak.

Absent: None.

Others present: Steve Erickson, North Hennepin Area Chamber of Commerce; Planning/Administrative Intern Nancy Smebak.

2. APPROVE AGENDA

A motion was made by Sloan Wallgren, seconded by Alden Webster, to approve the meeting's agenda as written. The motion passed 7-0.

3. APPROVE MINUTES

A motion was made by Larry Stelmach, seconded by Brittney Quant, to approve the July 28, 2015 meeting minutes as amended (to correct item numbering). The motion passed 7-0.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were offered.

5. BOERBOOM PARK EXPANSION PRESENTATION & DISCUSSION

Nancy Smebak gave a presentation to the committee on the process and status of the Boerboom Veterans Memorial Park Expansion.

The park is slated to double in size in the coming years. The City owns 3 of 4 residential parcels to the east of the current park. Funding is an instrumental concern for the project. Sources of funding for the park expansion include the Park Dedication Fund, which is a sum of money collected alongside any new commercial or residential construction in Osseo. The Park Dedication Fund is a small source of revenue. The fund currently has a negative balance.

Grants and donations are another potential source of revenue. Donations have been an important stream of revenue for City parks and beautification projects. There are a variety of grant sources available.

Lastly, park expansion can be funded through taxes and carried through the city's General Fund. These taxes would be part of the city's property tax levy. Bonds are an additional potential source of revenue, and would need to be approved by a vote of city residents.

Acquiring properties, removing the existing houses, and filling in basements and foundations are another preliminary step to park expansion. Design is a third step. The city anticipates using a contracted firm for design. A draft request for proposals (RFP) for design has been shared with the committee. The RFP will be created and recommended by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee, reviewed by city staff, and approved by City Council. The design process will likely involve the Parks and Recreation Committee, the City Council, and Osseo residents.

Once design is completed, construction will begin. Construction could begin as early as 2017, depending on other necessary precursor steps. Phased construction is a possibility, if not all funds or properties are available at the same time.

Funding estimates for the project include approximately \$150 thousand to acquire the fourth house. The City Council is looking at renting out the three owned houses. The cost to prepare these houses for rental is approximately \$20 thousand, and may be recouped from rental property income. Removing houses and remediating the site is estimated at \$80 thousand, depending on specific characteristics of the houses to be removed; the estimate is based on the cost to remove the Osseo Police Station. Design may cost \$50 thousand, and construction costs vary based on what is designed.

Smebak discussed specific potential funding sources for park expansion, as well as a timeline for major items.

The Parks and Recreation Committee's role includes recommending aspects of park development to the City Council, including an RFP for design services; providing input on park design and funding; promoting outreach and community engagement for park development; and considering Boerboom Park within the larger community and region.

The Committee then discussed the presentation. Dee Bonn asked for clarification on the funding needs, noting that approximately \$300 thousand was listed as needed to prepare for construction, and another sheet showed that the Park Dedication Fund was currently \$293 thousand in the red. The \$293 thousand will be reimbursed to the Park Dedication Fund with a transfer from the city's General Fund, plus an additional \$30 thousand in 2016. Smebak clarified that the \$300 thousand needed was to come after and in addition to the \$293 reimbursement. The current negative balance comes from acquiring the three houses that the city owns; the costs for acquiring these properties was not included in initial the total cost estimates provided to the Committee.

Sloan Wallgren asked about the expected rental income from the houses the City owns. Smebak reported that renting the three houses would be revenue-positive for the City. Zelenak noted that one property would net \$9,000, after the cost of getting the property ready to rent and property taxes and insurance were recouped. Another property would net \$7,700, and the third \$1,500 for the year, as it needed substantially more work. Smebak noted that certain costs would need to be paid regardless of whether they were rented out, including taxes, and renting the houses lets the city recover some of the costs. She noted that some repairs may need to be made even to move the houses off-site, per a recent inspection.

Wallgren asked whether there had been interest in removing the houses. Larry Stelmach noted that there was interest from an Osseo resident who subsequently agreed to wait an additional year to remove the houses. The current city budget does not have any funds to fill in foundations or remediate lots after the houses would be removed. Stelmach noted that the city did not have trouble renting the properties previously, and that there was a potential reward of money at the end of the day if the houses were rented. Smebak added that the

committee could help promote the rental properties to potential tenants. Alden Webster noted that a one-year lease might be harder to fill. Stelmach agreed with that possibility, and commented that Ms. Dorothy Clarke in the fourth house may choose to stay in her house for a while longer. The project would only happen when Ms. Clarke is comfortable moving on. He noted that the city was in a good position to manage its assets to accommodate Ms. Clarke's choices. Companies with many temporary and travelling employees may be interested in renting the city's houses. Anne Zelenak noted that one year was the minimum rental term, and it may take longer for the city to begin removal or demolition of the houses and construction of the park.

Wallgren asked about the RFP for the process, and whether the committee should consider potential park features in advance of issuing an RFP. Dee Bonn shared information on what contacts at the Osseo Farmer's Market had requested for the park. Community desires Bonn noted varied based on the age of the person asked. Most people asked for a picnic shelter, grills, a bathroom with handwashing facilities, playground equipment for tots to pre-teens. Many asked for the pine trees to be kept. Others requested a splash pad, play area, skate park, green space, flowers, a water fountain, shuffle ball and horse shoe courts, and an enclosed dog park. The RFP will be discussed again at the January Committee Meeting.

Stelmach asked whether grant funds might be tied to specific park amenities. Are there more popular topics or features for grant funding, he wondered. Smebak agreed that there was an opportunity to be strategic in park design, combining what Osseo residents would like to see in the park and what funders may wish to contribute pay for. Smebak noted that water quality projects like swales and rain gardens may be one example of projects attractive to funders and park builders. There is always a "chicken or egg" question of whether the grant money or the project idea comes first. Alden Webster asked whether grant money would be specific for parks, noting that the city was seeking funding for the historic water tower. Smebak noted that there are a variety of potential grants available, and that it was relatively unlikely that funds awarded for one project would take away funds from another project in the City of Osseo. Zelenak provided additional input on the broad range of grants available, noting that staff time might be a limitation for applying for funds. Volunteers may be recruited to help with grant writing.

6. SIPE PARK PRESENTATION & DISCUSSION

Smebak presented information about a proposed Osseo Lions Pavilion in Sipe Park. A concept has been approved by the Council, and specific site plan and design documents are in process. Bonn asked whether announcements about the pickle ball equipment had been in the newspaper; Smebak responded that the city was working to share that information.

Stelmach noted that the Sipe Park project would provide facilities for grilling and picnicking, if not permanent bathrooms. Boerboom Park may not need to accommodate all recreation desires in the City.

Wallgren asked if the project was moving forward this year. Smebak responded that the project may be constructed next season at the earliest. City Planning approval is still needed. Wallgren asked how the project would be funded. Smebak noted that the city had received donations for the pavilion, and Stelmach added that it would be fantastic if the Lions could pay for the entire structure. He added that the Lions are working to organize their project team for internal efficiency.

Wallgren asked if the Parks and Recreation Committee should prioritize projects, and if this shelter would delay Boerboom Park expansion. Stelmach responded that some donated funds were specified for Sipe Park, and that funding availability determined how projects were implemented. Smebak added that the Committee may have more opportunity for involvement in Boerboom Park and that the Lions club was taking the lead on the Sipe Park Pavilion.

Wallgren commented that had heard of desire for the shelter before but did not know it was being constructed, and hoped the committee could be involved in all aspects of parks and recreation in Osseo. The committee is comprised of residents, he noted, but the Osseo Lions may not represent Osseo residents. Kerstin Schulz also wondered what the committee's role was, and whether it was limited to Boerboom Park or included Sipe Park as well.

Anne Zelenak agreed that the committee should consider both city parks as well as all recreation activities in the city. She noted that the shelter project kind of has a life of its own and that the Lions are donating the shelter and funds to construct it. She did not see the pavilion project process as a priority. She asked if a Lions representative could attend the January meeting to share updates. The City Council has not had a reason to say no yet. Wallgren noted that if taxpayer dollars are dedicated to the shelter, the committee should provide input.

Stelmach mentioned that the shelter project had been on his radar for 2 ½ years, since the Osseo Community Foundation made a contribution. He agreed that a more public discussion on the project would probably be appropriate, to allow the new Parks and Recreation Committee to catch up to the project. He noted the Lions' excitement about the project. Public discussion occurred during Matters from the Floor at a City Council meeting 2 ½ years ago.

Dee Bonn observed that the Lions have almost built Sipe Park from the bottom up. Alden Webster mentioned that the Lions have always been a large part of Sipe Park for the past 40-50 years. Smebak commented that the Lions president is included on the committee's agenda-setting process, and the Lions as well as members of the public are invited to contribute agenda items.

7. COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING AND PARKS PRESENTATION & DISCUSSION

Smebak presented information about Osseo's comprehensive plan and upcoming plan updates. The 2007 Osseo Redevelopment Master Plan called for the city to periodically evaluate its parks and green spaces. In addition, the regional parks created by the Met Council calls for a bicycle trail along County Road 81. The Parks and Recreation Committee can consider how Osseo's plans interact with the broader regional plan and regional bicycle system.

Stelmach noted that searching the Osseo website for the "Redevelopment Master Plan" would allow people to access the document.

Wallgren asked if a representative from the regional parks planning process could share information with the committee.

Smebak noted that committee members could make presentations on parks topics or lead parks projects. She asked if the committee or a member would be willing to contribute to a

parks evaluation. Bonn asked if a survey could be sent out for the January meeting, with results to be discussed at the next committee meeting.

Kerstin Schulz asked Councilmembers what projects the committee should consider. Stelmach noted that the committee was full of opportunity and could help the city become a destination. He suggested “parks” may a first step, allowing the committee to turn more attention to recreation once facilities are established. The committee is diverse and has opportunities, but it is incumbent on the committee to self-organize to realize those opportunities with the support of City staff.

Dee Bonn commented that many women with young children at the Farmer’s Market asked if Osseo would have sports leagues, like the city used to. The committee could look at re-developing these leagues, with games held at Sipe Park and teams sponsored by local businesses.

8. STAFF & COMMITTEE MEMBER REPORTS

Smebak reported that she had covered with Hennepin Library staff, who seemed open to expanding hours in Osseo. However, the question of how to pay for additional hours was prominent. The Hennepin County Library seems to take a regional view of the library system, and there is a new library 4 miles away in Maple Grove that is open daily. Adult and children’s education could happen on the weekends. However, funding is also a concern for those programs. The committee can choose to pursue weekend hours, but there will be an opportunity cost. She also reported that the Osseo Ice Rink and the land it sits on is owned by the School District, and the District pays for the building’s electricity. Everything else, including maintenance and staffing, is provided by the City of Osseo.

Sloan Wallgren reported that the Osseo Football day was a huge success, featuring a win, and the Lions Roar was a huge success as well.

Dee Bonn reported that the Farmers Market had been rather slow during the last few weeks, but that vendors seemed to enjoy being in Osseo and several would be willing to return next year.

Alden Webster asked when the next meeting was scheduled. Smebak answered that meetings would be held quarterly in January, April, July, and October on the first Tuesday of the month, but that the committee could also meet more frequently as needed.

9. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Zelenak, seconded by Stelmach, to adjourn the meeting at 7:11 pm. The motion carried 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Smebak
Planning/Administrative Intern