



NORTH BRANCH —Minnesota—

**PARKS, TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE
COMMISSION
REGULAR AGENDA
MONDAY, APRIL 1, 2024 @ 7:00 PM
CITY HALL, 6408 ELM STREET, NORTH
BRANCH, MN 55056**

Charles Klopp
Chair

Bob Bernier
Commissioner

Farfum Ladroma
Commissioner

Lynn Wilson
Commissioner

MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORTH BRANCH IN THE COUNTY OF CHISAGO AND IN THE STATE OF MINNESOTA

REGULAR MEETING

Monday, April 1, 2024

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
3. ROLL CALL
4. PUBLIC COMMENT

5. AGENDA APPROVAL
 - a. Approve Agenda

ACTION

6. MINUTES
 - a. Approval of March 4, 2024 PTOS Commission Meeting Minutes

ACTION

Motion by Ladroma to approve the March 4, 2024, meeting minutes. Seconded by Wilson all voted AYE.
Motion carried.

7. REPORTS
 - a. Park Fund Balances

INFO

Sondrol provided an overview of the park fund balances.
Klopp inquired about the Riverwalk Park balance. Sondrol noted that there are remaining funds in the balance.

- b. Project Updates

INFO

Sondrol provided an overview of the project updates.
He informed the commission of the Arbor Day event on April 26 at Clayton Anderson Park and noted

that the Chisago County Master Gardeners had indicated that they would be providing free seed to help establish the prairie at the park.

Ladroma noted that he liked the look of the park monument sign and posts that were installed at Meadows North Park and thank the crew for installing it.

Wilson inquired to the status of the tree city designation. Sondrol noted that the city has adopted the proclamation and is in the process of the compiling the tree related expenditures for the past year. He noted that required ordinance modifications would be brought forward to an upcoming meeting for review.

8. NEW BUSINESS

a. Sunrise Bluff 3rd Addition - Concept Plan

ACTION

Sondrol provided an overview of the Sunrise Bluff 3rd Addition residential concept plan. He noted that the property is located along the Sunrise River and a large portion of the development is located within the open space/wildlife corridor. He added that city staff had met with developer and discussed the concept of the acceptance land along the river corridor and the construction of a trail along 392nd St from Everett Ave to Flink Ave in lieu of cash for park dedication.

Wilson inquired if there are city codes that require developers to install trails and sidewalks along streets with new developments. Sondrol noted that city code does require the installation of trails and sidewalks based on road types. He added that code would require a trail to be constructed along both sides of the roadway as development occurs and that rural residential internal streets such as 389th Trail are on a case basis. Wilson inquired if the developer was not required to install trails and sidewalks with the first 2 phases of the development.

Larry Beach, developer, noted that the trails were not required with the first 2 developments and it is a new requirement. He noted that the trail would provide this connection from Everett Ave to Flink Ave to the new trail. He noted that he would like to be able to preserve the pines trees near Flink Ave.

Wilson inquired to the cost of constructing the trail in relation to the park dedication fee amount of the development. Sondrol noted that it would be a fair and favorable agreement for the city.

Beach expressed that he would be proposing to dedicate the outlot and then to provide a trail easement across . Wilson inquired as to how much of the land would be usable for a park. Beach noted that it is wet, but noted that everything above the wetland delineation boundary would be high and dry and allow for a trail. Beach noted that the lot lines could be extended to provide for larger lots.

Sondrol noted that trails were not required for the first Sunrise Bluff development as it was a rural development that did not connect to anything at that time and the second phase a variance was approved to not require the trail.

Neider inquired as to when the developments were completed. Beach noted the first phase was 2014 and the second phase was 2017. Beach noted that the trail along 392nd would connect to the Flink Ave trail and allow the residents to walk and bike to Meadows North Park.

Ladroma liked the idea of preserving the open space corridor and having a buffer from the homes to protect the wetland area and river. He inquired as to the distance to Meadows North Park. Sondrol noted that it was a little over a half mile.

Neider suggested that the commissioners conduct a site visit and discuss the vision with the developer.

Wilson inquired about having a walkway continuing to the west and north. Sondrol noted that Comprehensive Plan has identifies a wildlife open space corridor that continues to the west and north for preservation and allowing a trail corridor. Wilson inquired if there is any existing access to any of the lakes in the community along the corridor. Sondrol noted that there is not currently today.

Beach informed the commission of the Chain Lake Shores concept plan that would provide access to chain lake.

Motion by Wilson to recommend the acceptance of the construction of the trail from Everett Ave to Flink Ave along 392nd St and to accept the dedication of the land identified on the attached plan and to provide an easement across the west outlot to extend the access to the west of the development. Seconded by Ladroma. All voted AYE. Motion carried.

b. Northwood Park Improvements - DNR Grant

ACTION

Sondrol provided an overview of the Northwood Park DNR Grant and the need to replace the playground surfacing at the park. He noted that grant would provide funding for 50% of the cost. He noted that 2 quotes were received for the playground surfacing and would recommend going with the low quote provided by PLT in the amount of \$19.50 cy for a total of \$12,382.50

Wilson inquired if references had been received for the 2 vendors. He noted that both companies have playground certified material and noted that the SafetyFirst quote has tamarack chips that would last longer but was \$4,000 higher. Wilson inquired as to who would be installing the surfacing material. Sondrol noted that the public works staff would be conducting the installation.

Motion by Ladroma to recommend approval of the low quote from PLT of \$19.50/cy for a total for \$12,382.50. Seconded by Klopp. All voted AYE. Motion carried.

c. Special Event and Park Reservation Permit Process

ACTION

Sondrol informed the commission that Council liaison Neider had requested that the commission review the City's special event permit process. Neider informed the commission that a special event permit request had recently been submitted for the fitness classes in Central Park and that the damage deposit of \$1,000 seemed to be a significant amount for the use. She suggested the concept of a tiered system for special events based on the type of activity planned to take place. She provided tiered examples of Tier 1, Midsummer Days type of activities, Tier 2; vendor sales and Tier 3: Fitness classes.

Sondrol noted that a special event permit is essentially required for any event that is provided and open to public. He noted that larger damage deposit for parks that have irrigation is required as there events that do install unapproved signs even if it may be a smaller event and the city is trying limit its exposure.

Ladroma suggested researching how other cities handle these. Wilson inquired if the damage deposit

could be lowered with the understanding that applicant would be responsible for any damage above that amount. Neider noted that damage deposit is currently held and not cashed and if damage were to occur an invoice would be submitted to the permit holder.

Ladroma felt that the events help assist with economic development in the city.

Neider inquired if the event were to change locations for the day to another park would that be allowed. Sondrol noted ideally that information would be provided up front to address with the approval of the permit. He noted depending on the event considerations of noise, traffic, parking, etc should be addressed. He added that the commission only meets monthly for changes to be recommended for approval by the commission.

Neider felt that the \$1,000 damage deposit could prevent potential users for reserving or using the park.

Ladroma noted that cameras have been installed in the parks to assist with monitoring damage.

There was consensus from the Commission to research how other cities process special event permits and discuss at the May meeting.

d. Parks, Trails and Open Space Capital Improvement Plan 2025-2034

ACTION

Sondrol provided an overview of the current 10 year CIP and identified the 2024 projects of Williams Park, Splash Pad, Willdridge Park, Flink Phase II Trail segment, pickleball courts, Malmquist property and future capital project funding. He noted the 2025 projects included the Co Rd 30 crosswalk, outdoor archery range as identified projects.

Klopp suggested reviewing this and providing input on this at the May meeting. Neider noted that she is in support of creating walkable/bikeable neighborhoods and is open for any questions from the commission.

Ladroma inquired about the budgeted amount for parks in 2024. Sondrol noted that the council approved \$100,000 for the Flink Ave trail project in 2024. Ladroma noted that the city's park and trail system is what attracted him to moving to the community and felt that continuing the walkable bikeable initiatives and moving forward with the development of Williams Park and a splash pad should take place as North Branch is a growing community.

Wilson added that at the joint commission/council meeting members from the other commission also expressed the desire for a community center, pool, splash pad and walking/biking initiatives/goals for the city.

Ladroma felt that the more residents can stay in the community the more that will support other businesses in the city.

Wilson felt that connecting with the community through the schools and events such as concerts in the park.

Klopp noted that project continue to be pushed annually to the following year. Ladroma noted that costs will only continue to increase. Sondrol noted that a lot of progress has been made in the past year including the fencing of the ballfields, CSAH 30 trail project, etc.

Wilson inquired as to what could be accomplished with \$1.8 million dollars, or how could Williams Park be completed in phases and what would that look like. Sondrol noted the need to prioritize what the city would like to accomplish and going from there.

Wilson inquired about holding a work session to discuss this in more detail. The commission came to a consensus to meet at 6pm on Monday May 6 to discuss the CIP. The commission discussed that a survey had been recently completed with citizen input. Sondrol noted that a facility assessment is in the process of being completed and will provide additional direction on the Williams Park site.

Wilson requested the powerpoint from the splash pad presentation at the meeting. The commission discussed the cost of a community center and that it would depend on the amenities and potential partnerships. Sondrol noted that the facility assessment is in the process of being completed and with the results of that will help guide direction moving forward. He added that council direction should be provided to the commission if they would look to obtain partnerships. Neider noted that she would not be in support of a city driven YMCA as it could significantly impact existing businesses. Wilson provided the option of utilizing existing school facilities to help meet these needs/desires.

There was consensus of the commission to hold a special work session meeting on Monday May 6, 2024, at 6pm to discuss the CIP to present to the City Council.

e. Clayton Anderson Family Memorial Nature Park - Limestone

ACTION

Sondrol provided an overview of an opportunity to acquire a large piece of limestone discovered at the Schoolside Village 4th development. He noted that it is estimated that limestone traveled from north of Montana to North Branch and that the estimated retail value of the stone was around \$2,000. He noted the developer was willing to work with the city to acquire and preserve the limestone with the placement of the stone recommended it to be placed in Clayton Anderson Memorial Park. He added that resident Joe Sausen would be willing to provide research and information on the stone if desired.

The commission discussed the location for placement of the limestone and discussed the entrance of the park. Sondrol noted that the public works department would determine if they can move the limestone with their equipment.

Wilson felt that the commission should do what is necessary to acquire the limestone.

Motion by Wilson to recommend approval of up to \$2,500 for acquisition and placement of the limestone in Clayton Anderson Park. Seconded by Ladroma. All voted AYE. Motion carried.

f. Westside Commons 2nd Addition

ACTION

Sondrol provided an overview of the Westside Commons 2nd Addition development. The commission

There was consensus support from the commission to install a sidewalk along 386th Street and to provide pedestrian crossing improvements at the intersection of 386th St and Falcon Ave.

9. OLD BUSINESS

a. Ballfield Improvements

ACTION

Sondrol provided an overview of the quotes for ballfield lime for the new dugout areas at Harder Park fields 3 and 4 and Tower Fields north and south as well as adding lime to the Tower south field. He noted that the funds had been approved for the Ballfield fencing and Minnesota Twins grant.

Ladroma inquired as to when the work would be completed. Sondrol noted as soon as possible to have the fields ready prior to the ball season.

Klopp inquired about any feedback from the ball associations. Sondrol noted that rec ball and travel baseball are now being managed by one organization and have provided very positive feedback on the improvements that have been completed and thanked the city.

Wilson inquired as to how many associations utilize the fields. Sondrol noted that rec ball, travel and fastpitch are the primary users.

Motion by Klopp to recommend approval of the low quote from Bjorkland Companies in the amount of \$23.25/ton for a total amount of 7,556.25. Seconded by Ladroma. All voted AYE. Motion carried.

b. Council-Commission Joint Worksession

ACTION

Klopp provided an overview of the meeting and noted that it was well attended and well received. He noted the group would meet quarterly and that they were looking for a representative of each commission to serve on the planning committee.

Klopp recommended Wilson to serve on the planning committee. Seconded by Ladroma. All voted AYE. Motion carried.

c. PTOS Strategic Plan

INFO

Sondrol informed the commission that he had been contacted by a member of the Wildridge Homeowners Association that was interested in partnering with the city to conduct a survey of the Wildridge neighborhood to determine what they would like to see in the full development of the park.

Wilson felt that it would be great to get their input as they live near the park and to make them aware that it is a public park and open to the entire public. Ladroma felt that it would be good to get input from the nearby Falcon Apartments as well.

Sondrol inquired if the commission would be interested in conducting a park tour. The commission came to a consensus to conduct the tour on Monday, May 20, 2024, at 5pm.

Wilson requested a stop at Clayton Anderson park. The commission suggested inviting the council and other commissions on the tour.

10. NEXT MEETING - 05/06/2024 7PM

11. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Ladroma to adjourn. Seconded by Klopp. All voted AYE. Meeting adjourned.