

**REGULAR MEETING
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
City of Oakdale
July 21, 2022**

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Oakdale Parks and Recreation Commission was held on Thursday, July 21, 2022, at Oakdale City Hall, 1584 Hadley Avenue, Oakdale, Minnesota. The meeting was called to order by Chair Lockhart at 7 PM.

CALL OF ROLL

On a call of roll, the following were present:

Chair: Paul Lockhart
Vice Chair: Glen Giacoletto

Commissioners: Glen Bearth
Jan Cunningham
Mark Giannini
Freddie Jiles

Also Present: Rachel Burand, Stantec Landscape Architect
Andy Gitzlaff, Community Development Director
Julie Williams, Recreation Superintendent
Jim Romanik, Public Works Manager
Jason Zimmerman, Finance Director

Absent: Steve Meyer, Commissioner
Jeff Koesling, Parks Superintendent
Jake Ingebrigtsen, City Council

Quorum Present: YES NO

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Regular Meeting Minutes, May 17, 2022

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER CUNNINGHAM, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER JILES TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 17, 2022 AS PRESENTED.

6 AYES 0 NAYS

NEW COMMISSIONER INTRODUCTION – Paul Lockhart

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

July 21, 2022

Page 2

Chair Lockhart introduced and welcomed aboard new Parks and Recreation Commissioner Glen Bearth.

WILLOWBROOKE PROJECT – Rachel Burand

Stantec Landscape Architect Rachel Burand reported on work done to date on the Willowbrooke Park Project. Andy Gitzlaff, City of Oakdale Community Development Director, is the Project Lead. Concept plans have been created for three parks. Stantec's Sarah McDonald is the Project Manager, with Rachel Burand being the Assistant Project Manager. The project management team includes representatives from the City of Oakdale and Lennar, the developer. Also included was White Star Farms, another developer with plans in the area. The park planning process includes meeting with Council and the Parks and Recreation Commission. Feedback will be collected throughout the process.

The project includes two phases. Phase One had an April kick off meeting. A community wide inventory and assessment report is in progress. An online questionnaire went out to Oakdale residents between May and June. Council had a meeting last week, and the last item is the meeting with the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Phase Two includes preliminary design alternatives. Each of the three parks has two design alternatives and area relationship diagrams. Feedback will help create one concept per park, with the final goal of 30 percent preliminary plans. In this phase, there will be review periods, design refinements, additional meetings, cost estimates, coordination with vendors, et cetera.

Draft Inventory and Assessment – Existing planning documents completed to date were reviewed, including Oakdale's local and regional context considering demographics, location, physical character, and environmental resources. Inventory is in progress for existing park and recreational facilities. Next, a level of service analysis will determine parkland and recreation needs. The results of the community survey are included.

Level of Service Analysis – The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) guidelines for acreage of parkland per 1,000 residents is 10.5 to 15 acres. The guidelines are further broken down into categories of mini, neighborhood, and community parks. Whether the facilities are City-owned is important for residents' access to recreation. The NRPA doesn't include standards for special uses, nature preserves, or greenbelt; Oakdale has plenty of that park land too. Oakdale's numbers are being verified and the report is in progress.

Questionnaire Results – A survey was conducted between May and June with short answer, open ended questions about the Oakdale parks system as a whole. Key Willowbrooke questions were included. The demographics of the 89 respondents were most in the ages of 25 to 64, balanced between precincts, majority identifying as female, and balanced between new residents and those living 20 to 30 years in Oakdale. The most common amenities residents would like to see were a splash pad, picnic, playground, and walking trails. Residents do not want a skate park, dog park, or baseball fields. Favorite Oakdale parks are the Oakdale Nature Preserve, Richard Walton Park, and Eastside Park. Reasons these parks are their favorite are because they are close to home, have walking trails, activities, nature, and playgrounds. Residents are driving outside of Oakdale for recreation facilities in Woodbury, Lake Elmo, Maplewood, and the Lake Elmo Park Reserve. They

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

July 21, 2022

Page 3

participate in Summerfest, baseball, softball, and Discovery Center recreation programs in the City. New programs and services desired are a splash pad, pickleball, a community center, and an outdoor pool.

Replying to a question made by Commissioner Cunningham about a less than expected interest in pickleball, Architect Burand stated that while having 89 survey participants is considered a good response for an online survey, the entire community may not be reflected, so other feedback is important too.

Replying to a question made by Vice Chair Giacoletto, Architect Burand stated that while public schools may provide recreation opportunities, if the technical ownership of the property is not the City, it will not be listed in the inventory of existing City-owned parks.

Commissioner Bearth noted that the survey indicated Walton and the Discovery Center as the most used parks, and that neither offer pickleball. He was surprised Tanners, a park offering pickleball, wasn't listed with more of a percentage of use.

Vice Chair Giacoletto replied that Eastside Park offers pickleball and is listed.

Commissioner Giannini asked for the reason Council determined a splash pad was not appropriate for Willowbrooke, as the splash pad was desired in the survey. He noted 12 to 14 responses from Oakdale residents who travel to Woodbury.

Architect Burand believes she heard that maintenance issues are the reason. The splash pad was a popular response. Keep in mind that the survey was meant for the Oakdale parks system as a whole. Maybe the splash pad is not right for Willowbrooke, but knowing that it was a popular response could influence another park.

Commissioner Cunningham recalled joining the commission in 2016 and discussing maintenance issues with adding a splash pad before Willowbrooke planning began. The community wanted it, but upon realizing the financial impact, it was phenomenal.

Superintendent Williams added that staffing was a concern.

Chair Lockhart suggested adding the splash pad as an item for next meeting, to discuss the pros and cons with Jeff Koesling and Jim Romanik.

Area Relationship Diagrams – Three parks are planned in the Willowbrooke neighborhood; The Commons, Neighborhood Park west adjacent to 694, and Neighborhood Park North.

Considerations in design include that the City's public works staff will be responsible for maintenance, increasing cost is correlated with more amenities, restrooms and concessions have utility and maintenance needs, and the playground cost varies with size, type of materials, equipment, and customization.

Questions to consider are if specific uses are appropriate for Willowbrooke's parks, likes and dislikes for each concept, and programming elements to combine for one preliminary design

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

July 21, 2022

Page 4

alternative per park. Two concepts are presented for each park, each with a plan and character images. The concepts are as different as possible so uses can be mixed and matched.

City Council Feedback – Council didn't endorse a specific concept or level of amenities for any park. Concepts are presented for feedback only. Active use programming is preferred where parking is provided; in the Commons and Neighborhood Park West. Theft and vandalism of unsecured park amenities is a concern. Council is open to phasing park amenities built over time, with the understanding there would be a master plan.

The Commons – The first concept called Gather and Move uses active recreation. Featured is a teen/adult ninja warrior play area that is less common, and interesting and approachable for all ages. A hammock grove features hammocks held by poles. An Adirondack grove features movable seating and serves as a flexible, passive gathering space. A central gathering overlook/flexible performance space provides shade and could be an art piece, or function as a picnic shelter or backdrop for a performance. There is a restroom, picnic shelter, open picnic area, and playground with containers for ages two through five, and five through twelve. Adult exercise equipment surrounds the youth play.

Commissioner Cunningham suggested that an amphitheater could fit in the central gathering spot.

Commissioner Giannini visited the Willowbrooke show house to get a map and learned that an amphitheater had been planned, but potential buyers said they didn't want the noise when choosing to buy.

Architect Burand continued with the second concept, called Wander and Reflect. Passive recreation has been based on Willowbrooke's Landscape Framework Plan, using planting zones planned for the neighborhood as a whole. Species will be placed in demonstration gardens within the park, and include educational signage to show what's planted in the rest of the neighborhood. Meandering paths, swing benches, gathering spots with seating, and a central plaza with lounge chairs are included.

Chair Lockhart confirmed that no restrooms are planned in concept two.

Commissioner Cunningham suggested a community pool be considered as an alternative to a splash pad.

Neighborhood Park West – There is a lot of parking at this park.

The first concept for the smaller park adjacent to 694 is called Ball and Grill. It can fit a U12 Soccer Field (largest able to fit). The field also serves as flexible lawn space. There is a designated volleyball area, central picnic pavilion, playground, and open lawn/picnic space.

The second concept is Picnic and Pickle, created because pickleball is desired. There are eight courts with room for future courts, potential pickleball tournaments, a picnic shelter, and open lawn area.

Chair Lockhart confirmed that no restrooms are in the concepts.

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

July 21, 2022

Page 5

Vice Chair Giacoletto necessitated a restroom.

Commissioner Giannini suggested installing a volleyball court instead since grass play destroys the lawn.

Superintendent Williams informed Chair Lockhart that the Tanners Lake Park restrooms are opened summer weekends from 12 to 6 PM.

Commissioner Giannini imagined future Oakdale Athletic Association (OAA) uses of t-ball on the grass, or youth soccer.

Neighborhood Park North – There is no parking at this park.

The first concept is Learn and Play, a nature based playground that can have equipment designed and customized by a vendor, or use natural logs. Play containers are for ages two through five, and five through twelve. There is an open lawn with trees.

The second concept is Fun and Games, with active recreation, game elements like concrete table tennis (bring your own paddle and balls), a bocce ball field, 1/8 mile running track with exercise stations, a corn hole court, hammock grove, shelter building, and restroom.

Chair Lockhart liked Fun and Games but was concerned with parking. Corn hole bags could be put in another park; maybe items from The Commons could be swapped with Fun and Games because it has the parking to support active recreation.

Vice Chair Giacoletto echoed that active recreation needs parking.

Commissioner Cunningham remembered that the commission had the idea to transition a couple lanes at Horseshoe Park to corn hole.

Commissioner Giannini may visit River Falls to look at cement corn hole.

2022 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CIP) PROJECT UPDATE – Jim Romanik

Walton Park Ballfield Rewiring – The project is in progress. The City is working with Short Elliott Hendrickson (SEH) on design with the goal of summer completion to have ready for play next year.

Walton Park Skate Park - American Ramp will be repairing the ramp structures. They are on schedule for next week and after starting, will shut down the skate park for a week and a half. \$115,000 was budgeted. After evaluating the slab and ramps, it was determined that only the ramps need repair at this time. The cost of the project was \$15,000. Manager Romanik will elaborate on the other \$100,000 in the CIP Proposal.

Commissioner Giannini heard from a skater that he liked the patch repair completed so far.

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

July 21, 2022

Page 6

Guthrie Shelter Roof- The contract is signed, but Manager Romanik is waiting on the Minnesota League of Cities Insurance Adjuster to return with an update on the May hail damage.

PROPOSED 2023 THROUGH 2027 PARKS CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN – Jim Romanik

Manager Romanik indicated cost increases for planned projects.

2023 Projects - The biggest 2023 project is the Oakdale Nature Preserve Trail Repaving. The estimate was originally \$360,000 when put together last year for the 1.8 miles of removing and replacing trails. This year with cost increases, the project is estimated over \$470,000. More will need to be built into the budget for 2023, as an estimate may be closer to \$500,000.

Council has given direction to consider replacement of aging playground structures. A few are 1995 to 1998 vintage, and around 30 years old. Council may want to apply the 2022 savings of \$100,000 unused from the skate park project budget to playground replacement.

A volleyball court at Eastside Park could be added near tennis and hockey. The \$25,000 budget, with inflation and cost of materials, will probably be closer to \$35,000. Volleyball costs are curbing, sand, drain tile, posts, and netting. Volleyball is a good fit to be placed near picnic shelters, but at Eastside that would mean removal of trees. Volleyball may fit elsewhere. In the north part of Eastside, there is a playground, shelter, and basketball court.

Commissioner Cunningham and Chair Lockhart were concerned a volleyball location near tennis and hockey would be congested.

Chair Lockhart suggested placing volleyball near the playground. Or there is area at Guthrie.

Commissioner Cunningham suggested Eberle Park for volleyball, if not pickleball.

Vice Chair Giacoletto observed a lot of volleyball in the Eastside soccer field/using the ballfield outfield. The grass wears away.

Commissioner Jiles wondered if sand courts would be used, or if players prefer the grass. There could be a plan to transition park use if volleyball wasn't used.

Chair Lockhart suggested reducing the investment by using timber with a lower material cost than concrete.

Vice Chair Giacoletto doesn't want materials to injure players diving for a shot.

Manager Romanik replied that Tanners Lake Volleyball Courts have a concrete border.

2024 Projects – The big project for 2024 is LED lighting replacement at Walton Ballfields one through four. Volleyball at Guthrie is also listed.

Chair Lockhart believes the dollar value was established three to four years ago and inflation will impact the amount.

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

July 21, 2022

Page 7

Manager Romanik will have to confirm the price, but the cost may be close. Opportunities to offset costs, as the project is a couple years out, will be explored; such as a rebate program to switch to LED and applying for grants.

2025 Projects – Playground replacements can be considered, like the Tanners Lake Park playground replacement. The parking lot and trails at Eberle Park need repaving. A community garden may be programmed, with size and location still to be determined.

Chair Lockhart noted that a community garden's success at Willowbrooke could be a trial to consider a garden at another location.

Manager Romanik reminded that the CIP is a draft and items can be moved, such as depending what is selected for Willowbrooke, to not duplicate projects in a nearby park.

Chair Lockhart reminded to program the acquisition of the Brockman Property into the CIP, so as to not lose sight of being prepared for the purchase of property if it becomes available.

Commissioner Cunningham noted the potential of the big area at Brockman's property and possibility of adding volleyball or pickleball.

2026 Projects – Prices may change, along with the needs/desires of the commission, Council, and community. Projects listed are lighted pickleball courts at Golfview, a playground replacement, a tennis practice wall at Eastside, and parking lot at Tanners (the south parking lot from the tennis courts, past the ballfield, including the landing).

Commissioner Cunningham recalled planning for Golfview being tabled due to possible development.

Chair Lockhart suggested a wait and see approach for Golfview. He raised concern that projects cost more and more moving into the future and there wasn't enough money in the budget to fund them.

Finance Director Jason Zimmerman introduced himself. He explained that funding is subject to community needs, desires, and investment. The outline of the CIP as it is now has incremental increases planned from a property tax standpoint to help fund these park projects. There are competing interests and things may change, but the projected/proposed increases have been incorporated into the 2022 CIP. It is the intent to follow through with increases, pending Council guidance, and attempt to increase the revenue in the fund.

Chair Lockhart added that some park projects, such as paving, may be funded from other budgets than the Parks and Recreation fund.

2027 Projects – The furthest year in the CIP has volleyball listed for Northdale Park. Placing the court at the north end of the parking lot has challenges. The hill will need to be removed, retaining walls built, and fencing placed to separate the parking lot. It may be possible for field two to be

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

July 21, 2022

Page 8

converted to volleyball. As other park projects are placed prior to 2027, a better vision for the uses of field two may come.

Commissioner Giannini acknowledged that the project is five years down the line, but informed that younger OAA soccer uses field two a couple nights per week for practices, and plays games on Saturday.

Manager Romanik informed Vice Chair Giacoletto that archery is pretty well used at Northdale; evident in the bales for target practice use. They are replaced yearly to every other year.

A playground replacement at Northdale could be timed with the volleyball court to have construction take place in one season.

Also listed is Horseshoe Park, to convert a couple lanes to corn hole. It would be useful to visit River Falls to look at the permanent concrete structures.

Eberle Pickleball Courts are listed in the 2027 budget, but are to be determined after finalizing Willowbrooke's installments. If requested, Tanners and Oakdale Nature Preserve tennis courts could be striped for pickleball.

Chair Lockhart asked when finalization is needed to lock in the CIP for the next four years.

Director Zimmerman replied that the CIP is somewhat fluid. Responsibility has transitioned from the former Public Works Director Brian Bachmeier to the Finance Director Jason Zimmerman and Public Works Manager Jim Romanik. Direction from Council is to have something ready in the tail end of next month. Staff will have conversations with the City Administrator regarding Council's expectations on what level of detail is desired in the Parks CIP. Last year it wasn't until November that the CIP was brought to Council.

PARK TOUR REPORT (Oakdale Nature Preserve, Tanners, Eberle, and Tilsen) – Paul Lockhart

Commissioner Cunningham informed that the commission has some ideas for the park located at the west side of the Oakdale Nature Preserve. The basketball court there has a lot of unused space.

Commissioner Jiles expanded that there is 20 to 30 feet of dead space that may be painted for another court if it could fit.

Chair Lockhart thought the basketball court may be shifted to the east, tightening the fence with basketball, and potentially adding a pickleball court into the enlarged space. If demand grows, a tennis court or both courts could be striped for pickleball as well.

Commissioner Giannini speculated that the space was so large, the fence may not even have to be moved to fit pickleball.

Vice Chair Giacoletto was disappointed that after the Oakdale Nature Preserve tennis courts were recently resurfaced for \$18,000, he visited only months later and they were already cracked. The

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

July 21, 2022

Page 9

courts hadn't even been through a winter. The cracks were not filled during resurfacing, or not done well. They run across both courts, and along the length of the court.

Manager Romanik can research what work was done and why it failed.

Chair Lockhart reported that of the four parks the commission visited, the Oakdale Nature Preserve was a top contender for playground replacement due to cracks in the slides near the bottom where the support legs are. The legs are almost coming through the slide. At Tanners, Eberle, and Tilsen the playground structures are in good shape for the most part, but need their metal sandblasted and painted. The new Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) swing installed at Tilsen need bolts tightened where they fasten to the top rail.

Commissioner Giannini added that swings are rusting through at Eberle.

Chair Lockhart aged Tilsen at 1995, and the other three at 1998. He was surprised how well they look, excluding the Oakdale Nature Preserve. Playground users at Tanners Lake said they'd like to see a structure added north of the swings. West of the playset there is an open sanded area to incorporate something new.

Commissioner Giannini added that he received feedback for Tanners that more ADA equipment could be added because the ramp only goes up one set, and nothing can be done from there.

Chair Lockhart requested maintenance be done at each playground beneath the slides to fill in the areas that get dug out.

Manager Romanik has talked to Park Superintendent Koesling about putting in safety mulch.

Commissioner Giannini thought that beach sand at Tanners Lake may not be a fitting location for safety mulch.

Commissioner Jiles suggested a rubber landing spot be added at slide exits.

Manager Romanik will have Superintendent Koesling follow up at the next meeting.

RECREATION UPDATE – Julie Williams

Summer Youth Camps – Two camp weeks remain. Nine summer instructors were hired and are a fantastic staff. The campers are having a great time.

Amped Up Entertainment – The amphitheater series is off to a great start. A performer from Jolly Pops came today and Snake Discovery will come next week. Raptor Center will wrap up the season on August 11.

Summer Concert Series – the season is half way through. Mojo Monks performed last night, receiving a lot of rave reviews. The Pan Handlers Steel Drum Band will perform July 27, and the full band from The Jolly Pops will complete the series on August 3.

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

July 21, 2022

Page 10

Farmers Market – The market is at its peak with in-season vegetables after a slow spring. Corn has arrived for pick up next week.

Movies in the Park – Encanto will play at Walton tomorrow night with good weather forecasted, just hot. Oakdale Police and Recreation sponsor the events. Summer staff will provide movie themed activities and ice cream treats will be available for purchase. The movie begins at dusk; around 9:30 PM. Raya and the Last Dragon will wrap up the events on August 12.

Red Cross Blood Drive – Oakdale Wellness 50+, Maplewood Oakdale Lions, and Oakdale Recreation will have a blood drive tomorrow. It is full.

Oakdale Wellness 50+ Ice Cream Social – The first 50 guests receive a dollar off coupon for ice cream on Sunday at the Oakdale Nature Preserve.

Commissioner Cunningham added that all ages are welcome.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Wellness 50+ - Commissioner Cunningham informed that a Be Safe and Well Series will kick off on Thursday, August 18 from 6 to 7:30 PM outside the Discovery Center with a kitchen fire safety demo by Oakdale Fire. On Thursday, September 15 self-defense will be taught by Glen Giacoletto, and lastly, Thursday, September 29 will be crime prevention with Oakdale Police.

ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER JILES, SECONDED BY VICE CHAIR GIACOLETTO TO ADJOURN THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION, DATED JULY 21, 2022, AT 8:28 PM.

6 AYES 0 NAYS

Respectfully submitted,
Laura Linzmeyer