

**City of Hastings**  
**Parks and Recreation Commission Minutes**  
**City Hall Council Chambers**  
**October 9, 2012 – 6:00 PM UNAPPROVED**

- 1) **Roll Call at 6 pm:** Commissioners Hedin, Schossow, Juntunen, Miller, Hawkins and Smith, Parks & Recreation Director Bernstein, PRC Secretary Behrens  
Absent: Commissioners Polehna & Kimmen
- 2) **September Minutes:** Motion to approve September minutes as presented by Miller. Seconded by Hedin. Passed unanimously.
- 3) **Setting Agenda:** Smith added “Additional Bike Racks in Downtown” to New Business
- 4) **Departmental Updates:** Department updates were reviewed with the commissioners.
- 5) **Tennis Court Lighting:** Bernstein received an email from a resident asking why the tennis court lights are on “every time I drive home.” Bernstein explained the current lighting system works on a timer system which is energized from 5:00-10:30 p.m. The user has to go to a light pole and press the “on” button to turn the lights on during that time period. Once on, the lights can be turned off manually at the same light pole utilizing the “off” button or the lights will turn off automatically at 10:30 p.m. However, once the lights are turned off by a user, the lights have a cool-down period of approximately 30 minutes before they can be turned on again. Anyone trying to turn on the lights during that 30-minute cool down period will not have success and will think the lights are not working correctly. Bernstein asked our Finance Dept about the cost of the lights. The approximate cost of leaving the lights on from 5:00-10:30 p.m. is \$6.18 a day. If the lights were on the entire time period every day for 180 days, the cost is less than \$1,200 per year. The cost to replace our lighting system at the tennis courts is approximately \$40,000-60,000. Bernstein asked for the commissioners’ thoughts on what to do about the tennis court lighting. Smith believes that lighting is a cost of doing business and that for convenience and simplicity, we should keep the current lighting and timer system and post a well-worded sign explaining how the lights operate. Hawkins asked if we could adjust the timer system during the summer so that the lights weren’t energized at 5:00 but later in the evening when it became dusk. Bernstein noted that even though our timer is supposed to automatically adjust for Daylight Savings Time, it doesn’t always work properly. Also, when there is a lightning strike or power outage, it can disrupt the timer system. This doesn’t happen frequently and staff is quick to check the timer when we hear from a resident. Staff will keep the current lighting system, but will post signs and adjust the timer as recommended. Miller asked if the tennis court nets would be put up this fall. Bernstein replied that we needed to keep off the courts for a week or so after the construction was complete, and now staff is watching the weather to see if it gets nice enough to warrant putting them up. Bernstein also mentioned that the rippling/bubbling that is on the courts is completely normal. The moisture that is in the repaired cracks is trying to rise to the surface and it will dissipate over time.
- 6) **Middle School Leisure Programming:** Parks & Recreation and Community Education have been working together on ways to maximize the new Middle School pool. Since the school district doesn’t currently have an Aquatics person, they are looking at using our Aquatics Manager during the winter months to do some programming at the new pool. They would contribute a portion of her salary. At this time, lap swim, open swim and special rentals are being looked at. Swim lessons have been discussed, but there are concerns about water temperature since the pool is set for competitive swimming. Also, there is some difficulty finding times for swim lessons when the pool isn’t already in use by HAST or the Hastings Sharks. Smith commented that the water temperature issue is a concern for swim lessons, but that he thinks we should move forward with the other programming opportunities. He also mentioned that varying the pool temperature to try to accommodate both competitive and leisure swimming isn’t practical because it takes too long. Schossow agreed that we should try to program lap swim and possibly other competitive programs. Smith and Miller both mentioned that there has been lap swim at the pool before and the attendance was low. Bernstein hopes that we can offer these programs to maximize use of the new pool and offer some new community services. In time, hopefully the programs will grow.  
**MOTION:** Miller motioned to continue the programming discussions for the Middle School pool with Community Education; Second by Smith; 6-0
- 7) **Vet’s Field Lights:** Bernstein received a question from a resident as to why the lights at Vet’s Park stay on until 11:00 p.m. Bernstein explained that especially Sunday-Thursday, our softball teams often play until 10:35-10:45 at night. The lights are left on until 11:00 to give people time to gather their things and get to their cars. At 11:00, the lights are turned off by satellite control. Bernstein has never received a complaint from the surrounding neighborhood about light spill.
- 8) **Construction Updates:**
  - **Boat Launch:** The construction at the boat launch is progressing nicely. Photos of the progress were shown to the commissioners. The contract is set to be done by November 5<sup>th</sup>.
  - **Dredging Project:** Portable Barge will be removing the boat dock for storage at Hubs and will then dredge the area (less than 500 cubic yards). MnDot needs to restore the bank where the bridge staging area was, and so the

plan is to use the dredging spoils in this area. The DNR wants it to be a certain type of dredging material and they won't know for certain if it will work until they start the dredging, although it is believed to be the right type.

- 9) **City Hall Vegetation Work:** The plantings at City Hall were last done in 1991. It was felt that they are getting tired looking and our Parks Maintenance staff will be working to landscape the area and freshen things up this fall and next spring.
- 10) **Memorial Benches:** There has been a recent spike in memorial bench donations. Parks & Recreation has received 4-5 donations in the past month or so. This program is doing well and is very popular. Hedin asked if people get to choose the location of their bench. The Parks & Recreation Department works with the donator to come up with a suitable location for both parties and tries to honor any requests for location that we get. Some areas are getting quite full so we try to come up with a few options for people if that is the case. The cost for a memorial bench is \$600 and that includes a memorial plaque. The City pays for the cost of the cement pad that is put down for each bench.
- 11) **Confluence Workshop:** The Confluence Workshop is this Friday and there are approximately 43 people registered so far. The Confluence Group was featured in an article in the Star Tribune on Sunday, October 8<sup>th</sup>.
- 12) **New Business:**
  - Additional Bike Racks in Downtown: Smith mentioned that many people enjoy biking downtown but feel that we are missing adequate bike racks in the area. One suggestion is to place some in Oliver's Grove. Bernstein mentioned that some new bike racks are going in at the Hastings Family Aquatic Center and that the current racks could be moved to Oliver's Grove. There are also some new bike racks that we purchased through a grant that are slated to be placed under the new bridge once it is completed.
- 13) **Old Business:**
  - No old business

MOTION to adjourn.

**Next Meeting: Tuesday, November 13, 2012; 6:00 PM; City Hall Council Chambers**

Adjourned at 6:57 p.m.

*Minutes submitted by Kristin Behrens*