



# Agenda Minnetonka Parks & Recreation Board

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

7 p.m.

Minnetonka Community Center – Council Chambers

## **P**arks & Recreation

### **Board Vision**

A city with outstanding parks and recreational opportunities within a valued natural environment.

### **Board Mission**

The mission of the Minnetonka Parks & Recreation Board is to proactively advise the City Council, in ways that will:

- » Protect & enhance Minnetonka's natural environment
- » Promote quality recreation opportunities and facilities
- » Provide a forum for citizens interested in our parks, trails, athletic fields and open space

1. Roll Call
  - \_\_\_ Jack Acomb
  - \_\_\_ James Durbin
  - \_\_\_ Chair Nelson Evenrud
  - \_\_\_ Cynthia Kist
  - \_\_\_ Peggy Kvam
  - \_\_\_ Chris Gabler
  - \_\_\_ Madeline Seveland
  - \_\_\_ Chris Walick
2. Approval of Minutes
  - A) October 4, 2017
  - B) November 1, 2017
3. Citizens wishing to discuss items not on the Agenda
4. Business Items
  - A) Consideration of 2018 Park Board Strategic Plan
  - B) Review of Volunteer Recognition Event
5. Park Board Member Reports
6. Information Items
7. Upcoming Park Board Agenda Items
8. Adjournment

## **Minutes of the Minnetonka Park Board Meeting of October 4, 2017**

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### **1. Roll Call**

Park Board members in attendance included Jack Acomb, Nelson Evenrud, Chris Gabler, Cindy Kist, Peggy Kvam, Christopher Walick, James Durbin and Madeline Seveland. Staff members in attendance included, Jo Colleran, Ann Davy, Darin Ellingson, Kathy Kline, Kelly O'Dea, Sara Woeste and Perry Vetter.

Chair Evenrud called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

### **2. Approval of Minutes**

Kvam moved, Kist seconded a motion to approve the meeting Minutes of September 6, 2017 as submitted. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

### **3. Citizens Wishing to Discuss Items Not on the Agenda**

Evelyn Allred, 16408 Hidden Valley Rd., Minnetonka, discussed the possibility of adding a sanctioned dog park to Minnetonka. Currently, there are 51 parks in Minnetonka and no dog parks.

Evenrud explained that staff has researched locations and park board members have toured them but they have not worked.

Allred added that there is a lot of confusion in Minnetonka about dog parks. The rules need to be clearer or have a large fenced in dog park.

Evenrud commented that is great input, a good amenity to have and a lot of people probably feel the same way. Rather than controlling the off-leash situation, there are natural resources and space in Minnetonka for a dog park to potentially grow into.

Allred explained that in Eden Prairie the fee is \$6.50 to go to the dog park. It would be great if Minnetonka got that money for a permit.

Evenrud concluded that it is a great idea and to make sure this discussion continues.

Steve Weisbrod, 12700 Bent Tree Rd., Minnetonka asked for an explanation of who everyone is.

Evenrud explained that they are all citizen volunteers who have been appointed to the board through a process by the city at various times. The annual term is up to eight years. City staff is also here.

#### 4. Business Items

##### A. Discuss Public Input Process for Mountain Biking

O'Dea gave an overview of the September meeting. In the project update it was mentioned that staff continues to hear from residents regarding the potential mountain biking project. Staff thought it was best to contract an outside firm to assist with the public engagement process and hired WSB & Associates. Tonight, Breanne Rothstein from WSB & Associates will present a few public engagement options for the park board to review and discuss.

Rothstein and Jeff Feulner with WSB and Associates introduced themselves. City staff contacted them to propose, outline and deploy a community engagement strategy for the mountain biking trails initiative and potential project. Presented are three potential community engagement options. The primary purpose of the engagement would be to listen to the concerns, collect input, answer questions, provide some background about mountain biking trails, collect responses and to guide specific questions.

**Option one:** is to conduct four targeted meetings to different community interest groups. The targeted marketing would convene appropriate representatives to the appropriate meetings so this would be considered a focus group or a smaller segment of the overall general interested parties. These outreach techniques would include a guided breakout discussion and focus group agenda style. Meetings would convene for both the advocates and opposition where input, opinions, opportunities, and constraints would be heard. Also, a general meeting would convene as part of option one. The advantages of this option are: 1). to make sure that each side of the issue is engaged in a meaningful way and in a targeted way and it allows for more in-depth conversation because there is a smaller group of people. The disadvantages are: 1). that there is less opportunity for collaboration across opposing viewpoints. Although, part of this option is a general meeting where everyone comes together and discusses the issues. 2).it is more challenging for marketing and getting the word out because it is an invitation and could be perceived as more exclusive. However, one general meeting is proposed as part of this option.

**Option two:** is to hold a series of general public meetings. Everyone would be invited to every meeting and it would hit a broad audience. More or fewer attendees may attend depending on time, location, date or the weather. This way you would get the most total number of people. However, the disadvantages would be: 1). that there would be less targeted conversations and it might provide an opportunity for one particular group to dominate the meeting. Therefore, not necessarily getting all the different opinions and perspectives heard. While general meetings are really good for being inclusive, those particular strands of information that you might be looking for might be harder to pull out from general meetings.

**Option three:** is to do geographic based meetings as part of evaluating mountain biking trails in the city of Minnetonka. Staff is examining several different locations and with this option, specific neighborhoods would be invited to meetings to discuss what it could look like in their area. Marketing and recruitment would be focused and marketed in those neighborhoods. Advantages are: 1). that you can learn about site specific issues, concerns and opportunities about a particular location. 2). New voices may be heard from people who are not necessarily engaged in the process to date but would be if a letter was sent to their home. Disadvantages are: 1). it may be perceived as more exclusive. 2). it is possible to have one side dominate if you engage just neighbors.

In addition to evaluating the three options, recommendations and thoughts on using online technology would be appreciated. Minnetonka Matters could be used as a tool if the park board thought that would be helpful. Also, real-time polling could be used during these meetings, so people in the room could be polled instantly.

WSB recommended option one due to the advantages outlined earlier.

Evenrud thanked Rothstein and asked the board if they had any feedback on the options.

Kvam said for option three that it wouldn't really fit this situation because mountain bikers have a bigger range than a neighborhood. Thus, missing a lot of people that should be at the meeting. For option one, Kvam really likes the focus on the different perceptions and on what is important to people and thinks it is really important to hear from all sides. In the packet, it lists a meeting for a sub-group for the park board and was wondering if that would be a public meeting.

Rothstein responded by saying the details could be worked out later, and that all the meetings should be public. It depends on how it is marketed, if people are encouraged to come or is it a committee meeting and other people can listen. The intent is not to have any private meetings and to focus on the opinions and concerns of the sub-groups and that includes the park board.

Kvam said that it feels like the public comments that she receives are reacting to impressions of a specific plan. Kvam feels like there is not a specific plan and people are getting dug into their opinions. Kvam wondered how to deal with that because the plan is in progress, so how do you approach that?

Rothstein answered by saying taking a step back with the plans that were in process. Currently, it is important to engage with the community, listen, and get the concerns and questions answered and addressed.

O'Dea agreed with Rothstein's response. O'Dea said that a concept plan was created to see what a mountain bike trail might look like in a couple of parks. There was a lot of feedback from residents and staff decided to take a step back and reassess the situation.

Gabler stated that he does not agree with polling in a room because one side can dominate the conversation. Gabler asked about the use of webinars because it is easy to track an audience. Some people may not be able to get to the meeting but will sit through a webinar. Gabler feels more accurate information comes that way. Gabler stated that he likes option one. Gabler asked what the timeframe to complete the meetings is because if the timeframe gets stretched out too long, it is more of a disservice.

Rothstein said that the community is excited right now so that energy should be harnessed and not to drag out the process. Rothstein asked staff if there is a timeframe.

O'Dea replied and said that he does not think there was. Intentions are that the meetings will be done sometime late October or in November.

Rothstein answered that with the holidays, there may be a couple meetings in January, depending on which option is chosen. The goal is to complete this portion of the work soon so the next phase of the study and analysis can be completed.

Durbin stated that he feels it is critical that there is an opportunity for someone who cannot come to a meeting to be able to engage in the discussion. Durbin said he likes that people can still submit comments via email, go to city hall or write a letter. Durbin is worried about scheduling the meetings around people's nine to five jobs because he believes people do not really have nine to five jobs anymore. Durbin likes option one but asked how to get people engaged in some of these smaller groups and targeted discussions.

Rothstein explained that focus groups allow more flexibility with schedules because people are invited and the time can be changed. Regarding the online piece, Minnetonka Matters would help because people would be able to answer questions similar to what was at the meeting through social media. With Rothstein's experience, the crowd on social media is least likely to come to a public meeting. Minnetonka's communications staff has a lot of resources that can be used for that particular community.

Walick likes option one because it combines the two and he appreciates the structure of the meeting. When people are very passionate about something, the meeting can go either way. Walick asked if the general public meetings are last because he feels like people should be able to voice their concerns before it gets

more targeted. That may make people feel more involved before the process gets towards the end and they feel like they have not been heard.

Rothstein explained that there is some flexibility, however; the recommendation is to do the focus groups first because that is a way to build a relationship with people. After meeting with the groups, you can say these are the topics that were talked about and this is what will be discussed more. The general community meeting can be used to advance the discussion on those issues with both parties in attendance.

Walick said when he saw the geography based engagement at first, he thought they were going to meet at the trail. Is that something that can be done?

Rothstein said site based visits are possible with option three. However, the timing would be in November, December and January so it will be cold outside. Getting out and seeing the locations can have value; however now with online maps and other tools, locations can be viewed there as well.

Kist requested that when this goes out to the general public, it is important for the timeline to be communicated. It should be made clear from the beginning, this is our intended timeline and comments are needed by such and such date.

Seveland said that when reviewing these, two disadvantages for option one are: 1). less opportunity for collaboration among opposing viewpoints and 2). perception of exclusion.

Staff and park board members have gotten a lot of input already from both opposing and advocates so the strong arguments for and against are known. With the public engagement piece, my hope is that participants would talk more, hear from each other and share those viewpoints. With just one meeting, collaboration and those discussions between advocates and opposing parties may be lost.

The perception of exclusion, there has already been issues with that during this process. If there is a public process, targeting those groups may leave out the general public. People that follow this process on Nextdoor or the website maybe have not advocated yet but are possibly still waiting to be involved.

The general public category is important and there are three audiences. 1). people that have already voiced concerns and are interested and want to be here 2). the general public that are just sitting by the sidelines waiting to see what is going to happen but they want to get involved. 3). People that may not have a clue but live nearby the areas where the proposed sites could take place. All three of those audiences should be targeted to make sure everyone is at the table and talking to each other. Seveland likes option one but would like to

include targeted mailings from option three into it. People need things sent to their homes.

Acomb asked if option one was chosen and with so much interest from the community what an estimated group size would look like.

Rothstein stated that these will not be private meetings so people will not be excluded. There is a personal invitation for about 20 to 30 people that we specifically want at the meeting. Everyone else will be able to attend but specific issues or topics will be discussed. The general meeting would be convening both groups to say this is what was talked about and heard. The discussion can be advanced beyond what has previously been heard into a place of solutions, policy, guidance and planning.

Acomb asked if there is a process in determining who receives the targeted personal invitations.

Rothstein explained that it will be people who have expressed the most passion and interest on the topic. Since staff has received the emails and calls they will help determine who gets invited.

Acomb said Rothstein discussed the potential for a live voting system. Acomb was curious how logistically that might work and if it is reliant upon smartphones or if some other form of technology is provided.

Rothstein said there are different ways to do it. Smartphones are the easiest and fastest but it does again limit everyone from participating. There is polling equipment to rent, and that would be handed out. If the city staff supports it, that equipment could be used so it insured everyone had that option. The newest technology is to use a smartphone and text a number. It is intended to generate a discussion at the beginning of the meeting and it allows you to quickly assess what is happening. It is a way to quickly gage the pulse of the room and adapt your agenda. For everyone to see right away, it would only be two or three questions at the beginning and maybe one at the end.

Walick said that he really likes the polling idea and has seen it work in classrooms and agencies. It helps facilitate and guide discussion. There would probably have to be a disclaimer saying that everyone might not have a smartphone but that is okay. In a situation like this where people are making various points; it may be good to gage whether or not people understand or if you have to elaborate more.

Seveland clarified they are going to do some input gathering meetings and this general public meeting later. Seveland asked Rothstein to talk more about what the general public meeting might look like. If the input gathering has already been

done she is wondering what the purpose and objective is for this meeting since it has already been ironed out. Also, what techniques might be used?

Rothstein explained that there is some general information in the packet on the structure of what the meeting would look like if it was a general meeting. Break-out groups are very effective especially if they are mixed. A world café style, which is making sure that people are not sitting at tables with friends or neighbors can be used. Mix up the people in the room and ask a series of questions and then mix them up again. It allows for the ability to hear from people that would normally never sit next to each other. Also, due to the base knowledge from the focus groups, the types of questions that can be asked are different. Because all this information has been collected and organized from the focus groups, the next step would be to start talking about solutions. If only four general meetings are held, potentially new people are coming to every meeting and they are at various levels of familiarity with the project. Which has its advantages and potentially disadvantages.

Seveland responded by saying some of it will not be ironed out until you really get into the planning of it.

Rothstein said the type and way a meeting is run is going to look different if 500 people are expected verses 80. At the general meeting, break-out sessions would work really well. There are some other ways you can collect information around what people who attend find interesting. One way is to have people organize their topics based on what they want to talk about and then whoever wants to talk about that issue, convene at a certain location. It would be kind of voting with your feet type of style.

Kvam asked with the world café style, if somebody at each table would be taking notes. This way the observations from each table do not just stay with the small group.

Rothstein responded that part of that particular method is that there is a different person taking notes every time. However, the person that took the notes stays and describes what the previous conversation was with the hopes of building off of that. At the end, there will be a set of notes that are a culmination of a lot of conversations. That is the goal and at the end you have a really thick amount of input that is a conversation that has been built upon; rather than a spreadsheet of one comment or one sentence notes.

O'Dea mentioned that this whole process is envisioned to run parallel to the feasibility study. Residents are still voicing their concerns and there are things staff is researching so we envision this process to kind of run parallel with some of our research.

Evenrud asked for comments.



Robert Numrich, 12510 Creek Rd., Minnetonka asked who WSB is, what their credentials are and why they city hired them. Numrich asked who is going to direct the meetings and what their credentials are. Numrich also was wondering who is going to collect the information and if there is going to be a statement about what is going on. Numrich said that nobody has been communicating what the plans are and was wondering who is pushing for this project. People that he talks to are against the project.

Evenrud stated that part of the process is resetting. Getting input and starting fresh is where we are.

Vetter explained that WSB is an engineering, landscape and architecture company. The company is vetted by the city council and is on the approved contractors list. In this aspect, staff has coordinated with WSB to in essence be an extension of staff to facilitate the engagement for this project.

Numrich said that it sounded like they were hired to do the design as if the whole thing has already been approved. Numrich's point was that in general you hire an architectural landscape company to design landscapes, not to get input from the community. Numrich asked why they were hired.

Evenrud responded by saying that part of modern day design and structures in any public agency involves a lot of public input and a lot of public engagement. Evenrud reiterated that the timeline has been discussed in previous meetings. It is early on so it might seem like through discussion that things are certain but this project is being reset and that is why this particular business item is being discussed.

John Drewitz, 2600 Sylvan Rd.S., Minnetonka, agreed with staff's decision to back away after receiving a lot of commentary from both sides. Drewitz asked if everyone was on Nextdoor and explained how that website worked. Drewitz complimented Seveland and Numrich for their comments on communicating the project and how to let people know about it. Drewitz learned of the project by Nextdoor and a small sign that was on the dog waste bag box in Big Willow Park. Drewitz mentioned that Minnetonka Matters is a great resource but thought very few people used it. A lot of commentary has been made from both sides and he was curious about what staff is going to learn by going through all these other meetings. Drewitz was concerned about the objectivity of the architectural design firm if the decision is not to do it.

Diana Houston, 12201 Minnetonka Blvd., Minnetonka, thanked the board for the opportunity to speak. Houston asked why WSB was contracted when Minnetonka has had prior experience with doing conflicting types of situations and similar projects; such as the Williston Fitness Center and the Shady Oak Development.

Houston asked how much the contract is, what the source of the funds is and if this is in addition to the \$130,000 that was already previously allocated?

O'Dea explained WSB was hired and that was part of the \$130,000. O'Dea said that he has Houston's email and can get the contract amount to her.

Houston asked again why the city is contracting out, rather using the city's resources with trying to manage the group and their opinions. The city has experience doing this with similar projects.

Evenrud stated that the city thought it was best to take a different approach and is trying to do more public input than might have done in the past.

Vetter commented that the city in the past has used public engagement processes facilitated by external consultants for projects such as: Minnetonka Mills, the Glen Lake area and the Opus area. Vetter says the other piece of using external consultants is for resource depth issues. When there is a project that gathers this much interest; consultants are used as an additional resource that offers their expertise in corresponding with people.

Houston wanted to clarify that the money for this contract is coming out of the \$130,000 and is depleting some of the funds for the project.

Evenrud responded by saying that is what he understood.

Houston asked if WSB is doing an environmental feasibility study and if the Minnetonka Creek Watershed District, DNR, Hennepin County Public Works Environment and Environment Energy be part of this study too?

Evenrud referred that question to staff.

Vetter said to get all questions from Houston. Houston had a lot of questions and Vetter requested to step back and talk about the other process that staff is working on because that may answer some questions that Houston has.

Vetter explained that currently, we are looking at public input options for this process. O'Dea previously mentioned that a full feasibility study will be conducted on the prospect of trails in our park system. Staff will look at all the parks, environmental resources impacts, what a concept level plan would be and that will all be vetted out and under review. Depending on those impacts, the city as an applicant, has to follow the same rules and procedures that any other applicant in the city would. Vetter thinks there are two aspects to this. One is public engagement and the other is the feasibility study that staff is conducting internally. They kind of have to run a little bit parallel and a little bit ahead and a little bit behind depending on what the topic is. This is so the public input is informed as to what the feasibility says and the feasibility can take the reaction to

the public input. Vetter thinks there is kind of a parallel track of public input and feasibility study that has to address a lot of topics to be able to move this forward. Last Thursday, Vetter gave a presentation to some residents at Applewood Pointe and they talked about how the VANTAGE program had worked on a feasibility study and from staff's perspective; it showed that it is an idea to pursue, but they need to be comfortable with a full feasibility study. When Vetter previously did a feasibility study, his was 38-40 pages verses one and a half to four pages. There needs to be a lot of information on what those impacts could be and he thinks those parallel courses should help define that as well.

Gabler commented that when looking at the agenda, the public input piece is what is being discussed tonight. WSB is a city approved vendor and they are really just helping gather information. Gabler suggested just looking at the information that was presented, rather than the other items right now.

Evenrud thanked Gabler and said that was a good reminder. Evenrud said that Houston's question did focus on the question of getting public input on other projects, however, our board does not necessarily have the expertise or ability to answer those questions on other projects.

Houston asked what WSB is doing, what are your goals, and what are WSB's goals for this project?

Evenrud replied that it is to get public input from everybody involved and on these three options that they presented us tonight. They want to take a vote and decide on which option we would recommend the city take.

Houston responded by saying that is the goal for tonight.

Evenrud asked if she was asking what their goal is.

Houston responded, yes.

Evenrud responded by saying it is to get the input concerning the project from the public in an accurate manor that is not swayed by any numbers, pressure or other factors.

Houston responded by saying that the goal is you want to hear commentary from the public. Based on that, the information about the context can be gathered through a situational assessment, like a local situation assessment. Issues are important to stakeholders; the more complex the situation and the more that people are in conflict over a potential park development action; the more deliberate and collaborative the process design. Houston wanted to lay that out as a comment was made before regarding groups that are separated for or against. There is a lot of value for a collaborative type of design. Houston talked about the notification out to the public and said there are a lot of people that

could have a hand in it. Houston said if a flyer or notification was made, people could be handing them out on the streets and engaging more people. She asked to consider that and think of how to engage the community, us as a group to help you get the word out. Lastly, Houston suggested a map that has the potential trail sites clearly identified. She is just wondering where the existing trails are and not a proposal of what it will look like. Houston thanked everyone for the opportunity to speak tonight.

Evenrud noted that he thinks the best thing that could happen through this process is that any side would learn about the other side's thoughts. Maybe they would walk away with something that they did not know. Evenrud thanked Houston.

Carol Allis, 12201 Minnetonka Blvd., Minnetonka stated that this process has been going on for a year if you look back at minutes. There are a lot of people that are huge supporters of mountain biking; however they think that Big Willow Park is not the right place for it. Allis has talked to bikers who do not quite understand why such a small park would be used. There is a lot of feeling amongst people that the process was going for a while and staff had a chance to hear from the bikers for a long time but not from everyone else. Now there is suddenly a new process that is going to be set up. Earlier, Seveland made the point that there is a lot of chance for collaboration and to have the mountain bike trails set up properly. It is not that there is a whole bunch of people that do not want the trails, that's not true. The more collaboration, the more chance for us to listen to each other, the better.

Pete Svebakken, 9611 Oak Ridge Tr., Minnetonka understands the point behind the focus groups in terms of efficiency but thinks there is already a battle zone set up. Svebakken thinks we need to come together and hear each other. At the end of the day we are all neighbors. Svebakken also questioned what the scope of the study is? Does it include fish and wildlife, trees, soil analysis, hydrological analysis?

Tim Vossberg, not a Minnetonka resident has a lot of experience with mountain bike trails and suggested talking to people at Oak Parks Heights or Lakeville who recently constructed trails. Vossberg had contact names and said that they could help through the process since they recently did it.

Evenrud mentioned that there has been a lot of discussions with other municipalities throughout this process. However, Evenrud mentioned that you can never have too much information from people that have gone through it.

Steve Weisbrod, 12700 Bent Tree Rd., Minnetonka, a longtime resident said this information was sprung on him recently and he is a mountain biker. Weisbrod has biked in Big Willow Park for years and would love to see more trails. Weisbrod thinks there needs to be an understanding. He thought the consultant

might be a little overboard but thought maybe there needs to be somebody like that so that both sides understand what single track mountain biking is all about. Weisbrod has raced for many years and wanted to mention that this sport is not just for the young individuals.

Evenrud thanked everyone for their input.

Vetter said that he thinks the delicate issue is the feasibility study and public input and what informs what. Vetter expressed the value in focus groups because of the need to understand concerns. Concerns can turn into additional education and then collaboration at the end. Liking option one and bringing in more things was discussed so Vetter wanted to lay out the following:

- think of WSB as an extension of staff,
- WSB is assisting the city with the process,
- the city has called in consultants to help with this before on projects,
- WSB has no financial interest in building a mountain bike trail; that is not what they are being hired to do.

Gabler wanted to make a motion that we recommend staff to follow option one, with the addition of a second general public meeting. The agenda would be set by what happens with the focus groups in both meetings. The second meeting gives another chance for collaboration, especially if it is built on the first one.

Vetter explained that one idea for a sub-group would be to designate a number of park board members to act as a sub-group; which could help go to the focus group meetings. It would help with the consistency of information from meeting to meeting. If there is an interest, that idea could be further discussed. Eventually, it will have to be discussed to see if it is a project to move forward to the city council. Having that consistency at the beginning is important to the board in itself. The consistency can be used to reiterate how information was remembered. Vetter asked for feedback and interest from park board members about acting as a sub-group.

Evenrud said that was a great idea, as they are familiar with gathering input for a broad range of topics related to recreation and space. Evenrud thought there would be interest amongst the board in participating in a sub-group. Vetter stated that the motion should reflect who is interested and it should also reiterate that nobody is taking a side on the topic. The sub-group is merely for observation, process and educating yourselves along the way.

Gabler stated that he is interested in participating in the sub-group.

Evenrud asked if there should be two board members.

Vetter said that there should be no more than three board members because it would give a little more flexibility with posting meetings. Anytime there are four or

more park board members in one location there is a quorum and the meeting has to be posted and called to order.

Seveland said that she is more interested in the collaboration piece and would rather be involved with the public group meeting that is not targeted. Vetter mentioned that if there is more interest, all of the meetings can be posted and all or any of the park board members can show up. Vetter reminded the board that their role during those meetings is observation and not conducting or taking a stand.

Evenrud said park board members can arrange their schedules so there does not need to be a quorum. Currently, there is a motion on the table from Gabler moved, Kvam seconded a motion for option one with an extra second public meeting involving board members.

Seveland said she did not agree with the motion because she wanted to emphasize taking a look at the public meeting. If there is one public meeting and that is where people are getting together and dialoging that is fine.

Durbin asked the chair if at the end of this process, this does not conclude public input into this process.

Evenrud agreed.

Durbin said this is just a way of gaining input in a more concise way, trying to reach more people. Afterwards, there are still going to be public meetings until the decision has been made on what to do. Durbin did not want to think this is going to close the door on public comment once this process is done.

Evenrud agreed with Durbin that it is going to continue and this is just the process and what it is going to look like.

Gabler commented that this is just step one in a multi-step process. This is just giving us information to say if it is going to run in conjunction with the feasibility study.

Seveland explained that she still wants a part of option three pulled over into option one. She wants to have the invitations based on proximity to trails from option three in option one. Seveland thinks you have to target the people with mailings and signs should be put out in front of the parks that people are going to. She would like to use every option possible to inform the public. Seveland said that when you are marketing to a large audience, marketing should take up a majority of your time. She said if we want this to be successful and want to make sure people are happy and informed than that is going to be a significant amount of time.

Vetter said that he thinks staff is open to anything and right now the original proposal from residents that got us to this point was for two locations that are Civic Center and Big Willow. I think one of the things that we were directed on is to go back as part of the feasibility study and look at all park locations. There might be a little bit of a lag then to the geographic based invitation because then that would mean 51 park locations to be invited if we did that from the start. If you directed us to wait on that piece of it, more towards the general maybe then the feasibility study would inform which ones are not applicable. Seveland said that what Vetter said makes perfect sense and once the feasibility study has been conducted, you would invite those audience members that may not be aware of this project to the general public meeting.

Gabler amended his motion for option one with an extra second public meeting involving board members with option one with the amendments of the second meeting and focusing on feasible parks. Kvam seconded the amended motion. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

Evenrud thanked everyone for the great input.

Vetter reminded people that the project page will be updated and to subscribe if you have not already.

**B. Review the Scenic Heights Elementary and Purgatory Park habitat restoration project**

Colleran is here to give an update on the Scenic Heights Elementary school and Purgatory Park habitat restoration project. Last year the Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed District as well as Scenic Heights Elementary School approved the city to partner on a project to restore a portion of Purgatory Park in conjunction with the restoration of Scenic Heights Elementary School's forest. The park board reviewed the details and approved that partnership on Sept. 7, 2016.

Since that time, city staff has been working with all of the partners. We have commented on the restoration plan, the specifications of the plan and on Aug. 23, we had a neighborhood meeting. About 160 invitations were sent to neighboring residents because as part of this habitat restoration there will be tree loss so we wanted neighbors to understand the types of restoration as well as the fact that when you are trying to restore an oak forest or a walnut grove or an aspen grove, there are trees like cottonwood, boxelder and ash that are suppressing the desirable trees for those eco-types and those trees will need to be removed. Invasive species like buckthorn would also be removed. Approximately 15 people attended that meeting and it was a very engaging conversation. They asked a lot about pollinator habitat, wetland protection and about the different types of habitat.

Colleran showed a map that displayed the different types of eco-types that are proposed to be restored. If the north is an area where we have a lot of American plum, which is a native understory plant, we will be restoring that area. Then it transitions into a prairie, a savanna, a wet meadow and the reason for the wet meadow is there is a drainage area that comes right through from Nantucket Dr., which is that street to the north than it crosses the trail so it's just a natural area where this drainage pattern; where it lends itself perfectly for wet meadow than it transitions back into a savanna.

The school has also been engaging their school audience at curriculum nights as well as at conferences. Then there will be signage posted in Purgatory Park. It will be off the trail but in the area where the restoration will be occurring so that anybody walking the trail will understand what this project is about.

A few changes to the project: originally it was going to be about \$315,000, the Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed District in conjunction with our letter of intent and the school district was hoping to acquire a lot of that funding through grant dollars. They were not as successful as they had hoped. They did acquire some funding but the dollar amounts have been dropped to about \$215,000 so about \$100,000 or so and that is for the implementation for the project. There is still design and engineering costs so overall, the project has been reduced \$50,000 - \$60,000. Additionally, the city will be working with the school district and the watershed district, meeting with the contractor, volunteers will be used to implement some components of the project so that is where the city's resources will come in. All of this is being funded by the school district and the watershed district and that includes this acre and a quarter portion of Purgatory Park. Our commitment is to be involved in that process, to engage volunteers and then to maintain that area into the future. The timeline has been pushed back also and we are hoping to bid the project later this October and then January through March 2018 is when the trees and the woody invasive plants will be removed. In the spring, the wetland area, the buffer of the wetland will be restored and then throughout 2018, that is when the plants will be installed, the seeding will occur, control of garlic mustard, etc... Tonight, I just wanted to give you an update and also ask if you have any suggested changes to any components of this project.

Evenrud thanked Colleran and said that it was great news about the upgrades and the students getting involved and asked for feedback from the board.

Kvam asked if there is a fence between Purgatory Park and that area to keep the people and the dogs out or how that will be done.

Colleran responded by saying that there is currently a fence in that area. It is more to keep the students in but also to keep the dogs that are under voice command on the trail. During the work, the fence will be removed so that they can keep that transition. As they are building the savanna and seeding the area they want to be



able to continue to cross that property boundary but then after the work is done; the school district is planning on having that fence reinstalled.

Kist asked since the budget got cut back about \$50,000 if there is any chance that in the future they could get grant money to do that work and what work was cut back because of that.

Colleran responded that the labor was the piece of the work that was cut back so what they are hoping to do is get more volunteers so they started talking about how many seed trays or shrubs could volunteers realistically plant. Looking at supervision, training of those volunteers and having team leaders that are the trained individuals that can go train 10 other volunteers. So it was really the labor piece that we are hoping to accomplish by volunteers.

Gabler asked for volunteer labor, if Eagle Scout projects would qualify for working in that area.

Colleran responded by saying there are actually two Eagle Scout projects through the school that are proposed on this project. One is building a gravel bed nursery that our city forester is involved in. It is basically gravel that is in a bed and you plant bare-root trees and the trees roots systems grow faster in this gravel bed than they do in soil and then we can transplant those. Another component of it is a stairway area so there is access from the school into this restored area because this is actually a DNR designated school forest.

Gabler said that he gets about 15-20 requests for Eagle Scout projects, and asked if he could pass some Colleran's way.

Colleran responded by saying he could pass a few on, if they have too many than they are basically working over themselves.

## **5. Park Board Member Reports**

None

## **6. Information Items**

Davy presented a table of the summer recreation program registration comparing 2016 numbers to 2017. Davy highlighted a few to talk about. Davy said the playground program continues to be popular. It is a free program and we are one of the few cities that still offers that program for free; however down the road that may change. The youth soccer league numbers are down a little bit but one kind of exciting thing that we added this year is that we partnered with Plymouth for our older kids. We always struggle with numbers and so does the city of Plymouth for that age group, so we were able to combine and give kid's an opportunity to play that may not have been able to. There were four Minnetonka teams and two Plymouth teams in the league.

Our teen programs, run in collaboration with the cities of St. Louis Park and Plymouth. These numbers look small but there are kids from other communities that are joining in on these programs and that allows us to run them.

An adult highlight is that badminton open gym program is extremely full and we have to turn people away. Beach yoga and stand-up paddleboard yoga are offered at Shady Oak Beach and we started this last year. We contract with a woman who has a company called KB Sculpt and she hauls her paddleboards out there and this was popular again this year. She is continuing to grow, she is hiring more staff, and buying more inventory so more classes can be offered.

In May, two new program managers were hired, a youth program manager and an adult program manager so they are going to try some new things. One of which, is a Badminton league which we have never offered.

Seniors are bringing in great numbers. Yoga and Pilates are very popular and the classes fill up the first day of registration. Tai Chi, dance and anything active are what they are really looking for. Trips are also doing well, some trips they have done are boat cruises and wine tours.

It is exciting to see the programs grow and add new things. Next summer, we are also adding a sand volleyball league.

Evenrud commented that it is great to hear such great new innovated things that have taken off, the program numbers and how amazing badminton is doing. Evenrud asked when we contract somebody through paddleboarding or other programs, do we do a split and if so, what would that be?

Davy said we usually split and 80/20 is kind of ideal. We collect 20 percent of the registration fee and they get 80 percent.

Kvam asked where a decent sand volleyball court is in Minnetonka.

Davy said there is a decent one in Hopkins that we were able to use at Valley Park.

Walick asked if there is any outreach to the teen community to see what they want. Walick knows that teens get antsy and they want to do something but sometimes they just need people to ask them.

Davy responded by saying that we have not done a lot of that in recent years. We try programs and hope they work and sometimes we fail but sometimes we are successful. Reaching out to the high school and doing some surveys is something we can look into. Sometimes you ask the questions and they tell you what they want and then you never see them again.

Evenrud commented that when you say that teens are going down, there is proof of that in this community and other communities. Evenrud has seen that too and it is something that happens naturally but you do not want to lose them. That is where they might stop for a few years and they just might never start again. When you keep the programs going, you keep people talking about them and eventually you may have more. Evenrud commends Davy for reaching out to other cities and not just canceling a program and refunding the money.

Ellingson said that there is not a hockey rink at McKenzie Park right now. The hockey board system made of white HDPE resin board is no longer being made. Staff had to look for a different system for the rink's replacement boards. Quotes were received for two different systems and staff settled on a fiberglass system. It is used in some professional rinks so it is a pretty good product. When selecting the system we were trying to decide how to build it and how to use what we have.

The rink that was there was an asphalt rink. When the rinks were built there was a lot of input from the hockey associations about wanting to use the rinks for rollerblading in the summers. That was a big component on why those are paved. At McKenzie Park, the rink is rarely used for rollerblading. Meadow Park and Boulder Creek Park are the two parks where there is still a lot of rollerblading. Since McKenzie is not being used for rollerblading, we looked at going to a gravel surface where it could be flat. Having it paved, there would have to be a slope to shed water in the summer. Going with a gravel surface, it can be flat with more uniform ice. Recreation was asked how they use the rink for the playground program in the summer and a gravel surface would not affect their summer activities. The new boards will be delivered Oct. 17 and should be installed by the end of that week.

Evenrud thanked Ellingson.

## **7. Upcoming Park Board Agenda Items**

No additional items were discussed in addition to the calendar included in the meeting packet.

## **8. Adjournment**

Kist motioned to adjourn, seconded by Walick. Evenrud adjourned the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

## **1. Roll Call**

City Council members in attendance included: Patty Acomb, Dick Allendorf, Tony Wagner and Brad Wiersum. Park Board members in attendance included Board Chair Nelson Evenrud, Jack Acomb, James Durbin, Chris Gabler, Cynthia Kist, Peggy Kvam, Madeline Seveland and Chris Walick. Staff members in attendance included GERALYN Barone, Jo Colleran, Ann Davy, Corrine Heine, Kathy Kline, Kelly O'Dea, Mike Pavelka, Susan Svec, Sara Woeste and Perry Vetter.

Park Board Chair Nelson Evenrud called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

## **2. Business Items**

### **A. Report from the Chair**

Chair Evenrud introduced James Durbin and Chris Walick, whom were appointed to the park board in 2017. Durbin and Walick gave a brief history of why they decided to join the park board.

Evenrud provided a summary of 2017 park board activity to date including:

- ✓ Adopted a Strategic Plan in January that includes a mission, vision, four primary goals and related objectives.
- ✓ Approved park and trail projects for the 2018 – 2022 Capital Improvements Program.
- ✓ Reviewed and recommended price adjustments to 2017 Shady Oak Beach fees.
- ✓ Received a request to construct mountain biking trails in Civic Center and Big Willow Parks. Held a public meeting regarding mountain biking trails and directed staff to look at other feasible locations including the 494 corridor. Discussed and recommended a plan for the public input process.
- ✓ Reviewed and approved changes to the city's park regulations.
- ✓ Reviewed the Natural Resources Division's 2017 Education and Outreach Plan.
- ✓ Approved 2018 slip fees for Gray's Bay Marina.
- ✓ The Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed District, Scenic Heights Elementary School and the city of Minnetonka are collaborating to restore a portion of Purgatory Park in conjunction with the ecological restoration of the Scenic Heights Elementary School Forest. The park board reviewed components of the restoration plan and community outreach efforts.

- ✓ Will hold the annual Volunteer Recognition event to show appreciation for volunteers who donated their time and efforts to the areas of parks, recreation and natural resources management in 2017.

## B. Project Updates

### 1. Mountain Biking

O'Dea gave an overview of the mountain biking project. O'Dea explained that the project was generated through the Imagine Minnetonka visioning process in 2016. Staff worked with interested residents and Trail Source Inc. to provide and present a possible concept to the park board. Staff heard a lot of feedback from residents and hired WSB and Associates to assist with the public engagement process. In November 2017, focus groups and general public meetings will begin. Staff created a project page for mountain biking and to date has 551 subscribers. Staff is conducting a feasibility study and it is anticipated to be presented to the park board in early 2018.

Acomb asked how the notification for the general meeting will be done. O'Dea responded by saying the subscribers will be notified first. Acomb asked if it will be in the *Minnetonka Memo*. O'Dea responded that it will be published in the December and January issues of the *Minnetonka Memo*.

Wagner stated that this is one of the most emotional topics for residents that he has encountered while on the council. He asked if the residents that are providing feedback are turning into subscribers of the page. O'Dea said that they are being directed to the project page and are joining.

Wagner gave advice that with this big of a project, the park board members need to be emotionally charged and should make sure to have respectful dialog.

Allendorf asked if the feasibility study includes looking at other big parks such as Three Rivers Park District parks that have built trails such as these. O'Dea said that will be part of the study.

Wiersum asked what learning we have done with neighboring communities. Wiersum explained that there are advocates and there is fear of the unknown to others. Wiersum explained that there is the possibility for creativity for this project. One example is that the hours of use could be restricted to ease some of the fears. Wiersum advised to learn as much as we can. He also referenced a recent NPR story on the rise in popularity of the sport across all ages and abilities.

2. Pickleball

O'Dea gave an overview of the pickleball project. O'Dea stated that the project went to bid and were received August 3, 2017. The lowest bid exceeded the budgeted amount and bids were rejected. The project will be re-bid in January 2018 when the bidding is expected to be more competitive. If bids again exceed the budgeted amount in the CIP, staff will look at either recommending amending the CIP or scaling back the project to six courts instead of eight.

Allendorf asked about the demand of pickleball and how many courts are at Meadow Park and the Williston Center. O'Dea stated that there are four courts at Meadow and two at Williston. O'Dea also said that the lack of courts does detour people from coming. Allendorf said that he has played at Meadow and did not think the wait to play was too long.

Evenrud noted that the eight courts requested makes good for tournaments and makes it a destination place. Also, the amount of parking at Lone Lake is good for a lot of players.

Vetter explained that Meadow Park is shared use between tennis and pickleball and it would be nice to have a designated place for pickleball.

3. Park Regulations

O'Dea explained that the ordinance to amend park regulations was introduced to the council on March 27, and was on the city council agenda for adoption on April 24, 2017. The ordinance was adopted, except for the change regarding sledding, 1135.020 item 16. The council felt sledding should be an open activity and not regulated in specific areas. The language was therefore not changed.

4. McKenzie Park Boards

O'Dea reviewed that funds were set aside in the 2017 Capital Improvements Program to install a new board system at McKenzie Park ice rink. Staff selected a system that utilizes fiberglass panels instead of HDPE plastic. The existing board system has been removed and the panels will be saved to be used on other rinks.

Vetter said the asphalt was removed and replaced with gravel. Removing the asphalt will give ice a smoother, more even surface. When asphalt was first installed, there was a big interest in roller hockey. Currently, there is still an interest in roller hockey, but only some rinks are being used.

5. Trail Flooding

O'Dea noted that a number of persistent trail flooding areas were remedied over the past year.

Acomb asked if the trail sunk or if it flooded. Acomb was aware that it was flooded and unusable the last few years.

Wiersum mentioned his appreciation for the repair.

Wagner said this made him think of the mountain biking engagement process. Wagner asked if there is something that can be done for people to leave feedback on what needs to be updated in the city. That would show why the city chose to spend money on a certain park when others also need updating.

Vetter mentioned that Darin Ellingson should be notified about this.

Vetter commented that at Sunrise Park there was recently a parcel change. Some of the amenities may not be available any longer due to this change.

Evenrud asked for questions from the park board and there were none. Evenrud commented that this was the first joint meeting without Dave Johnson, previous Recreation Services Director. Evenrud commented on how well things have gone since Johnson's retirement. Evenrud stated that Vetter has guided us and that helped gain their confidence with big topics. Evenrud also mentioned that O'Dea has taken over and it feels like nothing has changed, which is good.

Wiersum appreciates the park board's work. Wiersum is optimistic that there is a path or solution to these big projects.

Allendorf mentioned the cross country skiing project from years ago. There was an agreement to groom the trails at Hopkins High School; the north parcel. The school received the rollers so they could continue doing the maintenance of the trails.

Wiersum brought up the Shoreline buffer and how that was a big topic.

Evenrud thanked the park board for always asking tough questions.

### **3. Adjournment**

Gabler motioned to adjourn, seconded by Durbin. Evenrud adjourned the meeting at 6:10 p.m.

**Minnetonka Park Board Item 4  
Meeting of December 6, 2017**

<b>Subject:</b>	Consideration of the 2018 Park Board Strategic Plan
<b>Park Board related goal:</b>	Enhance Long-Term Park Board Development
<b>Park Board related objective:</b>	Annually assess the park board strategic plan
<b>Brief Description:</b>	The park board will review park board strategic plan mission, vision, goals and objectives in place for 2017 and implement desired changes for 2018.

### **Background**

In 2001, the park board worked with an independent consultant to establish a process for developing and annually refining a strategic plan. As a result of this endeavor, board members developed goals, objectives and specific action steps designed to meet the board's mission and vision developed earlier in the process.

Attached is a draft of the 2018 Park Board Strategic Plan. The park board will review this document and provide direction to staff regarding any desired changes for 2018. Once approved, staff will begin the process of preparing action steps to address the park board's goals and objectives, and will present those at a meeting in early 2018.

### **Discussion Points**

- Does the park board desire any additional changes to the 2018 Vision or Mission statements?
- Does the park board desire any changes to the Strategic Plan's goals and objectives for 2018?

**Recommended Park Board Action:** Review the attached strategic plan and provide staff with any desired changes for 2018.

### **Attachments**

1. 2018 Strategic Plan - Draft



**Minnetonka Park & Recreation Board**  
**2018-17 Strategic Plan – ~~FINAL~~DRAFT**

**Vision for Minnetonka Park and Recreational Facilities**

A city with outstanding parks and recreational opportunities within a valued natural environment.

The mission of the Minnetonka Park & Recreation Board is to proactively advise the City Council, in ways that will:

- Protect and enhance Minnetonka’s natural environment.
- Promote quality recreation opportunities and facilities
- Provide a forum for citizen engagement in our parks, trails, athletic facilities, and open space-

**Goals and Objectives (order does not reflect priority)**

**To protect natural resources and open space**

- Objective #1: Provide feedback to assist staff in managing the open space process
- Objective #2: Continue to review and comment on the implementation of the natural resources stewardship plan
- Objective #3: Review options to enhance natural resources & open space
- Objective #4: Promote the city’s efforts of protecting and enhancing the community’s natural resources by creating awareness and supporting educational strategies

**To renew and maintain parks and trails**

- Objective #1: Involve park board member participation in park & trail projects
- Objective #2: As needed, conduct an annual review of park dedication fees
- Objective #3: Identify areas of the city that are deficient of adequate park or trail amenities
- Objective #4: ~~Conduct a comprehensive review of the trail system to identify missing links and required future improvements~~Review the city’s Trail Improvement Plan and consider trail projects as they are presented.
- Objective #5: Renew, expand and maintain a trail system to encourage outdoor recreation.
- Objective #6: Consider all options (off-road and on-road) to improve the connectivity and walkability of community-

**To provide quality athletic and recreational facilities and programs**

- Objective #1: Perform an annual review of the Gray’s Bay Marina operations plan
- Objective #2: Anticipate, review and respond to community needs not previously identified
- Objective #3: Annually review policies related to the operation and management of parks to determine if changes are required
- Objective #4: Ensure that park amenities, recreational facilities and programs address future community needs and changing demographics
- Objective #5: Conduct a review of the athletic field fee schedule developed for 2017 and make recommended adjustments for 2018
- Objective #6: Review drafts of the updated Parks, Open Space and Trails (POST) Plan
- Objective #7: Offer a full range of programs for people of all ages and ability levels-
- Objective #8: Responsibly maintain our parks, trails and recreational facilities, while fairly balancing user fees with general community support-

**Enhance long-term Park Board development**

- Objective #1: Define Capital Improvements Program for 2018-2022 related to parks, trails & open space
- Objective #2: Enhance council relations- keep council members informed of park board projects under consideration
- Objective #3: ~~Develop a process to~~increase community awareness of park board projects through the online project page and outreach
- Objective #4: Schedule board member involvement in annual park board and city related activities
- Objective #5: Annually assess the park board strategic plan

Objective #6: ~~Conduct a review of the park board's program for recognizing volunteers who complete pre-approved projects to benefit the park system~~

**Commented [SW1]:** Add something about the facility space needs study?

**Minnetonka Park Board Item 4B  
Meeting of December 6, 2017**

<b>Subject:</b>	Discuss future Volunteer Recognition Events
<b>Park Board related goal:</b>	Enhance long-term Park Board development
<b>Park Board related objective:</b>	Conduct a review of the park board's program for recognizing volunteers who complete pre-approved projects to benefit the park system.
<b>Brief Description:</b>	The park board will review the format for recognizing volunteers and provide input regarding the frequency and format of future events

### **Background**

Prior to 2014, the Park Board would annually recognize Eagle Scouts for projects they completed for the city of Minnetonka's Natural Resources Division. This recognition would take place in conjunction with the annual joint meeting of the park board and city council.

From 2015-2017, the park board recognized all volunteers involved in supporting the areas of parks, recreation and natural resources. The event included formal invitations, prepared certificates for each volunteer, recognition from the park board and Mayor, and a reception that followed the ceremony with including friends and family.

In 2017, the recognition event was held on November 1 following the annual joint meeting of the park board and city council. Invitations were sent to 512 volunteers who contributed their time to the city in 2017. In all, 85 individuals and volunteer groups RSVP'd yes to attend the event. 30% of those who RSVP'd yes for the event did not attend.

Park board members contributed to the event by reading a summary of each volunteer assignment and the names of those volunteers in attendance.

### **Summary**

Staff is looking for feedback on the frequency of future volunteer recognition events. Does the board believe this should continue to be an annual event or held every 2-3 years? Are there any changes needed to the format of this event?

**Recommended Park Board Action:** The park board will review the format for recognizing volunteers and provide a recommendation regarding the frequency and possible changes to the format of the event.

**Minnetonka Park Board Item 6  
Meeting of December 6, 2017**

<b>Subject:</b>	Information Items
<b>Park Board related goal:</b>	N/A
<b>Park Board related objective:</b>	N/A
<b>Brief Description:</b>	The following are informational items and developments that have occurred since the last park board meeting.

**Mountain Biking Community Engagement Process Update**

Given the large amount of interest and concern over the prospect of developing mountain biking trails within city parks, the city has hired WSB and Associates to conduct additional community outreach and engagement for the potential project.

In October, WSB presented three public engagement options to the park board. The board recommended the population-based outreach process, which included conducting two focus group meetings and two general public meetings.

Focus group meetings update:

- The first focus group meeting was held Nov. 8 and was geared toward residents who had expressed concerns about the potential trails. Mountain biking trail advocates were targeted for the second focus group meeting, which was held Nov. 16. WSB and Associates led both meetings. The feedback received from each meeting is attached.

Project updates:

- Many residents have suggested the city use the online platform ‘Nextdoor’ to review feedback on mountain biking trails. Unfortunately, Nextdoor does not allow the city to view content posted on private neighborhood groups. In an effort to provide residents an opportunity to provide feedback online, however, the city will post a question to the online engagement platform, Minnetonka Matters, at [minnetonkamatters.com](http://minnetonkamatters.com). This forum will remain open from Dec. 1 – Jan. 31.
- Two general public meetings will occur Wednesday, Dec. 13, 2017 (6 p.m.) and Monday, Jan. 8, 2018 (7 p.m.) at the Minnetonka Community Center. The meeting notice will be distributed to all residents via the December and January issues of the *Minnetonka Memo* and will be emailed to everyone who has subscribed to receive project updates (approximately 580 subscribers). Staff hopes to have specific sites narrowed down by the Jan. 8, 2018 meeting, which would allow for direct

mailings as well.

### **Civic Center Trails**

Work has started on the civic center trails. Public Works staff graded the trail segment on the peninsula near the soccer fields. All work is planned to be completed this fall, except for paving which will be done in the spring. The trail segments going north of Minnetonka Boulevard and linking the three islands will be completed over the winter.

### **Burwell Roofing**

As planned for in the Capital Improvements Program, the cedar shake shingled roofs were replaced on the Burwell house and outbuildings. A “breather system” was installed which provides an air gap between the shingles and substrate. This will allow the shingles to breathe and reduce moisture in the shingles to not only extend the life of the roofing system but also to reduce moss growth. Detail work remains on the damaged ornaments and roof cresting. These will be repaired or replaced over the winter and reinstalled in the spring.

### **McKenzie Hockey Boards**

The new board system is installed and ready for winter weather and skating.

### **Attachments:**

1. Mountain Biking Focus Group 1 – Detailed Feedback
2. Mountain Biking Focus Group 2 – Detailed Feedback
3. Mountain Biking Focus Groups Summary Report
4. Picture of McKenzie Hockey Boards

Theme	Response
Environmental Concerns	Preserve a pristine nature area
Environmental Concerns	Preserve rich history and wild life in Big Willow area
Environmental Concerns	Environment sensitive trail impact
Environmental Concerns	Disruption
Environmental Concerns	Environmental impact
Environmental Concerns	Environmental degradation caused by bike trails
Environmental Concerns	Environmental nature corridor. Animals: Beaver, mink, 5-lined skunk, barred owls, kingfisher, etc.
Environmental Concerns	Big Willow is along the Minnehaha Creek. This is a wild life path from Lake Minnetonka to the Mississippi River
Environmental Concerns	Disrupt nature, animals/plant life, erosion
Environmental Concerns	Damage to wildlife and habitat
Environmental Concerns	Restoration efforts
Environmental Concerns	Nature feel gone
Environmental Concerns	Preserve natural habitat
Environmental Concerns	Save our greenspace
Environmental Concerns	Environmental impact
Environmental Concerns	Can we request an environmental study?
Environmental Concerns	Soil impaction - degradation of land
Environmental Concerns	It will destroy nature trails and wild life
Environmental Concerns	Damage to marshland and walking trails
Environmental Concerns	Disruption of wild life
Environmental Concerns	Where will the animals go?
Environmental Concerns	Erosion
Environmental Concerns	Minnehaha Creek Preservation
Environmental Concerns	Natural environment: damage to trails, quiet walking, impact
Environmental Concerns	Wildlife impact
Environmental Concerns	Impact on current animal and people trails through woods
Environmental Concerns	Wildlife endangerment
Environmental Concerns	Conservation fund
Environmental Concerns	Concerned about canoeing through a bike park - now it's a nice canoe ride
Environmental Concerns	Trail frequently flooded
Environmental Concerns	Litter
Environmental Concerns	Trash
Environmental Concerns	Too hydric

Environmental Concerns	Too sandy
Environmental Concerns	Off trail impact
Environmental Concerns	Will not stay on trail - will ride all over grass and grass will not grow
Location	Not here - why not closer to high school purgatory?
Location	Big Willow - no! Noise, traffic, policing. Why run down a general popular public asset?
Location	Too small
Location	Big Willow is not centrally located - what's the real reason it was chosen?
Location	Not here
Location	Big Willow is not the best location
Location	Why was Big Willow selected?
Location	Biking is fine but NOT Big Willow
Location	Big Willow - wrong location
Location	Eliminate Big Willow site for mountain bike trail
Location	Smallest park in the system. Why stuff bike trails into park with small hills, tight turns, and lots of people walking trails. Wrong park, wrong time - because it is by Dairy Queen?
Location	Locations considered, motorized bikes, noise effect
Location	Big Willow: 0 mountain bike trail attributes
Location	Where will trails be?
Location	Small park - B.W. runs will be short
Miscellaneous	Use of volunteers for work - liability
Miscellaneous	Bike speed limit in park now is 15 mph - will that change?
Miscellaneous	What will stop motorized bikers from using the trail?
Miscellaneous	Mountain biking would be used mostly in summer, and mostly after school
Miscellaneous	Who opens/closes the trail and does the "major" trail maintenance?
Miscellaneous	Motorized bikes, etc.
Miscellaneous	Park users: everyone can walk, fewer ride bikes. What is in the public best interest. Don't put pedestrians off the trail
Miscellaneous	People who don't pay taxes want the bike trails
Miscellaneous	Design
Miscellaneous	Concerned about property values going down.
Miscellaneous	# of mountain bike trail users in neighborhood? Minnetonka?
Miscellaneous	Is this just a minnetonka need?
Miscellaneous	Lack of map clarity
Miscellaneous	One access/exit point

Miscellaneous	Map based on current trails used for walking/animals
Nuisance	Noise control
Nuisance	Noise
Nuisance	Noise
Nuisance	Dust, noise, erosion
Nuisance	No serenity
Nuisance	Disruption
Nuisance	Late night noise
Nuisance	Quiet place to walk
Nuisance	Love the park for peace and quiet
Nuisance	Destroy peaceful nature of park
Nuisance	Ruin solitude
Park Character	Destroy beautiful peace
Park Character	Radically change the character of the park
Park Character	Don't want a neighborhood park to become a high traffic area
Park Character	Destroyed trails at Theodore Wirth, too small of a park, vantage?!
Parking	No parking available
Parking	Parking, policing \$, porta-potties?
Parking	Parking issues
Parking	Parking lots
Parking	Parking
Parking	Parking crowding on Minnetonka Boulevard
Parking	Parking
Parking	Parking
Parking	Lack of parking - already lots are full or close to it
Planning Process	What happens if trails not built?
Planning Process	Challenge of planning the larger community meeting for respectful listening to each other
Planning Process	Lack of trust
Planning Process	The way we found out about the project
Planning Process	Minnesota Statute 103D.
Planning Process	County project
Planning Process	People with something to gain are hired to do the studies
Planning Process	Advice on trail impact from a trail builder - bias
Planning Process	\$ from MORC or Minnetonka Mountain Club



Planning Process	Process the same for other special interest?
Planning Process	Process: who decides, based on what, when. How will you ensure all interested parties are heard, especially older residents?
Planning Process	Trust is destroyed - the process is all wrong
Planning Process	Bias: confirmation bias and special interests
Planning Process	Fairness - who is the cycling community vs. pedestrian community
Planning Process	Order of decision making: yes/no then location then design
Planning Process	Process
Planning Process	Transparency of process
Planning Process	Mission
Planning Process	Process
Planning Process	Input for residents
Planning Process	Older pedestrians don't text or email - how will you get their voice - many use Big Willow!
Planning Process	Process - if you're taking a step back, don't put the trail source Big Willow (totally biased) sheet on the takeaway table
Programming	Peaceful setting for memorial bench sites at Big Willow
Programming	Events? # of people, what races?
Programming	No room for both pedestrian and bike paths
Programming	Now, it's ideal for multi-family walking, running, dog walks
Programming	Displacement of current users of trails
Programming	Displacing seniors, displacing walkers, environmental
Programming	Needs to be one or the other user
Programming	Displacing seniors
Programming	Is mountain biking inclusive enough to dedicate land?
Programming	Displacing walkers
Programming	Thousands of people per year
Programming	Lose use of small trails for walking
Programming	Number of bikers
Programming	Where will I walk my dog
Programming	No bathrooms
Programming	Will there be events? Races? Rallies?
Programming	How will trails impact future projects? Gardens?
Railroad	Train tracks - will bikers be tempted to ride across tracks or down railroad tracks?
Railroad	Contact the railroad

Railroad	Conflict with BNSF
Railroad	Conflict with BNSF!
Railroad	How would plans change if the RR pu up 12' cyclone fences on both sides of their tracks to keep bikers off their right-of-way?
Safety	Liability
Safety	Possible vandalism
Safety	If you live by Big Willow it is the only safe from traffic place to walk
Safety	Danger for walkers at common trail segments
Safety	Safe environment
Safety	Safety
Safety	Safety
Safety	Safety
Safety	Pedestrian safety
Safety	Safety when walking 2 dogs on leashes
Safety	Safety
Safety	Failure to obey traffic control signs
Safety	Traffic safety: safe crossing, increased car volume, speed
Safety	Bikers already don't alert walkers
Safety	Bikers who don't yield to pedestrians - safety
Safety	Safety of crossing Minnetonka Blvd to riders - parking. Trails too short; too many crossings. Spending \$ for local upgrades that only affect a few
Safety	Safe place for the most people
Safety	Loss of safe, peaceful trails
Safety	Utilization conflict
Safety	Confusion over bike/walk junctions

What are your interests in this project (your Why?)	Explain your top priorities	What do you see as the biggest risks to the development of mountain biking trails in the community?
<p>We love mountain biking, enjoy parks/nature, don't want to have to drive to trails, local kids need outdoor activities. 50 parks in Minnetonka but 0 miles of singletrack. Parks are for people and if the majority want MTB trails it could be a good way to encourage a new generation to take an interest in parks and the environment. Single track MTB trails are less impactful to the environment than other current park uses like softball fields, wide walking trails, etc. Bikers have less impact on wildlife than off-leash dogs and walking trails. Equal park access - everyone should get to use them.</p>	<p>Location/design: Trails need to be easily accessible by bike and built according to Sierra Club and IMBA and MORC design standards for safety and low environmental impact. They also need to be long enough to be interesting and fun.</p>	<p>The perception that mountain bike trails will harm the environment, when in reality we're on the same page. Design challenges - we want to make sure the park can still be safely used by everybody. We also don't want the trails to be underdeveloped such that they don't get used. This discussion and these concerns are nothing new. The Sierra Club has environmental impact standards for mountain bike trails going back to the 1990s.</p>
<p>Exercise/recreation, family activities in neighborhood, easy access to fun singletrack, close singletrack, engage young families to care for our parks</p>		<p>A small group that is resistant to change, thus stopping the project</p>
<p>Personal and family (son) use. Like the idea of having accessible trails that don't require driving. Improving accessibility to sport to youth. Maximize the use of park, having a specific purpose.</p>	<p>Maximize use of park land and letting families, youth and high school teams get a local mountain bike (singletrack) experience</p>	<p>Environmental and safety impacts. Would need to ensure that trail is professionally designed to limit these risks, and even potentially improve the environment. Minnetonka trail advocates have already been working on this clearing invasive species (Buckthorn) at Big Willow. Current off path trails (hikers, dogs, bikes) get eroded and are the biggest risk. Professionally designed trails don't have the erosion issues. Parking - keep it limited to existing trails.</p>

<p>Member of Mountain Bike Team (Minnetonka), coach and parents of kids on the team. Avid mountain bikers for recreation and health. Proponents of enhancing the livability and tax base of Minnetonka.</p>	<p>The opportunity to have access to a place in our community to bike off road.</p>	<p>Incompletely informed people making decisions, preventing fair use of public assets - high likelihood. Injury - very low likelihood. Environmental damage - low to very low likelihood. Change to existing use patterns. Environmental damage (animals leaving) - low likelihood. Increased tax revenue (more people going to station, people buying bikes at Tonka Cycle, etc.) - medium likelihood.</p>
<p>I love to mountain bike. Wants well built, safe trails. Wants a place for the mountain bike teams to practice. Want to improve quality of the park. Looking for opportunities to get outside in nature. Just looking for places to ride. Bringing trails closer to Minnetonka to encourage outdoor enjoy. Currently using other trails and would enjoy Minnetonka more with trails. Parent wants trails closer for safety because kids biking on roads to other sites is too dangerous.</p>	<p>We feel designing a trail correctly will maintain the natural beauty of the park. As cyclists we feel having quality singletrack will be a safe way to enjoy the park. Design with zero to low maintenance. Proximity to our home. Make Minnetonka great for biking so residents don't have to drive their bikes to trails in far off cities. Want to see it in our life time (73 yr. old user).</p>	<p>Risk to the park if designed wrong. Risk to students biking/driving long distances to ride. Opponents to the development who are misinformed about the basics of mountain biking and trail development. Apathy of potential advocates.</p>

<p>Kids like to mountain bike, we also would like to have the trails close. The use of parks should be available to everybody's interests, like mountain biking. There's 50 parks in Minnetonka, and there's 0 trails for mountain biking. A mountain bike trail would get more kids interested in our parks, it would also get more people spending money at our local businesses.</p>	<p>To be able to mountain bike close to home, and not have to drive far/out of town. Use of the parks should not be exclusive, if there is sufficient interest for a sustainable MTB trail in Minnetonka, the issue should continue to move forward.</p>	<p>Other than the people who are against it, I don't see a bunch of risks. The misinformation that is perpetuated on Next Door about mountain bikers are generalizations many times, and also negative. All the dog poop on the ground that doesn't get picked up is worse for the environment than bikes. I really don't see any risks. Look at all of the other cities that have trails. They all work, they all get used. I have to load up my bike and my kids bikes on the car and drive there. I end up spending money in their town instead of my town for lunches - snacking, gas, etc.</p>
<p>Biking is part of our family lifestyle - spouse, kids, etc. Also involved with high school MTB team. Access to off road trail</p>	<p>Short drive to or bike to trailhead. MTB specific park probably not viable.</p>	<p>Limited space and large diverse group of users. Balancing community interests.</p>
<p>Benefit for the high school MTB team. Proximity, shorter drives, bike to the trail. Community awareness. Growth of team and sport. More exercise options for kids. Improve skills. Growing, life long sport. Builds community. Bikes off roads.</p>	<p>Want a fun, enjoyable trail with challenges. Long enough to get a work out, technical enough to want to return to, bring awareness to the sport, provide opportunity for youth to join sport.</p>	<p>Keeping trail nice, respecting the trail, keeping debris from trail. Challenging but safe. Harder and easier trails for all audiences. Walkers and bikers both included, but separate. Being too far from audience. Disagreement between neighbors. Inappropriate use of trails. Disasters - flooding, forestry, want to keep the natural beauty, not drive species or habitats away, want to keep stable systems.</p>
<p>Maintain the character of Big Willow, which is used by families with small children and people with pets.</p>	<p>Purgatory would be ideal location - Big Willow is a nature conservancy in park board mission statement.</p>	<p>Trying to combine MB with other activities which may not be compatible in small park. No one seems to know what is being proposed.</p>

<p>Support for family and kids interest in the mountain biking sport. Local access to facilities for mountain biking without having to drive. Lack of bike specific trails. Increase utilization of park areas. Provide a means to interest now local people to the use mountain biking sport. Promote fitness and healthy lifestyle.</p>	<p>how easy would / should it be to add to the overall system? I seem to recall some discussion of criteria for locating trails to be interconnectivity, and it seems that the ability to grow the overall network should be considered as well</p>	<p>Lack of understanding of what a mountain bike singletrack actually is. Risks of not developing mountain bike trails - lack of park use, forces riders onto multiuse trails/roads--neither is mountain bike friendly, riders who are out may well spend in restaurants in area around trail post ride.</p>
<p>Many questions on the location why Big Willow, why not Purgatory or other parks? 494 Corridor trail? Any outdoor activity/facility is a plus. Trails in west metro (about time). Excited for local trails. Activity in Minnetonka is important. A diverse recreational amenity. Minnetonka could use more activities aimed at young people.</p>	<p>The need for MTB trails is real now. Where is up for debate, but why not several parks?</p>	<p>Misinformation as to the impact of singletrack trails on the park, the environment, watershed, etc.</p>
<p>Riding close to home without having to drive to bike. Quality of life attracts people and improves our community</p>	<p>Location - we want to be able to bike from home without having to pack up our bikes and drive, we want our children to be able to bike near home. Environment - we are interested in limiting the impact to the environment. We are stewards of the land and we want good trail design to minimize bike/other users conflicts and address safety concerns. Connectivity - it's important to have the MTB trails connect to other trails to increase number of miles. Have limited time having to bike on roads for safety is a priority. Use - many of us bike year round so having the trail available is important. Also separating walkers from bikers with increase safety.</p>	<p>We see the biggest risk is not developing a MTB trail system. A trail system is a community asset and will attract healthy and education work force and increase money to local businesses.</p>

Hopkins MTB team. This project allows us to travel from HHS to trails in a safe manner. Lack of options in the West Metro.	Proximity to the school, design will be available to all riders, variety in terrain.	Popularity! Increase in trails.
The nearest legal place is 20 miles away. Tough for non-drivers (under 16 yr.). It's hard to bike around pedestrians, as in LRT. RR track not a big deal - stopping happens at Theo Wirth also (safety). Maybe residents can ride existing trails and the new trails could be more advanced.	I'm a stay-at-home mom and I'd love a chance to ride during the day. LRT is super boring, lots of pedestrians. High school team has a lot of racers and nowhere to ride. Need something in western burbs. Personally would ride it. Don't care where - just closer than Minneapolis. I just want good terrain. A flat trail isn't worth doing. Want to read with friends without an adult driving me around (HS rider).	Walkers and biker interaction, environmental degradation, not enough acreage.
Need to address the active lifestyle and need as young people and encourage park use with well-designed MTB trails.		"Not in my backyard" so parks, zero singletrack does not seem well-balanced.

## Mountain Biking Community Engagement Focus Groups Summary - November 8 & 16, 2017 Minnetonka Park Board

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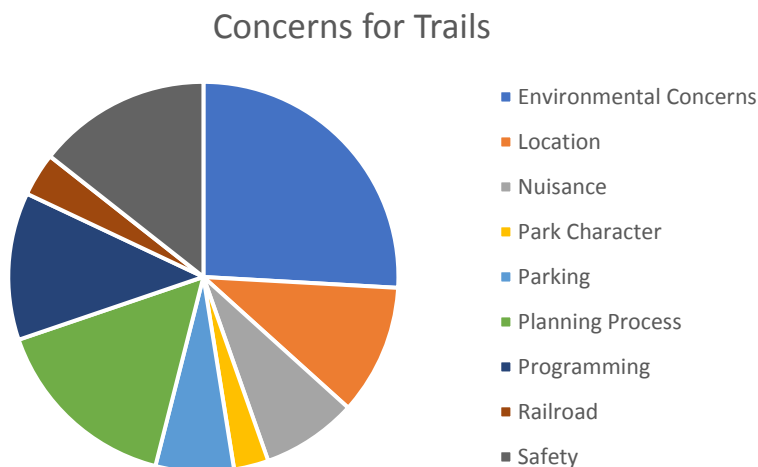
### Introduction

In November 2017, Minnetonka residents were invited to two focus groups to share their thoughts on the concept of creating mountain bike trails in Minnetonka. The first focus group was aimed at residents concerned about the potential trails while the second focus group convened residents who were advocates for mountain bike trails. Each group provided feedback on the prospect of trails and expressed priorities for the potential project.

### Feedback

Below is a summary of the findings from the community engagement activities. This information will be used to guide staff in creating a study to present to the park board.

#### *Focus group #1*



#### Representative comments:

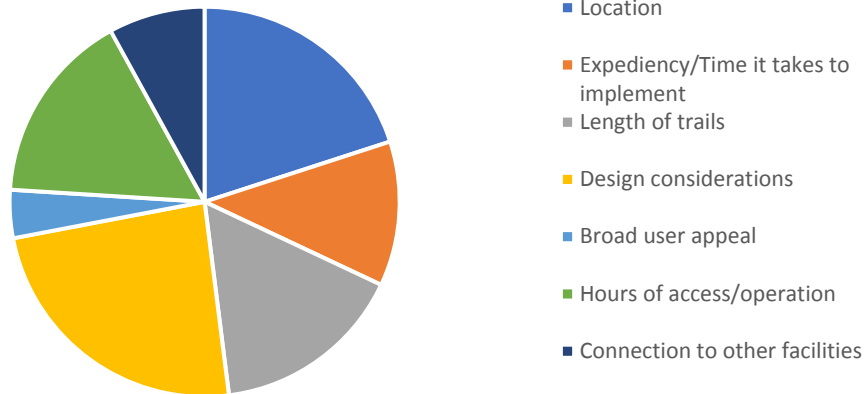
- Mountain bike trails will cause “damage to nature, animals/plant life, erosion.”
- The trails will “radically change the character of the park.”
- There may be “danger for walkers at common trail segments.”
- The trails will cause disruption, noise, and ruin solitude.
- Concern for the “displacement of current trail users.”

Generally, focus group attendees expressed a concern for the safety of park users, bikers and pedestrians alike. They also wondered how the trails would add to parking pressures, noise pollution and environmental deterioration. Attendees also voiced a desire for increased communication and engagement surrounding this issue.



Focus group #2

### Priorities for Trails



Representative comments:

- Users “don’t want to have to drive to trails—local kids need outdoor activities.”
- Attendees believed “separating walkers from bikers will increase safety.”
- Potential trail users are “stewards of the land and want good trail design to minimize bike/other users’ conflicts and address safety concerns.”
- The trails will cater to young people and increase physical activity.
- Park programming should cater to diverse community interests.

Generally, focus group attendees expressed excitement at the prospect of mountain bike trails in Minnetonka. They see this as a growing sport that has the potential to draw new, young people to outdoor recreation and physical activity. Similar to concerned residents, they prioritize safety, and the mitigation of trail user conflict. They are also concerned with the design and construction of the trail, desiring a course that is high quality and challenging.



**Minnetonka Park Board Item 7  
Meeting of December 6, 2017**

<b>Upcoming 6-Month Meeting Schedule</b>				
<b>Day</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Meeting Type</b>	<b>Agenda Business Items</b>	<b>Special Notes</b>
<b>Wed</b>	1/3/18	Regular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adoption of 2018 Park Board Strategic Plan</li> <li>Review of 2017 Farmer's Market Operations and staff recommendations for 2018 operations</li> <li>Selection of Chair and Vice Chair</li> </ul>	
<b>Wed</b>	2/7/18	Regular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minnetonka Historical Society presentation regarding Burwell House</li> <li>Presentation of the 2017 Shady Oak Beach Operations Report</li> <li>Review of the Shady Oak Beach inflatable amenity plan</li> </ul>	
<b>Wed</b>	3/7/18	Regular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consideration of projects for the 2019-2023 Capital Improvement Program</li> </ul>	
<b>Wed</b>	4/4/18	Regular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the Natural Resources Division's 2018 Education and Outreach Plan</li> </ul>	
<b>Wed</b>	5/9/18	Regular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual Park Board Tour</li> </ul>	
<b>Wed</b>	6/6/18	Regular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>	

**Other meetings and activities to note:**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Special Notes</b>
<b>Tues</b>	12/9/2017	Breakfast with Santa	9-11 a.m. Community Center
<b>Sun</b>	2/11/2018	Kids' Fest	Noon-3:30 pm Community Center, Ice Arena, & Civic Center grounds

**Items to be scheduled:**

**Mountain biking project updates  
Mountain biking feasibility report**