

Minutes  
of the  
NORTH MANKATO PARK & GREEN SPACES ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
North Mankato, Minnesota  
April 14, 2009

A meeting of the North Mankato Park & Green Spaces Advisory Committee was held at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 14, 2009 in the Large Conference Room of the Municipal Building.

Park & Green Spaces Advisory Committee members present: Chair Diane Norland, Nancy Gehrke, Mike Fischer, Bess Tsaouse, Tracy Malm, Chris Corley, Scott Thiem, Tom Hagen, Jim Santori, Rob Johnston and Mark Porisch. Also in attendance were Council Member Bill Schindle and Administrator Wendell Sande.

Chair Norland reviewed the agenda items as follows:

1. Benson Park Implementation Plan – Wendell Sande.
2. Million Tree Project.
3. Jacob Thompson Fishing Pier, Spring Lake Park.

### **Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made by Tom Hagen, seconded by Jim Santori, to approve the minutes of the February 10, 2009 Park & Green Spaces Advisory meeting, as amended. With all members voting in favor, the motion carried.

Rob Johnston suggested a representative for the Frisbee golf course attend a future Park & Green Spaces Advisory meeting.

### **Benson Park Implementation Plan**

City Administrator Wendell Sande referenced the Phasing Plan of the Benson Park Master Plan reporting the necessary first step is completion of a grading plan and the second step is completion of underground piping for the water features. He reported Planner Fischer is completing a Legislative Citizens Commission for Minnesota Resources grant application for matching funding of \$700,000. Planner Fischer reported he has listed the rolling hills prairie habitat, the woodland habitat and the oak savanna habitat in the application which are items that rank high for these grant funds. Administrator Sande reported because monies from the local option sales tax will be used for improvements in the three regional parks, Caswell, Spring Lake and Benson, this will make parkland funds available to be used for neighborhood park improvements. Administrator Sande reported because the Master Plan for Benson Park has been completed and we have the necessary matching funds, there is a very good chance we will be able to secure matching grant funds in the upcoming years. Discussion was held about proposed lighting for Benson Park and the suggestion was made to work with the Police Chief on the lighting plan. Administrator Sande reported since prairie grass and wild flowers take a long time to mature, this would be the next items to consider after the grading is completed. It was suggested to have Genevieve Brand, who is an expert on prairie grass, attend a future Park & Green Spaces meeting. It was also suggested to have small signs depicting the type of plantings in order to help educate the public. Administrator Sande reported once the grading plan is completed, it will be brought to the Park & Green Spaces Committee for review. In response to

a question regarding the Park Superintendent attending a Park & Green Spaces meeting, the Administrator reported the Public Works Director would be the appropriate person to attend the meeting when the grading plan is completed.

**Million Tree Project**

Tom Hagen updated the Committee on the Million Tree Project reporting because of a decrease in funds, 2,500 trees are scheduled for planting this year in comparison to the 12,000 trees that were planted last year. Plantings will take place April 18-19, 2009. A suggestion was made to have an article regarding donations to the Million Tree Project in an upcoming City newsletter. Administrator Sande reported City crews will complete any replantings in Spring Lake Park.

**Jacob Thompson Fishing Pier**

Chair Norland reported the Council discussed the Jacob Thompson fishing pier and would like to keep it separate from the bridge. Bruce Chalupsky will be asked to design a fishing pier that will match a future bridge. Administrator Sande reported \$70,000 has been budgeted from the local option sales tax for the bridge. An entry plaza will be incorporated as part of the fishing pier design with bricks available for purchase for dedication to other veterans.

The next meeting of the Park & Green Spaces Advisory Committee is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 12, 2009.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8 p.m.

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Chair

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Secretary