

CITY OF HERMANTOWN  
PARK BOARD  
June 21, 2016 Meeting Summary  
4:30 PM

**1. ROLL CALL**

Members Present: Jordan Urshan; Gene Shaw; Tom Eng; Michael Miller; Jim Sonneson; Councilor Natalie Peterson.

Members Absent: John Mulder, City Administrator.

Others Present: Eric Johnson, Comm. Dev. Dir.; Nathan Madill, HYSA; Zach Graves, Rose Road; Ted Kiefat, Little League; and Bert Ewer, Girls' Softball.

**2. MINUTES**

Motion made by Gene Shaw to approve the May 17, 2016 regular meeting minutes. Seconded by Jim Sonneson. Motion carried.

**3. PUBLIC DISCUSSION**

Bert Ewer- Stated that he was sent an email of an incident that happened this past week at Rose Road that a young lady was climbing on the batting cage, fell and split her head open.

**4. CONTINUING BUSINESS**

**4A. Stebner Field – Gate Location**

Jordan Urshan – He gave a summary of the recommendation which included leaving the gate where it is at the entrance of the field. This summer will be a trial period by leaving it locked open so no one can lock it, and placing a gate toward the back fields far enough up so the Police Department can have access back there without having to open any gates to do so.

Nathan Madill, HYSA – He stated that the Soccer Board is struggling to be on the same page as the Park Board and asked if the proposed decision will be made by the Park Board and/or the City Council.

Gene Shaw– He stated that it is the recommendation of the Park Board to the City Council.

Madill – He stated that the Soccer Board would like to either discuss it with the Park Board or the City Council just so that everyone is on the same page before a decision is made. He indicated that there are some members of the Soccer Board that are concerned with leaving the gate open because there would then be a lot of use by other groups that could hinder the progress that has been made on the turf.

Jim Sonneson – He asked Natalie Peterson to what extent will the City Council discuss this if the Park Board makes a recommendation.

Natalie Peterson – She stated that she was not aware that it would be coming before the City Council and that this really is a Park Board decision.

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Eric Johnson – He indicated that through conversations with City Administrator John Mulder, the decision is up to the Park Board as opposed to the City Council.

Peterson – She interjected saying according to her conversations with John Mulder, decisions that are made at the Park Board level or Utility level are not necessarily going to go up to the Council level. John will update the Council on what is happening with the various groups at the Council's Pre Agenda. She went on to say that the City Council does not have public discussion at a Council Pre Agenda meeting. She recommended to Madill that he contact John Mulder and let him know what Madill's request is and that maybe Madill could attend the public portion of the Pre Agenda. She noted that John Mulder would make that judgment call.

Madill – He indicated that he was not able to attend the May 11, 2016 Parks Tour, and commented that it did not go well. He stated that from the point of the Soccer Board, the User Agreement says that they have to notify the City in writing before they do anything. He further noted, as an example, that when the fences were put up, they had to inform the City what they were doing so and get also get their approval. However, there had been discussion about rocks being up in, he was not aware it was actually going to be done. He believes that communication between the City and his user group would be ideal. According to Madill, he believes that some of the Soccer Board members are worried that the gate is coming out and now the park is going to be torn apart.

Peterson – She asked if anyone informed the Soccer Association about the rocks.

Johnson – He stated that the implementation of the rocks happened faster than was previously envisioned. The plan was initially set up to happen during a two to three week period. However, things fell into place quicker than expected and the rocks were moved from Fleet Farm site to Stebner Field in a two to three day period instead.

Madill – He stated that the Soccer Board might feel better if they would have been able to have that discussion prior to that happened. He stated that the early paperwork for Stebner Field seems to indicate that it was set aside as a soccer complex, and if that is the case, part of the Soccer Board feels it should stay as a soccer complex and not be open.

Sonneson – He stated he was confused because he had heard Stebner Field called a park, and called a soccer facility. He doesn't feel it is a park because there is really no swing sets, even though there is one little deal there. He stated "it's really not a park, it's the soccer associations' field. He asked if the other parks (example: the baseball complex that the City has) does baseball put forth the money or use Rose Road for that. He asked, "Does softball and baseball put forth the monies on those complexes that soccer has put in over the years on the soccer complex?"

Johnson – He noted that there is money put forward by all user groups as part of this but not to the extent that soccer has, but they do pay a fee and/or monies to the City for the utilization of the fields.

Madill – He stated that when the back fields were done, a loan was taken out by the City so that soccer could afford to do it and that soccer is paying on that existing loan at \$20,000 per year until the loan is paid off. He asked if that was the same concept that was done with the other fields or was that done with City money.

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Tom Eng – He stated that he was told when he came on, the fields were approximately \$600,000. Soccer was responsible for \$200,000; the Park Board came up with \$200,000; and the City came up with the remaining \$200,000.

Peterson – She advised the Board that requested action is to make recommendations to City Council prior to placement. She also indicated that matters could be taken up at the City Council's Pre Agenda.

Johnson – He stated that his understanding of the Pre Agenda is that members of the public can attend the pre agenda, but as Natalie indicated, it is not the time for the open discussion of it, that does happen at the City Council meeting.

Urshan– He stated that he believes what has caused a surprise whether it be on the Soccer Board or in general is the fact that they feel like it happened so quickly. He referred to the 2015 walk through and how a play set needed to be moved. Since it was not on the forefront, they had to wait to put it on the agenda for the next year's walk through. It is his belief that the initial intent was having the gate where it is, not usage, but troublemakers.

Peterson – She said this is City land and it is public land. She also said that unfortunately, our City, other than within the school fields, some of these parks have playgrounds. She also noted that these are our City playgrounds.

Gene Shaw – He asked Eric Johnson if the City could put up signage that states what the fields can be used for.

Johnson – According to Johnson, the specific wording on the signs would provide contact information such as the Hermantown Soccer Association, or to schedule an activity contact ... and would have the contact information or field guidelines associated with the particular field. With that, the contact would be able to refuse a requested activity. He also stated that we want to protect all the fields to the best of our abilities but we do not want to limit the usage of the fields. He reiterated that Stebner Field is a City Park versus a soccer complex.

Motion made by Gene Shaw to move forward with leaving the gate open during the day and adding the signage for the field guidelines and that the second gate be put in to protect the back fields so police can patrol those fields for a trial period. Seconded by Michael Miller. Motion carried.

## **5. NEW BUSINESS**

### **5A. Parks Master Planning**

Eric Johnson – He stated that City staff has been discussing the creation of an overall Parks Master Plan which would serve as a planning guide for improvements to existing parks and trails as well as for the future development of new park and trail facilities. The Hermantown Parks and Recreation Master Plan will serve as a planning and best practices guide for the improvements to existing parks and trails as well as for the development of new park and trail facilities. Through community consultation and involvement, the parks and Recreation Master

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Plan will identify the values of the community. The Plan will provide a resource to guide policy development and decision making towards a City-wide vision for the parks, trails and recreation facilities throughout the City. The document will identify the parks, trails and recreation needs of the Hermantown residents, prioritize projects and services and develop a strategy to meet those need based on available resources.

Michael Miller – He stated that if initially you call this a plan, you will have a large part of the community involvement whereas if it were called a vision, it would be more considered a guide.

Johnson – He stated that the plan would be based on citizen input.

Peterson – She asked Eric Johnson to check with John Mulder to ask him to send the Park Board an updated listing of the items that have been done and what the timeline is for the season for the other items yet to be completed before the July 19, 2016 next Park Board meeting.

**6. COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

**7. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS**

Tom Eng – No report

Michael Miller – No report

Gene Shaw – Jordan Urshan reported on behalf of Gene Shaw that Gene reported a pick-up truck behind the baseball field. Gene’s concern was about access and availability and whether maintenance needs it.

Jim Sonneson – Jim stated that he was involved in the May 2016 parks tour. He stated that he went to Keene Creek, Rose Road Field, and Fichtner Field and noted items that have been completed and items yet to be completed.

Jordan Urshan – No report

Natalie Peterson – No report, but she wanted the Board to be aware that the City is waiting for a Special Session regarding the Hermantown Wellness Center.

**8. ADJOURN**

Motion made by Tom Eng to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Jim Sonneson. Meeting adjourned at 5:28 PM.

Officiated by:

Transcribed by:

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Jordan Urshan, Chair

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Mary Melde, Administrative Assistant