

Maple Grove Parks and Recreation Board

Special Meeting – Park Board Tour

September 21, 2023

Special meeting	The Special Meeting began at 5:05 p.m.
Board members present	Present on the tour were: Chair Bill Lewis, Vice Chair John Ferm, Board Members Ken Helvey, Deb Syhre, Andy Mielke, Krista Kuhnly.
Board members absent	Board Members absent were: Kelly Cunningham
Also present	Also present were: Mayor Mark Steffenson, Judy Hanson, Councilmember; Kristy Barnett, Councilmember; Rachelle Johnson, Councilmember; Kristy Janigo, Councilmember; Chuck Stifter, Parks and Recreation Director; Aimee Peterson, Assistant Parks and Recreation Director; Angie Dehn, Community Center Manager; Heidi Nelson, City Administrator; Sam McNellis, Park Supervisor; Cara Anderson, Administrative Assistant
Park Tour	<p>The first stop on the tour was a portion of the Eagle Lake Trails to view impact of the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). Director Stifter led the group along a portion of the trail which showed significant infestation. He explained a trail includes an easement over Plymouth property that was created in 1993. Sam McNellis, Park Supervisor, directed the group to several examples of trees in the area showing effects of EAB. He noted there were 183 trees within 20 feet of the trail which would need to be removed. He discussed potential reforestation.</p> <p>The second stop on the tour was the Sycamore Linear Park Corridor. The undeveloped trail corridor contained 42 mature trees with EAB that would need to be removed. It was noted that park staff had already spoken to several residents and an educational mailing would be sent out prior to removal. When asked how staff knows which trees to take down, Mr. McNellis noted they do a tree risk assessment to determine which trees need to be treated and removed.</p> <p>Donahue North Park was the third stop on the tour. Director Stifter gave a brief overview of the park, noting its features and</p>

that there has been less programming in the past few years at the park. He noted the Park Board recently reduced the outdoor ice program, eliminating the Donahue North rink. He stated a community garden had been proposed in the former rink space. He briefly discussed the restrooms in the warming house, noting the reoccurring vandalism. He stated staff have been working on a balance of building access to provide restrooms for families while reducing vandalism.

Assistant Parks and Recreation Director Aimee Peterson provided a background of the garden selection process. She noted an open house was held for the community and requests for extended fencing and pollinator plants had been suggested. Ms. Peterson described what the garden would contain and the timeline for it.

Councilmember Barnett inquired how the cost per plot was determined. Ms. Peterson explained the prices were established based on the research of other community gardens. Councilmember Barnett asked if there would be a large city cost. Ms. Peterson stated the startup cost would be under \$60,000. She noted how the garden plot holders would be the ones managing their individual plots, so maintenance by parkkeepers would be minimal.

Park Board Vice Chair John Ferm asked when the playground was scheduled for replacement. He noted that it might get more use once the community garden is in place. Director Stifter responded it was scheduled in the next few years.

The final stop was the Lakeview Knolls Pickleball Courts. Director Stifter noted the arrangement with the church to share the parking lot. He commented on the updates to the park which included right-sizing the ballfields to support the t-ball program, a playground replacement, and the increase of pickleball courts from 6 to 18. He went in detail regarding the pickleball courts, noting the adjacent shade structure and restrooms which would be good for users and hosting events. He described the sound abatement techniques that would be used including berms, trees, and sound abatement fabric along three sides of the courts. He stated the project intentionally

did not include court lights to limit the amount of use later in the day.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:57 p.m.