

Newton Park Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, June 15, 2022 – 6:15 pm

**Council Chambers - City Hall
101 W 4th St S
Newton, Iowa**

Minutes

- 1) Meeting called to order at 6:15 pm by Board Chair Humphrey.
- 2) Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance statement read by Board Chair Humphrey – no accommodations requested.
- 3) Roll Call: present - Humphrey, Caldwell, Daniels, Osby, and Tipton; absent - none
- 4) Certification of Iowa Open Meetings Law confirmed by Community Services Director Brian Laube
- 5) Citizen Participation or Comments: none
- 6) Review and approve minutes from May 18, 2022 Park Board meeting:
 - a. Motion by Tipton & seconded by Caldwell to approve said minutes. No discussion. Motion carried 5-0.
- 7) Harmony Park Project Presentation - Emily Thomason, representing Newton Main Street, shared a PowerPoint presentation on the revised concept plan for the downtown splash park. Highlights included:
 - a. Recap of the proposed location, project history to-date, and initial concept plan prepared last year.
 - b. Feedback the group had received on design improvements such as:
 - i. Design needs to visually complement the Main Street District
 - ii. Consider year-round activity and audiences of all ages
 - iii. Centre for Art & Artists recommended interactive musical sculptures that appeal to all ages and abilities
 - iv. Location for Farmers Markets, food trucks, small events
 - v. Include visitor information center to encourage tourism
 - c. An updated concept plan was shared that included the following key changes to the design:
 - i. Replaces splash pad features with water sprays and colored lights and reduces the water feature area
 - ii. Adds interactive musical sculptures, food truck ordering pads and a walking path in the northwest corner of the park
 - iii. Recommend a mid-century modern style restroom design with a visitors' information center and shelter
 - iv. Includes electric connections for small event-ready space

- v. Includes a pet relief area
 - d. Emily Thomason closed by sharing the group's next steps:
 - i. Continue gathering public input
 - ii. Meet with city staff to update construction and maintenance costs
 - iii. Continue fundraising (approx. \$369,000 raised by the group to-date)
 - e. Board comments included:
 - i. Board Chair Humphrey likes the idea, but cautioned that we don't want to repeat or duplicate things in the parks or elsewhere.
 - ii. Board member Caldwell stated that she likes the plan a lot.
 - iii. Board member Osby stated that he likes the idea of minimizing the water feature.
- 8) Annual Goal Setting Exercise – Community Services Director Brian Laube started this annual goal setting exercise by sharing a handout listing potential projects and potential visions/goals to be considered for inclusion in the online survey the board will complete. Discussion then followed:
- i. The projects list was separated into the following headings:
 1. 2021 Park Board Goals (projects on last year's approved project list)
 2. 2021 Park Board Goal Survey Items (projects that were voted on last year but didn't make the cut)
 3. Other projects to consider (based on input from staff, the board, City Council, and the public)
 - ii. Board discussion then followed with the following:
 1. Jeff Osby requested that a project to pave the parking lots at Agnes Patterson Park be included in the survey.
 2. Miranda Caldwell inquired whether benches are included in the Parks ADA Improvements project. Brian Laube shared that this project focuses on ADA-accessible walking routes and parking spaces.
 3. Jeff Osby asked about the Skate Park project included, to which Brian Laube shared that staff is exploring the construction of a larger skate park in Aurora Park at this time.
 4. Miranda Caldwell asked if parking lot improvements would be completed at Westwood as part of the proposed clubhouse project. Brian Laube added that the ballot language for the referendum would allow for some parking improvements, but the costs could likely limit how much could be done initially.
 5. Jeff Osby asked about upgrades to the baseball fields at Woodland Park, to which Brian Laube stated that staff is following what the school district is considering on building their own baseball field elsewhere, so that would weigh heavily on futures improvements at Woodland Park.
 - iii. Discussion then shifted to the visions/goals section of this annual exercise, with only one comment shared by Jeff Osby stating that the Parks Evaluation item is very important.
 - iv. It was then noted by Brian Laube that he'll wait at least one week before compiling the survey

Park Board Chair – Melanie Humphrey

Park Board Members – Miranda Caldwell, Collin Daniels, Jeff Osby, & Rachelle Tipton.

in the event that additional idea or projects are submitted by Board members via email.

- v. Brian Laube ended by stating that the survey results will be brought back to the July Park Board meeting for discussion, revisions if needed, and a vote to approve the 2022 Park Board Goals.

9) Sunset Park Concept Plan – Community Services Director Brian Laube began this discussion by recapping last month’s presentation which included the timeline of the 2018 concept plan and its contents. He then stated that he would open this item up to board input and questions.

a. The following questions/comments/suggestions followed:

- i. Add a baseball field back into the open field area where it use to be.
- ii. Don’t put the walking path on the sledding hill.
- iii. Consider putting a walking trail along the top of the sledding hill.
- iv. Delete the nature play area from the concept plan, as it is not defined in scope or location.
- v. Add inclusive playground equipment in this park.
- vi. Add fitness stations along the walking trail.
- vii. Humphrey suggested putting the splash pad in this park. Daniels and Caldwell felt that this was not the park for a splash pad.
- viii. Include a basketball court in the concept plan.

b. Discussion ended. Brian Laube then shared that these items, along with those shown on the 2018 concept plan, would be included in an online survey to be sent to board members soon.

10) Old Business

- a. When asked by Humphrey, Brian Laube shared that Cardinal Pond is not yet open to the public.
- b. Humphrey inquired about food truck registrations, to which Laube shared that they are all online.
- c. Brian Laube shared that donations for the July 4th fireworks and activities were at about \$7,800 with a goal of \$12,000. The board briefly discussed gathering donations at the event.

11) New Business

- a. Humphrey thanked Nick Cummins and staff for their recent maintenance work on the Aurora Park playground swings and mulch.
- b. Nick Cummins, Parks Operations Superintendent, shared information about the recent installation of the floating wetlands in Cardinal Pond. Nick added that it was a partnership with Jasper County Conservation, along with students from the Newton Christian School, on this unique and educational water quality enhancement to the pond at a very low cost.

12) Adjourn: motion by Caldwell and seconded by Tipton to adjourn. Motion carried by 5-0 vote. Meeting adjourned at 7:50 PM.

BJL
5-16-22