



**Parks Committee Meeting
Monday, June 10, 2024
6:00 PM**

The June 10, 2024 Parks Committee meeting will be held remotely and in person using the Zoom video conference application.

Instructions for Participating in the Meeting Remotely Via Zoom

Options for Joining the Zoom Meeting:

- **RECOMMENDED:** Use your computer, tablet or smart phone to join the meeting by logging on to
 - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85923813123?pwd=DVLswW303BO0NV1JVLqRnyDeBexah.1>
Meeting ID: (859 2381 3123)
Passcode: 181235
Dial-in Number (to call in to the meeting)
+1 312 626 6799. When prompted, enter Meeting ID: 859 2381 3123

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Roll Call**
- 3. Approval of Agenda**
- 4. Approval of Minutes**
 - A. Minutes of the May 22, 2024 Parks Committee meeting
- 5. Business**
 - A. Park Dedication Fund Balance
 - B. Levee
 - C. Town Square Park
 - D. Skating Rink
 - E. Meadow Ridge
- 6. Adjournment**

City of Afton Parks Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 22, 2024

6:00 p.m.

Attendees: Lori Swanson, Jane Tar, Bob Dickie, Nicholas Livingston, Grant Jensen; liaison, Ken Johnson

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 6:00 PM

Approval of Minutes

Minutes from April meeting approved by Bob and Jane.

Items of Business:

A. Park Dedication Fund Balance: \$350,803

B. Levee

The extension of the native planting project south all the way to the sidewalk and the gap to connect sidewalks was approved.

Jane proposed benches along the levee sidewalk, which would be part of a longer-term design if we continue planting native along the entire levee.

Grant will work on a sign design for the current project – a permanent design with a laminated piece that has some sort of “prairie in progress” message. Will also double-check with Elissa to see if this is part of the grant funds.

Ron is taking up the project of continuing the paved trail all the way to the end of the levee, in conjunction with Washington County.

Bob proposed starting to design what amenities will be at the trailhead – signage, info kiosk, tables, shelter, parking.

C. Town Square Park

Council approved next steps unanimously. Grant will present the project description to the city for them to seek bids with a proposed work description for them to invite bids however they do in such an informal bidding process.

Lori brought up Belwin’s willingness to provide wood chips. Ken will speak with Jason about 14 cubic yards at least (as was the assumed volume for the plan proposed by Horta Culture) and ask if they would set that amount aside and ask if they could deliver these when the time comes. Ron is looking into the minimum required for the informal bid process. Grant will follow with Ron about details of the bid process so we can complete the project yet this Summer.

One concern brought up by the council was that they wanted to know what the long term maintenance plan would be for any planting project. In addition to submitting for the planting design and planting, the city ought to reach out to TriCounty about removing sod to make way for planting beds once approved.

Discussing Plantskydd at the council meeting and among the Parks Committee, we would like to explore this as first and perhaps ultimate step to prevent deer grazing because it is not more fencing which is what we hope to move away from but this inspired discussion that urged us to ask Ron whether the garden bids should include an additional line item for temporary fencing while plants get established in the off chance that our voracious deer eat them anyway. Side note: Horta Culture just north of the park has not had deer grazing whenever they have been consistent about applying Plantskydd.

Separate from the bid, Bob also proposed using a couple of restored oil lamps from Afton's old streets to place behind the Tierney bench – a memorial to Afton's erstwhile lamplighter. Bob has spoken to the Kirschbaums and Ken asked to reach out to the Holtz family out of courtesy about the memorial tree. Bob said the family was fine with replacing the failing pine tree and replacing it with any variety. Our discussion opened up to perhaps plant a native wild cherry tree to honor the Kirschbaum name which translates from German to Cherry Tree, and this is also incidentally one of the keystone species of the local flora and fauna.

In addition to this new memorial idea, the Parks Committee thought the city could erect a fresh cut Christmas tree each year in time for a lighting ceremony ahead of the Afton Village Holiday kickoff and keep it up through the holidays – no sooner than January 6th which some believe is bad luck.

D. Skating Rink

It would require too much work to flatten out and drain the NE corner of the park. The proposal for the rink beside Selma's was met with approval by most. Ken got a reasonable estimate to clear the trees, lay some clay and sod above so it is easy to hold water and maintain.

E. Meadow Ridge

The Afton Meadow Ridge Seed Mix for 2024 was decided: 4th seed rain, an upland and lowland mix – which are designed to compete with nitrophilic vegetation.

F. Meeting Date

Lori made the motion to vote to switch meeting times to the second Monday of the month at 6:00 PM starting Monday June 10th. All voted in favor.

G. Outdoor Lights for Migration

Julie wrote up a piece for the Green Scene in the newsletter.

H. Deer Control

Bob found that there is not an inexpensive way to do this and after a herd is culled, female deer can attract new mates to town. Bayport culls with controlled bow hunts which prove effective. Darting and moving them is another option but expensive. The third way is use contraception. What we might try first is to educate and to discourage plantings that attract them and discourage. There is a fair amount of collisions. Official next steps: we put together an informational packet about next steps people can take to discourage. Perhaps a mention in Green Scene. Bob also raised the concern that outdoor cats are responsible the death of 1.4 billion birds. Move to remind the Afton public of the leash ordinance for cats. Perhaps include the dramatic effect belled collars.

Adjournment: motion to adjourn was made by Jane and seconded by Julie at 7:20pm

Parks Committee Memo

Meeting: June 10, 2024

City of Afton
3033 St. Croix Trl, P.O. Box 219
Afton, MN 55001

To: Parks Committee Members

From: Ron Moorse, City Administrator

Date: June 5, 2024

Re: Park Dedication Fund Balance

The Park Dedication Fund balance as of April 1, 2024 is \$350,803.00. No change since the last meeting. The new report comes out at the June 18, 2024 meeting.