

Newton Park Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, July 21, 2021 – 6:15 pm

Electronic Meeting held via Zoom at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86255869103?pwd=MWoxaHVSy0t3VnBjQTZrK2ZkRHNEZz09>

(Website Streaming was not available at <https://www.newtongov.org/CivicMedia> due to technical difficulties)

(Pursuant to Iowa Code section 21.8) This electronic meeting was held because a meeting in person is impossible or impractical due to concerns for the health and safety of board members, staff, and the public due to COVID-19. The public was able to participate in this meeting and comment on an agenda item by submitting via email to brianl@newtongov.org before 5:00 PM the day of the meeting or, during the meeting, by calling 641-521-7137 or participating via Zoom. Providing comment in person was not an option.

MINUTES

- 1) Call to order at 6:16 pm by Board Chair Melanie Humphrey.
- 2) Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance statement read by Board Chair Humphrey.
- 3) Roll Call: all 4 members present.
- 4) Certification of Iowa Open Meetings Law: Community Services Director Brian Laube confirmed that the meeting is being held in compliance with all applicable laws.
- 5) Citizen Participation or Comments: none
- 6) Review and approve minutes from June 16, 2021 meeting: motioned by Heitman, seconded by Osby to approve – no discussion – minutes approved by a 4-0 vote.
- 7) Discussion and vote to recommend location for the 2021 Holiday Lights display:
 - a. Community Services Director Brian Laube shared that staff has discussed this and recommend moving the 2021 display back to Maytag Park due to past donations for electrical upgrades there along with the tradition that's been established there.
 - b. Motioned by Heitman, seconded by Tipton to approve.
 - c. Discussion followed with Jamie Murphy answering Board Member Heitman's question on whether other donors or groups might oppose. Jamie shared that United Way of Jasper County is fine with moving it back, and also she expected no opposition from past sponsor Clemon-Maki Insurance.
 - d. Additional discussion included:
 - i. Jamie Murphy (Parks Operations Assistant Supt.) shared that a second display could someday be placed back at Agnes Patterson Park. She also stated that Agnes Patterson Park is tough to install, since the electrical capacity is less than Maytag Park.
 - ii. Melanie Humphrey stated that the display at Agnes Patterson Park seemed harder to see,

Park Board Chair – Melanie Humphrey

Park Board Members – Bryce Heitman, Jeff Osby, & Rachelle Tipton. (One seat currently vacant)

and that it made sense to return to Maytag Park due to the electrical donations.

- iii. Bryce Heitman asked if there were more displays at Agnes Patterson Park this past year, to which Jamie stated yes, but the number of displays increases each year as more are built or purchased.
 - iv. Rachel Tipton thanked the City for moving the display to Agnes Patterson Park last year when Maytag Park was not available due to tree clean-up work following the August 2020 derecho, but shared that she likes it better in Maytag Park due to other things including the skating rink already in the park.
 - v. Jeff Osby stated that the traffic flow through Agnes Patterson Park is better, but Maytag Park ties things together better for the display.
 - e. Discussion ended – following earlier motion by Heitman, and second by Tipton to approve – motion carried by a 4-0 vote to move the 2021 Holiday Lights Display back to Maytag Park.
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- 8) Discussion on food trucks and beverage sales in City parks:
- a. Community Services Director Brian Laube shared that staff has been reviewing rules, policies, and other guidelines related to allowing food trucks in City parks for City events such as the Summer Concert Series. Staff intends to allow food trucks at some events, but has paused this year until the City-wide policy on this has been approved. Staff has also begun reviewing rules related to the possibility of allowing private businesses or fraternal organizations to utilize their liquor license to sell beer in parks at some larger events. Both of these items are being considered due to the public's request for them. Laube also shared that some parks may not allow alcohol sales due to stipulations in a donation to the City of that land or other reason. Additional discussion included:
 - i. Brian Laube shared that current park rules and City Code are not well defined on this, so he envisions a Park Board recommendation followed by council approval before any private alcohol sales could occur.
 - ii. Brian Laube also shared that he would not consider moving the Westwood Golf Course's liquor license to a park for a special event. He also added that he would not pursue any events at Maytag Pool that would allow alcohol sales due to the potential liability and problems this could cause.
 - iii. Bryce Heitman shared that he was in favor of food trucks and alcohol sales by others at some of the City events to help grow those events.
 - b. Brian Laube shared that staff would continue reviewing existing rules and policies related to food trucks and alcohol sales, and envisions bringing something back to the board at a later date.
- 9) Discussion on returning to in-person meetings: Community Services Director Brian Laube asked the board if they were ready to return to in-person meetings in August. The consensus was to meet in person starting with the next regularly scheduled meeting.
- 10) Discussion and vote approving the 2021 Park Board Goals:
- a. Community Services Director Brian Laube began the discussion by highlighting the goal setting

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process and screen-sharing the results of the online survey the board members completed following last month's meeting. He also shared a draft of the proposed 2021 Park Board Goals document that was up for consideration.

- b. Motioned by Tipton, seconded by Heitman to approve.
- c. Discussion followed:
 - i. Melanie Humphrey asked whether the Cardinal Pond Improvements item should be removed from the top seven project list to allow the pond to become established. Jeff Osby felt that it should be a focus as a new park. Bryce Heitman shared that he was more onboard with improvements to Cardinal Pond than at Sunset Park.
 - ii. Discussion continued related to the proposed splashpad project. Jeff Osby was hung up on this as a goal. Melanie Humphrey continued that she had many questions on it including the location and will the City support it financially. Bryce Heitman countered that this project scored high on the survey and that he didn't complete the survey, so it must have had the support of others on the board. Following additional back & forth on this project, Brian Laube added that there is not a plan or CIP project for a 2nd splash pad elsewhere. He also shared that the project goal is written in a generic manner and not tied to the specific lot on W 3rd St N. He continued that the board having this as a goal does not allocate any money to the project, instead it just tells City Council that the board feels that this project is worthy of their consideration.
 - iii. Discussion turned to the Sunset Park proposed project. Jeff Osby inquired whether Sunset Park should be included, to which Melanie Humphrey shared that it was on this list because a concept plan had been prepared previously and it was a worthwhile project.
 - iv. Rachelle Tipton asked if the board could approve 8 projects instead of seven, to which Brian Laube shared that 7 was the normal recommendation but 8 could be allowed. Bryce Heitman added having fewer projects on the goals list would be better, leaving a better chance some of them get completed. Jeff Osby felt that they should show 8 projects.
 - v. The Visions/Goals section was then discussed briefly with no follow-up concerns with the proposed top three items.
 - vi. Brian Laube asked the board if they wanted to include the actual survey scores, or just delete those from each item and change the bullet points on the draft document to numbers, that way it would still convey the order of support or ranking. The board consensus was to number the lists and delete the actual scores.
 - vii. Board discussion was closed, allowing citizen comment. Fran Henderson commented that she appreciated Melanie Humphrey's enthusiasm for the proposed Sunset Park project; felt that the adjacent neighborhood doesn't have a park unlike some other neighborhoods, and that the City should keep pushing to complete this project. No other citizen input was received.

- viii. Discussion ended – following earlier motion by Tipton, and second by Heitman to approve – motion carried by a 4-0 vote to approve the 2021 Park Board Goals with 8 projects and 3 visions/goals, presented in a numbered manner (see attached final approved document).

11) Old Business:

- a. Jeff Osby inquired about yesterday's open house for the Westwood Golf Clubhouse Project. Brian Laube shared that about 40 people attended and the proposed concept plan was well received.

12) New Business: none

- 13) Motion to Adjourn by Osby, seconded by Tipton – by a 4-0 vote the meeting was adjourned at 7:33 pm.

The Goals of the Newton Park Board – July 2021

City of Newton, Iowa

Approved July 21, 2021

In 2013, the Newton Park Board sought public input to help identify park needs, new ideas for the parks, and other ways to improve the park system. Based on that initial input, the Park Board established a set of goals they felt were important to accomplish over the next five years. These initial goals were then updated in August 2014.

In September of 2017 the Park Board's original goals were reviewed again, with updates given on those goals that have been completed or partially done. The Park Board was then asked to come up with two new lists of actual projects and visions/goals. Board members were then given a survey to prioritize these two lists, with the intention of determining the top seven projects and the top three visions/goals. Based on the survey, the Park Board approved the goals on December 20, 2017. This process was repeated in 2018, 2019, and again in 2020 with the latest list of goals and visions approved on July 15, 2020.

To align with the City's CIP and budget schedule in 2021, the Park Board again reviewed a list of proposed goals and visions at their meeting on June 16, 2021; and then completed an online survey. Based on the survey in July 2021, the Park Board's top priorities are as follows:

Projects:

1. Westwood Clubhouse: build a new club house for Westwood Golf Course to better serve golf customers and to generate more usage of the facility (downsized vision to seat 150 people for events).
2. Hike & Bike Trail Loop: complete the city-wide hike & bike trail loop.
3. Sunset Park: complete park improvements per recent planning and design efforts.
4. Inclusive Playground Features: construct inclusive playground equipment and features in a park location TBD.
5. Splash Pad - Downtown Location: Install an interactive splash pad in the downtown area.
6. Downtown Dog Park: construct a dog park in Sunset Park.
7. Cardinal Pond Improvements: install improvements such as trails, ADA-accessible fishing pier, and other possible amenities.
8. Maytag Pool Upgrades: install new play features in the pool (includes removal of existing mushroom fountains and concrete structure in the shallow end), lazy river, or other large scale attraction.

Visions/Goals:

1. Parks Evaluations: Evaluate the long-term needs or uses of all City parks.
2. Volunteer Opportunities: Create volunteer opportunities to encourage more ownership of the parks among citizens to discourage vandalisms and other unwanted activities.
3. Hike & Bike Trails: Connect Newton to the Central Iowa bike trail system.