

CITY OF ST. ANTHONY  
PARKS AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 23, 2024  
7:00 p.m.

**I. CALL TO ORDER.**

Chairperson Fee called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**II. ROLL CALL.**

Commissioners Present: Chair Lily Fee, Commissioners Michael Guest and Jessica Swiontek (arrived at 7:35 p.m.).

Absent: Commissioners Daniel Bakke and Cody Holliday.

Also Present: City Manager Charlie Yunker, Silverwood Program Coordinator David Donovan, Citizens for Sustainability Representative Dan Kunitz, Finance Director Deborah Maloney, Coordinator Minette Backalog, and Student Liaison Cece Cram.

**III. APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 23, 2024 PARKS AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA.**

The agenda was approved as presented.

**IV. APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 3, 2024 REGULAR PARKS AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES.**

Chair Fee noted the following corrections to the minutes: On Page 3, Line 10, the word “with” was missing and on Page 8, Line 25, it should read “he” rather than she.

Motion by Commissioner Swiontek, seconded by Commissioner Guest, to approve the June 3, 2024, Regular Parks and Environmental Commission Meeting Minutes as revised.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**V. PRESENTATIONS.**

**A. Silverwood Park Updates.**

Silverwood Park Program Coordinator David Donovan reviewed the Hinterland exhibit by Pattie Chalmers will be from September 12 – November 30, 2024. Understory by Stephanie Hunder will be from August 8 – September 30, 2024. The opening reception for Ready, Set, GIF will be held October 10 from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. and will run from October 10 – November 30, 2024. This is a group show of 21 artists and animators exploring motion through hand-drawn GIFS.

Mr. Donovan continued the Field Trip will be held Saturday, September 14, 2024, from noon – 4:00 p.m. This is the 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration. He reviewed some of the activities offered during the celebration.

Art-making Programs will be offered on October 3, October 12, November 3, November 24, and December 7 at various locations. Mini-pumpkin decorating party will be held Wednesday, October 23, 2024, from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. and the cost is \$5 for all ages.

Fall School and Community Program Collaboration includes Wilshire Park afterschool Art and Ecology Club for grades 3-5 and monthly nature-based ECFE programs at Silverwood Park. He has been working closely with Councilmember Lona Doolan on this collaboration.

The winter hours for the Silverwood Park Care are 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Self-Serve Paddleshare Rentals are available every day through September. Boats can be reserved at [ipaddleport.com](http://ipaddleport.com).

The Silverwood Rental Open House will be held October 7, 2024, from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. 2026 Dates will become available on January 2, 2025. For up-to-date calendars and rental information contact [silverwoodevents@threeriversparks.org](mailto:silverwoodevents@threeriversparks.org).

#### **B. Citizens for Sustainability Update.**

Citizens for Sustainability Representative Dan Kunitz presented an update on their activities. On October 7, the book discussion of *Unstoppable Us*, Vol. 1 by Yuval Noah Harari will be held at the St. Anthony Village Library from 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

Chair Fee asked about the possibility of a Sustainability Fair and when this might be held. She would be interested in helping with an event.

### **VI. COMMISSION REPORTS.**

Commissioner Swiontek stated over the last quarter, the Excel Energy Partners in Energy discussion has begun. They worked through mission and vision statements. A big learning was the amount of energy used by utilities.

Commissioner Guest had no report.

Chair Fee stated she attended the Joint Council / Planning / PEC Session last week along with Commissioner Swiontek. She is part of a group called Friends of Silver Lake. She reviewed an article on water that will be included in Village Notes. She had information available for Commissioners. A resident reported bacterial pligh on the north side of town. This was thought to be due to the weather conditions. Another resident reached out to thank the Commission for the new benches recently installed at Silver Lake and Shamrock.

### **VII. OTHER BUSINESS.**

**A. CIP Presentation.**

Finance Director Deborah Maloney reviewed a PowerPoint summarizing Parks Capital Improvement Plan & Financial Overview.

The Planning & Budgeting for Parks & Environmental Operations and Capital Improvements inputs:

- Annual Goal Setting Work Session
  - Venue for City Council, Parks and Environmental Commission Representative and City Staff to discuss improvements in parks, amenities changes, etc.
- PEC workplan reviewed at Goal Setting.
- Topical joint meetings between CC and PEC.
- WSB Parks Assessment & Oertel Facilities Assessment.
- Staff observations and resident comments.

Ms. Maloney reviewed the Budget Calendar including:

- Developing the Annual Budget and Levy begins early in the year.
- Typically, by June-July City Staff has provided possible levy scenarios for Council direction.
- Staff provides proposed budget by late August.
- Preliminary levy is passed mid-September.

Sources for the Park Improvement Fund include Parkland dedication fees, Donations & grants, Park Improvement levy, Transfers and Interfund loans.

Uses of Park Improvement Fund include Athletic facilities & playground structures, Park shelters, Splash pads, Trail construction and Amenities.

The following PEC items are included in various budgets:

- General Fund – Primary location of Park and Environmental operating costs.
  - Parks personnel costs - \$329,300.
  - Supporting ISD recreation programming - \$52,200.
  - Energy Costs - \$42,800.
  - Supplies and other operating costs - \$59,100.
  - Sustainability programming - \$14,000
  - Clean-up day, other recycling events, fix-it clinics, rain barrels - \$5,000
  - Total General Fund costs - \$502,400.
- Capital Improvement Fund – Replacement of parks maintenance equipment.
  - Fleet costs – 2025 \$0/Five years \$140,125.
  - Heavy Equipment/Mowers costs – 2025 \$26,000 / Five years \$191,600.
  - Other Equipment – 2025 \$4,100 / Five years \$70,000.
- Building Improvement Fund
  - Parks Shelters/parking lots/trails – 2025 \$43,950 / Five years \$162,500

- Stormwater Fund – Stormwater operating and capital costs
  - Stormwater / Flood mitigation 2025 \$5,200 / Five years \$192,700.
  - Water Quality – 2025 \$50,280 / Five years \$452,200
- Total Capital Funds costs – 2025 \$129,530 / Five years \$1,209,125.

Ms. Maloney reviewed included in the Park Improvement Fund for 2025 include:

- Central & Emerald Park Signage, various benches, etc.
- Emerald Park accessible path to picnic shelter.

Future Improvements include:

- Proposed Annual Park Improvement Levy increase \$15,000 for 2025.
- Trail refurbishments / replacements. (Central Park trail included in 2025 Street Reconstruction feasibility).
- Playground replacements as scheduled with PEC input in 2024.

Overall Park and Environmental Spending was reviewed.

Mr. Yunker reviewed PEC projects for Council Consideration include:

- Pickleball Courts – Estimated \$300,000 - \$600,000.
  - PEC identified Central Park as overall preferred location.
  - Location could be shared with ice rink w/sound mitigation or south side of the Pavilion and not share with ice rink.
  - May reduce field space available for sports booster activities.
  - Could consider integrating full basketball court.
- Safety Netting – Estimated \$110,000
  - Occasional resident requests for additional netting due to foul balls.
  - City would pay for C3, ISD282 would pay for C1.
- LED Lighting – Estimated \$535,000
  - Central Park \$370,000.
  - Tennis Courts \$165,000.
  - Estimated 50% energy savings.
  - Reduced glare and better ball visibility.

Ms. Maloney provided detailed spreadsheets for the Commission's information.

Commissioner Swiontek arrived at the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

Commissioner Swiontek asked about the 50% energy savings when switching to LEDs. Mr. Yunker stated the 50% is based on the materials given from the bid. There is a return on investment. This does not have a funding source yet. Tax savings would not be seen.

Chair Fee stated for the pickleball courts it may make sense to consider another location for the courts. Mr. Yunker stated since a fund is not present that question would need to be

1 solved. The PEC can have more conversations about the exact location while the funding is  
2 being researched. The cost would be similar in another location. Chair Fee had questions  
3 about a Park Levy. Mr. Yunker stated it depends on when a decision is made. From a levy  
4 standpoint, it would be several years out.

5  
6 Commissioner Swiontek asked if the PEC should come up with the location prior to  
7 determining where the funding would come from. Mr. Yunker stated they can be looked at in  
8 parallel. It would be wise to have a location discussion.

9  
10 Chair Fee described Totem Park in New Brighton and its renovation. The cost for the  
11 pickleball courts there was close to \$300,000.

12  
13 Commissioner Swiontek stated the safety netting is critical as far as a priority for timeliness.  
14 Commissioner Guest suggested making the ice rink more usable perhaps for a dog park. Mr.  
15 Yunker asked the Commission if the pickleball courts would be a priority over the Central  
16 Park lighting. Chair Fe asked if there are any grant opportunities for lighting upgrades. Chair  
17 Fe stated this fits into the Climate Action Plan. Commissioner Swiontek suggested the priority  
18 be the netting, the lighting and then the pickleball courts.

19  
20 The minutes from the June 3, 2024 meeting were approved after a quorum was present.

## 21 22 **VIII. COMMUNITY FORUM.**

23  
24 Ms. Cindy Lenner-Smith, 3100 29<sup>th</sup> Ave NE, stated she has lived on Silver Point Park since  
25 1991, noting the park is being renovated. She does not know if there were any design  
26 programming conversations with the neighbors regarding the playground design. She showed  
27 pictures of the park to the Commissioners. She understands they are going to remove another  
28 handicapped parking space for ADA accessibility. There is no parking for the playground  
29 area. There were cars parked at the end of her driveway with kids left in the car. She called  
30 Public Works and they agreed they cannot fix stupid. Kids run across their driveway going to  
31 the park. She proposed removing the hockey rink and warming house and putting in some  
32 portable bathrooms and more parking. She is surprised no kids have been hurt in the parking  
33 lot. The ice rink is rarely used. The basketball court is used often. Parking is really needed.

34  
35 Mr. Paul White, 3201 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue NE, stated he is following up on the possibility of a dog  
36 park in St. Anthony. For the last several years, he has had discussions with Councilmembers  
37 and Commissioners. He has done a couple of rounds of surveying residents regarding a dog  
38 park. There were 100 responses and 95% were in favor of a dog park. More recently he  
39 created a survey with 12 questions. He launched the survey this weekend. There have been 53  
40 responses so far. 40 were residents of St. Anthony. 92% are in support of the dog park. He  
41 reviewed the other questions on the survey.

## 42 43 **IX. ADJOURNMENT.**

44  
45 Motion by Commissioner Swiontek, seconded by Commissioner Guest, to adjourn the  
46 September 23, 2024 meeting of the Parks and Environmental Commission at 8:15 p.m.

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**Motion carried unanimously.**

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3

4 Respectfully submitted,

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6

7 Debbie Wolfe

8 *TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*