

**PARKS AND OPEN SPACE COMMISSION (POSC) MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 13, 2025**

The Mound Parks and Open Spaces Commission met on Thursday, March 13, 2025, at 6:30 pm in the Council Chambers at the Centennial Building.

Present: Chair Joanna Kahn, and Commissioners Travis Mills, Tyler Pieper, Kim Blievernicht, and City Council Representative Sherrie Pugh.
Absent: None.
Others Present: Deputy City Manager, Maggie Reisdorf.
Public Present: Phil Velsor (3232 Gladstone Lane).

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm.

2. Roll Call

Present: Chair Kahn and Commissioners Mills, Pieper, Blievernicht, and City Council Representative Pugh.
Absent: None.

3. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Blievernicht to approve the agenda as amended, second by Pugh; Motion carried 5-0.

4. Oaths of Office

Commissioner Kim Blievernicht
Commissioner Tyler Pieper

5. Approve Minutes from 2-13-2025 Meeting

Motion by Blievernicht to approve the 2-13-2025 meeting minutes, second by Pugh. Motion carried 4-0-1 (Mills Abstained).

6. Comments and Suggestions from Citizens Present

Phil Velsor, resident at 3232 Gladstone Lane, introduced himself to the POSC. He talked to the commission about the plan to repave the parking lot near Lost Lake Commons where the current farmers market takes place over the summer. He talked about the plan to have an ice rink located there over the winter months. He talked about the plan to install a fire pit with the upcoming construction on Phase II of Lost Lake Commons Park. He recommended that it be placed as close as possible to the where the ice rink would be so it could be used by users of the ice rink in the winter. He recommended that between the options of wood and gas, to go with wood. He stated that gas would be a maintenance nightmare.

Velsor asked the commission if they ever thought about having an ice rink at Surfside Park on the lake. He wondered if the basement of the Park Depot building could be converted into a warming shelter during the winter months. He talked about how he helps maintain the ice rink at the local elementary school.

Kahn stated that she is 100% on board with the idea of a rink at Surfside Park, but that it was discussed in the past and the previous City Manager said no.

Velsor said that it is just an idea to reconsider to be able to have activity there year-round. He stated that he is looking forward to the Phase II of the Lost Lake Commons to be completed.

Reisdorf stated that it is something that she will talk with the public works department and City Manager about.

Pugh asked Velsor what he thought about the recent improvements to Surfside Park.

Velsor informed that he loved the new improvements. He said that he was sad about some of the discussion that took place regarding the playground, but that it makes him smile when he drives by it. He told the commission to keep up the good work.

7. **2025 Goals and Priorities DRAFT Summary**

Reisdorf informed that she took the listed goals and priorities stated from the previous meeting and put them in a list format. She stated that the goal of the meeting was to review the list and make changes.

Mills mentioned item 4a. Low cost ideas for underdeveloped parks including nature play areas that include rocks, stumps, etc. He asked if these types of installations would need to be certified. The commission talked about regional nature reserves that offered nature play areas for kids and asked staff to look into how these organizations were able to do these types of features.

Pieper recommended installing something like a short balance beam to walk on. He asked if a category called “Natural Areas” could be added as 4.d.

Mills talked about having an event planner who can coordinate city events and food trucks. Pugh informed that the city would have to declare a public event in order to invite a food truck to a park.

Kahn asked to add to the new website information about which parks are ADA accessible. She stated that she was worried about the plan to get all ADA accessible needs addressed within five years. She stated that the city currently makes significant accessibility updates every time a park playground is replaced.

Blievernicht stated that she is ok having these improvements scheduled for 10-15 years. She said she just wants to see that this is made a priority and that it is being done right and now fast.

Reisdorf informed that the city recently completed a Long-Term Capital Improvement Plan that ties into the recently approved Long-Term Financial Plan. She said that she could create something similar for lower cost items as the projects listed within the plan are higher cost items.

Kahn recommended that each commissioner pick a priority each to be accountable for and keep moving forward with that one for the year.

Reisdorf stated that one question that the commission should talk through a bit more is what the word accessibility means to each of them as it can mean different things to different people.

The commission asked if they could have a summary of what the public works department plans for each year as far as park maintenance. It was discussed how it may be helpful to understand the department’s annual goals.

Reisdorf informed that the public works department has a set maintenance budget. She stated that she could talk with the Public Works Director and Finance Director as to what those funds focus on. She informed that she could talk with them as well about if it is feasible to put a small amount of funds aside each year for minor projects that the commission can recommend.

Pugh talked about the recent park dedication fund revenue received from the new Lake Minnetonka Flats development. She also said that the Liquor Store puts aside funds each year from its sales for park projects.

The commission talked a little bit about the planning for Phase II of the Lost Lake Commons. Pugh stated that the City Council liked the portable fire pits that were used for the Christmas event at the park. She recommended that the residents of the Lost Lake Villas and the Artessa Coop be included in the discussion on whether wood or gas would be preferred.

The commission talked about maintenance of gas and the cleanup and staff time needed for wood burning. Kahn recommended asking what other cities have done and the pros and cons. She said that it would be important to ask the public works department as well.

Mills said that he preferred wood because of the environmental concerns connected with using gas.

Pugh mentioned that there needs to be more communication with the City Council as it doesn't always seem that they understand what the commission does all the time and the knowledge that the commissioners have on the park system.

Pieper agreed that more could be done to communicate with the City Council, including a regular update to them.

8. **Parks and Open Spaces Program – Review**

Reisdorf stated that she has been working on the city's new website the past several months. She said that with the update, she has been reviewing the Adopt a Green Space Program documents. Reisdorf explained that the commission has wanted to review and clean up some of the documents since some of them are outdated.

Reisdorf said that she updated the application document and the list of available adoption sites for the commission to review and provide comment on. Reisdorf showed them a preview of how the program would be displayed on the new website (that was not live to the public yet). She showed how the spaces would be listed as adopted and/or not adopted.

Pieper asked if the city would be able to assign actual addresses to each park, since only the big parks have addresses. He said it would be easier for people to find the parks that way.

Reisdorf said she would look into it.

Pieper recommended that more pictures be added of parks and open spaces to the website.

Mills talked about how the program need to be revamped and better advertised.

Reisdorf agreed.

Kahn explained that the program has existed for a long time. She said that the POSC provides information on the program at the Farmers Market during the summer. She said it is an opportunity for the commissioners to highlight the parks. She recommended that there be more communications with the adopters and that an annual event be held to recognize their efforts and the sense of community.

Mills said it would be great for adopters to take pictures and send to staff to then be able to share their accomplishments.

9. **Reports**

Staff Reports: Reisdorf provided project updates to the POSC including that the project planning for Lost Lake Commons Phase II and Chester Park would be at the April 10, 2025 meeting. She informed that the POSC would likely have a joint meeting with the City Council in April.

Pieper requested the POSC list of priorities be provided, as well as those of the City Council. He said it would be a great opportunity to review where they both align.

Pugh stated that Mound is a very livable community and has never sought recognition for what it can be. She said it is age friendly and very livable. She explained that more needs to be done with regards to economic development, but that that is being worked on. Pugh said she appreciates the city as a small town and unique place.

City Council Representative: Pugh informed that there is an upcoming fundraiser happening for the Philips Island Town Hall renovation.

Commission Comments: There was discussion on the City Council's request to review the interviewing for vacant POSC seats. Concerns were presented on not having any of the POSC involved in the process anymore and recommended that there be representatives of the POSC involved.

Pieper referenced a letter that he drafted that was included within the packet. He informed that he thought it would be good to send a letter to the schools informing them of opportunities to utilize the city parks and open spaces for educational purposes. He asked for feedback.

Mills said that it was a good idea to send the letter. He made some minor recommended changes. Pieper said he would make the changes and bring back to the next meeting.

Pieper provided an update on a grant that he recently submitted. He said that the grant process is behind schedule, but that he recently was asked to provide additional information about the project. He talked about other upcoming potential grant opportunities.

10. Next Meeting: April 10, 2025

Tentative Discussion Items:

Chester Park

Lost Lake Commons – Phase II

Parks and Open Spaces: List of Protected Spaces

(Add) Park Visit Discussion with Public Works

(Add) Discussion on Top Commission Priorities and Individual Priorities

(Add) Letter to Adopt a Green Space Participants

11. Adjourn

Mills moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:19 PM. Pieper seconded. Motion carried 5-0.