

**Brainerd, MN  
May 11, 2021**

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the special meeting of the Brainerd Park Board was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Board President Yeager.

Upon roll call, the following members were noted as present: Boeder, Schaefer and Yeager. Board member Rushmeyer arrived after roll call. Also present were City staff members Paul Sandy, Jennifer Bergman, Katie Kaufman, Troy Harris and David Chanski, and Widseth staff members Mike Angland, Lindsey Kriens and Ashley Martel.

Park Board President Yeager opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

### **Approval of the Agenda - Approved**

MOVED AND SECONDED BY MEMBERS RUSHMEYER AND BOEDER, DULY CARRIED, TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED.

### **New Business**

#### **Design Standards Kick-Off Meeting – Discussion**

Mr. Sandy gave an overview from previous Park Board discussions of the expectations and purpose for establishing design standards for the park system to include buildings, signage, branding, landscaping, etc. Staff met with Widseth to learn what input is needed from the Park Board and sent out an e-mail prior to the meeting so they could bring their thoughts and ideas.

Mr. Angland said he is excited to be working with the Park Board to establish design standards for the park system and provided an agenda with bullet points for discussion.

Board members shared their thoughts and visions for the parks. They would like to see the park system be a destination within the Brainerd Lakes Area like the lakes and golf courses are, with clean, well-maintained, safe parks with activity options. Make the parks feel new and exciting yet draw on the historical aspect of our parks. Use more maintenance-free materials to reduce ongoing maintenance. Use signage and structures that are similar throughout the system to make them recognizable as Brainerd parks, with more thought given to placement of amenities within the parks. Incorporate the Mississippi River and have greater accessibility to water elements in the parks. Provide more grills where people are likely to use them. Eliminate stumps and dead tree branches and work on beautification. Clean up the Lum Park Beach and make it more usable for residents and visitors. Install wayfinding, park, and trail signs that have the same “brand”. Upgrade trash receptacles. Establish more walkways, paths, and benches along the paths. Provide more accessibility for disabled individuals. Have similar lighting throughout the park system. Have more availability for camping. Do something with the “empty” parks located in neighborhoods and residential areas. Upgrade picnic tables with steel ones. Budget planning.

Mayor Badeaux said the goal is to create spaces where people want to be, and that seating is something that is overlooked in the parks. Mr. Sandy said by setting the standards staff can do work without waiting for the next Board or Council meeting, plus it will provide direction for future staff, Board and Council members when there is turnover. Mr. Chanski said we want to make sure that the Park Board’s vision for the parks is reflected in the Zoning Code that is being rewritten. He reported they are waiting for the legislature to award the \$2.85 million to construct

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the Mississippi Landing Trailhead, so the Park Board will need to be thinking about how it wants that future park to look. He mentioned if the Park Board is interested in utilizing metal roofs other than the standing seam style, the code would need to be changed; also, metal buildings like the existing ones in Lum Park are currently not allowed. Maintenance Foreman Troy Harris likes the design standards approach for future and ongoing maintenance projects. Ms. Kaufman stressed the word quality as stated in the mission statement, and designing diverse areas for community members to organize within. She likes the idea of giving a purpose to each park, having more camping - specifically Trailside potential, and thinks we really need to look at Rotary Riverside Park and how they designed that craftsmanship look.

Mr. Angland thanked everyone for the ideas and thoughts they brought to the meeting. He said the Widseth staff toured every park and shared initial impressions of existing conditions. Inconsistencies jumped out at them, as well as differed maintenance items. He suggested updating the website to make it easier to find the parks. There are beautiful mature trees and a good variety of trees in the parks. They tried to identify distinguishing things about each park and would like to see the history of the parks capitalized on. Prominent entries are a great precedent that has already been set and really draws people in. They loved the look and feel of the timber and stone used at the entrance to Rotary Riverside Park as well as the beautiful walking paths. The stone features in Gregory Park speaks to the history, is timeless and kind of says "Brainerd". Timber accents would be easy to incorporate when building improvements are done. He stressed opportunities with upcoming projects and ongoing maintenance to implement the design standards. The Widseth team has ideas for standardizing signage and wayfinding. Mr. Angland shared images from various parks with some thoughts on improvements. He mentioned improving accessibility when upgrading playground equipment, lighting and security, building improvements, and extending Lum Park Beach to increase capacity. Mr. Angland suggested placing temporary signs in neighborhood park spaces that are currently not being used (Gustafson, O'Brien) to seek input from neighborhood residents as far as what they would like to see there. QR codes could be implemented for electronic access at parks and on trails.

Board members agreed on beige/tan colors and green roofs, and they like the idea of timber and stone accents. Mr. Angland thinks they can begin to populate the materials schedule, and he asked the Board to think about upcoming projects they can use to develop and implement the design standards. Mr. Sandy would like a decision for the Memorial Park building and brought shingle samples. The Board elected to match the color to the new building at Gregory Park except go with a dark green shingle. They would like to incorporate natural wood accents wherever possible. They also agreed on future playground equipment colors that will compliment building colors.

The next design standards workshop will be held between the next two regular Park Board meetings.

## **Adjourn**

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 5:47 p.m.

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Kim Finch  
Administrative Specialist

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