

**ANDOVER CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING – JUNE 22, 2021  
MINUTES**

The Workshop Meeting of the Andover City Council was called to order by Mayor Sheri Bukkila, June 22, 2021 at 6:00 p.m., at the Andover City Hall, 1685 Crosstown Boulevard NW, Andover, Minnesota.

Councilmembers present:                    Jamie Barthel, Ted Butler, Valerie Holthus and Randy Nelson

Councilmember absent:                    None

Park Commission present:                Chair Jim Lindahl, Commissioners Jake Widmyer, Mark Miskowiec, Sophia Newton, Tracy Strombeck, Shane Stenzel, and Scott Roth

Also present:                                City Administrator, Jim Dickinson  
City Engineer/Public Works Director, David Berkowitz  
Assistant Public Works Director, Todd Haas  
Parks & Streets Operations Manager, Jason Baumunk  
Others

***JOINT MEETING WITH PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION***

***A.    DISCUSS THE 2022-2026 CIP FOR PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT***

Mr. Haas presented the playground equipment replacement schedule proposed by staff and approved by the Park and Recreation Commission. He stated, in 2022, Prairie Knoll and Strootman Parks will be funded out of the General Fund and Rose Park will be funded from the cell tower revenues. He highlighted replacements for 2023-2026 requesting three replacements per year.

Mayor Bukkila noted the budget was \$120,000 in 2022 but the report stated \$100,000 for playground replacement. Mr. Dickinson replied \$20,000 is for other replacement items such as backstops and fencing needed in the parks.

Mayor Bukkila asked Council to weigh in on increasing the budget for playground replacement to \$150,000 in 2022.

Councilmember Butler recommended a two to three-year gradual step-up to reach \$150,000. Councilmember Holthus agreed with the current schedule and the gradual step-up. She asked if the cell tower money can be used at any park. Mr. Haas replied it can only be used at the park that has the tower in it. Councilmember Holthus asked the cost of Hawkridge playground. Mr. Haas stated the cost of Hawkridge was around \$40,000 and the community provided the labor. He explained larger playgrounds in parks will be more expensive.

Councilmember Barthel agreed with a gradual step-up schedule and would like to have playgrounds replaced every 15 years.

Councilmember Nelson asked if the parks being considered for replacement are being utilized. Mr. Haas stated staff sends out surveys to the neighborhood and residents provide input on the replacement items. He stated some items can be refurbished.

Councilmember Nelson asked if some parks have been closed due to lack of use. Mr. Baumunk stated equipment was removed from Strootman Park and the neighborhood came back to ask that it be replaced. He said once a playground is installed, it typically remains an amenity in the park.

The Council reached consensus to a gradual step-up increase in funding, and to target getting to \$150,000 by 2024.

***B. DISCUSS THE 2022-2026 CIP FOR NEW TRAIL SEGMENT IMPROVEMENTS***

Mr. Haas noted the Park and Recreation Commission recommended a new trail segment, segment 6, along Coon Creek from Crosstown Boulevard to Hanson Boulevard. He indicated the trail could be supported by a DNR grant. Mr. Haas stated the trail was proposed around 20 years ago, however, the neighbors were against it and the Council decided not to construct it back then.

Councilmember Holthus stated she remembers the residents being against the trail and asked if staff has contacted them again. Mr. Haas said there may have been some turnover. Mr. Berkowitz stated staff would contact the neighbors and see if there was any interest in a trail as a first step.

Commissioner Miskowiec said the Commission wanted to bring this option to the Council's attention and thought it was time to ask the question again. Chair Lindahl stated there is a utility easement along the creek which the trail would go along. He said there is a good likelihood that the neighborhood has turned over and may be supportive of a trail now.

Mr. Berkowitz stated a trail cannot go in a drainage and utility easement. The City would have to acquire a trail easement from the property owners.

Mayor Bukkila asked if Option B connecting the proposed trail to the existing trail system made any sense if the current trail brought you to the same destination. Councilmember Holthus thinks continuing the Tom Anderson Trail along the creek for segment 6 would be wonderful as it is off the busy road. She feels the first step is to talk to the residents. Mr. Berkowitz noted Anoka County would likely not allow a crossing at Hanson Boulevard so the trail would have to lead to an intersection north or south along Hanson Boulevard to properly complete the connection.

Councilmember Butler stated it would be a great trail if you could provide a crossing at Hanson Boulevard, but since that is likely not feasible, this segment is not high on his priority list. Councilmember Barthel concurred.

Chair Lindahl stated trails are a huge asset and the Commission would like to see the trail remain on the list as a future trail in the long-term plan. He recommended acquiring the easements as property owners are willing.

Councilmember Barthel supports keeping it in the long-term plan.

Mayor Bukkila asked if the Council supported contacting residents to see if they support segment 6 or just keep it on the long-term plan. The Council reached consensus to reach out to the residents.

Mr. Berkowitz stated there is not enough money available in the trail fund to build segment 1 along Crosstown Boulevard in 2022 and staff placed it in the CIP for 2023.

Mr. Berkowitz noted another section of trail at the Fields of Winslow Cove along Prairie Road that is not in the CIP. Mr. Berkowitz explained the developer will grade the trail and when the City has the funds, the trail can be paved.

Mr. Berkowitz asked for the Council to prioritize the trail segments for the CIP.

Mayor Bukkila asked if the Park Commission recommended trails for the CIP. Chair Lindahl said the trails are ranked and titled in the Commission's preferred order.

Councilmembers Barthel and Holthus accepted the order the Commission proposed. Councilmember Butler added he has concerns about segments 4 and 5.

Mayor Bukkila stated trail segment 2 is on a road where pedestrians and bicyclists can share the road and cars do not go a high speed. She believes there will be a higher need for segment 3 to be constructed before segment 2. Councilmember Butler is concerned about segment 3 and safely crossing a busy road to get to the trail.

Councilmember Holthus stated she sees kids biking on the shoulders of Verdin Street all the time. Commissioner Strombeck stated there are many people who have to cross Round Lake

Boulevard and Verdin Street to access trails. The Council and Commission discussed segment 3 and other options for safely walking and biking in that area.

Mayor Bukkila asked the Park Commission if they wanted the order to remain or swap segments 2 and 3. The Commission was split 6-1 in favor of keeping the order the same. The Council was split 3-1 in favor of accepting the recommended trail segment order of the Park Commission.

***C. DISCUSS THE 2022-2026 CIP FOR TRAIL RECONSTRUCTION IMPROVEMENTS***

Mr. Haas stated the only trail that needs reconstruction is a Kelsey Round Lake Trail in the 2024-2026 and will include a floating boardwalk replacement. Mr. Berkowitz noted the funding for this project will be from the Capital Equipment Reserve and/or Road and Bridge Funds.

***D. DISCUSS THE 2022-2026 CIP FOR PARKS***

Chair Lindahl stated the Park Commission would like to increase the Parks Miscellaneous Fund from \$15,000 to \$50,000 with \$10,000 allocated to youth safety. He noted the Park Commission recommended placing a pickleball facility in the CIP in 2026 and asking the pickleball community to contribute \$100,000 of the \$300,000 project. Chair Lindahl stated these changes are subject to the City Council reducing the Park Dedication Fee contribution to the Andover Community Center to \$500,000. Chair Lindahl reviewed the items in the current CIP.

Mr. Dickinson stated the additional money in the Parks Miscellaneous Fund would most likely come out of the General Fund and tax levy. He said any individual item over \$10,000 would still come before Council. Mr. Dickinson stated using tax levy gives the Park Commission more flexibility in determining park improvement projects as park dedication funds have limited use.

Councilmember Butler stated he would support a gradual increase of the Parks Miscellaneous Fund. Councilmember Nelson said it is too big of a jump and he would like to see smaller increases.

Councilmember Holthus asked what the Commission meant by youth safety. Chair Lindahl identified fencing dugouts, netting at ballfields, general maintenance in fields, and other projects that pertain to keeping the parks safe for youth sports. Councilmember Holthus supports a gradual increase.

Councilmember Barthel supports a gradual increase and suggested \$25,000 in 2022 then slowly going up to \$50,000.

Commissioner Stenzel stated the Park Commission would like to use this money to support requests brought to them by the community.

Mayor Bukkila noted the City is facing a challenge with the levy due to significant street projects. She stated the City plans improvements and if there is a request by the community in the parks, the Commission can add it to the CIP and use it as an opportunity to educate the public on the process.

Councilmember Butler stated he supports \$25,000 for 2022 with increases being discussed each year. The Council concurred with that proposal.

Mayor Bukkila explained the Park Commission approved \$1 million to go towards the Andover Community Center (ACC) in 2018. She noted she was not in favor of it at that time. She stated Park Dedication Fees were adjusted to accommodate for the ACC contribution and still allow for the completion of park projects. Mayor Bukkila stated if the ACC contribution was lowered, then it would also make sense to lower the park project list and Park Dedication Fees by the same amount.

Councilmember Butler stated Mayor Bukkila said it well. He understands the Park Commission wants to complete projects, however, he does not support renegotiating the Park Dedication contribution. Councilmembers Holthus, Butler, and Nelson agreed.

Commissioner Strombeck asked if the Council would consider incrementally lowering the contribution and having the City fund projects that benefit the City Campus.

Councilmember Butler said that someday development will slow down, and less money will be in the Park Dedication Fund. He said there will still be park needs and the Council will have to decide how to fund them at that time.

Commissioner Strombeck asked if the ACC payment schedule can be extended. Mayor Bukkila replied no. Mr. Dickinson said the contribution is based on Park Dedication Fees collected September to September and split on a 50/50 basis. He said it does not have to be 50/50 but would recommend 50/50 with an annual cap.

Mayor Bukkila noted the contribution is being paid off quicker than expected because of the amount of development.

Commissioner Miskowiec said the Commission discussed not building anything in the next few years because of high construction costs and paying off the ACC debt early. He asked if it would save the City any money. The Council supported the Commission paying off the debt early but did indicate there is no interest charged.

Chair Lindahl reviewed projects in the Parks CIP for 2023 and later. Mr. Berkowitz explained the Parks CIP will need to go back to the Park Commission for review since the Council does not agree to reducing the contribution to the ACC.

Mayor Bukkila asked if the current warming house at Prairie Knoll needed to be replaced. Mr. Haas explained it needs to be enlarged. He said the building is 20 years old and the park is heavily used. Councilmember Butler supports the expansion of the warming house and asked the Commission to contact the hockey association to see if they can contribute to the cost.

Councilmember Holthus asked if a portable warming house would be appropriate for this location. The Commission has not discussed a portable warming house at that location.

Mayor Bukkila recommended contacting associations that use the park to see if they could assist by putting some money into it.

***RECESS AND RECONVENE***

Mayor Bukkila recessed the Workshop at 7:20 p.m.

Mayor Bukkila reconvened the Workshop at 7:30 p.m.

***D. DISCUSS THE 2022-2026 CIP FOR PARKS - continued***

Chair Lindahl explained the Commission requested \$50,000 to complete miscellaneous projects instead of placing them as a line item on the CIP. Commissioner Stenzel stated the Commission would like the additional \$10,000 to come out of the Park Dedication Fund and not tied to a tax levy and not being a specific line item in the CIP. The Council supported that proposal.

***E. DISCUSS ANDOVER COMMUNITY CENTER/REQUEST FOR INFORMATION BY THE COMMISSION***

The City Council is requested to discuss information requested from the Park and Recreation Commission regarding the Andover Community Center and direct staff on how to proceed.

Chair Lindahl stated the Park Commission would like to receive additional information from the ACC since they are contributing \$1 million to the expansion. He noted they have requested information and have not received it.

Mayor Bukkila understands the Park Commission feels like a stakeholder. She said when the \$1 million was agreed upon, there were no expectations for information or oversight with the ACC. Mayor Bukkila said with the elimination of the ACC Advisory Commission, the Council needs to decide goals, review, and oversight.

Commissioner Roth stated they feel the ACC falls under the Park and Recreation Commission umbrella. He said it would be good for them to know how the ACC is doing on a quarterly basis so the Commission can be accountable to the community. He would like to see utilization rates and budget.

Commissioner Miskowiec would like to know pickleball usage information so they can decide how important outdoor courts are.

Commissioner Widmyer said he would like to provide input and receive information because they are contributing funds to the ACC. He would like to see what Andover residents are getting from the ACC.

Commissioner Newton said the Park Commission approves field schedules and does not review ACC schedules.

Commissioner Strombeck stated she feels the ACC is its own island. She said she would like to bridge the gap between the ACC and community.

Councilmember Holthus said the Commission is asking for what the Advisory Commission requested in the past and does not see a problem providing those reports. She recommended sharing the report the Council receives with the Commission.

Councilmember Butler stated the intent is to provide more information and the ACC is working with Council on providing information the Council wants to see. He explained it is a transition period.

Mayor Bukkila said the Council has received information monthly and they are tweaking the reports, so the Council will be getting the information they want. She stated they will share that information with the Commission.

Mr. Dickinson reminded the Council he asked for 6 months to make the transition from the ACC Advisory Commission to providing information directly to Council and the Park Commission. He noted staff are working on providing monthly reports to the Council and intend to provide quarterly reports to the Park Commission. Mr. Dickinson explained the ACC Director reports directly to the City Administrator and not to the Council or Commission putting the accountability on the City Administrator. He anticipates the transition process being complete by July.

Mayor Bukkila would like the Commission to be on the receiving end of suggestions from the community for recreational programming. She said it could be an agenda item or the Commission can come up with a way to gather community input.

Mayor Bukkila said information is coming. She asked the Commission if there is information they are not receiving that they would like to get. Commissioner Roth stated the Commission has not received any information. Mayor Bukkila stated the item should be included on their agenda with a staff present. Mr. Dickinson indicated it is the goal to provide the Commission with a quarterly report and staff are working on giving the Council the information they need first. He

noted the ACC has been an item on the City Council Workshop agendas for the past three months and the information is available in the agenda packet. Mr. Dickinson also stated the Commission has been provided the ACC Facility Update Reports the past few months. That report lists the upcoming events, track usage and current programs.

***F. DISCUSS USER FEES FOR USE OF PARKS/FACILITIES BY ASSOCIATIONS/GROUPS***

Chair Lindahl said this item came up with the Commission to see if they could generate additional funds for field maintenance. Commissioner Stenzel stated users of the ACC pay fees and other sports do not pay fees to use the fields. He is not for gouging kids but there is a need for replacement and repair costs. Commissioner Stenzel said this is a discussion item to see if there is an appetite for an outdoor usage fee. He explained other cities are charging user fees. Chair Lindahl stated the fees would go into a special fund to go back into the outdoor facilities for maintenance, repair, and replacement.

Mayor Bukkila asked the Council if they were interested in pursuing a user fee.

Councilmember Holthus asked what cities charge fees. Chair Lindahl said Blaine, Coon Rapids, Ramsey, St. Francis, and Champlin charge some sort of fee.

The Council did not support user fees at this time but may consider it in the future.

Mr. Berkowitz stated the City has an additional maintenance fee if associations ask for additional maintenance for a tournament or beyond the regular schedule.

Commissioner Strombeck asked the schedule for crowning ballfields. Mr. Baumunk replied they are crowned on an as needed basis based on wear.

***G. DISCUSS PROGRAMMING ACTIVITIES***

Commissioner Stenzel would like the Commission to look at how to program the parks for recreation. He asked how the City is serving those who do not participate in sports. He suggested working with Community Education and the Y to get people into the parks. Commissioner Stenzel asked if the City was doing well with recreation and can they do more on the programming side.

Mayor Bukkila said recreation programming reminds her of Community Education. Chair Lindahl said the City used to contribute to Community Education and when the City stopped, the communication and collaboration stopped.

Councilmember Holthus asked if the Commission had ideas they would like to share. Chair Lindahl said they would like to hold movies in the park, food truck event, art in the park, yoga in

the park, nature walks, and canoeing down the Rum. Mayor Bukkila stated this feels like Community Education.

Commissioner Stenzel stated recreation programming is a service that costs money but also adds value. He hears young families asking what they can do with their kids. Commissioner Stenzel thinks there will be people interested in yoga in the park and thinks the Y can facilitate that, or a part-time worker or intern.

Councilmember Butler asked if recreation programming should be a City or Community Education responsibility. He explained Andover has made the decision to not include a recreation department as a City function. Councilmember Butler suggested tapping into Community Education. Mr. Dickinson pointed out the City needs a board member for the Community Education Advisory Board.

Mayor Bukkila stated she is open to exploring working with Community Education and tasked the Park Commission to look into it.

Councilmember Holthus asked if the movie in the park was popular in 2020. Mr. Berkowitz estimated 200-250 people attended.

Commissioner Strombeck asked if the Andover Athletic Association (AAA) could incorporate some programming. Councilmember Butler responded AAA is focused on the sports they offer.

Commissioner Stenzel asked if the Council would support movies in the park. Mayor Bukkila asked if movies in the park could be supported through charitable gambling. Mr. Dickinson said he would look into it.

## ***H. OTHER BUSINESS***

Mr. Sutherland stated the ACC's facility schedule is posted on the website and frequently updated.

Resident Hope Luedtke suggested a tour of the Community Center one day a month so people can know what is in there.

## ***DISCUSS 2022 STREET RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT/22-2***

The City Council is requested to discuss the method of assessment for the 2022 Street Reconstruction Project. Mr. Berkowitz stated the City would like to meet with the neighborhoods in July and need direction from the Council on how to proceed with assessments. The two developments, Timber Rivers and Eldorado Estates, have a variety of lot sizes that are making the assessment process a challenge.

Mr. Berkowitz explained staff came up with options for assessments. He stated the project can

be looked at as one or be broken into sections. Mr. Berkowitz walked through each method of assessment: unit, front footage, and area, if the project is assessed as a whole and if broken into sections.

Councilmember Butler asked the historical assessment process. Mr. Berkowitz stated the majority of assessments are based on unit calculation.

Councilmember Butler asked if the assessment manual required the City to choose one method or if they can select a blended approach. Mr. Berkowitz replied the manual dictates the types of methods the City can use and does not indicate whether you can blend methods.

The Council discussed how to break up the project to make the assessment equitable.

Councilmember Butler suggested using the unit assessment except for the smaller lots.

Councilmember Holthus stated the method of breaking lots into sections has been done before in the 161<sup>st</sup> Avenue and Verdin Street area. Mayor Bukkila stated that project was easier because the lots in each section were similar.

Mayor Bukkila said the South Coon Creek project was also difficult and the process became very arbitrary. Mr. Dickinson said the South Coon Creek project was based on front footage and unit.

Councilmember Holthus suggested breaking the project into four sections. Councilmember Barthel agreed and recommended using the unit method in each section.

Councilmember Butler said the sections selected seem arbitrary and there are variations of lot sizes within the sections. He proposed 50% assessment on frontage and 50% assessment on unit. Councilmember Butler stated this method shows the City is balancing the fact that everyone uses the streets with the amount of street front the property has. He said it takes away the issue of residents questioning which section they are in.

Mr. Berkowitz said the cul-de-sacs will benefit the most. Mr. Dickinson asked if there was a clause in the assessment manual that says cul-de-sac lots are measured at the setback. Mr. Berkowitz replied there is not a clause that states that.

Mr. Dickinson proposed breaking the lots into acreage. Councilmember Holthus stated she does not like that method because everyone uses the streets.

Councilmember Butler stated there are two philosophies: one is that streets are only used so much for one home and the other is that bigger lots require more street inherently. He stated that is why he proposed the hybrid assessment of unit and frontage.

Mayor Bukkila directed staff to continue to work on the process. Mr. Berkowitz stated staff will

analyze Councilmember Butler's hybrid method and Mr. Dickinson's acreage method.

Councilmember Nelson said he likes the acreage idea because it justifies a larger lot paying more.

Mayor Bukkila suggested a flat fee and then an add on based on parameters.

Councilmember Barthel stated there is no ideal number and the Council needs to pick something and move forward.

Mr. Dickinson suggested adding a workshop before a regular Council Meeting.

Mr. Dickinson said Andover assesses 25% of the project cost where other cities charge 50-60%. Staff will review the assessment process and bring it back to the Council in July or August.

#### ***FIELDS OF WINSLOW COVE TRAILS & OUTLOTS***

Mr. Berkowitz displayed the proposed trails at the Fields of Winslow Cove. He stated the City has the option to make the trails public or keep them private and Home Owner Association (HOA) maintained. The Council reached consensus to make the trails public but eliminate some of the minor trails.

Mr. Berkowitz stated the developer wants the outlots to be City maintained and the City is suggesting they remain HOA maintained. The City will maintain the stormwater ponds. Council reached consensus to have the outlots HOA maintained.

#### ***ANDOVER COMMUNITY CENTER MAY 2021 UPDATE***

Mr. Dickinson provided an update on the Community Center for May of 2021. He explained the comparison from 2021 to 2020 is not relevant because the Community Center was only open for three months year-to-date in 2020. He provided a facility update and stated staff are making an effort to market and fill non-prime hours. Mr. Dickinson stated staff are looking at software to make facility management and scheduling easier for the ACC and public.

Mr. Dickinson provided an update on programming stating the YMCA is exploring with local churches to provide weekend drop off programming and other programs for teens. The YMCA is placing a priority on senior programming as most seniors purchase memberships. Mr. Dickinson stated the City is allocating time for seniors to use the City Hall senior facility and will fill the remaining time with rentals.

Mr. Dickinson reviewed the ACC financials, rentals, staffing, and usage statistics. Mayor Bukkila asked for the usage statistics to be presented by facility instead of user.

**2022 BUDGET DEVELOPMENT DISCUSSION**

Mr. Dickinson noted the Board of Review data projected a 9% increase in the taxable market value; however, the City will use a conservative 5% increase for preliminary 2022 tax rate calculations.

Mr. Dickinson briefly reviewed the Council's budget goals and progress made on the goals. Mr. Dickinson anticipates the Fire Department will be requesting new staff. Mr. Dickinson noted anticipated retirements and staff vacancies within the next few years and Human Resources will continue to focus on succession planning, utilization of internship opportunities, continued cross-training of staff, and/or possible realignment of resources.

Mr. Dickinson reviewed the Road and Bridge Fund and indicated Administration will be proposing a 5% increase for the Road and Bridge levy for 2022 to \$1,409,579. Mr. Dickinson reviewed the levies, fund balance, and options for funding streets. In order to make an impact on street conditions, staff suggests a bonding scenario. Council discussed options for funding streets and will continue discussions at future workshops.

***OTHER ITEMS***

There was none.

***ADJOURNMENT***

***Motion*** by Holthus, Seconded by Barthel, to adjourn the meeting at 9:55 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Shari Kunza, Recording Secretary  
*TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*