

Special Wahpeton City Council Meeting
August 17, 2022
5:15 p.m. (Joint meeting with the Wahpeton Park Board)

Council Present: Mayor Lambrecht, Bohn, Goltz, McNary, Schillinger, Unruh, and Woods II

Absent: Fobb & Perdue

Staff Present: Huwe, Miranowski, and DeVries

Wahpeton Park Board Present: President Brian Watson, Tyler Gripentrog, Roger Jensen and Deb Tobias

Wahpeton Park Board Staff Present: Edwardson, Holtz, Diekman, Schmaltz, and Metcalf

Others Present: Frank Stanko-Daily News and Zach Hatting-Interstate Engineering. Wahpeton Community Development Corp. Board Members Dale Rubish, Brad Pauly and Perry Miller. Approximately 16 additional members of the public attended the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order by Mayor Lambrecht 5:15 p.m.

Facility Concept – Lambrecht explained tonight’s meeting is intended to consider a new site concept to locate a community recreation center in Chahinkapa Park at the current 11-acre softball site. Lambrecht acknowledged and expressed appreciation to all the individuals in the room that have worked diligently to develop a proposal for a community recreation center, then turned the meeting over to Roger Jensen of the Wahpeton Park Board.

Jensen provided five large to-scale arial photos of the current softball site. Jensen explained the regulation field size for softball has changed requiring the outfield fence to be located 300’ from home plate, the four softball fields in Chahinkapa Park all have a fence distance of 275’ or less. A minimum of four regulation size fields are required to host state tournaments. The current fields are useful for “little league” recreation programs but will require updates in fencing and irrigation in the near future.

Jensen presented a concept for consideration to site a new recreation center in the Park. Jensen referenced to-scale cutouts of the previous recreation center concept to illustrate potential building sites, access points and room for expansion. Jensen said adding an indoor recreation facility could create a unique recreation destination corridor beginning with the Kidder Recreation Area moving to the Bois de Sioux Golf Course, Chahinkapa Zoo, the recreation center, Jim Sturdevant Football Field and John Randall Baseball Field. Group discussion explained the new facility could be part of a recreation facilities plan that would address current concerns with the pool and ball fields while adding new indoor amenities in a cost efficient, comprehensive, purpose-built plan. General discussion on the merits of utilizing existing public land for public use. Brad Pauly asked what is the city’s position on moving forward. Lambrecht responded this is the first step for the council and park board in discussion on investing in assets to grow our community, serve our residents and improve the quality of life for residents in the future.

At 5:45 p.m. the group walked from Hughes Shelter to softball diamond No. 1 to visualize the site. Jensen suggested a professional recreation facilities designer be engaged to create options, identify trade-offs and optimize the use of public space. Goltz stated he felt this was a better location than previously presented and would like to learn more about the relationships between the multiple user groups including the schools and parks & recreation with an emphasis on youth. Lambrecht concluded the meeting with an analogy of building a tree of community support for the project with the council as the trunk, residents, committees, and user groups as the branches and leaves. Lambrecht encouraged people to contact him

with questions and suggestions. The topic will be included on the next city council agenda to determine the next steps in the process.

Motion by Goltz, seconded by Woods, to adjourn the meeting at 5:56 p.m.

Mayor Brett Lambrecht

Darcie Huwe, Auditor