



**City of Newport  
Park Board Meeting  
February 27, 2014**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

**2. ROLL CALL**

Board Members present – Tom Aguilar-Downing; Emily White; Marge Meconis; Anita Perkins; Laura Duffey;

Board Members absent –

Also present –John Neska, Executive Director; Tim Geraghty, Council Liaison

**3. APPROVAL OF PARK BOARD MINUTES**

**A. Park Board Minutes of January 23, 2014 Regular Meeting**

**Chairperson Aguilar-Downing** - There were two points that I saw. On page 3, under the Executive Director's Report where he says "Her and her husband " it should be "She and her husband."

**Motion by Meconis, seconded by Perkins, to approve the Park Board Minutes of January 23, 2014 as amended. With 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, the motion carried.**

**4. REVIEW 2014 GOALS**

The Park Board reviewed the 2014 Goals as outlined in the February 27, 2014 Park Board Packet.

**Executive Director Neska** - Just so you know, under the goal for Signage at Frances and Henry James Pocket Park, remove Mary Ann Newman from the contacts.

**Marge Meconis** - Was the disc golf course added to this?

**Chairperson Aguilar-Downing** - It was added outside of the meeting and is on the agenda tonight.

**Motion by White, seconded by Meconis, to approve the 2014 Goals and move forward to the City Council. With 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, the motion carried.**

**5. REPORT ON 2014 WINTER FAMILY FUN NIGHT**

**Chairperson Aguilar-Downing** - Many of us were there so I'll open the floor for observations and discussions.

**Emily White** - I thought everyone seemed to have a good time. The fire pit and fire were good and the kids seemed to have a good time. I was disappointed that we didn't have more people there but we were competing with a cold night plus the Olympics. I think everyone that was there had a really good time.

**Chairperson Aguilar-Downing** - It was slightly less than last year but it was also a lot colder than last year. We had our own Newport Olympics, a speed skating contest. We had two different heats for the younger and older kids. There was a little kid in the first heat that everyone cheered on so that was neat. There was a really fast kid in the second heat that wiped out around the corner but picked himself up and ended up getting first place. We had good music. I would like to

thank Newport on the Move, they provided a lot of staffing and help. I think it was successful and we'll do it again next year.

## **6. UPDATE ON 2014 PHOTO CONTEST**

**Chairperson Aguilar-Downing** - The deadline is coming up. I have three judges in line already. There are three different categories, the best nature shot, best people/animal shot, and best black and white shot. Each category will have a youth and adult division. We'll have deadlines for each season. The deadline for the winter competition is March 31st. If you have a photo that you would like to submit, you can email it to Renee Helm at rhelm@newportmn.com or you can drop it off at City Hall. Brian North from the North Pole Restaurant, myself, and Jamie Smith from the Library and Community Center will be judges.

**Marge Meconis** - I had spoken with Bess Coy at East Ridge and she said would be willing to judge as well. She is an Art Teacher at East Ridge and runs the Photography Class.

**Chairperson Aguilar-Downing** - Good. The contest is open to all Newport residents and the photos must be taken in or from Newport Parks. The rules are on the City's website. The winners will be displayed on the City's website and several venues around town. There will be a cash prize at the end of the year for the overall best photo. Renee had a question as to whether or not Board members can submit.

**Marge Meconis** - No.

**Emily White** - No.

**Chairperson Aguilar-Downing** - Ok.

**Executive Director Neska** - I think it would still be nice to see pictures even if they were from the Park Board.

**Marge Meconis** - So maybe we can submit pictures but not for judging. We wouldn't want to give the appearance of favoritism.

**Chairperson Aguilar-Downing** - Ok. I have some posters for the contest if you could post them throughout the City. I'll be getting them out to newspapers and the TV station.

**Anita Perkins** - Does it say on the poster that it's only open to Newport residents?

**Chairperson Aguilar-Downing** - No, I couldn't fit it on there but it does say that on the website.

## **7. PROPOSAL FOR DISC GOLF IN LOVELAND PARK**

**Chairperson Aguilar-Downing** - When I was distributing posters for the Winter Family Fun Night at the Post Office Building and stopped in at Everyday Disc Golf which is owned by Tom Marcus. We talked about the possibility of disc golf in the parks and I asked Tom if he would like to come join us and give us some thoughts on it. We support local businesses but if we were to go for something it would go out for bid so there's no guarantee he would get it.

**Tom Marcus, Owner of Everyday Disc Golf** - I've been here for about two years now. When I first came here I came before the Council. Part of my business is the promotion of disc golf and I think it would be great to see a course in Newport. I think Loveland Park would be great. I was just hoping to start a conversation about it and see the level of interest and budgeting for it. I would propose a nine-hole course at Loveland Park and maybe start by the ice rink. The hardest part would probably be carving the holes from the woods. I don't have a formal proposal. Tom mentioned there probably isn't a lot of money but could be budgeted for in the future. Baskets cost about \$500 each. I would recommend concrete tees, signage, etc. I think you could get a course installed for \$10,000.

**Marge Meconis** - I remember when you first moved in I had stopped to talk with you and we were talking about Loveland and if there would be room to have a course there. Did you get a chance to walk the land?

**Mr. Marcus** - I've been up there a couple times.

**Marge Meconis** - Are you proposing doing it on the upper level?

**Mr. Marcus** - Yes, I'm not sure where else you would go.

**Marge Meconis** - I don't either. I walked it with my son who plays disc golf and we were saying the same thing.

**Mr. Marcus** - It wouldn't just be that open area. I don't think the park gets used enough and I think it would help get people there. I'm looking for feedback to see what the level of interest is from you and the City.

**Chairperson Aguilar-Downing** - Are there other courses in the region?

**Mr. Marcus** - Yes, Cottage Grove, Hastings, and South St. Paul all have them. They're all over the metro.

**Laura Duffey** - I would like to see an estimate of how many people might be attracted to a new course especially since there are other courses nearby.

**Marge Meconis** - Those other courses are really well used.

**Emily White** - You could do it in the winter?

**Mr. Marcus** - Yes.

**Laura Duffey** - The Park Board's annual Buckthorn Day is done in Bailey School Forest now but I think eventually we'll need to move over to Loveland.

**Mr. Marcus** - That was actually going to be part of my proposal.

**Chairperson Aguilar-Downing** - Are there disc golf leagues?

**Mr. Marcus** - Yes.

**Chairperson Aguilar-Downing** - Do you have contacts for them? It gets back to Laura's question about use.

**Mr. Marcus** - Yes. I don't think you need to be worried about it not being used.

**Chairperson Aguilar-Downing** - If there is a league involved and we get volunteers from there to help build the course and clear some buckthorn.

**Mr. Marcus** - Yes, I've worked with some players in Cottage Grove.

**Chairperson Aguilar-Downing** - I think it would help if when people come in to your shop you mention this and gauge interest.

**Mr. Marcus** - I've already been doing that and they seem excited. Where do we go from here?

**Emily White** - How can we gauge interest? Maybe through the newsletter?

**Chairperson Aguilar-Downing** - I think we're thinking about this for 2015.

**Marge Meconis** - I don't think you can think about this as a City thing, I think it's more regional. People travel a lot to do this. They tend to go where the free courses are. I've heard the Cottage Grove course is extremely busy.

**Mr. Marcus** - Yes and that's difficult to keep up with at times. My friends and I are working with the City of Cottage Grove on making sure the course can be the best it can be. I like your ideas of asking for support and see where the residents stand.

**Chairperson Aguilar-Downing** - John, do you have anything to add?

**Executive Director Neska** - One thing that came to mind is tying it in with Ashland. They bought several homes near 4th and 5th Avenues for a buffer and maintain it. That's something to think about.

**Mr. Marcus** - Thank you for your time and I'll keep in touch.

**8. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT** - Nothing to report.

**9. BOARD REPORTS**

**A. Marge Meconis** - Nothing to report.

**B. Anita Perkins** - Nothing to report.

**C. Emily White** - Nothing to report.

**D. Laura Duffey** - Nothing to report.

**10. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

**Marge Meconis** - Did anything ever happen with the development on Bailey?

**Executive Director Neska** - I believe it just went away. Nothing ever came of it.

**Chairperson Aguilar-Downing** - I went in to Bailey School Forest and the path was cleared so thank you to you and your crew for making that accessible to all of us.

**Emily White** - I had been driving around on Friday and there wasn't a town that I drove through that compared to us as far as plowed streets. I called up to Public Works and left a message on Friday to thank the guys for that.

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion by Duffey, seconded by White, to adjourn the Park Board Meeting at 7:29 P.M. With 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, the motion carried.**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Tom Aguilar-Downing, Chairperson

Respectfully submitted,

Renee Helm  
Executive Analyst