

Maple Grove Citizens Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

November 18, 2015

Call to Order	The meeting was called to order by CAC member Bob Joiner at 7:00 p.m.		
Members Present	John Beacham Bob Joiner Joan Masberg	Leslie Bender Harry Kennedy Joe Picket	Lorraine Gresser Steven Maas Don Skoglund
Members Absent	Stephen Gill, Tim Klevar, Kevin Rebman		
Others Present	Councilmember Erik Johnson, CAC City Staff Liaison Mike Opatz, City of Maple Grove Parks and Recreation Program Specialist Katie Lallier, and Maple Grove Youth Football Association members Jason Pitts, Mike Wherry, and Dave Malenke.		
Minutes	The minutes for the October 14, 2015 meeting were approved.		
Area Reports	<p>John Beacham recognized Mike Opatz's help in facilitating getting info to the Maple Grove Police regarding egging of homes in his neighborhood. Mike also was of assistance in coordinating with appropriate City staff to get a stop sign in John's neighborhood.</p> <p>Joan Masberg commented on having a greater sense of police patrol when walking in the Central Park area in a positive way. She said it might just be her own awareness or increased patrols. Councilmember Johnson said he thought there was close to full staffing of police officers, more Community Service Officers, as well as the black and white police vehicles being more visible.</p>		
Councilmember Judy Hanson	<p>Newly appointed Councilmember Judy Hanson was introduced and welcomed. She is a former member of CLIC/CAC. Councilmember Hanson stated that she wants to learn what CAC is doing. She remarked on some of the groups/ideas that came out of CLIC/CAC, such as the Arbor Committee, history museum and boulevard plantings and is aware of some of their past projects like review of a fitness center.</p> <p>Councilmember Hanson asked what CAC has been doing. It was stated the group has become more project focused with sports dome and the second sheet of ice. A number of years ago the group spent about a year reviewing/evaluating a potential ward system. Through that process it was felt that CAC may have pushed the envelope with the City Council. Since then the Committee has taken a more conservative approach. In addition, the City Council selects the chair of the committee versus in the past when the committee selected the chair themselves. In addition, CAC oversees the community survey which takes place every five years. The committee's focus has changed as Maple Grove has become more</p>		

established and is looking at broader topics.

Councilmember Hanson asked about Capital Improvement Projects which was part of CLIC in the past. It was explained that due to budget constraints the funds allocated for CIP gradually went away and correspondingly so did those duties for CLIC/CAC.

This year CAC has primarily been looking at various athletic associations and their operations. It is felt that CAC will find common themes from the associations' presentations. CAC will put together summaries and possibly make some recommendations related to the youth sports associations. The suggestion was also made to have a future presentation by the Parks and Recreation Department.

Councilmember Hanson said she is hoping to find some good avenues to get feedback from the community. She commented on how CAC has been known as the "eyes and ears". She thought the group might have some input on Planning Commission matters. It was stated that CAC is not necessarily asked input on those items, but in general the CAC Council liaison has been open to CAC input. It was stated that discussion would be welcomed on how to find ways for CAC to assist in getting public input. Feedback from the City Council is important, but CAC understands the need to stay within boundaries.

The statement was made that at the second City Council meeting in December the Arts Center would be making a presentation and could eventually be requesting funding from the City for a future facility.

**Presentation by
Maple Grove
Youth Football
Association**

At the CAC's invitation, three board members of the Maple Grove Youth Football Association (MGYFA) were in attendance to provide an overview of their association and to share their philosophy and approach to various factors regarding the athletes, parents and coaches.

The MGYFA representatives provided a handout of their presentation which included: association background, demographics, team selection, game format, coach selection and expectations, goals, structure, facilities and equipment, community service, and future vision. They started their presentation by walking through the handout. Dave Malenke was the main presenter for MGYFA.

MGYFA is a nonprofit, volunteer organization that was established five years ago through private funding sources. MGYFA teams are made up of 2nd through 8th graders in the Maple Grove High School area. MGYFA is a member of the Lake Minnetonka Athletic Association (LMAA) with eight other communities in the western suburbs.

The MGYFA representatives then reviewed the demographics of the team

with 500-600 players per season; 30-36 teams; and 125-150 coaches.

With regard to selecting teams, the 2nd through 4th graders are formed by school and neighborhood, so kids are playing with friends primarily. The 5th through 8th grade teams have criteria to provide for balanced teams based on physical abilities, weight, and skill. MGYFA feels this structure provides fair and balanced competition as well as player development. A player who is better than others may inspire others to do well. In addition to the fact that one team isn't head and shoulders above the others. They talked about "black striped" players being those who are bigger/weight more than other teammates, and they do not carry the ball. For safety each team gets an equal number of black striped players, and weight is balanced amongst the teams.

They provided an overview of game format for 2nd grade, 3rd through 6th grade, and 7th through 8th grade. Second grade is primarily teaching the basics, and they play flag football. Usually the coaches are high school varsity players.

MGYFA places an emphasis on participations and wants everyone to play. Players are guaranteed 50% playing time with a six-play rotation schedule. Therefore, if a player sits out for six plays, they are guaranteed to play the next six.

MGYFA has EMTs present at every LMAA game and MGYFA practice. The question was asked about concussions and awareness that has become more prevalent recently. MGYFA stated that baseline concussion testing is offered to 7th and 8th graders. Testing is not conducted on 2nd through 6th graders as their brains develop so fast.

MGYFA coaches, directors and board members are required to pass a background check, and only badged coaches are allowed on sidelines during games and practices. Coaches are required to be USA Football certified before each season as well.

As part of their presentation MGYFA provided a section of their code of conduct. They have three codes of conduct—one for coaches, one for parents, and one for players. The question was asked about adhering to the code and how violations are handled. MGYFA reps stated that coaches have been removed as necessary. If parents or kids violate the code of conduct, kids will sit out a game. Parents have been talked to, and they will take kids out of the program if necessary. The comment was made that MapleBrook Soccer has a conduct program that is mandatory for parents. MGYFA has considered such a program.

MGYFA has established a players/coaches box to control parental interaction. They have found that as kids get older there are fewer issues with the parents. There is also a process parents can go through if they

have an issue with a coach. In addition, coaches have meetings with parents at the beginning of the season. The question was asked about a coach having an issue with a parent. MGYFA has found minimal issues with parents toward coaches.

The question was asked about teams not playing by the rules. Coaches review, and LMAA board members are usually at games, and if needed, can address at that time. Teams are self-monitoring and hold each other accountable. Coaches, referees and captains have pre-game and half time meetings as well. MGYFA stated that not playing against other Maple Grove teams takes out some of the animosity/competitiveness. The goal is to keep kids coming back and having fun. In their football program, they do not cut players.

MGYFA briefly reviewed the overview of the Lake Minnetonka Athletic Association.

With regard to facilities and equipment, MGYFA stated that helmets are provided to all youth players.

MGYFA players and families have various activities as part of community service, such as food drive and selling/wearing pink socks as a cancer fundraiser. There is also a scholarship program for families in need; MGYFA wants to get kids on the field.

CAC member Harry Kennedy reaffirmed the quality of the Maple Grove Youth Football Association.

The question was raised about fees. All dues include a helmet with a deposit check required to ensure MGYFA gets the helmet back. 2nd grade fees are capped at \$65. 3rd through 6th grade is \$175 if they sign up early, after that \$225. 7th/8th grade cost is \$225 for early sign up, \$275 after.

MGYFA costs include equipment, referees, EMTs, camp activities, and spirit wear. Some money is required by players for an end of the season party.

The question was asked about insurance coverage. LMAA insurance covers the member associations.

The statement was made that parents acknowledge the possibility of injuries. MGYFA does not play tournaments for safety reasons; there is too much of a chance for injury. In addition, there is usually 2-3 night at least between games.

The question was asked if parents ask about a weight limit division. MGYFA said it has been considered, but they do well managing the

distribution of weight on the teams. The current model of balancing the teams works for them.

The presentation/discussion moved onto a youth sports vision for fields, diamonds, and facilities near the Maple Grove Senior High School. MGYFA talked about a large storage shed recently completed for helmets, equipment, etc.

MGYFA stated there is a lack of high quality athletic field space in Maple Grove—lights, scoreboard, announcers, grass infield for baseball diamonds were some of the items mentioned. They stated probably the best space in Maple Grove is at Gleason Fields. MGYFA would like to be part of future improvements if possible. They have a 5-6 year vision to work with other sports associations (baseball, soccer, lacrosse) to utilize space at the high school. The statement was made that maybe CAC could help navigate the waters and explore possibilities.

Councilmember Johnson pointed out that other athletic associations such as hockey and basketball had financing commitments for facilities such as the sports dome, community gymnasium at Maple Grove Middle School, and second sheet of ice at the Community Center. Councilmember Johnson suggested that MGYFA talk to other associations.

MGYFA said they would like a better understanding of what the City of Maple Grove can influence/drive and what falls under the school district's purview. With the question asked of how MGYFA goes about getting things done in Maple Grove yet understanding there are three high schools/cities in the district. The statement was made that it all comes down to financing.

MGYFA was asked how they see the growth of their organization. They said concussions have become a big factor and safety measures are being taken. If the football numbers go down, then youth are playing other sports and that's why MGYFA wants to work with other organizations for fields, facilities and improvements. The question was asked about what they consider a high quality field. To which they talked briefly about field quality and stated making the best playing conditions for what they have.

MGYFA needs to identify their needs and resources to help maintain facilities and who is going to be responsible. They need to explore the possibilities and work with other youth sports organizations. MGYFA plans to have a face to face meeting in 2016.

CAC stated they would be open to hearing from the collective organizations with the key factor being financing. The statement was made that the school district needs to provide the land; they will not

provide funds. The City needs a sound, sustainable plan to review to consider financing.

MGYFA stated they feel the school district is the biggest hurdle as they have to be fair to the other communities in the district. MGYFA is going to have to be unified, tenacious and patient.

The CAC members thanked the MGYFA for attending and their presentation. MGYFA was told that Mike Opatz is the contact if MGYFA wants to share any additional information with CAC.

**Review CAC
New Member
Interview
Process**

Mike Opatz distributed a memo that provided the interview schedule of 13 CAC candidates. There will be three groups of four CAC members to conduct the interviews. The December 9th CAC meeting will start at 6:30 p.m. with the first interviews starting at 6:45 p.m. A week prior to the interviews Mike will mail the candidates the interview schedule, interview questions and past CAC work plans.

It was suggested that CAC give thought to how they are going to make final selections and should they give consideration to geographic distribution. Possibly some sort of ratings and provide comments to share when reconvening as a larger group to make the final decisions.

CAC members are encouraged to be at the December meeting. It is hoped that additional CAC members will help to meet the meeting quorum needs. The importance of attending CAC meetings was reinforced.

A WCCO-TV news program on community organizations was brought up that addressed costs within the youth sports community. Mention was made of a University of Minnesota representative that was in the feature and possibly having them attending a future CAC meeting.

The request was made to review the CAC candidate applications. The group can look at them, but they are not public and copies were not distributed. It was stated that all applicants are being interviewed on December 9th. The question was asked about the geographic distribution of the applicants, and a map was available that night for review at the end of the meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Morris
Minute Secretary