Resolution 2011-220

Resolution to Approve the Proposed Permit Application Procedures and Guidelines Governing Use of the Park System

Whereas, The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB), issues special use permits for various activities throughout the system;

Whereas**,** The total number of permitted events has increased over the last decade;

Whereas, The size of the permitted events and the impact to the system has increased;

Whereas, The MPRB's current permit procedures and guidelines governing use of the park system have not been updated since 1999; and

Whereas, The current permit procedures and guidelines governing use of the park system do not adequately provide guidance to the current use of the park system;

RESOLVED, That the Board of Commissioners approve the proposed Permit Application Procedures and Guidelines Governing Use of the Park System; and

RESOLVED, That the terms and conditions in the proposed Permit Application Procedures, Regulations and Guidelines Governing Use of the Park System amends and replaces all existing policies and procedures identified in Attachment 2, and supplements the Policies and Guidelines Governing Use of the Park System passed through committee on November 9, 2011; and

RESOLVED, That the President and Secretary of the Board are authorized to take all necessary administrative actions to implement this resolution.

Adopted by the Park & Recreation Board
In formal meeting assembled on December 7, 2011

_____
John Erwin, President

_____
Karen Robinson, Secretary

Approved:

R.T. Rybak, Mayor

TO: Administration and Finance Committee

FROM: Jayne Miller, Superintendent

DATE: November 22, 2011

SUBJECT: Resolution to Approve the Proposed Permit Application Procedures and Guidelines Governing Use of the Park System

BACKGROUND

The policies and procedures for special event permitting were last updated in 1999. There has been significant growth in the use and event permitting area since the last policy and procedure revisions. The current policies and procedures, adopted in 1999 are shown in Attachment Two.

A review of policies, procedures, budgeting and security service management of use and event permitting by HLB Tautges Redpath, LTD, a certified public accounting firm, was completed in October of 2010. A copy of the report is shown in Attachment five. HLB Tautges Redpath, LTD provided a series of recommendations to improve the special event permitting within the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB).

POLICY AND PROCEDURE RECOMMENDATIONS

The report prepared by HLB Tautges Redpath, LTD was critical of the lack of policies and procedures for use and event permitting.

In reviewing MPRB's current policies and procedures, it is clear that MPRB needs more policies and procedure guidelines in specific areas. This is due to the growth in events since the policies and procedures were adopted. It is also driven by the implementation of the new online software "ActiveNet". The Use and Event Permitting staff along with legal counsel have been working on reviewing current policies and procedures and determining what new policies are needed, new procedures that will streamline the permit process for recurring events and putting in place policies and controls to assure that staff manage the use of the park system to prevent overuse, distribute special events throughout the City and appropriately value the use of the MPRB property for special events. Below are policy and procedure improvements staff is implementing to address the concerns identified.

Use and Event Permitting – Process Flow

A process flow chart will be developed that depicts the process for applying for recurring and new events. This flow chart will be posted on the web site as well as included with all applications by December 8, 2011 for event permits after the Board has approved the new

Permit Application Procedures and Guidelines Governing Use of the Park System. The flow chart will outline the submission and approval process for all permits.

Returning Events Policies
The current policy provides for returning events in good standing to have priority over new events. Events that meet the requirement will have thirty (30) days from the date of their last event to submit a written application for the following year to retain priority for the same time and Venue that had been granted a permit in prior year(s). To transition into this policy, Returning Events shall have until December 31st of the year these policies and procedures are enacted to submit a written application for the following year to retain priority for the same time and Venue that the event has previously been granted a permit. This will allow for new events to have an application timeline after all recurring events have been permitted.

An internal review process of each event will be done by the Use and Event Permitting staff along with a multi-disciplinary team each week so that all events are notified of their eligibility to apply as a recurring event. All events will be immediately notified which will allow those that are deemed ineligible time to appeal the decision.

Internal Notifications
The timeline outlined for recurring and new events will allow for much clearer communication internally on event dates. This will provide Park Police, Maintenance and Marketing & Communications staff the time to plan and schedule the events. Some events have been allowed to shift from pathways to parkways if their registrations exceed the pathway capacity. Under this new policy, they will be restricted to what they have submitted on their application, which may mean they need to cut off registrations due to capacity issues.

The implementation of Active Net for permits in 2011 will also improve internal communications. Internal calendars and email notifications will be part of the Active Net system of internal communications. When a permit is accepted by the Use and Event Permitting staff, internal notifications that have been set up on the permit occur automatically.

External Notifications
The current procedure for parkway notification is to have the event organizers post the route 7 days in advance of the event. This practice has been found to be ineffective as the frequency and placement of the signage had been inadequate along with the size, quality and information printed on the signs has not been consistent with each event. Event Organizers will now be required to use the MPRB contracted vendor to post parkway closure signs 4 days prior to the event date, along the designated route of the event. In addition to upgraded parkway postings, a letter will be sent to all addresses along effected parkways notifying them of expected closures for the year. Updated letters will be sent if new events are permitted throughout the year. Individuals can also sign up for an E-Subscription through MPRB that will email and or text up coming road closures. The MPRB website will be updated daily with upcoming road closures along with MPRB annual guides and brochures. The Use and Event Permitting Staff will continue to research new technology trends such as twitter and facebook to notify residents and businesses of events that may affect their neighborhoods.

Overuse Policy
Current policies and procedures regulate the number of events at Lake Calhoun, Lake Harriet, Lake Nokomis and Lake of the Isles to two parkway closures a month. Rather than limit just those specific parkways, the policy will be applied system wide. Exceptions would require Board approval with subsequent neighborhood notification. The Aquatennial provision is also

outdated. This provision does not allow for any other events to be held during the ten days of the Aquatennial. This event has gotten smaller, so an overall system ban on other events during the ten days of the event no longer makes sense. The recommended policies will eliminate the current restrictions in place during the Aquatennial.

The proliferation of new events and demand for new events requires that the Park Board have an open process, but a process that values the use of our parks appropriately and assures that overuse of the parks is taken into consideration before new events are approved.

Under current ordinances, persons are prohibited from erecting tents or similar structures or remaining in the park between the hours of 12 midnight and 6 am unless pursuant to a permit issued by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. These ordinances remain in force under the proposed policies, procedures, and guidelines.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of the proposed Permit Application Procedures and Guidelines Governing Use of the Park System

PREVIOUS BOARD ACTION

November 9, 2011	Administration and Finance Committee passed Policies and Guidelines Governing Use of the Park System
1999	Board of Commissioners passed current permit policies and procedures

LEGAL COUNSEL REVIEW

Legal Counsel has reviewed and approved the proposed Permit Application Procedures and Guidelines Governing Use of the Park System.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment One	Permit Application Procedures and Guidelines Governing Use of the Park System
Attachment Two	Current Special Event Permitting Policies and Procedures
Attachment Three	2012 Fee Structure
Attachment Four	2012 Event Use Permit Application
Attachment Five	Audit Report on Customer Service and Special Events

Prepared by: Shane Stenzel, Administrative Analyst
Approved by: Jayne Miller, Superintendent