

**CITY OF EDMONDS  
PLANNING BOARD MINUTES**

**December 9, 2015**

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Chair Tibbott called the meeting of the Edmonds Planning Board to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Public Safety Complex, 250 – 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue North.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

Neil Tibbott, Chair  
Philip Lovell, Vice Chair  
Matthew Cheung  
Carreen Rubenkönig  
Daniel Robles  
Valerie Stewart  
Nathan Monroe  
Samuel Kleven (Student Representative)

**STAFF PRESENT**

Rob Chave, Planning Division Manager  
Carrie Hite, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Director  
Karin Noyes, Recorder

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT**

Todd Cloutier (excused)

**READING/APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes from the November 18, 2015 meeting were not available for approval.

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF AGENDA**

The agenda was accepted as presented.

**AUDIENCE COMMENTS**

There was no one in the audience.

**DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DIRECTOR REPORT TO PLANNING BOARD**

Vice Chair Lovell suggested that City staff should pay close attention to Snohomish County's proposal to change the zoning in the Urban Growth Areas on the west side of Interstate 5, which includes the Esperance area. As proposed, the change would allow more housing units and buildings up to five stories high, but only in exchange for development credits under a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Program. He questioned how the change would impact the City, and particularly the Esperance area, which is currently unincorporated but may be annexed into the City at some point in the future. Mr. Chave clarified that the change would only apply to properties located along corridors, which means that only a few locations along SR 104, Highway 99 and 76<sup>th</sup> Avenue that could be impacted. He emphasized that the greater height would only be allowed through participation in the County's TDR Program, which is intended to preserve agricultural and resource lands.

Vice Chair Lovell asked the location of the Edmonds Holiday Market, and Mr. Chave advised that it is located in the parking lot just south of City Hall.

Chair Tibbott reminded the Board of the public open house related to the Development Code update that is scheduled for December 16<sup>th</sup> starting at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers at the Public Safety Building. He commented that the event is a great opportunity for the citizens to learn about potential code changes that could have a lot of implications for the City.

### **PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURAL SERVICES UPDATE**

Ms. Hite provided an update on the activities of the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department over the past year, which included the following:

- **4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Cultural Corridor Interim Art Project.** The Arts Commission and staff went through a process to select an artist for the street lighting project on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue from Main Street to the Edmonds Center for the Arts. The artist is currently testing light products, and installation is anticipated to take place in the spring of 2016. Vice Chair Lovell asked how the lights would be powered, and Ms. Hite answered that they would be solar powered and located in the pavement of the driving lanes. This required staff to address some transportation issues to ensure that the lights would not serve as a distraction for traffic. It is anticipated that the lights will actually help to calm traffic. Vice Chair Lovell recalled that the 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Cultural Corridor Plan identifies a pedestrian-oriented design with limited parking and vehicular traffic. He asked how the lights would be impacted when the street is redesigned at some point in the future. Mr. Hite said the City does not have any immediate plans or financial resources to redo the street, and the lights are considered an intermediary art project. The intent of the project is to bring more attention to the area so citizens can start enjoying the idea of an arts corridor now.
- **Flower Basket Poles.** A total of 22 poles with unique elements will be installed in downtown Edmonds, and the goal is to replace four or five of the existing poles each year. Nearly half have been done. The artist elements on top of the new poles are costly and paid for by private donations through a commemoration program. Board Member Stewart asked if thought was given to ensure that the new poles and artwork are long lasting and durable, and Ms. Hite answered affirmatively.
- **Wayfinding/Interpretive Signs.** Five small wayfinding signs were installed in early 2015 and four large wayfinding sign poles were recently installed at major entries to the downtown. The Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department will install the panels on the new poles this week. The signs at the gateways are located in highly visible locations and will help direct people to various locations throughout the City. The font, design, and color are consistent with the City's adopted sign master plan.
- **Museum Plaza.** City staff participated in design discussion and assisted with construction questions and landscape removal for the new plaza outside the museum's main entry to make sure it was appropriate for the location and tied in with other things on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The project has been completed.
- **Community Cultural Plan/Mini Arts Summit.** The Arts Commission has taken a lead in organizing work groups to address implementation of the 34 art-related strategies in the Community Cultural Plan. Over 50 people attended a Mini Arts Summit update in July, which was a spinoff of the Mayor's Arts Summit that was held two years ago. It is exciting to watch the group move forward with their work.
- **Library Public Art Process.** Initial work has been done by the Arts Commission and staff to plan for a new public art installation at the exterior entry area to the library in conjunction with developing new landscaping in the area after the old book drop is taken down. The new art installation will tie in with the library theme and be a public asset. It is hoped it can be installed by the fall of 2016.
- **125<sup>th</sup> Celebration.** In celebration of the City's 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Arts Commission reprinted a 1975 publication, *Brackett's Landing: A History of Early Edmonds.* The book is a nice historical piece for the community and is available at the Museum.

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- **Edmonds Marsh.** The City continues to work with Earthcorps to project manage the Phase 1 of the Edmonds Marsh rehabilitation effort, which includes daylighting Willow Creek. Design work for daylighting Willow Creek is at 60%, which enables the City go after grant funding for the project.
- **Marina Beach Park Master Plan.** A considerable amount of time was spent in 2015 to complete the Marina Beach Park Master Plan to prepare for the daylighting of Willow Creek. Board Member Stewart participated on the advisory committee and provided great input. The effort included a robust community process, working with a consultant, and a final draft was presented to the Planning Board earlier in the year. The draft plan is set to go to the City Council for a public hearing and final approval in January. Staff has met with the tribes and completed the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) review, and they believe the plan is solid. However, it is important to note that the City Council is considering amendments to the Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO). The master plan is designed based on the current CAO, and changes could require additional review of the design. One particular issue is related to buffers. Because the Department of Ecology (DOE) is currently recommending buffers between 30 and 70 feet, the master plan identifies a 70-foot buffer on the dog park side of the creek and 50 feet on the park side. If the City Council approves greater buffers, the plan will have to be updated accordingly.

Vice Chair Lovell pointed out that the Mayor’s Task Force for the Railroad Crossing Analysis may consider alternatives that could impact the Marina Beach Master Plan and/or the Willow Creek daylighting project. The process will be long and deliberate as the task force considers various opportunities and options, but the Parks Department should keep track of what is being discussed by the group. He pointed out that the Public Works Director serves as a member of the task force and can keep the Parks Department apprized of what is being considered and how it might impact parks.

Ms. Hite recalled that plans for the ferry were considered during the master planning process, and a representative from the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) participated in the process. The draft master plan is designed so that no significant changes would need to happen if WSDOT goes forward with a project that readjusts the ferry over Marina Beach Park. The only impact would be to the parking lot. Also during the master plan process, members of the public expressed a desire for a pedestrian walkway to access Marina Beach. This will be particular important if WSDOT doesn’t go forward with its plan, and the lower yard, once clean, becomes an asset for Edmonds and part of the park. The notes relative to both of these items are captured in the draft plan, but they were not included in the schematic drawings.

- **Yost Pool.** The City is currently going out to bid for replacement of the spa at Yost Pool and hopes to have the project completed by the opening of the 2016 season. However, just this week, they found that a valve had lost its seal and the pool was leaking about a gallon of water per minute and flooding the boiler room. The water was pumped out and the City hired a diver to plug the drains until both valves can be replaced. The City will continue to spend capital dollars to keep the pool operating, but it will be costly. At some point, the community needs to talk about interest in a new aquatics facility. In the meantime, the City has created some efficiency in operations by contracting with the YMCA to operate the pool. This has enabled the pool to move from a \$50,000 subsidy for operations to a surplus of \$40,000. The City has been pleased with the customer service provided by the YMCA, and hopes to continue the arrangement in 2016. Vice Chair Lovell referred to a community center project that is currently underway in Spokane that includes an indoor pool. The budget for the entire project is less than what the City came up with for just a new aquatics center. He suggested it would be worthwhile for City staff to research this project, and he agreed to provide contact information.

Chair Tibbott recalled that, at one time, Ms. Hite said it was more cost effective to run a summer-only pool compared to a year-round pool. He asked if that would still be the case. Ms. Hite said that is true for outdoor pools, but not for indoor pools. She explained that swim lessons are what brings in revenue, and when kids are in school, there are large gaps of time that make it difficult to collect sufficient revenue. Indoor pools that have many different features are more successful, and outdoor pools are best run seasonally.

- **City Park.** The spray pad at City Park is completed, and final punch list items are being finished up. The facility has been winterized, and the City is looking forward to a ribbon-cutting ceremony in May.
- **Dayton Street Plaza.** The area has been demolished and is awaiting construction. The project went out to bid in the fall, but no bids were received. Staff is currently pulling from the small works roster to find a contractor. The estimated

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cost of the project is about \$100,000. It is anticipated that construction will start in February or March of 2016 so that it can be finished by summer.

- **Former Woodway High School Development.** Phase 1 of the project has been completed, including two full-size, multi-use sports fields. However, the City Council just adopted an 18-month ban on crumb rubber turf, which starts in 30 days and continues until July 11, 2017. During that time, the City Council requested that the City hire someone to study the effects and impacts of crumb rubber and pay attention to the research that is coming out. They will hold a public hearing on the matter one month before the expiration date so the City Council can decide whether or not to continue the ban. She explained that the two new fields are crumb rubber, and the school district is currently scheduling and maintaining them. They are both highly used at this time. Phase 2 of the project includes two more fields and Phase 3 calls for resurfacing the tennis and basketball courts and replacing the play area. At the City Council's December 8<sup>th</sup> meeting there was a proposal to pull Phases 2 and 3 from the Capital Facilities Plan. Many City Council Members talked about the project being long-term and an opportunity to try some other types of infill. The Council ultimately voted to leave the project in the plan, recognizing that it is a 20-year plan for the City. This allows the City to continue to work with the school district to consider other options for Phases 2 and 3.

Ms. Hite advised that the City has not yet signed an interlocal agreement with the school district for operating and maintaining the fields, and that would be her interest for the community. A citizen commented at a recent City Council meeting that the fields have been locked and not available for public use. Because the fields were funded with public dollars from the Verdant Health Commission and the State, she believes they should remain unlocked and accessible to the community at all times. That would be the City's intent in assuming the responsibility to operate and maintain the fields. She pointed out that the City Council's discussion relative to the interlocal agreement was more about the crumb rubber infill than maintenance and operation of the fields. She and the City Attorney have made some edits to the agreement, and they are waiting to hear back from the school district. The changes reflect the City's interest in alternative materials in future phases, the decision making power to make those decisions, and paying for the up charge associated with the changes.

Vice Chair Lovell asked if it is possible that the school district could decide to move forward with Phase 2 while the City's 18-month ban on crumb rubber infill is in place. Ms. Hite answered that there is no funding allocated for Phase 2 at this point, and it will require that someone make the effort to raise funds for the new fields. She does not anticipate this will occur within the next 18 months. The City has not yet paid its portion of Phase 1 based on its discussion about crumb rubber. If the new school district leadership indicates a desire for the City to maintain and operate the fields and they are willing to consider alternative materials, there could be some traction and interest from the City to move the project forward. Vice Chair Lovell asked if it is possible the school district will consider crumb rubber infill on any other school fields in the City within the next 18 months. Ms. Hite answered that they are considering the replacement of a baseball field with crumb rubber within the next 18 months. The ban that is currently in place applies to all city and school fields. She commented that the City received a letter from the school district indicating their intent to sue the City for banning crumb rubber. The City does not have any plans to install fields on city-owned property, and she would be very surprised if there is a huge public interest to turn the Civic Field property into athletic fields because it is surrounded by multi-family residential development on three sides.

Board Member Stewart asked if the two remaining fields at Woodway that have not been redeveloped are still grass. Ms. Hite said it is an unusable grass field with a track around it. Board Member Stewart asked if the children who currently attend school on the site would continue to have access to the fields in the interim, and Ms. Hite answered yes.

Mr. Kleven said the students at his school have differing opinions about the use of crumb rubber infill. While many students do not seem to care, he felt they really were not well informed about the dangers associated with the material.

- **Community Garden.** The scope of the Woodway Fields project included a community garden, and the City has allocated \$155,000 in the capital budget to move forward with the project next year. As part of the Phase 1 construction project, the district ran a water line that is tapped at the northern end of the campus for a community garden. In recent months, some citizens have voiced concern about locating a community garden on this site because of its close proximity to the crumb rubber fields. There are ways to test the air and soil to ensure it is safe for gardens, but the City Council will have to be engaged in the discussion. If the garden is not developed at the Woodway site, the City will look for

alternate locations. However, she noted that the City does not have available land, and land is costly to purchase for this purpose. Perhaps they could partner with a school or church. She believes the Woodway site is ideal, but there may not be interest.

- **Waterfront Parcel Acquisition.** The City received a Conservation Futures grant of \$500,000 to purchase waterfront property. She reminded the Board that one of the goals in the Parks Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan calls for the City to aggressively pursue waterfront property acquisition and improve access for citizens. However, recent negotiations with a landowner failed, and the City was unable to purchase the property. As an alternative, the City requested that the grant funding be allocated to fund the purchase of Civic Field, and the request was unanimously approved.
- **Civic Stadium.** The City is in the process of purchasing the property from the school district at a cost of \$1.9 million, with \$1 million coming from the State and \$500,000 from Snohomish County. The City's portion will be about \$500,000. The City has allocated \$100,000 in 2016 to complete a master plan for Civic Field. She explained that when the City receives state money to acquire land, they are required to issue an easement or deed restriction on the land to ensure it remains open space or park in perpetuity. The Civic Field is actually four large lots (6 acres) that are owned by the school district and two unvacated streets (2 acres) that are owned by the City. Although the City Council has expressed interest in having the Boys and Girls Club remain on the site, the deed restriction would not allow any construction to occur on the six acres purchased from the school district. Staff is working with the state to reconfigure the property to shift the two acres owned by the City to the northwest portion of the site where the Boys and Girls Club is currently located. The remaining six acres would be the unrestricted portion of the site. In order to accomplish this, the two streets would have to be formally vacated by the City. A survey and appraisal have been done, and the City is working through the closing process with the State. No closing date has been set, but it will likely occur before the end of January.

Chair Tibbott asked if the stadium would have to be removed from the restricted property if no development is allowed, and Ms. Hite answered that the deed restriction would allow for such things as stadium seating or a storage structure, but it would not allow a recreational center, field house, etc. Board Member Robles asked if the restriction would allow a restroom facility. Ms. Hite said her understanding is that a restroom facility that serves the open recreational use would be allowed, but she would double check and report back. If a restroom is not allowed, it could be located on the two acres of unrestricted land near the Boys and Girls Club.

Ms. Hite advised that the City has allocated \$100,000 in 2016 for master planning of Civic Field, which will involve extensive public outreach. The property was originally designed to be a school field and is working in its current configuration. This is a wonderful site, and the City is excited to walk the community through the master planning process to identify what it could be in the future.

Chair Tibbott asked if the City has had discussions with the Boys and Girls Club regarding their preferred location. For example, some people may find it easier to commute to a more central location. Ms. Hite said the Boys and Girls Club has indicated a desire to remain in the downtown on the Civic Field, and the City Council has expressed interest in continuing discussions and creating this opportunity if possible. The pros and cons of the existing site opposed to a new site will be part of the future master plan discussion.

- **Fishing Pier.** The City received a \$1.3 million grant from the State and is partnering with the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife to rehabilitate the structural part of the fishing pier. The City will manage the project, and design work has nearly been completed. Construction is anticipated to start in March of 2016, and it is likely that the fishing pier will have to be closed for approximately two months for liability reasons. A notice of the closure will be posted well in advance. Board Member Stewart asked if it would be possible to wait until there are fewer fishing opportunities available, and Ms. Hite said they are trying to work within the State's fish window and thought it would be better to do the project in the spring rather than summer and fall months. Staff will work with the contractor to do everything possible to keep the closure time to a minimum. Board Member Cheung pointed out that fresh-water fishing is open during the spring months.

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- **Student Conservation Association.** The City has collaborated with the Student Conservation Association to implement a work/education program to help the parks over the summer. The program has been successful and the City hopes it will continue in 2016. The program is partially funded by a grant from the Hazel Miller Foundation, with contributions from the City, as well. The program offers a good opportunity to teach students to be stewards of the land, and they get good projects done in the parks, as well.
- **Anderson Center Amphitheatre.** Funding has been set aside to replace the roof on the amphitheatre in 2016. Bid documents were prepared and sent out, but the bid prices were much higher than anticipated. She will approach the City Council in early 2016 with a request to amend the Capital Improvement Plan to fund the project and the goal is to have it completed by the beginning of summer.
- **Veteran's Plaza.** Based on a recommendation from the Planning Board, the City Council charged a community group to develop a Veteran's Plaza, located outside of the public safety building. Chair Tibbott has been serving on the community group as a representative of the Planning Board. At this time, the group is working on a capital campaign to raise the necessary funding to move forward with construction. Chair Tibbott reported that, to date, the group has raised \$245,000 towards the total cost of \$400,000.
- **Recreational Opportunities.** The City continues to offer an array of recreational programming for all ages, and they have experienced an increase in the demand for pickle-ball. To address this need, the City added drop-in opportunities and offered a fall tournament. Special events in 2015 included Outdoor Movies, Sand Sculpting Contest, Health and Fitness Expo, Conquer the Hill, Puget Sound Bird Fest, Watershed Fun Fair, Moonlight Beach Adventure, Starlight Beach Walk, and a Spring Beach Cleanup and Low Tide Walk. It was noted that the Ranger/Naturalists provided 267 marine programs, 22 Discover the Forest programs, 10 Nature Discovery in the Classroom programs and a variety of camps. The Ranger/Naturalists have incredible knowledge and work well with the public, and visitors and students come from throughout Puget Sound to participate. Board Member Stewart suggested that perhaps the Rangers could consider starting their programs just a bit earlier so that young children have an opportunity to participate. Board Member Robles noted that there appeared to be fewer summer camps offered by the City in 2015. Ms. Hite explained that the City still offers a lot of specialized camps during the summer, but they now contract with other entities, such as the Boys and Girls Club, to provide the general summer camps.
- **Other Items for Discussion Next Year.** The City is planning to install three outdoor fitness zones in 2016 at Mathay Ballinger Park, City Park, and Seaview Park. The City received a \$50,000 grant for this purpose, but it is tied to costly equipment that may not be appropriate for what the City is planning. While they will bid the project using the equipment, it may not be the best approach. Board Member Stewart asked if the Parks Board would be involved in selecting the fitness zone equipment. Ms. Hite said it is likely that a community group would be formed, and a member of the Parks Board would be invited to participate.

The City is planning to replace the gateway on SR-104, and money has been set aside to partially upgrade the restrooms at Bracket North Park and Olympic Beach Park. Full upgrades are scheduled to occur in two years. A parklet will also be developed on the 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Cultural Corridor. While parklets are usually temporary installations intended to attract people to the downtown and act as gathering places, the proposed parklet will be more permanent. In addition to the parklet on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, the City has also received requests from business owners in the downtown who want to develop parklets as temporary installations. Parks staff is currently working on a procedures manual that would allow this to occur.

Vice Chair Lovell cautioned that when considering future restroom upgrades and parklets, the City should keep their eye on what is happening with the railroad crossing plans. He also suggested that the senior center project, in particular the concept of a community center, should be included in the list of 2016 projects, as well. Ms. Hite agreed and said she participates on the Senior Center Committee, which is looking at a 2017 construction timeline. They will likely write a grant application in 2016 for funding for the construction costs.

Chair Tibbott asked if the City has given any more thought to providing a gateway on the northern side of the City on either Olympic View Drive or 196<sup>th</sup> Street. Ms. Hite said that is on her list of projects to consider in the future.

The Board Members thanked Ms. Hite for her presentation and update. Board Member Stewart commented that the Board does not get to act in its capacity as a Parks Board often enough, and the report was well done. Ms. Hite voiced appreciation for the Board's interest and participation in park-related issues. She particularly thanked them for providing representation on each of the various park committees.

### **REVIEW OF EXTENDED AGENDA**

Mr. Chave advised that Planning Board priorities for 2016 will include the Development Code Update and the Highway 99 Planned Action.

### **ELECTION OF 2016 OFFICERS**

**BOARD MEMBER MONROE NOMINATED BOARD MEMBER LOVELL TO SERVE AS CHAIR OF THE BOARD IN 2016. BOARD MEMBER STEWART SECONDED THE NOMINATION. AFTER A VOTE, THE BOARD ELECTED BOARD MEMBER LOVELL TO SERVE AS CHAIR OF THE BOARD IN 2016.**

**BOARD MEMBER STEWART NOMINATED BOARD MEMBER RUBENKONIG TO SERVE AS VICE CHAIR OF THE BOARD IN 2016. BOARD MEMBER ROBLES SECONDED THE NOMINATION. AFTER A VOTE, THE BOARD ELECTED BOARD MEMBER RUBENKONIG TO SERVE AS VICE CHAIR OF THE BOARD IN 2016.**

### **PLANNING BOARD CHAIR COMMENTS**

Chair Tibbott commented that he has very much enjoyed working with the Planning Board over the past several years, and getting to know both past and current members. It has been a great learning experience for him, and he looks forward to reading the minutes of their future discussions. He assured them that he is aware of the effort they put into the items they review.

Chair Tibbott reminded the Board that their next report to the City Council is scheduled for January 27<sup>th</sup>.

### **PLANNING BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

The Board Members thanked Chair Tibbott for his service on the Planning Board. They particularly thanked him for his hard work and leadership and wished him the greatest success as he serves on the City Council.

Vice Chair Lovell announced that the City Council's authorization for the Economic Development Commission (EDC) had a sunset review for the end of 2015, and at their last meeting, they decided by a vote of 3 to 4 not renew. The EDC's last meeting is scheduled for December 16<sup>th</sup>, and he plans to attend on behalf of the Board. Some have voiced concern that the City Council did not give adequate direction. Others believe that while the Commission did great work early on, it has accomplished what they could and finding new areas of discussion is difficult and challenging.

Board Member Rubenkönig noted that her husband current serves as the Vice Chair of the EDC. She expressed her belief that the City Council's perspective on the accomplishments and future goals of the EDC may be markedly different in 2016 given that there will be new representation.

Vice Chair Lovell reported on his attendance at an open house sponsored by the Railroad Crossing Analysis Task Force on November 11<sup>th</sup>. More than 100 people were in attendance, as was the consultant that was hired by the City. The Task Force's intent is to make sure there is adequate public outreach so that their work can be based on a lot of public input. While they received a lot of interesting comments, it is difficult to categorize them into a specific direction. However, it is apparent that many people regularly cross the tracks on bicycles, vehicles and by foot, and it is important to keep in mind the sensitive nature of the issues involved. He said he was surprised at how few residents are truly informed about what is going on in the City. The Task Force recognizes that there needs to be a lot of communication and hand holding as they try to get the community interested and involved in the process. He concluded that the meeting was very worthwhile and the comments that were made will be summarized in written form by the consultant. The task force will meet again on December 10<sup>th</sup> at 10

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a.m., and will continue to meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays of each month in the Brackett Meeting Room of City Hall. The meetings are open to the public. He said he does not anticipate that anything the Task Force is doing will impact the Board's work calendar in 2016, but members of the City staff are participating to keep the City well informed about what is going on. The Task Force is scheduled to complete its report by the end of 2017.

Chair Tibbott said he has spoken with at least one City Council Member about the need to provide training opportunities to the Planning Board, and he anticipates this will move forward in 2016.

Mr. Kleven thanked the Board for the opportunity to be the student representative and said it has been an educational experience for him.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The Board meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

**APPROVED**