

FARGO PARK DISTRICT POLICY FOR MEMORIALS

Background and Purpose:

The Fargo Park District (“Park District”) receives requests from time to time to add an amenity to a facility as a memorial. The requests are for various reasons, including financial or community contributions of a person or organization or a significant event that the requesting party wants to recognize. The Park District feels that consenting to a memorial should be a thoughtful process. A memorial can be enduring and stay with a piece of property long after any knowledge of its origin has passed. The granting of a requested memorial should be purposeful and systematic. The memorial may honor a person of significant stature within the community, recognize an organization or group of citizens which has contributed to the development of a facility or program, or recognize a significant event. This is different than a “naming right,” which protocols are already in place. This policy is to provide a thoughtful review process for gifts and donations that are meant as memorials.

Management Philosophy:

The following procedures are adopted to give the Board of Park Commissioners a means by which they can have a uniform policy regarding memorials that may be posted at or affect Park District properties. Each request will be considered on a case by case basis. The following guidelines have been established in order to be consistent with our donors and give appropriate recognition in a tasteful manor. We encourage citizens to contact the Park District to discuss ideas for locations of memorials. However, final memorial locations will be dependent on the needs of the District and planning processes already underway.

Procedure:

The memorials procedure is intended to minimize the emotional impact of the process of reviewing and deciding on a memorial request. The Park District desires that all parties involved (the requesting party, the Park District staff and commissioners and the general public) are given time to think through the long-term implications of the memorial. The applicants are encouraged to work with park staff to determine how a memorial can enhance the experience of park users as well as meet the needs of a donor. This procedure takes time and may require several planning meetings.

The following procedure should be followed in granting requests to establish or allow for a memorial on Park District property:

1. Staff will accept the specific request from an organization or individual, together with their rationale in writing. The staff will gather such other information as may be reasonable under the circumstances, including talking with staff or the general public with knowledge of the person, organization or event. Staff will then review the information and determine the appropriateness of the proposal as measured by the approval criteria.

2. Staff will present the request and related information to the Facility Committee on at least two (2) occasions. At the first meeting, the committee will discuss the memorial and its relative

merits. The Facility Committee may have the requesting party or staff provide additional information.

3. At the next Facility Committee meeting, staff will provide any additional information requested by the committee. The Facility Committee, with or without its recommended action, will place the proposed memorial on the next regular Board of Park Commissioners meeting agenda.

4. The Board of Park Commissioners will take action on the request at the board meeting, again having authority to request that additional information be provided.

5. The Park District shall be responsible for the installation, maintenance and protection of the installation, within reason, at the cost of the person/group requesting the memorial. Once installed, the memorial becomes Park District property.

Memorials Criteria:

Listed below are the criteria which should be used to approve or disapprove a requested memorial when undertaking the process described above. This list is not limited to the criteria below, other criteria might be considered.

1. The contribution of the person, organization or event, its character and reputation.
2. The requested location of the memorial, and its support of current park use.
3. The requested form of the memorial, if deemed to be a relatively permanent fixture at the site.
4. The requested form of the memorial being consistent with the location and its fit with design standards required of public spaces.
5. The cost of the memorial and how it will be funded.
6. The cost of maintaining the memorial and how that will be funded.
7. Trees, shrubs, flowers and other landscaping that are installed as part of a memorial shall not detract from the scenic or architectural value of the existing environment. The materials need to meet the design and maintenance considerations of the Park District.
8. Memorials that are park amenities will be accepted on the basis that they will be maintained for ten years in their original location or in an area near their original location. After 10 years, the amenity may be removed or relocated pending redevelopment of the park site.
9. Larger memorials such as statues, fountains, plazas and garden areas may be accepted under specific circumstances. The District will determine placement of all such memorials and a written agreement will be created to outline the maintenance and commitment of costs by each party.
10. Monetary memorial donations that are not designated will be used to meet current need of the District as recommended by the Executive Director.

A memorial for an individual, organization or event is a special circumstance. Years from now someone should be able to ask “why this name,” or “why this amenity” and the answer should be that the person, organization or event provided significant contributions to either the community, facility or a Park District program that, without such commitment and efforts of that person, organization or event, the facility or program would have not been enhanced.

The Park District does not guarantee permanency of the memorial. The Park District takes no responsibility to replace stolen, vandalized plaques or to maintain or replace landscape materials that are not watered properly or diseased.

If a memorial must be relocated or removed the following process will be followed.

Removal of a Memorial:

1. Upon receipt of a written request for removal from staff, a commissioner or the general public, staff will research the background information to find a reason or circumstance for the initial memorial and any over-riding commitment to the memorial. This includes attempting to notify the original donor.

2. Finding no compelling reason to retain the memorial at its current location or to keep the memorial at all, the request will be first discussed by the Facility Committee. If the Facility Committee finds that there is a reason to relocate or remove the memorial, the matter will be placed on the agenda of the Board of Park Commissioners meeting for final action.