



Council Communication

Office of the City Manager

Date January 28, 2008

Agenda Item No. 41
Roll Call No. 08-
Communication No. 08-045
Submitted by: Donald M. Tripp,
Parks and Recreation Director

AGENDA HEADING:

Approval of Prairie Meadows 2007 Community Betterment Grant Agreement

SYNOPSIS:

Approval of a Prairie Meadows 2007 Community Betterment Grant Agreement for \$3,000 for the ongoing Woodland Municipal Cemetery effort to restore headstones in the infant section of the cemetery.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Amount: \$3,000 (revenue) \$758 (City costs)

Funding Source: : 2007-08 Operating Budget, Page 219, Cemetery, GE001, PKS01040

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Prairie Meadows rates applications for its annual Community Betterment Grants on demonstration of need, leverage of other funds or community support, community impact, proposed evaluation results and strength of organization. Grants are awarded in categories of human services, education, economic development, and arts and culture.

The City of Des Moines Park and Recreation Department submitted a grant application in the category of arts and culture for funding to restore infant headstones in Woodland Cemetery. The cemetery's infants' section dates back to the late 1800s and holds the remains of many orphans whose graves are marked with a single large monument, and approximately 540 infants for whom only twenty original stones remain to mark the graves. The small spaces for those graves have therefore gone virtually unnoticed for years. The elements have worn off the etched lettering in the marble markers that do remain standing, leaving no identification for the children who lie beneath.

Gerald Leblanc, Woodland's volunteer citizen historian, undertook a fundraising initiative in 2006 to install headstone markers in the infant section, resulting in funding to install fifty headstone markers. Each stone is made of Georgia gray granite, measures 6" X 4" X 12," and is engraved with the infant's first and last names and date of death. It is Mr. Leblanc's and the Park and Recreation Department's hope to continue with this project until all pioneer infants are memorialized with a headstone marking their interment. Funds were sought from Prairie Meadows to provide for out-of-pocket expenses which would allow installation of an additional twenty markers. Installation of the markers funded through the Prairie Meadows grant will be completed in summer 2008.

In addition to the Grant Agreement, Prairie Meadow requires that a recognition plan to acknowledge the donation and a written report be filed regarding the project, prior to disbursement of the funds.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S): NONE

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S): NONE

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS:

Recognition of Prairie Meadow's donation and written report filed, receipt of grant funds.