

MRPA Facility Section Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, March 10, 2009: Oxford Community Center, St. Paul

Meeting was called to order at 10:05am

Attendees:

Matt Solheid, Mike Mattson, William Schneider, Gina Gryniewski, Mark Palm, Jen Graham, Angie Jedinak, Rick Busch, Rob Hughes, Craig Panning, Michelle Snider, Lisa Jose, Jason Minnick, Cindy Higgins, Brad Martens.

Brad Martens gave brief update on the Section.

Minutes from January meeting were approved.

MRPA Board update: Michelle Snider

- The Legislative Committee will meet on Thursday, March 12th at 1pm. Meetings are open for all to attend.
- The Disney Institute is up to 100 registrants and will take place April 30, 2009.
- The National Playground Safety Institute will be April 15-17
- MRPA Design Institute will be held April 21-22 in Oakdale. The institute is geared towards all recreation professionals.
- More information on each of these items is available at www.mnrpa.org

Membership Committee Update: Jennifer Graham

The MRPA Membership Committee is looking for additional members. The group meets every other month and would like a member of the Facilities Section to be a liaison for the group. Interested individuals may contact Jennifer at jgraham@ci.inver-grove-heights.mn.us.

Eric Thompson gave a background of the Oxford Community Center [City of St. Paul, MN - Official Website - Oxford Community Center](#) and introduced Hugo McPhee.

Core Topic: Security and Surveillance presented by Hugo McPhee, Chief of Police for the Three Rivers Park District: HMCPhee@threeriversparkdistrict.org (763) 694-7736.

Caught in the Act! What Electronic Surveillance can do.

Three Rivers Park District has recently installed an outdoor surveillance system at Hyland Lake Park Reserve. The installation cost was approximately \$200,000 and was implemented in part due to the removal of gate attendants at each park. Future plans include installing similar systems at Elm Creek Park Reserve, Lake Minnetonka Regional Park, and Clifton E. French Regional Park. The installation of the security system was not done to off-set costs related to vandalism or violence. Costs of this nature come nowhere near the \$200,000 mark.

The camera system is wireless and includes a camera that monitors the license plates of all vehicles entering the park. A wireless system was chosen due to the large amount of

trenching that would be needed if a wired system was chosen. Cameras can be viewed remotely at any computer location by logging in to the system.

Camera surveillance provides an assumption that someone is monitoring the cameras. Three Rivers Park District does not have people watching the monitors and continues to rely on sworn officers, park rangers and PSO's.

Scope of the problem:

- According to the U.S. Department of Justice, a property crime occurs every 3.2 seconds
- Louisville's park system in 2007 incurred \$80,500 in losses due to graffiti, vandalism, and theft
- Last year, park vandalism in Boise, ID cost the city over \$42,000

Identifying Risk:

- Remote locations
- Low guest activity
- Financial transaction areas
- Gatehouses
- Crime trends

Crime prevention through environmental design:

- Enhances safety for staff & guests
- Deters crime
- Encourages a proactive and planned design to park areas (lighting, sightlines, vegetation)

Utilization of surveillance camera systems: Three Rivers Park District

- Surveillance cameras were identified as one component of an overall strategy to reduce crime in the park system (creative play areas, entry roads, parking lots, remote locations)
- Wireless technology utilized
- Access footage from various computer locations
- Involved input from the board, staff discussions, and asset management collaboration
- Cameras allow for rapid sharing of events with other agencies/media
- License plate cameras-\$6,000
- Mega-pixel color cameras-\$2,500
- Support equipment-\$8,000

Constitutional issues:

- Right to Privacy-U.S. vs. Knotts 368 U.S. 276, 281-82 (1983)
 - Beeper placed in bottle of chloroform was used to track vehicle to a secluded cabin which led to arrest and conviction. Appeals court ruled beeper was in violation of privacy
- Search and Seizure-Katz vs. U.S. 389 U.S. 347 (1967)

- Illegal gambling info taken by electronic surveillance on phone booth. Ruled unlawful due to a reasonable expectation of privacy in a phone booth

General Rule

- Video surveillance in public areas is legally permissible
- No reasonable right to privacy in public forum
- In California, video surveillance appears to represent a valid use of State's power to protect citizens

Best Practices:

- Gather input from your board or council
- Gather input from staff
- Recognize the limitations and capabilities of the system
- Determine if cameras should be visible or covert
- Determine locations (risk matrix, crime trends, proactive efforts)
- Be prepared to modify or adjust deployment as needs indicate
- Compatibility
- Real-time vs. video review
- Secure wireless network
- Who has access to review/monitor video?
- Accommodate expansion
- Maintenance costs
- Shelf life
- Monitor use and effectiveness

Questions:

Rick Busch (Plymouth) asked if motion sensors were used in the Three Rivers system.

- Three Rivers uses motion sensors only on the license plate cameras near entries. They are more expensive and with an outdoor setting tree movement would most likely keep cameras on for a large portion of time.
- Oxford Community Center uses motion cameras to monitor the entry to the building.
- Plymouth has motion cameras but has missed some items due to sensitivity issues.

Mike Mattson (Ramsey County) asked about the use of "dummy cameras".

- Three Rivers has seen success in the use. Eventually people learn that it is a dummy camera and it is then ineffective. It also may lead to persons letting their guard down due to a false sense of security with a camera present.
- St. Paul has also seen it work in their Recreation Centers. People however do catch on quickly. A better route is to go with inexpensive black & white cameras that can be purchased for as little as \$300.
- Hugo stated that you may even be able to get away without cameras with proper lighting, site lines, etc.

Mike Mattson (Ramsey County) asked about ongoing costs.

- Three Rivers estimates the life of the cameras at 8-10 years. The replacement cost needs to be built into the budget.

Cindy Higgins (Anoka County) asked whether it is more important to monitor high traffic areas or low traffic areas.

- Three Rivers has found that most incidents occur for them in high traffic areas. It can also be used to gauge the successfulness of events by attendance checks.

Rick Busch (Plymouth) asked about the use of panning cameras.

- Maple Grove is using them and would not implement the same system again. The panning misses large portions at a time and although the speed of panning is monitored, criminals are able to act when the camera is not viewing the area. More cameras would be recommended against panning cameras. Maple Grove is also looking at upgrading their system to IP so officers can view the cameras in their vehicles.

Other comments:

- Cameras can be set-up to coincide with alarms or by motion sensors in advance of the camera to help with catching acts. Surveillance companies can accommodate most any request.
- It may be wise to wait to install cameras when opening a new facility. Crime patterns may not be what you originally thought. As trends arise the installation can be better planned.

Roundtable: How to track responses to questions raised by email:

- It was agreed upon that individuals with questions for the Facility Section group should email Brad Martens. He will then intern forward the question out to the group. Respondents should then respond only the person requesting the information rather than replying to all.

Announcements:

1. Upcoming Meetings

- a. Tuesday, May 10th: Marketing Your Facility-Risdall Advertising
- b. Friday, June 12th: Asset Management (cooperative meeting with the Fitness and Wellness Section) Tuesday, September 8th: Energy Efficiency
- c. Tuesday, November 10th: Strengthening Your Message Through Data Collection and Reporting

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 12:05pm