

Park district routine frozen

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January 23, 2008

Glen Ellyn Park District officials discussed a portable refrigerated ice rink Tuesday night but will continue with their usual ice-making routines for now.

Commissioner Ron Aubrey suggested this month that park district staff look into the idea of a portable rink. The district spends about \$8,000 each winter season to create man-made ice rinks at Newton Park and Lake Fox Croft. The ice-making process takes about five days, along with many park district man hours.

Cory Atwell, park district executive director said it's frustrating when parks and recreation staff spends so much time making the ice, and then the weather takes a turn and the entire project melts after a day of use.

The 100 foot-by-200 foot refrigerated ice rink park district officials researched would run up a bill of about \$750,000 and could be situated at Newton Park. The actual rink's price is about \$550,000, a Zamboni to resurface the ice would cost about \$32,000 and the remainder of the cost would fund the construction of a shed for all the equipment.

Officials said if the project were of great interest within the community, a group of residents could lead a park district referendum to attain the funds.

But for now, they'll keep on with their usual ways.

The park district creates ice and hockey rinks at Newton Park inside tennis courts and in open area to offer an activity area for residents.

"We've always had two rinks there, and it was always a great alternative to Lake Ellyn and Lake Fox Croft," Atwell said. "There have been a couple winters when we never got the lake open."

So far this winter Lake Ellyn hasn't been open for skating. Now, the ice is about 5 inches thick across the lake, and park district officials are hopeful it will be 8 inches thick in the near future and finally be open to residents.

In 2005, the park district emptied Lake Ellyn and installed a low-flow system and vortex system to help filter the lake and allow for an even ice freeze during winter months. The roughly \$1 million project was funded by an anonymous donation given specifically for the work.