

City to construct third hockey rink

By Thomas W. Still
Staff Writer

For the benefit of Mason City's pint-sized Gordie Howe's and young "Boom Boom" Geoffrion's, a third hockey rink will be constructed next season.

The Mason City Parks and Recreation Board voted unanimously Thursday night to allow the construction of a third ice rink, which would be adjacent to the existing rinks in MacNider's Woods Park.

The request for another rink was made by the Mason City Youth Hockey Association, which will provide all material, equipment and labor needed to build the rink. The hockey association cited the growth of the league — up to 205 youths and 16 teams this past season — as the main reason for the request.

The park board will provide up to \$4,000 in maintenance for the rinks next year, which would be mostly in the form of "flooding" the rinks and snow removal. Any maintenance costs beyond the \$4,000 would be borne by the hockey association.

The request for a third rink was one of two askings presented by the hockey association Thursday night. The park board also approved a proposal that Supt. of Recreation Robert Dvorsky "administer and supervise" the set-up of the four youth leagues next year.

Dvorsky handled the league's administration as a member of the youth hockey board this year, and indicated the "official" status won't lead to an increased work load. In fact, he said, most youth hockey programs in southern Minnesota are administered by local recreation departments and the concept works well there.

Several youth hockey officials said their organization will be able to concentrate more on raising funds for the league once administrative responsibility is out of their hands.

Park Board Chairman Joseph Lucido said the board "will in turn want more control over what's happening in the league" once Dvorsky takes over administrative duties, a point agreed on by the youth hockey representatives.

Commissioner F. Stanley Davis questioned whether the park board should be involved in the selection of any "traveling" squad made up of the league's best players. The hockey representatives said that responsibility will remain in the league's hands, and assured Davis that all youths receive equal playing time.

The need for the third rink came about this season due to the addition of a "mite" hockey instructional program and four-team broomball league, and the general growth of the league, youth hockey representatives said.

Lucido questioned the possible increased maintenance costs caused by a third rink, and first suggested the tearing down of an existing small rink and the building of a second large rink. Rink maintenance cost the park board \$3,600 this year.

Although the city of Mason City's budget has already been okayed for the 1976-77 year, Lucido pointed out, the possibility of state-ordered budget "ceilings" may

mean the park board's budget could still be cut.

The youth hockey officials said they "appreciated" the park board financial picture, and assured Lucido they would pick up any added maintenance costs.

In other action, the park board approved a volunteer "junior playground leader" program, which will go into effect this summer.

Through the program, youths ranging in age from 14 to 17 will be able to volunteer at least 15 hours a week to assist in the city's playground program. Duties will include assisting the playground director, issuing supplies and other routine responsibilities.

The program is designed to provide leadership training and on-the-job experience, and an opportunity for future employment with the Recreation Department — although a job isn't guaranteed.

Workers will also receive one pass to the Municipal Swimming Pool for each five hours of work, one greens fee pass at Highland Park Municipal Golf Course for each 10 hours work; and two staff tee-shirts.

Interested youths may apply in person at the recreation office in City Hall, which is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.