

★ **Roll Call Number**

**Agenda Item Number**

43-I

Date August 26, 2013

Letter received from Variety – the Children’s Charity of Iowa regarding naming of proposed new playground to be built by Variety at Ewing Park.

MOVED by \_\_\_\_\_ to receive and file such proposal and refer to the City Manager and Park and Recreation Board for review and recommendation.

(Sponsored by Councilmember Meyer)

COUNCIL ACTION	YEAS	NAYS	PASS	ABSENT
COWNIE				
COLEMAN				
GRIESS				
HENSLEY				
MAHAFFEY				
MEYER				
MOORE				
TOTAL				

**CERTIFICATE**

I, DIANE RAUH, City Clerk of said City hereby certify that at a meeting of the City Council of said City of Des Moines, held on the above date, among other proceedings the above was adopted.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal the day and year first above written.

MOTION CARRIED APPROVED

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

August 19, 2013

The Honorable Mayor and  
Members of the City Council  
City of Des Moines

RE: Naming of Ashley Okland Star Playground

Dear Mayor and City Council:

Variety – The Children’s Charity of Iowa approached the Park and Recreation Department with a proposal to fund and build a new playground which would provide an opportunity for children of all abilities to be mobile and active - regardless of their physical, mental, or special-needs state. Although the City currently has a number of playgrounds throughout the Parks system, none of the existing playgrounds are considered “all-inclusive,” or specifically designed for all children, including those with special needs. Ashley Okland, the real estate agent who was shot on April 8, 2011, was a Variety board member who was passionate about providing children with the opportunity to engage in outdoor activities. This new playground would honor her memory and provide an exceptional opportunity for children of all abilities to play together.

Since our initial contact, members of the Park and Recreation staff have met with Variety board members to determine a location for the proposed playground. After visiting various sites, a location just south of McKinley Avenue in Ewing Park was determined to be the best location for the new playground. The site is easily accessible from both SE 14<sup>th</sup> and Indianola Avenue and already has available parking, and a restroom; all of which are connected with a handicap accessible sidewalk. Detailed site information has been sent to Cunningham Recreation, Variety’s vendor for the playground equipment, and concept plans for the new playground are currently being developed. Signage for this playground has been discussed with Park and Recreation staff to ensure it will follow the recommended guidelines for other park areas.

Variety is excited about developing this new playground and is committed to raising the funds for this project. Please consider naming this playground at Ewing Park the Ashley Okland Star Playground. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Sheri McMichael, Susan Hatten and Brenna Finnerty  
--Ashley Okland Star Playground Steering Committee