

# Norfolk Insider

City of Norfolk, NE

[www.ci.norfolk.ne.us](http://www.ci.norfolk.ne.us)

April 15, 2013

## “New Elkhorn Lodge Ready for Rental”

Pat Mrsny, City of Norfolk Parks Superintendent, knows the area of the new Elkhorn Lodge at Ta-Ha-Zouka Park like the back of his hand. It's like he grew up there. Well, almost. His aunt and uncle lived in the house that has recently been converted into the Lodge and his grandparents lived right next door so he spent a good part of many summers playing at the park that he now oversees.

A year ago his Aunt Doris Mrsny approached City of Norfolk officials about selling her 1982 built home. She was moving out of the house and had known the City parks division was working on cleaning up the property to the north of the baseball fields near their home.



It was the perfect solution for the City as the old Elkhorn Cabin was literally rotting at its foundation and needed replacing. Not only that, the Mrsnys had a large 40 by 60 foot metal shed on the four acres where the house sat that City employees could use to do

work in and store equipment.

“It was like getting three or four birds with one stone,” said Mrsny.

There were many features in the house that made it an ideal candidate for a lodge. There were huge skylights in the living room lined with planks of cedar. A large stone fireplace, wooden beams in the ceiling and a rustic wood mantel gave it a lodge feel. A huge copper oven vent was a focal point in the kitchen above an island that would be the ideal spot for buffet food.

After the purchase of the Mrsny lot last summer is when the real work began. To be converted into a lodge that could be used by a large number of people, a lot of renovating needed to be done. One of the first things was to take out two bedrooms and a bathroom to open up the first floor so that up to 15 tables could be set up in the main area. Once those rooms were removed, city workers put in two Americans With Disability Act (ADA) accessible bathrooms.

A little of the construction work had to be contracted out but was done almost entirely by city park employees with some help from the City street, water, and permits and codes divisions.

The sunken living room was filled in to match the level of the kitchen area. Access to the garage and basement was closed off as neither area will be open to the public and will be used for park maintenance operations. A new deck was added onto the back of the building that included a handicapped accessible ramp.

A mop room that holds a faucet and mop sink for cleanup replaced part of another bathroom. New laminate floors and hard wood trim was installed.

Half of the kitchen cupboards were removed and a built in oven placed in the existing cupboards. Ceiling fans were raised and some low hanging lights were taken out. The kitchen counters were also replaced.

Work was finally completed in early April and the Lodge was deemed ready and is available to the public for rental April through October.

Up to 90 people can be seated inside the new Lodge that is air conditioned and heated. Unlike the other buildings that are rented out by the city, alcoholic beverages are allowed in this facility. The Lodge sits at 1008 McKinley Avenue in an isolated area of the park. The main parking lot is on the north side at the back of the building where the door into the Lodge is located. Overflow parking is available out in front of the large metal building to the front of the property.

A fence has been built around the front of the Lodge to provide some privacy with trees lining the backyard. Picnic tables and a concrete pad in the back can handle up to 150 people.

Since this building has many amenities, park officials have set the rental fee at \$200 per day- a higher fee than the other buildings the city rents out. Mrsny is pretty sure it will be a popular gathering spot.

"It will be a great place for family reunions, graduation and wedding receptions. We're happy with how it turned out," Mrsny said.

For more information about renting the Elkhorn Lodge or any other city rental facilities contact the city offices at 402-844-2014.