

# RAMSEY COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION

## COMMISSION MINUTES

November 8, 2017 at 6:00 pm

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation Administration Building

2015 Van Dyke Street, Maplewood, MN 55109

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 pm by Gale Pederson, President of the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation Commission.

Attending: Metric Giles, Gale Pederson, Louise Krohn, Leah Shepard, Bryan Shirley, Kong Vang

Absent: Cedrick Baker, Candy Peterson, Brian Tempas

Staff: Sara Ackmann, Jon Oyanagi, Amber Soler

### **Approval of the Agenda:**

Louise Krohn moved for approval of the agenda and it was seconded by Leah Shepard.

*Motion carried.*

### **Approval of the Minutes:**

Kong Vang moved for approval of the minutes and it was seconded by Bryan Shirley.

*Motion carried.*

### **Golf Course Study / Evaluation:**

#### **Sara Ackmann**

The plan is to send out a request for proposal to have a consulting firm evaluate golf course operations for categories including but not limited to the following: policies, procedures, the pro shop, the clubhouse, game initiatives, customer service, the marketing campaign and expanding diversity. The Parks & Recreation department hopes to learn more about how the County is positioned in the market and ideas for how to grow the game in Ramsey County. This will be conducted in the summer of 2018 and early drafts of the report should be available in the fall of 2018.

### **Community Engagement / Ambassadors:**

#### **Jon Oyanagi**

Parks & Recreation is pushing to be more involved with cities for our county's comp plan process and public meetings. There will also be pop-up meetings. Jon shared an idea for commissioners to act as ambassadors for the department's public engagement meetings and for them to be responsible for attending or inviting residents who live in their district to attend the meetings. Bryan was in favor of the idea as was Leah who brought up how important it can be to have tabling at events as it has the potential to reach those residents who cannot or will not attend public engagement meetings. Kong brought up the idea of more partnering with cities within the county which was well-received. Jon shared that he will continue to refine the idea and present more information to the commission as it becomes available.

### **Highland Park Reservoir Proposal:**

#### **Jon Oyanagi**

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation has put forth a proposal to repurpose the 430 x 330 foot bunker that was formerly the Highland Park Reservoir. It hasn't been used in years and St. Paul Regional Water is taking proposals regarding repurposing the space. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation's proposal focuses on meeting the department's basic needs for that site with an emphasis on more parking for the nearby arenas and bettering the storm water run-off as it is currently ineffective and inefficient. Proposals are due November 17. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation's proposal will detail more of a process, less of a project. If the county is awarded the proposal, they plan to exercise due diligence in evaluating the wants and needs of residents in that area of the county prior to planning specific projects. The department would like to make this a usable space for residents year-round. There is the possibility for 1-2 new rinks as well as green space. There is also opportunity for having quite large group gatherings in the space as it sometimes occurs where picnic pavilions and shelters are simply not sizeable enough to accommodate large gatherings.

The commission members shared their ideas and thoughts regarding the proposal and potential projects. Metric shared that he has a conflict of interest as he works for St. Paul Regional Water but he has high hopes that whatever is proposed and accepted will place a strong emphasis on being racially equitable for the residents of Ramsey County. He also mentioned the importance of intentional naming of measurable impacts keeping in mind the "Three I's" being: inform, input and influence. Bryan mentioned the idea of constructing an outdoor music venue in the space as it is something that the Twin Cities is lacking in comparison to other large metropolitan areas.

### **December Agenda:**

The December agenda was amended to account for a short meet and greet opportunity or game so that commission members and department staff can get to know each other better. Kong offered to plan this activity for the group.

### **Director's Report:**

#### **Jon Oyanagi**

The project at Lake Owasso Regional Park has begun. So far there has been tree removal and demolition of old shelters as well as the removal of the play structure. The play structure is going to Kids Around the World, a group that sets up these repurposed playgrounds in countries around the globe. Some of the trees will be salvaged to make new nature play areas later on in the project.

The Sucker Lake Channel project has been underway and is slated to be completed by the end of 2018.

Golf courses are now closed except for Manitou Ridge.

Arenas are open and Aldrich was the last arena to get their ice.

Meetings will be happening regarding the South Shore Trail project in White Bear Lake.

The Legacy grants which the department receives are from 3/8 of 1% of sales tax and the funding will end in 2034. Events are being planned to showcase the benefits of the fund and to celebrate successes that have come from it. There is hope that this will bring awareness to the fund so that it can and will continue to exist and grow.

The department is continuing to determine how best to handle the Snail and Grass Lake flooding. Flooding has happened the past two years and has caused the beach at Snail Lake to be completely underwater with the play feature and even picnic table area flooded. There has also been flooded trails and a tunnel off a trail that has not been usable due to the flooding. The watershed district has studied the problem and has a report with recommendations coming soon.. Bryan inquired if action was certain to which Jon shared that it indeed was but not necessarily completely funded by the department.

**Report from Chair & Other Commission Members:**

Leah inquired as to the status of the ADA Committee to be formed and Jon shared that it is still in the works but should be formed by the end of the year.

**Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:22 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amber Soler