

RAMSEY COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION

COMMISSION MINUTES

**June 13, 2018 at 6:00 pm
Snail Lake Regional Park Pavilion**

4191 Snail Lake Blvd, Shoreview, MN 55126

Attending: Leah Shepard, Kong Vang, Cedrick Baker, Metric Giles, Candy Petersen, Louise Krohn, Brian Tempas

Not in Attendance: Brian Shirley and Gale Pederson

Guests: Catherine Zimmer

Staff: Jon Oyanagi, Mike Goodnature, Ann White Eagle and Angela Marlette

The meeting was called to order at 6:02pm by Leah Shepard.

Approval of the Agenda:

Candy Petersen moved for approval of the agenda and it was seconded by Louise Krohn.
Motion carried.

Approval of the Minutes:

Kong Vang moved for acceptance of the April 2018 Minutes and it was seconded by Leah Shepard.
Motion carried.

Change/Addition of New Commission Members

Jon Oyanagi, Director

The County Board will look at the change or addition of new commission members at the June 26, 2018 County Board meeting. This was pushed back because District 6 was vacant giving time to recruit.

State of Parks Report Delivered May 22, 2018

Leah Shepard, Candy Petersen and Jon Oyanagi

Candy acknowledged a job well done by Leah. Jon thanked Candy for attending. Candy commented that the Board was very enthusiastic, asking many questions and very engaged. One topic that the Board would like added addressed is winter trail usage at Battle Creek. Commissioner McDonough has received some complaints about trails being closed during the winter. Jon explained that the trail that runs through the gorge receives little sunlight and gets very icy making it difficult to maintain. The trail along Highway 61 is also closed due to erosion and alternate routes are being sought. Commissioner McGuire would like the Commission to look at adding Pickleball to the system. This will be added to a future agenda for discussion. Jon complimented Leah on doing a great job.

Recognition of Departing Commission Member: Cedrick Baker

Leah Shepard

Leah thanked Cedrick for his work with the Commission and presented a plaque in recognition of his service. The Commission members and Jon had a photo taken to commemorate the presentation.

2017 Minnesota Conservation Corp Report

Mike Goodnature, Natural Resources Manager

It is his duty to oversee the AmeriCorps Conservation Corps crew each year. A group of young adults are hired with funding made available through the Parks and Trails Legacy funding. In the past they had participants from multiple schools in the area. In 2017 there was a full crew of four people. These participants worked part time and mainly in the Regional Parks system. They work at Tamarack Nature Center maintaining gardens and assist with outdoor education curriculum. System wide activities include brush cutting and invasive species removal. These are large important projects that would not happen without their assistance. The youth are signed up with AmeriCorps, mostly in or just out of college and receive a small stipend plus some payoffs for educational loans. There were issues filling groups this year system wide and Ramsey County currently has two youth and a third just applied. Catherine asked what the youth get. Mike reviewed how they work with them during the school year. The youth view this as an opportunity since they apply and are hired under AmeriCorps. Leah asked if the youth are doing work that would not normally get completed. Mike responded that it is definitely work that would not get completed. The youth take care of smaller parcels of woodlands that would not usually get attention. Kong asked what the time frame of the program is. The Conservation Corps come on in March and until school ends and begin a regular summer schedule. Candy asked how long the program has been working with Ramsey County. Mike estimated seven years that Ramsey County has participated. Brian asked for a breakdown on the number of youth and the diversity of these teams. Most specifically if it reflects the youth in the county? Mike offered to get a breakdown and report back. AmeriCorps maintains those type of statistics.

Joint Meeting with Surrounding Cities

Jon Oyanagi, Director

The Commission has met jointly with other Parks and Recreation Commissions such as the City of St. Paul, Maplewood and Roseville. Jon asked which cities the commission would like to approach for a joint meeting. Candy volunteered to check with North St Paul. In the past the Commission travels to the cities. Some larger cities that have not been met with are White Bear Lake and Shoreview. Kong thinks it would be interesting to meet with White Bear Lake. Jon will check into a meeting with White Bear Lake. Metric would like to see how Hennepin County and Ramsey County compare with work on racial disparity and other demographics roles. An option would be to meet with the Minneapolis Park Board or Three Rivers Park District. This would be an option, however the focus was on the cities since they are also working on their comprehensive plans. It would be an ideal time to plan future collaboration and share these plans. We could partner with Minneapolis and Three Rivers on the basis of regional parks and trails since that is the extent of crossover. Leah is interested in both, especially with the aspect of gathering the information on equity and with those cities that we can collaborate with.

Park Tour Itinerary

The park tour has been typically done as the August meeting. Jon reviewed the parks visited in the past; last year was Ramsey County Parks, the year before that was Silverwood and St. Paul Parks. Cedrick asked if there are any major projects happening that the commission can see the progress. Jon confirmed that Lake Owasso would be such a park. Cedrick commented that Silverwood was a very

helpful to tour show casing different amenities and different ideas. Jon suggested visiting the new facilities in Washington County, The Cottage Grove Ravine Park, Fish Creek, and Battle Creek. It would be helpful to visit Battle Creek and see its current condition since the master plan is being redone. Kong and Candy agree since it's been some time since the Commission has visited the southern parks. Leah asked if a staff member from the Washington County Parks can meet with the commission members to answer any questions. This route would also make it convenient to visit Carver Lake Park in Woodbury. There have been talks with Woodbury about wrapping Carver Lake into a Regional Park that would include Fish Creek and Battle Creek.

Upcoming Community Events

Leah Shepard and Metric Giles 26.40

Leah asked if there are upcoming community events in which the commission can do some outreach. Louise reminded the group that Rondo Days Festival is July 21st and Ramsey County will have a booth. Metric updated that the Selby Ave Jazz Festival is September 8th at Selby and Milton. The Rice Street Festival begins July 29th. The Ramsey County Fair begins July 11th and runs through July 15th. Kong mentioned that many smaller cities have their own festival and community events. Leah asked if Ramsey County will be at the State Fair this year. Parks & Recreation will be working with the DNR, Greater Regional Parks and Metro Regional Parks system at the DNR building focusing on the legacy program. Jon updated that Parks & Recreation had tables at the WaterFest. Ann with the Conservation District has always been there and this year Ken Pelto with Parks & Recreation was there. Leah also wanted to check that all members received the signup email for Ramsey County Fair and Rondo days. Members were able to sign up for the Fair at the meeting as well. Jon reminded the members that the first night is also the night of the monthly commission meeting and will need to be at a different location.

Branded T-Shirt Ordering

Angela Marlette, Administrative Assistant

Commission members agreed to keep the shirts the same and placed orders in order to have them before the Ramsey County Fair.

Commission Name Change

Jon Oyanagi, Director

In order to avoid confusion with the County Commissioners, it is recommended to explore changing the Parks and Recreation Commission name. One thought is, since Ramsey County Parks & Recreation is absorbing the Soil & Water Conservation District and expanding our natural resource base, to change it to Parks, Recreation, & Natural Resources Advisory Committee.

Leah summarized the motion to change the name from the Parks & Recreation Commission to Parks, Recreation & Natural Resource Advisory Committee.

Candy moved and Louise seconded.

Motion carried.

Directors Report

Jon Oyanagi, Director

Introduced the award that Ramsey County Parks & Recreation received from the Minnesota Recreation & Parks Association for the work done on the Tuj Lub Courts at Keller Regional Park. It was presented by MRPA at the County Board meeting May 22nd. Jon will also bring this to the Maplewood City council meeting in July as they were integral partners in making this happen.

All Committee members were signed up to be members of The National Recreation and Parks Association. An email will arrive detailing the membership. In the future we look at opportunities for webinars and conferences.

The County Board approved all the details for the transfer of the Ramsey County Conservation District to the creation of the Soil and Water Conservation Division beginning July 1st. Everything they do will remain as the same for now. Ann White Eagle will be the Division director. Leah asked what does this mean for the committee. The items that the Conservation Division works on will be brought before this committee. Leah asked for a brief orientation of the duties of the Soil and Water Conservation Division at a future meeting.

Report from Chair and Other Commission Members

Candy gave updates about the First Tee fundraiser at the Ponds of Battle Creek on July 21st. The cost is \$40.00 and includes a cart. Funds go to help the First Tee program. This is the third year of the program. Contact the Ponds at Battle Creek if you are interested. Also addressed some of the deer population issues and that the City of North St. Paul is now on the list for a deer hunt in two years. Metric extended an invitation to the group to attend the 2018 Community Peace Celebrations on Friday June 17 at 376 Western Ave, at the Boys and Girls club from 2pm-6pm. Perhaps next year Ramsey County Parks & Recreation can participate. Jon asked if Metric could find out who the contact is for next year. The Conservation District just recently installed a rain garden for the club.

Louise moved to adjourn
Meeting Adjourned at 6:48pm

Next Commission Member Meeting:
Wednesday, July 11, 2018
Vadnais Sports Center