

RAMSEY COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

January 8, 2020 – 6:00 PM

PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT: 2015 VAN DYKE STREET, MAPLEWOOD, MN 55109

Attendees: Leah Shepard (AL), Jessica Pitzel (1), Jordan Nelson (2), Brian Tempas (3), Melissa Wenzel (6), Candy Petersen (7), Michael Berger (AL)

Not in Attendance: Bryan Shirley (5), Metric Giles (4)

Guests and Staff: Branden Block, Mark McCabe, Joe Bergquist, Angie Marlette

The meeting was called to order at 6:03pm by Leah Shepard.

New At Large Commission Member, Mike Berger was welcomed, and each member introduced themselves and what brought them to serve on the Parks Commission. Mike introduced himself and expressed how important Parks are as a way to get outside and be active. He was pleasantly surprised to learn that Hockey and Golf were also part of the commission advisory's scope.

Approval of Agenda

Candy Petersen motioned for approval of the December 11, 2019 agenda, Jordan Nelson seconded. All Approved. *Motion carried.*

Approval of the Minutes

Jessica Pitzel submitted for correction of the December meeting adjournment time to 7:56pm and motioned for approval of the December 11, 2019 minutes and Jordan seconded, all approved. *Motion carried.*

2020 Commission Chair and Vice Chair Election:

Candy moved to elect Leah Shepard as Chairperson and Jessica Pitzel as Vice-Chairperson, Brian Tempas seconded. All Approved. *Motion carried.*

2020 Work Plan/Annual By-Laws Review and Approval: Attachments – 2020 Draft Work Plan

Mark summarized the changes made into the 2020 Work Plan from previous requests. More frequent Racial Equity Plan updates were added as well as regular requests for the commission's participation in events hosted by Parks and more frequent requests for input from the planning and development team. This work plan is meant to be flexible and items are meant to be as needed. Candy appreciated that there was no planned meeting for December as that is a busy month. Upon Melissa Wenzel's question, Mark commented that those months where there are no meetings, ideally, Commission members would be using that time to engage the community at service events or assisting with other Parks outreach.

Annual By-Laws Review and Approval: Attachment -Parks Commission By-Laws and Proposed Changes

Melissa sent an email, previous to the meeting, asking for discussion and consideration to change the language on attendance and the requirement outlined in the By-Laws. Discussion was also opened as to if the second Wednesday of each month was still a suitable day. Overall consensus was that in order to adequately serve there is an expectation of regular attendance. The current language permitting the missing of three consecutive meetings and half of the announced meetings in a 12-month period does not fill the needs of the Commission. Angela Marlette reported that all meetings were able to gain a quorum this past year.

Leah summarized that the motion on the floor is to change the language in the By-Laws to “*Any member of the Commission who misses more than **two** consecutive meetings or **one-third** of announced Commission meetings, within a period of 12 months, may be recommended by the Chairperson of the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners for removal from the Commission.*” Candy moved to adopt the new language, Melissa seconded. All Approved. *Motion carried.* Further study into Roberts Rules of Orders will need to be done to see if we are being fully compliant with the By-Laws.

West Side Arena Case Study: Joe Bergquist Presentation Handout – Designing for Diversity

Joe Bergquist introduced himself, his expertise in the hockey arena field and provided background with his work on the Parks Racial Equity Leadership Team (PRELT) whose work plan was presented at the last meeting. Work Plan item #4 is to, “Eliminate racial inequality in our parks facilities, programs, and services provided to residents, and to provide equal access to all residents based on community and neighborhood values, cultures, interests, wants and needs. Many times, the users of the facility are no longer from the surrounding community and not reflective of it. The opportunity arose to use the idea of expanding use of West Side area from a practice facility to a place that would also be available to the surrounding community as a case study in designing for diversity. With expanded use, facilities can meet their operating expenses and as seen in Aldrich and Vadnais, their capital needs as well.

It was determined to use West Side as a pilot project for designing of diversity for un or under represented stakeholders. Joe explained how stakeholders are determined, how to begin the process, and all the steps of the process that ensure the community has key involvement in designing the use of facilities. Maintaining the revenue from ice sales can fund the facility for off-season use by the local community. Ideas produced from this pilot ranged from Quinceañeras for smaller groups (not as large as Aldrich), space for soccer, other community events and an Equity Rec Hockey League serving the youth of the area.

Next Steps: Apply for the 2020-2021 Community Engagement Funds from the last budget and continue with the process as laid out to create an extended use plan for the West Side Arena. Commission members will have opportunities to engage with this as residents of the area and as a Parks Commission member.

Melissa mentioned that the online presence would need to be updated and personalized to showcase what is happening.

Legislative Platform

Mark previously mentioned that the Battle Creek Winter Recreation Area is once again on the Legislative agenda for bonding for \$3.1 Million for snow making on the cross-country ski trails and the sledding hill. Many local teams as well as other facilities desire this to happen with concerns of student safety in travelling and over use of other facilities. It would enhance out door recreation for local community with, ideally, free use of the sledding hill. An advocacy campaign is being worked on. Melissa wants to encourage that the communications focus on the bigger picture of health and equity that exist. Leah asked for the talking points to be shared when available.

Mark summarized the different opinions with in the Metropolitan Council for Legacy funds use. Shifts in this can affect how and what projects are funded.

Directors Update

- Commissioner Toni Carter has been elected Board Chair, taking over from Jim McDonough
- Commissioner Nicole Frethem began serving for District 1 to finish the existing term
- Ice Castles at Long Lake Regional Park continues to build and move towards opening
- Working with the City of New Brighton on cost share project for building of restrooms and shelters at Lions Park in Long Lake Regional Park
- Highland Area is planned to have renovations for the parking lot and rain water mitigation

- Highland Park Reservoir demo/reclamation, no update
- Park Ordinance updates while work began, work continues on language in the ordinance and park hours which will be brought to the Commission for review and then the county board

Report from the Chair & Other Commissioners

No report from Chair or commission members. Leah asked for an update on the Battle Creek Master Plan.

Upcoming Community Engagement

Master Plan Amendment for Snail Lake Regional Park focusing on flooding and other mitigating efforts. Commissioner Frethem will be hosting community meetings to listen to concerns and respond to questions.

Adjournment: Candy motioned for adjournment at 7:30pm