

RAMSEY COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

April 8, 2020 – 6:00 PM
VIRTUAL ZOOM MEETING

In Attendance: Leah Shepard (AL), Michael Berger (AL), Jordan Nelson (2), Brian Tempas (3), Metric Giles (4), Bryan Shirley (5), Melissa Wenzel (6), Candy Petersen (7)

Not in Attendance: Jessica Pitzel (1)

Staff: Mark McCabe, Mike Goodnature, Brett Blumer, Angie Marlette

The meeting began at 6:04pm.

Approval of Agenda and March 11, 2019 Meeting Minutes: Leah Shepard asked for a motion to approve the agenda and meeting minutes. Brian Tempas made the motion and all approved.

Motion carried.

Directors Update: Mark update the Parks Commission on both County and Parks specific COVID19 response.

Timeline –

03/15-03/17 Executive Orders to close schools, bars, restaurants and other places of public accommodation (golf/arenas/TNC). RC Closed all Walk-up Non-emergency Services and workers still reporting to offices.

03/23, Started delivering modified services (online or over the phone), Parks staff whose jobs can be done from home are to work remotely.

03/27-04/10 Executive Stay at home order further changes modified service delivery, Ramsey County staff are classified as essential and Parks is able to continue most job functions.

03/29, Returning Maintenance & Operations workers start times changed, lunch times spread out and opened more lunch spaces to accommodate social distancing.

04/03, Modified refunds established for Parks delaying opening until May 8th, Summer Ice has been cancelled and Spring TNC Programming cancelled. No outreach programming in the Parks.

04/02, TNC modified programming has begun online with daily themes, videos, self-guided nature discovery, and links to resources.

- Daily high-level updates sent to leadership, Weekly updates to the modified service delivery plan.
- Signage posted closing playgrounds and reminding users of social distancing, huge increase in users resulting in increased portables cleaning, garbage pickup...
 - Opening of normally closed sites early

- Challenge of Summer aquatics programming, TNC Summer Day Camps and other programming, Golf opening dates and planning fall ice.
- Employee safety reduce exposure and continue parks moving towards opening preparedness
- Construction/Master Planning projects moving forward – Turf facility, Battle Creek playground, Beaver Lake Count Park MP. No Executive order against new construction.

Melissa Wenzel added that Boy's Totem Town is another facility that maybe uses for homeless and COVID response. Mike Berger appreciated the posted Social Distancing signs in the parks.

2020 Deer Management Report And 2019 Conservation Corps Review: Mike Goodnature presented the 2020 Deer Management Report for approval. Based on 2019-2020 ariel surveys and DNR recommendations:

- 2020 ariel survey observed a total of 720 deer
 - 118 deer increase in one season
 - Well exceeds DNR goal of 15-20 per square mile
- proposing special archery hunts on 8 county properties in the fall of 2020
 - Participants will be selected through the Metro Bowhunters Resource Base (MBRB)
- Proposing to allow sharpshooting on county land for the winter of 2020/2021 in select areas where the amount of deer is between 3 to 10 times the target populations
 - Locations are within the city of Maplewood and St. Paul including the Highwood and Larpenteur avenue areas

Metric Giles requested information on how groups can be added to the DNR meat distribution list. Leah asked if there were any objections to approving the 2020 Deer Management Report. Hearing none: [Motion carried.](#)

Mike reported that due to COVID-19 the 2020 Conservation Crew work has not begun since recruiting is not possible at this time. There would also be issues transporting underage workers safely to job sites during this time.

The Commission was then presented the 2019 Conservation Crew Annual Report detailing natural resource activities, areas worked and youth education. *Brian Tempas asked what the biggest concern Mike had with not having the Conservation Core for 2020.* Besides the lack of opportunity for the youth to serve and gain experience, the inability to maintain smaller areas of restoration that normal contractors will not due because the project is considered to small.

Tamarack Nature Center: Destination Discovery Final Phase:

Brett "Gus" Blumer reviewed the Final Phase Design Concept of Tamarack Nature Center. Report covered:

- User information and Community Partnerships
- Overview of the 2008 Master Plan Vision
- Project Scope: Program building, Garden House, Sugar Shack, Program Shelters and Stormwater infrastructure

The Conditional Use Permit that was submitted to the White Bear Township will be received at their May meeting since April's was cancelled. Gus then reviewed the architectural drawings for affected structures and asked for input and questions.

Metric pointed out the need for more demographic information in the Presentation especially information that shows accountability toward racial equity work included in all Ramsey County projects.

Leah asked if there is a Master Plan for Tamarack Nature Center.

Report from The Chair & Other Commission Members: No Report

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:29pm.

Next Meeting: May 13, 2020