

RAMSEY COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

April 14, 2021 – 6:00 PM
VIRTUAL ZOOM MEETING

Commission Members in Attendance: Chairperson: Leah Shepard (AL), Michael Berger (AL), Jordan Nelson (2), Brian Tempas (3), Metric Giles (4), Melissa Wenzel (6), Candy Petersen (7)

Staff in Attendance: Mark McCabe, Kris Lencowski, Angela Marlette

Community Members: Andrew Montain

Call Meeting to Order: Chairperson Leah Shepard called the meeting to order at 6:21pm after attendees had a chance to check in on recent events.

Approve March 10, 2021 Minutes and April 14, 2021 Agenda: *Motion made by Leah to move agenda items; Parks Appointments and Racial Equity, to happen after the Park Ordinance update. Jordan Nelson seconded; All Approved the agenda change. Motion Carried. Leah motioned to approve the April Agenda and March meeting minutes together, All approved. Motion Carried.*

Park Ordinance Equity Review Update: Kris Lencowski, Director Parks and Trails

Kris reviewed the Park Ordinance revision project, history, partnerships, review and how engagement with less represented communities is being done. Specific items in the Parks Ordinance are being focused on as they either need clearer language, been deemed to have potential social justice issues, or updating to meet greater access to the Parks. This is the first revision and there will be further engagement as the process continues. Ultimately, there will also need to be an Engagement (both media, meetings and signage) to educate the community on the final product.

- **Comments/Feedback:** Mike Berger notes that Law enforcement does not need the Parks Hours to create probable cause for enforcement or investigation. Melissa Wenzel commented that if we do have Park hours then they need to be enforced equally across the system. If plowing is an issue, then figure it out. Jordan Nelson suggested a deeper dive to see if other organizations have eliminated Park hours across the country. Mike suggested, rather than an explanatory page just amend the ordinance to be plain language. Some arenas may not be able to have this, but many will. Suggestions were also made to change criminal penalties to fees or volunteer service, although this adds a new layer of administration and enforcement. Metric Giles cautioned against only selectively bringing items to the public for comment and review as well as also to making sure there is an education component.

Racial Equity Topic Ideas: Ideas that were formulated by the Parks Commission

- How is Racial Equity and Racial Justice being listed as a line item budget, both Ramsey County and Parks and Recreation specific. Mark updated on the lateness of the delivery of budget parameters and how fast moving this process is right now due to Leadership dealing with State funding COVID impact items and not raising the Levy.
 - Brief summary of line items
 - Shared analysis and where Ramsey County Values are represented in the budget

- Have the Park Racial Equity Team meet with Commission, not just an update more of an interaction for the purpose of creating a relationship
- Transportation to the Parks

Parks Commission Diversity Appointments Update:

- Currently, there are five applicants from Districts 1,3, and 6. Currently no submissions for District 5
- Application process is open through April 23, 2021
- As a part of the new process, all applicants are considered (both returning and new) for open positions if the residency requirements are met
- Metric asked about how the opening for all Committees and Advisory Boards are communicated/solicited to the public and how long the applications are held for
 - Notices are sent via subscribed e-blasts, social media, and newsletters as well as shared with existing groups such as the Equity Action Circle (EAC)

Commission Member Update: No updates

Director Update: Mark reached out to the EAC regarding open positions on the Parks Commission and the desire for more diverse applicants. This was also discussed at the County Board Workshop since ultimately the Commissioners appoint the Parks Commission members.

Adjourn: *Candy Peterson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:08pm*

Next Meeting: May 12, 2021