

RAMSEY COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

June 9, 2021 – 6:00 PM
VIRTUAL ZOOM MEETING

Commission Members in Attendance: Chairperson: Leah Shepard (AL), Gregory Williams (AL), Michael Berger (1), Jordan Nelson (2), Brian Tempas (3), Savannah Lane (5), Snowdon Herr (6), Candy Petersen (7)

Commission Members Not in Attendance: Metric Giles (4)

Staff in Attendance: Mark McCabe, Benjamin Karp, Kenneth Pelto, Justin Townsend, Angela Marlette

Welcome New Commission Appointees

Commission members and staff introduced themselves with their background and interests.

Meeting was called to order at 6:04pm

*A motion was made by Candy Petersen and seconded by Jordan Nelson to approve the May 12, 2021 minutes and June 9, 2021 agenda; All Approved, **Motion carried.***

Racial Equity Topic: Right Track Plus Worker Program: Ken Pelto

- Ken introduced himself, he is a Program Specialist doing nature-based education in the Regional Parks with a strong focus on equity and attracting new park users. Worked with Elder Herr in the Equity Action Circle as well leads the Parks and Recreation Racial Equity Leadership team. Would be very interested in any ideas from the Commission.
- Public Sector Academy, multi-department internship program, will be returning again in the fall.
- New program starting that is sponsored by RC Workforce Solutions and the City of St. Paul, called Right Track Plus internship program. If businesses are interested there are 4 different informational sessions. The Parks department is committed to hosting several different interns.
<https://www.ramseycountymeansbusiness.com/workforce/Right%20Track%20Career%20Internship%20Program>
- Funding is from the American Recovery Plan: enough for 300 positions.
 - For young adults 18-24 years
 - 18 hours a week for 15 weeks, August through November (tentatively)

Q&A: *Greg Williams asked if Metro Transit would be eligible since they are housed in Minneapolis?* Mark will send a note to Workforce solutions regarding Metro transit eligibility, but if the host site is within Ramsey County they would certainly qualify.

Battle Creek Master Plan Presentation: Benjamin Karp

- Mark McCabe gave an overview of the Parks Master Plan process and past decision-making processes that have moved from Director centric planning towards the involvement of the community in the creation of Park plans.
- Ben reviewed the variety of community engagement methods and outcomes that were obtained from the input of diverse community members used for creating a long-term plan for Battle Creek Regional Park.

- Concepts map review included:
 - The implementation agency (Metropolitan Council) asks, as a park of the planning process, that future park acquisitions are addressed in the plan.
 - Improved connectivity/access points were reviewed, *Leah Shepard asked if Bus routes were included and Greg commented that the off-road master plan has included and is located on another map in the plan but not in this presentation.*
 - Future amenities include but not limited to the request for added bathrooms, improved trail signage, picnicking, parking, and Waterworks improvement.
 - Natural resource management and preservation details.
 - Park programming development and partnerships.
- This is a 20 to 30-year level plan that will have numerous community engagement processes as it proceeds into the individualized projects.
- Parks & Recreation is seeking a letter support from municipalities, community organizations, this Parks Commission, the Ramsey County Board and finally to the Metropolitan council.

Q&A: *Greg asked about pollution remediation with Pig's Eye as well as about a pool deep enough for swimming lessons at Waterworks, specifically in light of the recent drowning in Minneapolis. When the time comes to actual planning of that project, the community will have the opportunity to voice their desires. Greg would like to know how to get connected regarding ultimate disk, suggested connecting to parks programming staff on this for next steps. He also suggested support of the Metro transit. Ben will investigate intentional outreach to Metro Transit.*

*Candy made a motion to support for the Battle Creek Master Plan, Greg seconded, All Approved, **Motion carried.***

Soil & Water: AIS Boat Launch App, Justin Townsend and Ann White Eagle

- Ann thanked the new members for their service and introduced herself and Justin.
 - Shared the story of Soil & Water's Right Track Intern.
 - Pollinator friendly Native Planting at the Admin building described with planting planned June 4th, 2021 with a grant from RWMWD.
 - Hiring a Environmental Resources Specialist.
- Justin introduced the pilot program for the Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) App for Ramsey County owned Boat Launches.
 - Done by the boaters, especially handy with COVID concerns.
 - Lake and Boat Specific.
 - Web app, no downloading needed: www.ramseyais.com

Annual August Parks Tour Planning: Protentional Site Ideas and Topics

- TCO Sports Garden: New Field House Tour
- Beaver Lake Park: Master Planning now happening
- BattleCreek Winter Recreation Area site visit
- Administration Building Native Planting/ New Soil & Water Space Tour
- Transportation can be a combination of personal vehicles and a county van

Commission Member Update

- Leah read Brian Tempas introduction that was emailed in his absence.

Director Update

- Reminder, No July meeting.

- Melissa Wenzel was thanked for the service to the Parks Commission.
- County lifted the mask mandate this week and Parks is in progress of updating signage.
- Beaches and Waterworks open this weekend.
- Budget update forecasted arena revenue down 30% because of restrictions in usage equating to about \$1 million in revenue.
- Parks reservations is having its busiest season in history.

*Mike Berger made a motion to adjourn, **meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm***

Next Meeting: Annual Parks Tour, August 11, 2021