

RAMSEY COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

September 9, 2020, 6:00 PM

Zoom Meeting

Commission Members Attending: Vice Chairperson: Jessica Pitzel (1), Michael Berger (AL), Jordan Nelson (2), Brian Tempas (3), Metric Giles (4), Bryan Shirley (5), Melissa Wenzel (6)

Not Present: Leah Shepard (AL), Candy Petersen (7)

Staff: Mark McCabe, Lisa Hanson Lamey, Ann WhiteEagle, Gus Blumer, Benjamin Karp, Angela Marlette, Anne Carroll **Resident Guests:** Richard Straumann, Catherine Zimmer

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairperson, Jessica Pitzel at 6:03 pm.

Welcome and Speaker Introduction:

The Parks Commission welcomed community guests Rich Straumann from Arden Hills and Catherine Zimmer.

Approve June 10, 2020 Minutes and September Agenda:

Jessica updated the agenda to move the GARE (Government Alliance on Race and Equity) Racial Equity Toolkit to the October 14th, 2020 meeting. **Bryan Shirley motioned to approve the June 10, 2020 minutes. Brian Tempas seconded the motion. Motion carried.** Melissa Wenzel asked about a recap with the Community on the August meeting and confirmed the adjourn time on the agenda. Mark McCabe confirmed that this will be discussed later in the meeting. **Agenda Approved.**

21st Century Parks Community Engagement:

Mark reviewed the history and impetus surrounding future direction and community involvement in the Parks System. The need to evolve with changing demographics of the Parks system and ensure the system is reflective of what the community wants. Parks system received 80K of funding to conduct CE through a Ramsey County grant. Anne Carrol was hired to assist in the Community Engagement piece. Lisa Hanson Lamey introduced the 21st Century Parks Vision and the elements that Anne will assist Parks with. Anne reviewed the engagement framework, staff training and implementation consulting in which she will be involved. The Parks Commission will need to consider their level of training and involvement desired. The concept is that Equity-centered engagement support project decisions by using IAP2 core values and code of ethics.

- Ideally representatives from the Parks Commission attend a mini training (approximately 3 hours)
- Participation in identifying key stake holders, project planning and implementation.

Jessica asked if the framework being established was meant to be reused with different projects or is it altered with each project? Anne responded that the framework as a process is consistent across all engagements, but the actual design and implementation plan is unique to each. Jessica commented that she would be interested in assisting and that an abbreviated training would be ideal. Leah Shepard can assist in establishing content of the Commission training.

Capital Projects Update:

- Long Lake Regional Park, Lion's Park restroom facility, parking lot and picnic shelter anticipated to be completed by next spring.
- No bonding bill from the Legislature is expected to be passed

- Tamarack Nature Center garden house project continues to bring it up to code, make the facility year-round programmable space as well as add other amenities.
- Owasso County Park project continues with the City of Shoreview, construction is nearing completion with the road open mid-October. Anticipated opening next spring.
- Turf Facility and TCO Sports garden progresses with official signage being installed and the structure up.

Battle Creek Mountain Biking Plan Community Engagement Summary:

- Trail signage indicating multi-use areas has been ordered and will be installed as soon as it arrives.
- Memorandum of Understanding with Minnesota Off-Road Cyclist for Battle Creek trail maintenance has expired, and Mark continues work on agreement updates. It was incorrectly stated that there was a current agreement.
- Battle Creek Community Engagement summary and timeline will be reviewed now and emailed to the commission.

Gus Blumer reviewed the Overview of the Off-road cycling Master Plan, history, all forms of community engagement, survey questions, future steps and a timeline starting at the inception of the Park.

Mike Berger asked what more is there left to be done in this current plan? It is a graphic plan that people can look at, take it all in and provide further comment. Further comments will be incorporated into that design and balanced against all the other comments received once people have something to react to.

Mike also asked for the best way to continue to submit comments. The preferred concept that is based on all the community engagement will be available online (projects tab) for comments and questions. At this time there are no in person events scheduled.

- Final steps, the plan will be sent for review to municipalities and the county.

Directors Update:

- Fall Programming adjustments:
 - Waiting for word from the MN State High School League for their direction on restrictions.
 - Parks potential of extended facility use beyond the normal parks season.

Commission Member Update:

- Brian Tempas has frequented Battle Creek Regional Park trails several times since the August tour and had only positive experiences with shared trail use. He stated that all public comments are welcomed but they need to be weighed with the others before rushing in one direction.
- Melissa Wenzel is struggling to respond to comments on NextDoor app regarding Ponds of Battle Creek closure and the McKnight Road diet. She will no longer respond to Ponds comments and wanted to make all aware of the social media chatter.
 - Parks does have communications staff that monitor social media communications.
 - Melissa would appreciate any talking points or tips.

Adjourn: Melissa motioned for adjournment at 7:35pm.

Next Meeting: October 14, 2020