

RAMSEY COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA

March 11, 2020 – 6:00 PM

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

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

Not in Attendance: Jessica Pitzel (1), Candy Petersen (7)

Staff: Kristopher Lencowski, Kenneth Pelto, Brett Blumer, Angie Marlette

The meeting was called to order by Commission Chair Leah Shepard at 6:04pm

Approval of Agenda: Melissa Wenzel motioned for approval the agenda, all approved and *motion carried.*

Approval of January 8, 2020 Meeting Minutes: Melissa motioned for approval of the meeting minutes, all approved and *motion carried.*

Advisory Council Evaluation Findings Workshop Presentation: Kris Lencowski

In May of 2019, Parks Commission Chair Jim McDonough and County Manager Ryan O'Connor directed a study to be done on Advisory Councils' efficacy in meeting community and county needs. The Parks Commission Board as well as 31 other advisory groups participated. Kris presented the findings and action items from this project via a power point presentation. *Metric Giles asked if data on the diversity of members as well as applicants is available for review as well as suggesting better data graphics and to work with youth and seniors. Angie will reach out to Jolie Wood. Leah asked about reformatting the way Council candidates can apply and get information regarding. Melissa suggested to publish committee members so that support can be leveraged and it's easy to reach out. Metric suggested a Ramsey County volunteer day so that each area has an opportunity to get to know others and network. Bryan commented that the Chairs of different Human Services Committees would meet with lobbyist so that there is direct input on funding as well as meeting with other Committees.*

Racial Equity Updates

Ken Pelto presented the Commission with a Parks & Recreation Racial Equity Leadership Team Plan Updates. In December 2019 the work plan was presented to the Commission and input sought on the Action Items. Recently, a core team has been established at the County-Wide level. Each department will now have a representative to be a part of the Racial Equity Leadership at the Service Team level. Parks is a part of the Economic Growth and Community Investment Team (EGCI) in which newly hired, Prince Corbett, will guide Racial Equity Leadership teams of all Service teams. While County-wide goals have yet to be established, the

Parks Equity Plan is being used as a template for creation of overall county goals. Ken continued to give Park's goals updates:

- Last 4 new hires were racially diverse candidates, 20% of seasonal staff were racially diverse
- Increased focus on attending alternate job fair locations to increase the diversity of the applicant pool and hosting job fairs
- Participation with Work Force Solutions Young Adult Public Sector Academy: 10-week paid internship
- Community Engagement Increase in diverse areas and type of engagement on projects and plans: Battle Creek and Vadnais Snail Lake Regional Park Master Plan
- Under procurement goals; There is a current Request for Proposals for new software that will assist in tracking if the companies contracted with meet equity goals
- Group meets monthly with timelines assigned to the different goals

Leah requested specific items that have been repeatedly discussed to be brought into the Parks Equity work plan: 1) Including Community groups in scoring of parks progress/outcomes 2) Educational series and shared analysis for this group. This feedback has been repeatedly mentioned and tracking progress is important.

Ken has asked Human resources about GARE training and the Commission's potential involvement.

Ken can inquire about the Commission taking the new hire training so there is exposure to what is currently instituted.

The Commission discussed the many free tools and different options available for training and resources.

Summer Programs Updates:

Ken showed the Commission Parks newest programming tool on permanent loan. The Ice Shanty that is now available for summer programming use from the Metropolitan Council.

- Archery, canoe and bike rides, summer solstice events, story trails, partnership with Libraries to earn badges with a phone app to visit parks, continue the P.I.N.E, and programs with at risk intercity kids, transitional homeless center programming. Metric suggested partnering with the St. Paul Almanac Story mobile.
- Kris presented the Summer Programs presentation reviewing the planned programs and partnerships for serving the community and underserved populations.

Metric expressed concerns regarding transportation availability and qualification criteria used to choose participants.

Director Update:

Kris gave updates on the Winter Recreation Snow making bonding request of \$5,300,000.00. The TCO Sports Garden is the new name for the Vadnais Sports Center because of the successful naming rights agreement. The Commission members were encouraged to participate or lead Earth day clean-ups happening in the parks.

Vadnais-Snail Lake Regional Park Master Plan Update:

Gus Blumer reviewed Master Plan amendment presented to the public input and asked for by the Metropolitan council regarding flood mitigation. The goal being to restore/offer alternative trail loops and make sure they are resilient to future flooding. The preferred alternative will be presented at the next public meeting, created from the three original options based off public feedback. Included are plans to re-open the beach, relocate the shelter and move other amenities to be more user friendly. Native plant restorations are planned with RWMWD as well as the lake home owners.

Tamarack Final Phase Conditional Use Permit Plan:

Gus Blumer reported that in 2008 a Master Plan was done to make a destination discovery area and the project is now in the final phase that includes the programming building, remodeling the garden house, replacing the sugar shack and building a shelter for programming and rentable to the public as well as stormwater mitigation.

Report from The Chair & Other Commission Members: None

Adjournment: Bryan Shirley motioned for adjournment at 8:02pm

Next Meeting: Zoom Meeting, April 8, 2020

