

**City of Bloomington
Parks, Arts and Recreation Commission
September 9th, 2015**

6:30 p.m.

Present: Gordie Holm, Chairperson; Jim McCarthy, Vice Chairperson; Commissioners, Matias Figari, Marie Holm, Peter Moe, Dave Rickert, Lenny Schmitz

Absent:

Staff: Randy Quale, Parks and Recreation Manager

Alison Warren, Recording Secretary

Visitors: Erika Hoaglund, DNR

Dennis Porter, Former PARC Commissioner

Call to Order Chairperson G. Holm called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Oath of Office for New Youth Commissioner Matias Figari was sworn in by Chairperson Holm as the PARC Youth Commissioner. His term will extend through August 31st, 2016.

Wildlife Management Fencing
Item #3.1
Quale presented to the Commission regarding Wildlife Management Fencing. At a previous meeting, issues with primarily turtles and mortality concerns as they cross over roadways were discussed. In response to this issue, Quale shared five options for potential fencing along East Bush Lake Road near Bush Lake Beach. Erika Hoaglund from the DNR was also available for any questions regarding the turtles, their mortality and the fencing.

Schmitz inquired about the durability of permanent fencing with it being located in the right of way and the amounts of snow, salt and sand that it would encounter. Hoaglund stated that fencing in similar locations has been replaced every other year. Quale stated that the location of the fencing would be closer to the lake and far enough away from the road to avoid the corrosion issues. McCarthy inquired about the potential issues with mowing. Quale stated that the fence would be place inside the areas that are not mowed. Figari inquired if there were options that were removable instead of permanent. Hoaglund stated that there are a few temporary options but the cost to install and remove may get expensive. Hoaglund offered to inquire with other agencies who have previously installed different types of fencing to get their cost and time of install and report back to staff.

Quale inquired with the Commission if they believed that more staff time should be spent

on this project. He stated that this could be a good pilot test site that has funding available via Metropolitan Regional Parks System operational and maintenance grants. The overall consensus of the Commission was that it was worth pursuing more and getting more information.

Bryant Park Amenities
Petition
Item #3.2

Quale shared with the Commission a petition that was pulled together by the residents who live near Bryant Park. The petition requested additional picnic tables and benches for Bryant Park. Staff is working with the organizer of the petition to determine the best location. Quale shared some of the potential locations that would avoid the storm water retention areas as well as be of value to the parks users. The cost of the additional amenities would be somewhere in the range of \$4,000.

Sculpture Donation to
Civic Plaza
Item #3.3

This item was tabled until further notice.

Community Center Task
Force Appointment
Item #3.4

As discussed at the July meeting, the City is pulling together a task force relating to the Community Center. A PARC member was requested to be a part of the task force.

P/Moe, M/Holm, to appoint Lenny Schmitz as the PARC representative to the Community Center task force. Motion carried 7-0.

P/Moe, M/Holm, to appoint Jim McCarthy as the alternate or if room additional PARC representative to the Community Center task force. Motion carried 7-0.

2014 Parks and
Recreation Annual Report
Item #3.5

Quale presented the 2014 Parks and Recreation Annual Report to the Commission. G. Holm provided some corrections that were to be made. Schmitz inquired about an archery program within the City.

L/Schmitz, D/Rickert, to accept, and recommended approval to the City Council, the amended 2014 Parks and Recreation annual report. Motion carried 7-0.

2016 Parks and
Recreation Budget
Review
Item #3.6

Quale provided an update to the Commission regarding the 2016 budget. He stated that after an initial analysis by City Council, the budget will need some modifications before bringing it to the Commission for review. He noted that although some of the increases were not approved, it appeared as though some of the additional dollars requested for the Park Asset Inventory and the Center for the Arts Enterprise Fund were included.

Minnesota River Valley
Master Plan Update

Item #4.1

Quale presented the Minnesota River Valley Master Plan update. He stated that at this point in the planning process the master plan has turned more into a strategic priorities plan due to the many areas and topics that will require additional time and studying. The priorities include finishing ongoing projects such as the Old Cedar Avenue bridge reconstruction and the Minnesota Valley State Trail. Many other plans are also scheduled in relation to the river valley such as a trails plan, a signage plan, a comprehensive maintenance plan, a cultural resources plan and a natural resources protection plan. Other priorities include process and management related activities such as the Park Asset Inventory, an update of the memorandum of understanding with the Fish and Wildlife Service and establishing media promotion strategies. Quale stated that all of these priorities will need funding and if funding is not available or approved, priorities will be deferred until funding becomes available.

Schmitz inquired about the previously discussed option of designating the river valley as part of the Metropolitan Regional Parks System. Quale stated that steps are being taken to inform the Metropolitan Council staff that this is of interest to the City. G. Holm inquired about the usage of the City's communications staff to provide timely information on the website, newsletters and other outlets. Quale stated that all of the information is currently available on the website, but at this time there is not further information from the MnDNR regarding the trail. Once that information is available it will be readily available to the public through a multitude of sources.

Dennis Porter, a visitor to the meeting, stated that at this time it seems the assumption is that the area is not being utilized, although there is no real study to provide actual usage. Porter stated that through his own experience, the river valley is one of the busiest parks during peak hours and people just don't realize it. Quale stated that as a part of the trails plan it is being considered to conduct a usage study. He also mentioned that if the river valley were to be designated a regional park, usage studies would be a requirement.

Quale inquired with the Commission if staff was going in the right direction as far as timeline, projects and budgeting. McCarthy stated that it would make the most sense to request all of the funding in 2016 in case there is movement from the DNR so that the City can react to that. Rickert stated that the timeline looks well planned out, not too ambitious, but well developed. Moe said that the draft looked great.

Porter provided the Commission with his opinions regarding the Minnesota Valley State trail. He began by noting that the current users would like improved access, signage and bridges, but that does not mean it needs to be a paved trail. He stated that as current users, they are the ones maintaining the trails and have realized that this is a major flood plain. He said the area has flooded nine of the last ten years. He mentioned the petition regarding the paving of the trail has grown to over 3,500 signatures.

Porter stated that in 2014 the DNR reported that of the 590 miles of paved trail in Minnesota, over 100 miles needed maintenance work and it wasn't getting done due to funding. He questioned why the City would want to be part of that problem. He also questioned if the trail were to need maintenance when it would happen or if the City would end up taking on the additional costs. Porter also mentioned the current paved trail that is being constructed on the south side of the river, not in the flood plain. He questioned why there would need to be two paved trails. He also stated that the current number of cyclist is going down and the number of mountain bikers is growing, giving another supporting reason for a non-paved trail in the river valley. Quale concluded the discussion regarding the Minnesota River valley stating that he will provide information as to the City Council's reaction on the updated plan.

Alternative
Transportation Plan
Update

Item #4.2

Quale stated that the plan is on hold to address a few items including the maintenance plan and costs as far as maintaining current and future trails. Engineering staff will be rewriting the maintenance section of the document and some other minor revisions will be made. At this time, Engineering staff are quite busy with construction projects and will be getting this project done as time allows. The plan is scheduled to be brought back to Council by the end of 2015.

Park Improvement
Projects Update

Item #4.3

The Commission reviewed the park improvement projects update highlighting the Twins/Toro rebuild of Hrbek Fields, the bike repair stations at Civic Plaza. The Commission had no further questions or comments.

City Council Action
Pertaining to Parks and
Recreation

Item #5.1

The Commission reviewed the City Council action pertaining to Parks and Recreation from the Regular Meetings on July 6th, July 27th, August 3rd and August 24th.

Park and Recreation
Manager's Report

Item #5.2

The Commission reviewed the Parks and Recreation Manager's Report. Quale highlighted the Old Cedar Avenue Bridge project, coyotes in Bloomington, geese at Running Park, and the upcoming events of Buckthorn Bust and River Rendezvous. The Commission had no further questions or comments.

Staff Recommendation
to Cancel September
23rd Study Meeting

Item #6.1

P/Moe, L/Schmitz, to cancel the September 23rd study meeting of the Parks, Arts and Recreation Commission. The motion carried 7-0.

Approval of Minutes –

D/Rickert, J/McCarthy, to approve the minutes of the July 8th, 2015 Parks, Arts and

July 8th, 2015

Recreation Commission meeting. The motion carried 7-0.

Item #7.1

Adjournment

L/Schmitz, P/Moe, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried 7-0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Item #8

Alison Warren

Recording Secretary