

PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES

Thursday, February 27, 2014 – 7:00 P.M.

NOVI CIVIC CENTER – COUNCIL CHAMBERS

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. with Commissioner Jewell presiding.

INTRODUCTION OF NEWEST COMMISSIONER: Scott A. Pratt

Commissioner Jewell asked Commissioner Pratt to tell what he has been doing since leaving the position of Recreation Supervisor for Novi Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services.

Commissioner Pratt stated he is still in the parks and recreation profession but with the Department of Natural Resources. He oversees State Parks.

ROLL CALL: Torimoto (Absent-Excused), Bauss (Present), Ferrell (Absent-Excused), Jewell (Present), Pratt (Present), Staab (Present), Wingfield (Absent-Excused), Kodali (Present), Singh (Absent).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

It was moved by Commissioner Staab and seconded by Commissioner Bauss to approve the agenda as written.

Voice Vote **Unanimous**

CITIZEN COMMENTS: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A. Approval of the December 19, 2013 minutes – no January Meeting,

It was moved by Commissioner Bauss and seconded by Commissioner Staab to approve the minutes as written.

Voice Vote **Unanimous**

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. Walkable Novi – Commissioners Torimoto and Bauss

Commissioner Bauss stated he and Commissioner Torimoto attended the meeting a month or two ago and there has not been anything since so there is nothing to report.

B. Novi Parks Foundation - Commissioners Staab and Ferrell

Commissioner Staab stated the Novi Parks Foundation met last Tuesday. The Golf Outing is August 7th. They will be sending out "save the date" notices soon. They were made aware on Monday that Executive Director Torno has accepted a full time position in Ann Arbor. They will be seeking a replacement. They are also seeking new members for the Foundation Board. They received a second payment from Tom Holzer Ford for the sign at Power Park

C. Parks and Recreation Grant Committee - Commissioners Wingfield & Jewell

Commissioner Jewell stated there has not been a meeting so there is nothing new to report .

STAFF REPORTS:

A. Administration Division – Director Jason Mangum

1. Deputy Director position update

Director Mangum stated when Scott Pratt left the position of Recreation Supervisor the position was reclassified as Deputy Director. Jeff Muck has accepted the position and will start on March 17. He will be attending the next meeting. Jeff is currently the Director of Huron Valley Recreation and Community Education. He has been in the recreation field for 15 years and a Director for the past 7 of those years. He will be a great asset to our department.

2. Community Recreation Plan update

Director Mangum stated when our Community Recreation Plan was submitted to the DNR it was misfiled and we were told it was up for renewal this year but we actually have another year to complete it. We have taken a step back and are now in the research stage and can be more thorough. We are early in the process and should have it done in the next month or two. Your SWOT analysis last week was part of that plan and will be used for both the Community Recreation Plan and the Strategic Plan which we are combining in to one document.

3. Older Adult Services – retirement of Rachel Zagaroli

Director Mangum announced the retirement of Rachel Zagaroli. In the packet is a flyer on her Retirement Party. She has been the Older Adult Services Manager for ten years. That program has grown. Meadowbrook Commons has one hundred percent occupancy and has for several years. She will be missed. He encouraged the Commissioners to attend her Retirement Party on March 20th. We are in the process of finding a replacement. The position has been advertised and we are in the process of screening and interviews.

4. City Manager position update

Director Mangum stated City Manager, Clay Pearson's, last day with the City of Novi is tomorrow. He will become the City Manager in Pearland, Texas starting on March 10th. The Mayor and City Council have approved the contract for Victor Cardenas, our Assistant City Manager, to become our interim City Manager. The City is determined to do a national search and are in the process of recruiting executive search firms. By the end of March, the goal is to have an executive search firm in place.

B. Recreation Division – Director Jason Mangum

1. Youth and Teen update

Director Mangum stated Girls on the Run has been a successful and growing program and provides training for girls in third through sixth grade. It helps them learn lessons of fitness. It has a very specific curriculum and they train for a 5K run. It has been growing since we adopted it. A year and a half ago we had one school that had a Girls on the Run program and we have expanded it to all of the elementary schools, including Novi Meadows.

A new program we have this year is the Spring Break Camp. Greg Morris, our youth and teen programmer, has put together a very successful camp during the summer, Camp Lakeshore. He is expanding that to include a Spring Break Camp. This is an opportunity for parents who work to have a place for their child to go when they are out of school. The program will take place at Novi Woods.

We have a newly revamped program, the Eggstravaganza, which is an egg hunt. It will be Saturday, April 12th from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the MSU Tollgate Farm. There will be crafts, refreshments, petting zoo, hay rides among other activities. One of our premier programs for environmental stewardship is our Novi CARES program. This is an acronym for environmental opportunities. They are Cemetery clean-up day on Saturday, April 12th; Arbor Day on Saturday, April 26th; River Day on Saturday June 7th; Earth Day on Saturday, May 3rd; and Shredding Days the first Saturday of every month.

2. Theatre production updates

Director Mangum stated the youth of our community recently completed the production "101 Dalmatians" and was a great success. We had nearly one hundred and one people audition for it (actually ninety-six). We had two casts of 35 performers.

Auditions for the next performance of Disney's "Peter Pan" for grades 3 through High School is going to take place this Saturday.

Our dinner theatre this year will be "The Mobfather". It is an interactive dinner theatre. The ticket prices include dinner and entertainment. The ticket prices are \$45 per person before March 10th and \$55 after March 10th.

3. Sports update

Director Mangum stated our winter sports, basketball and volleyball, are wrapping up. Our spring sport, soccer, is getting ready to kick off. Volunteer coaches are needed. We have both House and Travel Leagues. Our Travel League plays through the Western Suburban Soccer League. They both start on March 24th.

Director Mangum stated we also offer both Boys and Girls Lacrosse. This will be our first year to offer Girls Lacrosse. We have enough girls registered for the program to run. They had chosen the name Novi Rumble. This is an instructional league and we will play neighboring communities. In Boys Lacrosse we have added a third division. We have Boys 3rd and 4th, 5th and 6th and 7th and 8th. Our boys teams are call Lax Cats.

Commissioner Bauss asked at what the Girls Lacrosse ages are.

Director Mangum replied it is a 5th and 6th grade league but since it is new we will have 4th, 5th and 6th together.

Commissioner Bauss asked what the demographics are between boys and girls as far as participation in our programs.

Director Mangum stated he has not looked at that. He asked Commissioner Pratt if that is something he had looked at when he was Recreation Supervisor.

Commissioner Pratt replied that he had and that it tends to be program and sport specific. For example, more boys play basketball but girls play volleyball.

Commissioner Bauss was concerned in equitable activities for both boys and girls.

Director Mangum stated equitable activities is something we will look at and monitor.

MATTERS FOR COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION:

A. Review and discussion of Novi Farmer's Market

Director Mangum stated the Novi Farmer's Market is something that has struggled in the past partly because of location and partly because of timing. Director Mangum gave some background on the past Farmer's Market. He stated we have

a couple of options. We can focus our efforts and energy elsewhere or we can put in some extra effort and budget and make the Farmer's Market a reality. We have received some input from some City Council members who think it is important and want to see it go. He wanted to bring it before the Commission and see if there are any thoughts on the Farmer's Market. One of the things we could do is to pay Eastern Market to bring out vendors. We would pay them to come rather than they would pay us to be there. The benefit is that we would have the reputation or branding of Eastern Market and may attract residual vendors but also residents. That has a negative effect on our revenue because there is an expense but not revenue. We have looked at alternate locations rather than Fuerst Park where it is relatively hidden. He stated he would like feedback from the Commission. One of the reasons we feel ours has not been as successful is that Northville has an established and very successful Farmer's Market as does the City of Farmington and Wixom.

Commissioner Staab stated he would like to see the Farmer's Market succeed. Commissioner Pratt stated when he was Recreation Supervisor he personally made calls to about 35 to 40 vendors and they would not commit to a location that is close proximity to other Farmer's Markets. The Eastern Market proposal is at least a temporary solution. It would garner interest and they would know there is going to be produce there, where before we couldn't guarantee that. People will start to see the significance of having a Farmer's Market in Novi. He likes the Eastern Market idea if there is money in the budget.

Commissioner Bauss asked about having the Farmer's Market at Tollgate Farm and having other activities that tie into it. The location may also create more distance from the competitors.

B. Review and discussion of Novi Dog Park

Director Mangum stated this was a January Commission item. The power point presentation is in the packet. The presentation would have been given at the January Commission Meeting. It was presented to City Council on Monday, February 3rd. The project management team consists of members of the City community from Community Relations, Parks and Recreation, IT, and our consultant from OHM. The reason we would build a Dog Park is multifaceted. The location selected for the Dog Park is 42390 Nick Lidstrom Drive, which is right behind the Novi Ice Arena. The land is mostly void of trees and has a little elevation in topography which makes it more esthetically pleasing. The amenities we will have at the Dog Park include a double gated entry. It will have a key fob access system with an annual fee to utilize the park. There will be a bottle filler and a pet fountain. There will be benches, a large dog area of a little more than two acres, a smaller, timid dog area of three quarters of an acre, and parking. The design and engineering is about thirteen thousand dollars, construction is about two hundred and twenty-one thousand, and amenities and signage is about fifteen thousand dollars. The total is about two hundred and fifty thousand dollars. The intended schedule is in February we present it to the Planning Commission and we advertise for project bidding. In March we will award construction. In April we hope we are thawed out enough to proceed. During the spring and summer we will have construction and turf establishment. In the fall we will have our Grand Opening.

Commissioner Staab stated he got a comment from a resident after the City Council Meeting. Commissioner Staab read the comment which stated the resident liked the plan for the park but asked if a covered area of some sort was planned to give the dog owners relief from the weather.

Director Mangum thanked Commissioner Staab for the comment. The original plan did have some pavilion type shelter but unfortunately because of budget constraints they were not included in this phase but look at it for future phases. On the colored version of the site layout all of the dark green areas are trees, from the actual tree survey, that are at least four inches in diameter. We are going to prune up the tree canopy so they will provide shade and we will provide portable seating so people can move to the shaded areas. That doesn't help for rain but we will continue to improve this park.

Commissioner Staab suggested that after the park gets past the Planning Commission and is operational, maybe one of the Park Foundation members can go to some of the service clubs or businesses for naming rights on a pavilion or shelter.

Commissioner Bauss asked about the fee rates.

Director Mangum stated we are working with Northville Parks and Recreation, who operate a Dog Park at Northville Community Park, and we are going to have a partnership with them where we have the same requirements for access and vaccinations, and the same cost. The key fob will work at both parks. Their fee is currently fifty dollars a year so that is what we would anticipate the fee to be.

Commissioner Bauss asked how many subscribers they have.

Director Mangum stated that he did not know how many subscribers they have. They have two dog parks. One is a little smaller and is in downtown Northville and that is separate. We would not have the reciprocal agreement for that one only with their bigger dog park. It will be a benefit to both our residents and their residents.

Commissioner Bauss commented there are ten parking spaces.

Director Mangum stated there were originally twenty spaces but ten spaces were given up to create a path from the Ice Arena parking lot to the dog park. It serves as overflow parking for the Ice Arena. To the west of the parking spaces there is room for ten more parking spaces which will be built in a future phase. We will have a rolled edged curb in that area rather than a hard square curb so that if the ten spaces are full someone could park in the dirt area.

Commissioner Staab asked if a citizen doesn't have a dog but has visitors who do have one would they be able to take the dog to the dog park.

Director Mangum stated that was brought up. The Suburban Collections Showplace has numerous dog shows a year so we would have to make provisions for that. It is something we will have to bring up. Under the current model it would not work.

CITIZEN COMMENTS: None

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Pratt stated he is glad to be on the Commission and gave Director Mangum kudos for the work on the dog park.

Student Representative Kodali stated he liked the idea of the dog park and of the short term pass.

Commissioner Bauss welcomed Commissioner Pratt and is looking forward to working with him on a peer basis and having all of his insight.

Commissioner Staab stated he appreciates the opportunity to get to the dog park information. It will be a welcomed addition. He knows the dog park in Wixom get a lot of use. He welcomed Commissioner Pratt.

Commissioner Jewell stated he also thinks the dog park is a great addition and it is long overdue. He thinks Director Mangum did an excellent job putting it together and presenting it to City Council, especially with the limited funds. He welcomed Commissioner Pratt.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn by Commissioner Staab and seconded by Commissioner Bauss.

Voice Vote **Unanimous**

The meeting was adjourned by Commissioner Jewell at 7:46 p.m.

DATE APPROVED: _____

Harry Torimoto, Chairperson

Jerry Jewell, Vice Chairperson