

## **PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES COMMISSION**

**Thursday, September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023 – 7 P.M.**

Novi Civic Center – Council Chambers

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

### **ROLL CALL:**

Commissioners: Dooley (absent/excused), Staab (present), Joseph (present), Joshi (present), Riggins (present), Tolkacz (present), Torimoto (present)

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Commissioner Joseph motioned for approval of agenda and second by Commissioner Joshi.

**Voice Vote**                      **Unanimous**

**CITIZEN COMMENTS:**                      None

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

It was moved that the minutes for the August 17<sup>th</sup> meeting be approved by Commissioner Joshi and second by Commissioner Joseph.

**Voice Vote**                      **Unanimous**

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- A. Walkable Novi – Commissioners Dooley & Tolkacz  
Commissioner Tolkacz said the next meeting will be in October. Director Muck added that the consultant will join us to give an update on the non-motorized master plan status.
- B. Novi Park Foundation – Commissioners Joseph, Joshi, Staab & Torimoto  
Commissioner Joshi reported that the meeting has been postponed to October 3<sup>rd</sup>. At that time, they will wrap up Pour on the Shore and have official numbers.
- C. Grants Committee – Commissioners Joseph & Riggins  
Commissioner Riggins stated that there was no meeting, therefore nothing to report. Director Muck explained the committee will reform after the next City Council is seated along with the two new appointments from this body. A November meeting would be the next time the grants committee will happen.
- D. Parks and Facilities Updates
  1. Lakeshore Park – Commissioner Joseph  
Commissioner Joseph went back to Lakeshore Park on Tuesday to take additional pictures for his presentation. The day had minimal people compared to his prior

visit. Commissioner Joseph called Lakeshore Park the crown jewel in the city after all the renovations the past couple of years. It is also the largest park in Novi. He showed a picture from the website highlighting the amenities. The beach was closed when he visited but the tunnel looked brand new. Pictures were shown of the walkway from Pavilion Shore Park and the volleyball courts. The sand volleyball court is still in good shape at the end of the season. He noted erosion on the retaining wall and stones out of position.

A big concern for Commissioner Joseph was the tables being moved from the shelters plus the two different types of tables. The green version is in better shape than the brown. The brown tables need staining and refinishing. The building was a great addition to the park. History of the park is displayed on the wall when entering the facility. The offsite library was being used during the commissioner's visit and appears to be used a lot.

Commissioner Joseph loves how bike friendly the park is with the multiple spots for parking, bike fix stands and safety. He did express concerns over the bike path ending abruptly. Back by the mountain bike trails there is a bit of erosion by the trailhead and the landscape could be refreshed. He also pointed out a lot of downed trees and branches in that area which need to be cleaned up.

The three shelters were described. The main shelter at the front of the park is in the best condition. Shelter two by the restrooms and soccer field had several tables pulled out all around and several need work. Shelter three has people spread out more during their rentals and events with the tables scattered about. He suggested the staff bring the tables back to the shelters. A panoramic photo was shown of the main playground. The mulch was still in good shape even in heavy traffic areas. The bathroom facilities looked good except for a written notice about the door latch.

Director Muck thanked Commissioner Joseph and said the purpose for these reports is to point out things the park's staff don't see everyday. After receiving the PowerPoint today, he sent many of the issues to the park's maintenance team. He explained that half the tables were refurbished last winter as a test run to see how they would hold up. The project will be completed this winter. The tree debris was not from the previous storm but Autumn Olive, an invasive species that was taken out with volunteer efforts from city staff. It was actually removed yesterday. The retaining wall will be addressed. In the CIP for next year the parking lot and trail head will be re-designed and paved. The turn around to the trailhead needs a complete redo. After that project is finished our friends from the Motor City Mountain Bike Association will put in a new trailhead with changing area and tool storage.

## 2. ITC Community Sports Park – Commissioner Joshi

Commissioner Joshi expressed that the park looks great many times during her presentation. She showed pictures of kids enjoying the Tim Pope play structure and the David Barr statue Coasting the Baseline. She feels Tim Pope might be the most popular play structure due to her observations on frequent walks at ITC. The history and story of Tim Pope are displayed on a sign. The library read box was full, although last week when she visited it was empty.

Commissioner Joshi observed that pickleball is designated for 8:00am – 1:00pm however, pickleball is taking over. On her visit on a Tuesday afternoon there were

many people playing pickleball. Director Muck agreed that pickleball takes over as much as they can. Outside the hours of 8:00-1:00 tennis takes priority. Commissioner Joshi mentioned a crack on the basketball court and the hoop was slightly torn. She showed a few photos walking towards the fields. Many people were enjoying soccer but not much action on the softball fields. Director Muck said that is a great observation about the baseball and softball fields which was a significant part of the discussion when talking about renovating the ITC Sports Park. The baseball fields sit mostly empty outside of April – early August.

Commissioner Joshi continued with the ITC trail. The bike station looked great as well as the map showing the trail distance and how to use the road crossings. Director Muck finished by saying the entry way signs were replaced this week with ITC's new logo and also due to fading.

### **MATTERS FOR COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION:**

#### A. Splashpad Signage / Rules

Director Muck presented an overview of the splashpad rules. The plan is to operate the splashpad from 10:00am – 8:00pm the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend – Labor Day, that matches the Lakeshore Beach hours. There will be an attendant at the splashpad during operational hours. That person is not a lifeguard but will be there for emergencies, maintenance, picking up trash and monitoring capacity. There will be no entry fee. The rules are pretty standard detailing what behavior is allowed. No animals. Smoke free. Must wear proper swim attire. These are basic and were pulled from other communities with operating splashpads. There are a couple versions with all the same verbiage and will be displayed in multiple areas. It is noted that the splashpad can be closed at any time for weather, maintenance, special events or other operational matters. We will have the ability to close the gates so people cannot access the area.

Director Muck asked the commissioners for feedback, dialog, and questions. More explanation was given in regard to weather and soccer overlap.

#### B. Commission Chair, Vice Chair Nominations & Committee Appointments

Director Muck said this is the time of year when we start talking about who is going to lead the commission and what committees everyone will be a part of. Historically, the process is sending Director Muck your interest over the next month. The list will be compiled, and a vote will take place before the next meeting. October 19<sup>th</sup> it will be an agenda items to talk about who was elected.

#### C. Commissioner Parks and Facility Updates

Director Muck and Chairman Dooley have been discussing the need for the park and facility updates. It may be time to take a break due to a lot being on next year's agenda with ITC, five-year master plan, and older adult needs committee. The commissioners will be invited to different focus groups to weigh in on the subjects. As a group we can decide in October if the park updates should be eliminated, be in a different format, eliminate / add parks, or decrease the frequency of presentations.

## **STAFF REPORTS**

### A. Administration Division – Director Jeff Muck

#### 1. Park Project Updates

Director Muck started with the update on the newest park, Northwest Park, which is getting ready to open. It is on 12 and a Half Mile between the Andelina Ridge subdivision and Catholic Central. The road was paved, a sidewalk was added along the edge of the park, areas were cleared, and a parking lot was constructed. The next phase has started with Spring Line Excavating working on pathways which are to be completed by the end of September. The contractor for the playground installation, Nature Playscapes, will begin early November when the equipment that was ordered arrives. Minimal trees were removed from the site. The trees that were removed will be repurposed into benches to be placed in the playground area. Northwest Park is meant to be a nature-based playground utilizing the topography and existing items.

The Community Relations team provided construction information to the neighborhood communities. The onsite workers have reported very positive interactions with the neighbors regarding the pathways. The construction company cannot keep people off the paths, as they are excited about using the park. Pictures were shown of the pathways and clearing of the playground. Progress is being made at Northwest Park.

Director Muck continued by saying the concrete was poured last week for the splashpad surface. Over the next two weeks the foundation for the restroom and mechanical building will be poured. The bridge to get to the splashpad will be constructed. In addition, electrical work, installation of water features including bucket and spray canons begin Monday. Director Muck is confident in a Memorial Day 2024 weekend opening.

The updated conceptual plans for ITC Community Sports Park have been received, however, staff has not reviewed them yet. After the staff evaluates the plans, cost estimating will occur. The Spicer Group and a contracted engineering firm will both evaluate to get a comparative for a better idea of cost.

City and school staff are meeting next week to complete the transition of the land swap from a maintenance side including signage, keys, and gates. The city now has ownership of storage buildings at Bosco Fields. This will help the park's maintenance staff with equipment storage.

### B. Recreation Division –Director Jeff Muck

#### 1. Programs & Services

Director Muck provided the recreation update in Deputy Director Ringle's absence. Twenty dogs attended Doggie Dive In at Lakeshore Park. The annual event is held the day after the beach closes. The survey indicated 100% satisfaction. The Dog Park will be closed October 4<sup>th</sup> for routine maintenance. Five new site supervisors /event specialists have been hired. This role is a key part time position that sets up and take down rooms in this building, assists at Sizzling Summer and Lakeshore Park. We are still hiring. The hours are very flexible. The work-based learning students from Novi High School adult transitions started

back recently. They come to the Civic Center every Wednesday and Friday to clean and recycle.

Dooley Dog and picture day is Saturday September 23<sup>rd</sup>. Chairman Dooley and Recreation Supervisor Chase Root will be grilling over 500 hot dogs for the event. Chase Root will be running the basketball program with nearly 500 players and fifty teams. The coaches' meeting will be on Thursday, September 28<sup>th</sup>.

Director Muck recapped the summer camp programs. Lakeshore had 281 unique participants across the ten weeks with 850 registrations. Camp PowerPlay, which is held at the Civic Center had 118 unique campers and 450 registrations. These camps were maxed out each week.

Currently, there are ninety girls signed up for youth volleyball and twenty adults. Jack O 'Lantern Jubilee, the Halloween event is coming up October 21<sup>st</sup> at ITC. About 100 of 500 available spots are filled already. Ten out of the twenty businesses are planning to return to sponsor this year.

Director Muck continued with updates from the Cultural Arts world. The Polynesian Art Advocacy Council of Michigan partnered with the city at the end of August to host a Luau that featured a performance, food, crafts, and more. This was a benefit to raise money for wildfire relief in Maui. Over 170 people attended and \$4,000 was raised for the Maui Relief fund.

The Mexico Lindo dancers had a family showcase last weekend for their students ages 5-60 to share what they are learning in class. The instructors from Mexico Lindo partnered with the employee engagement committee to hold a Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration. The event featured crafts, learning how to dance and Hispanic culture.

The Novi Concert Band has an upcoming performance at the middle school on October 29<sup>th</sup> which will feature Disney's wonderful world of music. The Choralaires began fall rehearsals last week in preparation for their holiday concert. Theater auditions for Finding Nemo Jr. took place August 27<sup>th</sup>. 110 children were offered a role. The show will take place November 16<sup>th</sup> -19<sup>th</sup>.

The Mackinac Island trip is coming up October 17<sup>th</sup> -20<sup>th</sup>. Recreation Supervisor Madison Lachance and OAS Manager Kit Kieser will be taking forty-seven seniors to the Grand Hotel. They will participate in programs offered by mParks and receive a tour of the island on a horse drawn carriage. There is an opening on the trip due to a cancellation.

PRCS will be partnering with the library to offer 12 Days at Lakeshore Lodge. This is a brand-new holiday event full of holiday programs across twelve days including a magic show, trivia, crafts, sport tournaments, gingerbread house making, hikes with s'mores, Lunch with Santa and more. Lakeshore Park will be decorated with a festive lodge atmosphere. It will be something different for the holidays this year.

#### C. Older Adult Division – OAS Manager Kit Kieser

##### 1. Programs and Services

OAS Manager Kit Kieser said that the transportation staff had a meeting September 20<sup>th</sup>. It was a great opportunity for the staff to get together to discuss challenges and successes to help us serve the residents. Nineteen of the team members were in attendance.

A new program called Rummikub has been added to the list of games. It is a tile game based on gin rummy. The program runs on Monday afternoons at the Civic Center and already has good attendance.

Sixty people attended the end of summer ice cream social at Meadowbrook Commons last week. Unfortunately, Sip Sip Hurray was moved to October 4<sup>th</sup> due to Lakeshore Park being closed on the original date. Registration has reopened. The annual Veterans Day event will be held November 9<sup>th</sup> at the Civic Center. Admission is free for veterans and a small fee for non-veterans. World War II era entertainment and a meal from Mission Barbeque is included. Registration is open for a Thanksgiving luncheon that will be held at Meadowbrook Activity Center on November 16<sup>th</sup>.

OAS Manager Kieser highlighted many of the social services programs. A Matter of Balance fall prevention program begins this week with health and wellness program provider Ascension. Fortunately, it will be in person instead of virtual. The program was full by September 12<sup>th</sup>.

Tuesday of this week the Cutting the Cord program brought in more than thirty participants, bringing the total attendance for this program to over 100 interested in moving from cable to streaming.

Two programs are planned around the Medicare Open Enrollment Period including One on One counseling and a course called Medicare What You Need to Know.

In conjunction with an independent facilitator older adult focus group meetings were conducted this week. Forty people participated. We are looking forward to learning what they had to say during a debrief later this week. Director Muck spoke about the next steps and timeline for the older adult needs committee.

### **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:**

#### Commissioner Riggins

I thought this was a great meeting. The reports on ITC and Lakeshore were great, thank you. I go to Lakeshore all the time, so it was great to see. I am excited for Northwest Park, and I will be visiting. The staff thinks of everything, even repurposing the benches. Just a great meeting overall.

#### Commissioner Torimoto

I am echoing the same sentiments and am pretty excited about the progress of the park projects, especially the big ones, splash pad and reimaging of ITC. It is always cool to hear about the new programming that the staff comes up with. My wife and I are actually Rummikub players. The 12 Days at Lakeshore Lodge sounds fantastic.

#### Commissioner Tolkacz

Thanks to Commissioner Joseph and Joshi for the reports. Even though I am familiar with Lakeshore and ITC I learned information I did not know. Good job.

I was also interested in the 12 Days at Lakeshore Lodge, particularly the night hike. The program for older adults Cut the Cord is great. There are so many options out there. My wife does social work for the church and looking at some finances it is amazing what people are paying for cable. Sling TV and other services over the internet gives the same stations at a fraction of the cost. I think Cutting the Cord is a great service.

Commissioner Joseph

My wife's company rented the pavilion at Rotary Park last week. They had nothing but positive things to say about the park. They took advantage of the tennis courts, play structure, the pavilion and had a really good time. The feedback on our facilities was great. Great meeting tonight.

Commissioner Joshi

I am echoing everyone's comments. It is nice to hear about so many new programs. OAS was amazing just rattling off so many programs I could not keep track of the great things that will be happening in the future. I appreciate the parks department because when Director Muck looked at the issues in the PowerPoint everything was taken care of before the presentation this evening. Thanks to facilities and everyone involved.

Commissioner Staab

I enrolled in a Cutting the Cord program. It is very meaningful. It is such a good service that we offer. The Medicare programs we have coming up will be helpful to get people on board because it can be very confusing. Michigan is a special time in the fall as we approach the holiday season. Many things are going on a Lakeshore Lodge and the Pumpkin Jubilee. I encourage our viewers to stay tuned and get involved in the different activities that we have going on. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to call 248 347-0400 and they'll be glad to accommodate.

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Tolkacz and seconded by Commissioner Riggins.

**Voice Vote**

**Unanimous**

The meeting was adjourned by Commissioner Staab at 8:05 p.m.

DATE APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jay Dooley, Chairperson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Charles Staab, Vice Chairperson