

PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES

Thursday, May 16, 2013 – 7:00 PM

NOVI CIVIC CENTER – COUNCIL CHAMBERS

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm with Commissioner Policicchio presiding.

ROLL CALL: Policicchio (Present), Ferrell (Absent), Jewell (Present), Staab (Present), Tecklenburg (Absent), Torimoto (Present), Wingfield (Absent), Kodali (Present), Singh (Absent).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

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

Voice Vote

Unanimous

PRESENTATION:

Shauna Lewallen – Alliance for Innovation Conference “Transforming Local Government”

Director Mangum introduced Shauna Lewallen stating she was hired as a Sport Supervisor and has been with the department since last August and has been doing an excellent job. She recently had the opportunity to attend a conference with some other members of the City, Assistant Chief Hart and Victor Cardenas. It was the Alliance for Innovation Conference “Transforming Local Government”. We asked her to come tonight to give a brief report on it like we generally do when we have a staff member who attends a training or conference.

Recreation Supervisor Lewallen stated the “Transforming Local Government” conference was different than any conference she has ever attended. She has been in the recreation field for almost 10 years and has attended almost exclusively recreation conferences. Many of those were pre-scripted where it would speak about solving a problem. This conference was about city government and not directly about recreation. The different sessions were not call “sessions” but “case studies”. It was cities coming and talking about the issues they had and the different innovative ways they addressed those issues. She came back with many ideas. She went to 8 or 9 sessions. One of the themes was communication and how we communicate with our citizens. It was how we talked at citizens and how they talked at us but there were not many two way conversations. They talked about ways to build the two way conversations and innovative ways to use but not abuse technology by not letting it do the communicating for you. What she keeps going back to is to stop doing things to people and to start doing things with people. She is starting to think about some of the messages she is sending out for sports and how a two way conversation can be had rather than just giving information all of the time. Community Involvement was another thing talked about a lot. Much of the focus was on the

barriers people have for getting involved. They talked about using the talent in your community. We do that in sports and recreation because we ask for a lot of volunteers and we utilize them but she knows we can do that better. They also spent a lot of time talking about sponsorships. The easy or natural partnerships are the ones that are being utilized. It is the unusual partnerships are the ones that are being missed. One of the sessions she attended talked about an unusual partnership. The keynote speaker at the very end really hit home. They talked about how sometimes you get paralyzed by the need for perfection and that we take a long time to roll something out because you think it has to be perfect. You need to think about what is the viable product that people need. Sometimes you just need to put things out there, ask for feedback and have that two way conversation, tweak it as you go and get better.

Commissioner Jewell asked where the conference was held.

Supervisor Lewallen stated it was in Atlanta.

Commissioner Polocicchio thanked Supervisor Lewallen for her presentation.

Commissioner Staab asked Supervisor Lewallen how she might implement some of the things she learned from the conference.

Supervisor Lewallen replied one of the first things she did was sports specific. She has known that the sports part of our website has needed some work. People were calling us asking for information they shouldn't have to make a phone call to get. She was paralyzed by wanting it to be perfect and worrying about what needed to be on there and how often to update. She had this huge idea but she knew two or three things she could put right away on the website. She didn't have to have a massive plan to make improvements. The sports page has already been updated and we are continuing to make changes as people call us and we recognize what information we need so people do not have to make a phone call.

CITIZEN COMMENTS: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A. Approval of the April 18, 2013 minutes.

It was moved by Commissioner Torimoto and seconded by Commissioner Jewell to approve the minutes as written.

Voice Vote

Unanimous

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. Walkable Novi - Commissioners Polocicchio & Torimoto

Commissioner Torimoto stated the Walkable Novi Committee Meeting was cancelled today but he wanted to bring up a couple of things which Mark Spencer, the City Planner, provided. May is National Bike Month. On May 24th the City does have a Bike Rodeo. There is a Novi Parks Walking Club that has started. There are three specific dates where people can gather and walk in certain locations around Novi. He had also sent them articles on efforts to improve the sidewalk situation on Eight Mile along Beck Road toward Maybury

State Park. It is a collaboration between the City of Novi and Northville and Wayne County and Oakland County. It has gotten a lot of positive press.

B. Novi Parks Foundation - Commissioners Staab and Ferrell

Commissioner Staab stated the April meeting was well attended. The Golf Outing is coming up on August 1st at the Links of Novi. Pricing is the same as last year. They are a little ahead of schedule on commitment of major sponsors. They are now working on filling the foursomes and getting golfers. There was also discussion on re-presenting to ITC to partner with them again. June 15th the Novi Parks Foundation will be attending a pre-Gala at the Barr Property.

STAFF REPORTS:

A. Administration Division – Director Jason Mangum

Director Mangum thanked the Commissioners for everything they do and the time they spend volunteering for the betterment of our community through Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services. Commissioners are one of our best advocates because your voice is heard by elected officials, the City Council, the Counties and State Representatives. When there is a need people expect to hear from him because it is his job but Commissioners or Citizen Advocates are a vital piece because the voice of a citizen carries much farther in certain instances than that of a professional.

1. MRPA Advocacy Day at the Capitol

Once a year the Michigan Recreation and Park Association has a day at the Capitol. Sometimes the purpose of that is because there is a certain issue or item that needs our voice to be heard. Sometimes it is just a way of saying “thank you” and sometimes just to celebrate what we do. This is going to be the second annual “Get Out and Play” at the Capitol. It will be on the Capitol lawn on June 18th and will be full of activities. There will be all kinds of opportunities for camps to come out and participate in outdoor activities. There will be things like GPS and Disc Golf. Nature Centers come out and bring animals. There have been canoes and kayaks. Last year was very successful. There is also a bigger issue with which we could use the Commission’s help and that is the Michigan Natural Resource Trust Fund. We were informed that just about every week there is an idea or a bill or something proposed in the Legislature that attempts to raid, attack or drain that fund. That fund is meant to build parks and recreation facilities. Our current park project, Pavilion Shore Park, is being funded with a Natural Resource Trust Fund Grant. Two years ago we had a Natural Resource Trust Fund Grant to purchase a piece of property called the “Novi for Habitat” property to help maintain and preserve open space and habitat. Villagewood Lake Park is there because the funds were available with a Michigan Natural Resource Trust Fund Grant. We are encouraging you as part of this day to come out to Lansing. If any Commissioner is interested they should contact him and he will set up appointments with our Representatives and Senators just to let them know how important the Michigan Natural Resource Fund is in our community. He will be there and we will have camp kids there on the lawn. It will be a great way to let the people in Lansing know that we are serious about parks and about recreation and that these are important to us and to our Community.

2. July is Parks & Recreation Month

Director Mangum stated July is Parks & Recreation Month. On June 17th at the City Council Meeting there will be a proclamation designating July as Parks & Recreation Month in Novi. He encouraged the Commissioners to be there to show support to our elected officials. There is a theme every year for July and this year it is "My Parks and Recreation is..." We are asking people to fill in the blank. We will be asking people around the town "What is your Parks and Recreation and what does it mean to you?" For some people it may be the place where they connect with nature and for others it may be a place where they can be active or a place to play or play and coach sports. It is different but important for everyone and we want to celebrate that. We will hopefully have some activities planned for Parks & Recreation Month and at the next Commission Meeting will have some opportunities for the Commissioners to think about what is your Parks and Recreation. We can put this on Facebook as "Meet your Commissioners...What is Parks and Recreation to them?".

3. Pavilion Shore Park Update

Director Mangum stated he has been out to Pavilion Shore Park just about every week taking pictures and meeting with the contractor. They are finding really interesting things as they dig, as you can imagine, from all of the things that piece of property has been. As they took old pilings out of the lake they found things like old locker tags and women's makeup from the 1920s. They have also found old foundations and footings and rollercoaster foundations. We are on schedule to open later this summer. A Commissioner asked about "Get Out and Play".

Director Mangum replied the event is in the morning. It starts at 9am and kids will be coming throughout the day. He would be happy to make the appointments if the Commissioners can come. The idea is to get the Legislators out to see, firsthand, some of the great things we do.

Student Representative Kodali asked when Pavilion Shore will be finished. Director Mangum stated at Pavilion Shore Park they are currently working on the shore line which is the biggest part of this park. The boardwalk pier is finished and they are getting ready to put the railing on that. The Plaza, or center of the park, has been built and back filled and is ready for flag stone paving. They are now working on some of the natural shoreline areas. They are also working on grading to put in sidewalks and irrigation. Our schedule is to be open by the end of summer.

Commissioner Staab asked Director Mangum to refresh his memory on how much the Novi Parks Foundation contributed to Pavilion Shore Park.

Director Mangum replied that the Foundation contributed \$50,000 as part of the grant match.

Commissioner Staab just wanted the audience to be aware that this is part of the reason for their fund raising efforts through the Golf Outing.

Director Mangum stated it is more than just \$50,000 going toward the park as a matching grant. It helps us to secure that grant. That small investment

by the Foundation helped us to actually leverage those funds to gain a greater benefit through the Natural Resources Trust Fund.

Commissioner Staab stated this is the reason that the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund needs to be protected.

Director Mangum concurred.

B. Recreation Division – Superintendent of Recreation Scott Pratt

1. Playgrounds

Superintendent Pratt stated the Commissioners may have noticed at Rotary Park and the back of Lakeshore Park there are no longer any playgrounds. The playgrounds have been removed. There were media releases. City Council approved the donation of these playgrounds to “Kids Around the World” who will refurbish them and send them to poverty stricken areas around the world. Once we get news on where those are going we will publicize that. The new playgrounds will be coming the week of May 27th depending on weather. The playground at Lakeshore Park is going to be nature themed. The one at Rotary Park is going to be larger than what had been there.

2. Theatre/Arts

Superintendent Pratt stated we have a great show coming up. We wrapped up “Little Mermaid, Jr.”. We had a great production crew and cast. Those who attended really enjoyed it. He will have numbers on that production at the next meeting. On June 1st we will have “A Like Totally 80’s Wedding” which is an interactive dinner theatre. We have sold around 20 tickets and are currently doing a marketing blitz for it. We have received many phone calls about it today and feel sales will be taking off. This production is being done by Christine Colleen Meyer of Incredibly Convenient, LLC through Wayne State University.

Director Mangum stated it is an original script written especially for us.

Superintendent Pratt stated the production will be June 1st at 6:30pm.

Tickets are \$37.50. The way we have it set up on the website you can reserve a table and you can sit with your party.

Superintendent Pratt stated “How The West Was Fun”, which is our Senior Show for 2013, will have their first meeting on Monday, May 20th. If any Senior Adult would like to participate they can contact the Novi Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services office and they will tell them about the two “Meet and Greets”. Marilee Dechart will be back to direct the show. She brings a wealth of experience and is currently putting the script together.

3. Youth/ Teens

Superintendent Pratt stated Greg Morris is the Youth and Teen Coordinator. He is currently getting Lakeshore Beach ready. He just finished painting the lifeguard stands and will be adding sand and raking out the sand. The buoys are in. He is also in charge of Camp Lakeshore and has his staff for that. Lifeguards and Booth Attendants are all set. We are gearing up for the Memorial Day Weekend opening.

Our free Bike Rodeo is coming up on Friday, May 24th. It will be held in the North Parking lot of Novi High School from 6pm to 8pm. We have partnered with the Motor City Mountain Biking Association. The Police Department will

also be there. There will be full inspection of bikes, fun activities and kids leave with a prize.

The Great Novi Campout will be at Lakeshore Park on Saturday, June 22nd starting at 4pm. They can put up their tent. There will be a fire pit where they can make s'mores and there will be a hot dog meal. There will be a big screen movie and activities all night. Lakeshore beach will be open for extended hours with lifeguards. There will also be geocaching through Oakland County Parks. The deadline to sign up for this event is June 14th.

4. Sports

Superintendent Pratt stated our Martial Arts group participated in the Metro Detroit Open Tournament in Canton on May 11th. This Tournament has been in existence for six years and is a five star rated tournament. The judges are all high ranking black belts. Our group swept the teenage brown and Jr. Black belt divisions and took home a total of 98 awards. Thirty-two students earned first place wins, thirty-two took second, twenty took third and fourteen took fourth. One of our students earned a berth in the final Grand Championship round. Our own Shankar Kiru was crowned the tournament Grand Champ for underbelt adult. We received major awards at that tournament.

Recreation Supervisor Lewallen stated this is the inaugural spring season for Adult Soccer. We started adult soccer last fall and had 64 women play, which is phenomenal for us. We decided to offer it again this spring and are up to 120 women which is nearly double. This is just women. We do not have any men's teams yet. By the time we get the men here we are going to be a destination for adult soccer. They find ITC fields impressive.

Adult Softball is off and running and really successful. For the 5:10pm league we tried to roll out for the teams on the waitlist we only have four teams but that is an additional four teams we have above what was our maximum number.

Sand Volleyball is coming up on those beautifully renovated courts at Lakeshore Park. We have already doubled the league from last year and the registration isn't close to over.

Dooley hotdog day is this Saturday at ITC Community Sports Park. We will start grilling at 9:30am and will start handing out hotdogs at 10:30am until they are gone. This has been totally funded by Novi Youth Assistance. She invited the Commissioners to come and participate.

5. Concession Stand Contract

Superintendent Pratt stated this year we are not overseeing with our personal staff the concession stands. We went to City Council and got two contractual agreements approved. Coach's, LLC is doing Ella Mae Power Park and Lakeshore Park. This is the first year we are going to offer either a portable stand or working within the stand at Lakeshore Park. We also have Antonio's Big Dog who is doing the two concession stands at ITC Community Sports Park. We will be monitoring them so if you are out there check them out and give us any feedback.

Superintendent Pratt added he wanted to mention tennis court resurfacing. It has been on our project list for a while. He is trying to get them out there as soon as possible. They said they need to have three 40 degree days and

they have had those so he is working with them. They will be resurfacing the tennis courts at Rotary Park and at ITC Community Sports Park. There are four courts total at those two sites.

MATTERS FOR COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION: None

CITIZEN COMMENTS: None

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Student Representative Kodali had no comment.

Commissioner Torimoto thanked the staff for all that they do. He stated he has signed up for Adult Tennis. There are fireworks coming up and he is also looking forward to biking on the trails. He is also looking forward to the Sizzling Summer Arts Series at Fuerst Park. His daughter will attend Camp Lakeshore this year.

Commissioner Staab thanked the staff for their comprehensive reports. He will check his schedule for June 18th to see if he can attend the event in Lansing. We are fortunate that our State Representative, Hugh Crawford, is a past Novi Parks Commissioner and we have his ear from a Parks standpoint. He encouraged people to get involved with the many different activities, especially with Memorial Day coming up in a week, the Bike Rodeo and the hotdog day. He asked if Jay Dooley was going to be out cooking the hotdogs.

Recreation Supervisor Lewallen replied he will.

Commissioner Staab stated the first day for the Farmer's Market will be June 18th and will run through the end of October. He stated people should feel free to call the Novi Parks office or him about the Novi Parks Foundation Golf Outing.

Commissioner Jewell thanked the staff for everything they do. He stated he is going to try and make the June 18th event in Lansing as well.

Commissioner Policicchio stated he is encouraged to see how everything is moving along in the department. There are a lot of things being done and done well. He will not be able to make the June 18th meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn by Commissioner Jewell and seconded by Commissioner Torimoto.

Voice Vote

Unanimous

The meeting was adjourned by Commissioner Policicchio at 7:40pm.

DATE APPROVED: _____

Paul Policicchio, Chairperson

Harry Torimoto, Vice Chairperson