

**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Friday, September 10, 2021**

This meeting took place in-person with a Zoom Video Conference option

Members present: Dorothy Dybvig, Dave Barsness, Tony Vavricka, Karry White, David Chasson, John Gaede

Members absent: Oliver Dykstra; Council Liaison Val Palmer

Staff Present: Administrator Kathy George, Streets & Parks Supervisor Craig Hiler

Other: None

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by Chair Dybvig.

Approve Agenda

Motion Gaede, second Barsness, to approve the Agenda as presented. Motion passed 6-0.

Approve Meeting Minutes

Motion Barsness, second Gaede, to approve the minutes from the August 12, 2021 meeting. Motion passed 6-0.

New Business

Mary Thorvig Memorial Tree Garden – Commissioners reviewed a design created by John Bishop with FCI for the arch entrance to the Memorial Tree Garden. Positive comments were received regarding the beautiful design. Commissioners would like to have a wider opening so that 2 people, as well as wheelchairs, could easily pass through. They would also like “Mary Thorvig” to be at the top, with “Memorial Tree Garden” as the banner (the reverse of what was presented). Administrator George will relay the feedback and ask FCI to move forward with creating the arch.

Eagle Field – Fence Quote – The Street Crew has been making the requested improvements to the softball field at Eagle Field. One of the items requested is to extend the infield fencing to help contain balls. S&P Supervisor received a quote for this work from Century Fence for \$5,975.

Motion White, second Barsness, to recommend the City Council accept the quote from Century Fence to extend the infield fence at Eagle Field for \$5,975. Motion passed 6-0.

Continuing Business/Updates

2021 Events – The Commission discussed the following events for 2021:

- Robinson Park Fall Clean Up: Commissioner Barsness is working on coordinating a date with the climbers and with the school.

- Oktoberfest - October 2: Plans are firming up for the event. Commissioner Vavricka mentioned that the MN Climbers Association Fall Festival is also planned for October 2nd. It would be great if people could spend time visiting each park on this day. The Sandstone Lions, Quarry Lions, United Church of Christ, Members Co-Op Credit Union, East Central Prom Committee, Sandstone Flower & Garden Club, and Sandstone History & Art Center will all be participating. Crafters are being invited, as well as food vendors. A bouncy house has been secured. A tent will be rented for the Bavarian Musikmeisters. Commissioner Vavricka will look into filling the 11:00 – 1:00 time slot with local bands. The Commission authorized the purchase of souvenir beer steins that can be sold at the beer stand.

Robinson Park

Camping – There were 13 registrations for 14 days of camping in August.

2nd Legacy Grant Application – The grant from the Greater MN Regional Parks & Trails Commission has been awarded. George has submitted the required DNR documents and is waiting for the State to approve the contract. No costs can be incurred before a start date is determined by the DNR.

The Planning Charrette for the 1st Legacy Grant project took place with LHB personnel on August 19th. As soon as those minutes are available, George will share them with the Commissioners.

Panther Park

- MN Amateur Sports Commission – Skatepark Grant – The committee will meet September 15th to review the applications. George plans to attend virtually.

KREEC Property – Skunk Creek Trail

After the July Park Commission meeting, Bill Penning of the MN Land Trust notified Commissioner Chasson that the Land Trust can't use their grant funds to pay for easements for property that is already publicly owned. Commissioner Chasson would still like to move forward with donating the easement for the property on the east side of Old Military Road (the bulk of the property) so that it can be preserved into the future and not sold by the City.

Commissioner White questioned whether a future trail connection from Robinson Park could still be developed if the property were in the Land Trust. Chasson stated that a plan for the property would be developed and the future plans could be included in the overall plan for the property.

Administrator George will send the Commissioners the original information that was received from Bill Penning regarding the MN Land Trust. Penning will be invited to the October Park Commission meeting for further discussion.

Other

Administrator George will check in on Commissioner Dykstra, who hasn't attended a meeting since May.

Administrator George informed Commissioners that the ability to attend meetings remotely has now expired with the end of the COVID-19 emergency declaration. The October meeting will be held in-person. Guests will still be able to attend remotely, but Commissioners must attend in person unless they are out of town and are able to attend from a place that is open and accessible to the public and proper notice has been provided.

The Commission discussed the recent occurrence of individuals who took it upon themselves to remove the hazardous iron spikes from the Kettle River. It was clarified that the City does not have jurisdiction over the Kettle River and that the DNR is the appropriate authority. The City does not condone or encourage people to remove items from the Kettle River without going through the DNR.

There was discussion about the possibility of creating surf waves/white water rafting course in the river. Commissioner Vavricka will re-circulate information he had previously provided for continued review and discussion.

It was noted that Big Spring Falls is still closed due to the sewer spillage that occurred in June. Hopefully, with the recent rains, the testing results will meet the DNR requirements and the area can be re-opened soon.

Adjourn

Motion Vavricka, second Chasson, to adjourn at 9:20 a.m. Motion passed 6-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy George, City Administrator