

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Friday, February 9, 2024

Members present: Dave Barsness, Dorothy Dybvig, John Gaede, Tony Vavricka, Elsie Laursen

Members absent: Karry White, Council Liaison Val Palmer

Staff Present: Administrator Kathy George

Other: Banning State Park Manager Clarissa Payne, Alana & Kaitlyn Tyson

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:20 a.m. by Chair Dybvig.

Approve Agenda

Motion Gaede, second Vavricka, to approve the Agenda as presented. Motion passed 5-0.

Approve Meeting Minutes

Motion Gaede, second Laursen, to approve the minutes from the January 12, 2024 meeting. Motion passed 5-0.

New Business

Kaitlyn Tyson – Wildflower Garden

Tyson is working on a Girl Scout project to create a wildflower garden at the new Mary Thorvig Memorial Tree Garden. She presented her plans to the Park Commission, including a list of plants she intends to use and a layout map. She plans to fill in the areas between plants with native grass. She will create a brochure and raise funds for signage. For her Girl Scout project, Tyson stated that she needs the City to approve a Sustainability Agreement for continued care of the garden.

Motion Barsness, second Vavricka to recommend the City Council approve the Sustainability Agreement for Memorial Garden Care as presented. Motion carried 5-0.

Park Commission Vacancy

Due to the retirement of Commissioner David Chasson, a vacancy exists on the board. The City advertised the vacancy, which is a 3-year term. Three applications have been received: Todd Sandell, Sally Brewster, and Rick Puiseggur. Commissioners were very appreciative of the interest shown.

Motion Barsness, second Dybvig to recommend the City Council appoint Todd Sandell to serve a 3-year term on the Park & Recreation Commission. Motion carried 5-0.

Sherri Kruger-Kukowski – Winding River Mosais

Kruger-Kukowski reached out to the City to invite participation in an artwork project she is working on that will be included in an exhibit in November. The artwork will be titled “Coffee anyone... You Betcha” and will be a 12-foot cutout of the State of Minnesota embellished to resemble an old-fashioned coffee percolator and mug. Commissioners supported sending an old mug to Kruger-Kukowski for the project.

Continuing Business/Updates

Annual Events

- City Skate & Slide – CANCELLED (no snow or ice – nice weather!!)
- Spring Park Clean Up – April 27th
 - Commissioner Gaede made a flyer – advertise to the community as the date nears
 - Include in the Spring newsletter
 - Ask Sirena to share through the Neighborhood Watch program
 - Provide donuts, pizza, water for participants
- Arts in the Park – Tuesdays in June
 - Commissioner Vavricka will line up the musicians
 - American Legion Auxiliary, Dairy Association, Quarry Lions, Friends of the Library, 210 Gallery & Art Center – all have been invited to participate
- Quarry Days – August 9-10
 - Commissioner White agreed to host a booth on Saturday to promote the City Parks
 - Commissioner Barsness will help as well
- Mary Thorvig Memorial Tree Garden “planting” ceremony – August 11
 - Commissioner White will help with this event
- Robinson Quarry Park Clean Up – typically September or October
 - Commissioner Barsness will coordinate
- Oktoberfest – October 5th
 - the Chmielewski Funtime Band has been booked
- Quarry City Christmas – November 30

Various Updates

Robinson Quarry Park

Camping Data – There were 4 registrations for 4 days of camping in January. This does not include Ice Fest, which took place January 12-14. Many participants camped throughout the park that weekend.

Legacy Grant Projects

Phase 2 – A project kick-off meeting took place January 22nd. Attendees included Heidi Bringman and Rachel Johnson (LHB), Commissioners White, Barsness and Dybvig, Councilor Palmer, and Administrator George. July is the earliest grant work can be done (expenses incurred), assuming all the pre-grant contract requirements are met (George is

working on these). There was discussion about the new gravel loop drive with the parking lot by the climbing wall; Commissioner Barsness had some input from climbers and would like to arrange a time for climbers, City staff, Commissioners, and engineers to meet on-site to talk about the plans. Additional survey data is needed within the Kettle River to ensure accurate design of the public access areas. The location of the stone wall with the stacked stones on either side of the road leading to the northern portage were discussed (they are both very close to the road, leaving no room to accommodate a proper road). The stage location at the climbing wall needs to be firmed up. More survey work is needed for the new campsite area, too.

Tentative schedule for the project:

January 22, 2024	Project kick-off meeting with client
February 2024	LHB/City work on additional services agreement
March/April 2024	Project reconnaissance/additional survey needs
May/June 2024	Final design/prepare construction documents
August 2024	Bid date (dependent on funding approvals)
Late Summer 2024	Construction begins
Late Fall 2024	Final completion

Panther Park

A request has been submitted to MN Power to add lights on three (possibly four) existing power poles. Two lights along Commercial Avenue should be installed soon; however, two other poles are scheduled for replacement, with the timing unknown at this time.

A grant application has been submitted to Essentia Health for \$10,000 to help with the toddler play feature that will be installed this year.

Lions Hill

Activity has been very limited, with the warming house closed while there hasn't been any snow. There were 83 visitors between December 10th and January 21st.

Other

The Sandstone Area Farmers Market submitted a Special Event Permit Application for 2024. They plan to start June 15th and run through October 26th. They have been offered Train Park (rather than the parking lot) if they are interested.

Banning State Park Manager Clarissa Payne reported that the DNR has approved the ownership transfer of the 40-acre lot owned by the Bureau of Land Management to be transferred to Banning State Park. This will clear the way for the Skunk Creek Trail to connect to Big Spring Falls.

Adjourn

Motion Barsness, second Vavricka, to adjourn at 9:00 a.m. Motion passed 5-0.

Respectfully submitted, Kathy George, City Administrator