



Park Commission Meeting

December 2, 2024

7:00 PM

Fridley City Hall, 7071 University Avenue NE

Minutes

Call to Order

Chair Borman called the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present

Luke Cardona
EB Graham
Peter Borman
Melissa Luna
Tim Kirk
Ken Schultz
Don Whalen

Also Present

Mike Maher, Parks and Recreation Director
Scott Hickok, Community Development Director
Scott Lund, Mayor

Approve Parks & Recreation Commission Agenda for December 2, 2024

Motion by Commissioner Cardona to approve the December 2, 2024, meeting agenda. Seconded by Commissioner Graham. The motion passed unanimously.

Approve Parks & Recreation Commission Minutes for November 4, 2024

Motion by Commissioner Graham to approve the November 4, 2024 meeting minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Whalen. The motion passed unanimously.

Open Forum

No comments.

New Business

1. Fridley Public Art Initiative

Mike Maher, Parks and Recreation Director, introduced the guests present to speak about this item.

Mayor Scott Lund spoke about the community benefits of public art and explained that \$100,000 was anonymously donated this year as a seed for public art. He stated that the first piece of art has already been commissioned to be located at Moore Lake Park and two donations were received to fund that piece. He provided an update on recent activity of the Board of Directors for this foundation and stated that the main job of the foundation will be to raise funds for the purpose of public art. He explained that the Public Art Commission will then do the work on selecting pieces and finding appropriate locations. He hoped that the public will also support this public art initiative.

Commissioner Whalen noted the proximity to Minneapolis, which is rich in the arts. Mayor Lund noted other communities that also participate in public art.

Chair Borman noted the reconstruction planned for Mississippi which would include roundabouts and asked if those are being considered as locations for public art. Mayor Lund commented that he did not believe that roundabouts were included in the list but explained that the Public Arts Commission has begun to draft a list of priority locations for art installations.

Commissioner Cardona asked if there are grants available for this purpose. Mayor Lund confirmed that there are noting that they have had someone come to speak to them to provide information on available grant funds.

Scott Hickok, Community Development Director, provided background information on the public engagement and process that led to the ultimate creation of the Public Arts Commission and 501C3. He identified public art already found in Fridley and also explained how the East River Road corridor could be split up into different districts and themes. He explained that the anonymous donation of \$100,000 for the purpose of public art helped to move this forward, acknowledging that continued donations and fundraising will be important in continuing this initiative. He reviewed some ideas and locations that have been submitted through the public engagement process. He then provided more specific information on the water-related art for Moore Lake Park.

Commissioner Cardona asked if there would be any focus on local artists. Mr. Hickok stated that the focus is finding the best art for the location, which would include a review of both local and nonlocal artists. Mayor Lund commented on some local artists that they are aware of and have been in contact with. They also spoke about the value they are receiving on the first piece of art.

The Commission

2. Sylvan Hills Park Design Review

Mr. Maher stated that Sylvan Hills Park was originally scheduled to be a 2024 project. He stated that a large grant was received from the WMO in order to incorporate water treatment-related improvements to the project which delayed the project to 2025 in order to plan appropriately. He reviewed the project goals and highlights, explaining how the water quality improvements will compare to the existing conditions. He also provided a brief reminder of the theme for the play area. He stated that the plan would be to put the project out for bids in the next month.

Commissioner Graham asked if the lawn area would be large enough for playing. Mr. Maher replied that area would be the size of about four tennis courts and therefore would create room for playing in open space.

Motion by Commissioner Cardona to endorse the updated schematic design of Sylvan Hills Park. Seconded by Commissioner Schultz. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Fridley Parks and Recreation Commission Draft 2025 Workplan

Mr. Maher stated that he created a draft for the workplan to look ahead into 2025 to review with the Commission. He reviewed the 2025 workplan highlights and welcomed input.

Commissioner Cardona stated that he would like to focus on meeting with more youth sports associations, ensuring that they schedule ahead of time for proper planning. Mr. Maher confirmed that could be a priority and he would reach out to the different groups in attempt to connect with them in 2025.

Commissioner Cardona commented that it would be great to receive updates on the Public Arts Commission. Mr. Maher stated that perhaps he could include that in his list of monthly reports.

Chair Borman also reviewed the 2025 meeting schedule. Mr. Maher commented that the Commission already adopted the meeting calendar and he simply included it for the Commission to have on hand.

Staff Reports

4. Springbrook Nature Center Report

Mr. Maher briefly reviewed the report, highlighting upcoming programming and events. He also welcomed a new seasonal staff member and recognized a seasonal staff member that will be exiting.

5. Fridley Parks and Recreation Division Report

Mr. Maher provided an overview of the report.

6. Park Maintenance and Construction Report

Mr. Maher provided an update on the recent activity of staff and the seasonal activities.

Unfinished Business

None.

Adjournment

Commissioner Kirk made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Whalen. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Maher, Staff Liaison