



Park Commission Meeting

May 1, 2023

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
Tim Kirk
Suad Maow
Don Whalen
Mike Maher, Parks and Recreation Director

Approve Parks & Recreation Commission Minutes for April 3, 2023

Motion by Commissioner Cardona to approve the April 3, 2023 meeting minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Kirk. The motion passed unanimously.

Approve Parks & Recreation Commission Agenda for May 1, 2023

Motion by Commissioner Graham to approve the May 1, 2023 meeting agenda. Seconded by Commissioner Whalen. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

1. 2024 Parks Capital Investment Program Recommendation

Parks and Recreation Director Mike Maher provided background information on the Capital Investment Program (CIP) noting that the Commission annually makes a recommendation on parks projects for the coming year. He briefly summarized the 2024 CIP relating to parks and welcomed any questions.

Motion by Commissioner Kirk to approve the 2024 Capital Investment Program. Seconded by Commissioner Whalen. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Grant and Project Opportunity for Outdoor Fitness Court

Mr. Maher advised of a grant and project opportunity for an outdoor fitness court which is offered by the National Fitness Campaign and Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Minnesota. He explained that this would essentially be an outdoor gym and provided more details on the partnership that would be involved as well as the process that would be involved to bring this type of concept forward. He stated that at this time there is funding available for the first 50 partners and provided more details on the financial model and grants being offered. He asked if the Commission believes that this would be used in the community and whether it would be a good fit for this community. He provided details on the desired location for this feature through the grant program and provided some park locations that could meet that criteria.

The Commission asked for details on the estimated maintenance costs, whether this would take away from other elements in the parks master plan, utilization of the app, whether it would be appropriate to locate near a school, and the experience of communities that have participated in this program. Mr. Maher noted that there are no moving parts and therefore would have a similar lifespan to a commercial playground. He stated that staff could follow up to find the additional data. He noted that the intent was to gauge the interest of the Commission as staff was unsure because it had been determined that the grant would only cover about one quarter of the cost.

The Commission noted that while there was a desire from some community members to have fitness equipment in the parks, this may be more intense than what was desired, and the grant funding would not be sufficient to support this concept. Mr. Maher noted that staff could look into incorporating other fitness elements into the park improvements planned through the master plan process, as that would be similar in cost, or even less, than this concept. It was noted that the City could also come back to this program in the future if there is interest.

Motion by Commissioner Kirk to not pursue this program in 2023 but potentially reconsider in future grant cycles. Seconded by Commissioner Cardona. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Neighborhood Park Sign Final Design Selection

Mr. Maher provided background information on the design process for neighborhood parks and presented the proposed design options including colors and sample materials.

The Commission

Motion by Commissioner Cardona to approve the staff recommendation, option four, for the neighborhood park sign final design. Seconded by Commissioner Graham. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Fridley Parks and Recreation Department Scholarship Program Application

Mr. Maher provided an update on the amendments to the program and updated application, which he believed addressed the input from the Commission at its last review.

The Commission asked for clarification on whether this would run on a school year or calendar year. Mr. Maher replied that this program runs with the school year but would switch to a calendar year for 2024. He stated that they would begin the program in 2023 on a prorated scale.

Motion by Commissioner Cardona to adopt the scholarship policy and corresponding application form and to endorse implementation of the program. Seconded by Commissioner Graham. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Outdoor Field and Facility Rental Guidelines and Fees Draft Update

Mr. Maher noted that the Commission discussed this at the last meeting, and he has attempted to incorporate those comments into the draft policy. He reviewed the updates that were made to the policy for the Commission to consider for adoption.

The Commission suggested using religious organizations rather than churches. Mr. Maher agreed. It was also noted that staff should follow up to ensure the description used for nonprofits would be accurate and would not exclude the sports organizations.

Motion by Commissioner Cardona to approve the Outdoor Field and Facility Rental Guidelines and Fees document with the noted change. Seconded by Commissioner Whalen. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Maher provided an update on the work staff is doing to check the participation levels of youth in the different sports organizations to ensure they have a majority of Fridley residents to maintain priority status.

Old Business

Staff Reports

6. Springbrook Nature Center Report

Mr. Maher commented on the busy schedule of staff working with students at local schools. He thanked the Springbrook Nature Center Foundation and the volunteers that held a successful spring fundraising event. He provided details on a new installation, staffing changes, and grant applications.

7. Fridley Parks and Recreation Division Report

Mr. Maher provided details on program enrollments, recent events, progress on Moore Lake Park, and staffing.

8. Park Maintenance and Construction Report

Mr. Maher stated that staff has been transitioning to the spring season and preparing for spring youth sports. He also thanked staff for the work they had done to mitigate flooding.

Adjournment

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

Respectfully submitted,

Amanda Staple
Recording Secretary