



PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Fridley Municipal Center
7071 University Ave NE, Fridley MN 55432

MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 7, 2021

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

Members Present: Mike Heintz, Peter Borman, Ryan Gerhard, and Shanna Larson

Members Absent: EB Graham and Dave Kondrick

Others Present: Mike Maher, Community Services Director

2. APPROVE PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION AGENDA FOR SEPTEMBER 7, 2021

MOTION by Commissioner Larson to APPROVE the September 7, 2021 meeting agenda. SECONDED by Commissioner Borman. The MOTION PASSED unanimously.

3. APPROVE PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES FOR June 7, 2021

MOTION by Commissioner Larson to APPROVE the June 7, 2021 meeting minutes. SECONDED by Commissioner Borman. The MOTION PASSED unanimously.

4. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS:

a. Start, Stop, Continue Exercise Results Discussion

Community Services Director Maher stated that the Commission met in worksession in August in order to discuss the role and direction for the Commission. He stated that he drafted a summary of that discussion and welcomed any additional action items or changes the Commission would like to make.

There were no additional comments from the Commission.

b. Program, Service and Fee Review

Community Services Director Maher stated that one document was from City staff and the other from Springbrook Nature Center related to the current fees for programming and services and to show the diversity in programming. He stated that over the next several months the Commission will discuss programming and therefore he wanted to present this opportunity for the group to review the fees. He noted that a list of 2022 fees would be brought forward in the future for review. He welcomed any input on fee adjustments the Commission may have.

Chair Heintz referenced the K-4 youth programs and asked if those are daytime or evening activities.

Mr. Maher stated that those programs would be youth instructional activities and would be held after school or in the evening. He stated that it is his understanding that these activities are non-competitive formats focused on skills.

Commissioner Larson referenced the park shelter rentals and asked if there have been any instances where a security deposit had to be kept. She stated that the deposit is only \$50 for a shelter that supports 150 people, and most likely if someone is hosting 150 people the \$50 would not be an impactful amount to encourage good behavior. She commented that perhaps a higher deposit should be required to encourage better behavior.

Mr. Maher commented that it is his understanding that the actual holding of a security deposit is extremely rare. He stated that most of the park shelter rentals would have a key checked out and park staff would go in at the end of the day or next day to complete cleanup. He stated that it would be difficult to attribute damage to the facility unless it is very obvious. He explained that the park shelter structures are sturdy and simple, therefore the risk of damage is minimal. He stated that if the Commission would like staff to present updates or review the fees, that could be done.

Chair Heintz used the example of a volleyball net being put up and a water line is damaged and asked if the renter would be liable for that.

Mr. Maher stated that there are instances such as the use of a bounce house that requires stakes to be driven and, in those instances, a Special Use Permit is required which has a higher charge.

Commissioner Larson commented that staff does a good job in comparing pricing to other cities in order to remain competitive and therefore feels comfortable with the fees.

Commissioner Borman asked and received confirmation that the fees included in the packet are the current fees.

Mr. Maher replied that these are current fees. He stated that if the Commission has suggestions for fee adjustments, staff could do that as they begin to plan for programming and events for 2022. He also encouraged the Commission to review the list of programs and services as they plan for the next year.

Chair Heintz stated that staff does a great job of offering opportunities and variety at every age.

Commissioner Larson agreed that the City makes an effort to provide opportunities for everyone.

5. OLD BUSINESS

None

6. STAFF REPORTS

a. Springbrook Nature Center

Community Services Director Maher stated that a new staff member was welcomed to the Springbrook team and reviewed the experience of the employee and duties they will handle. He provided an overview of the Springbrook Day Camp program that has wrapped up, noting that 45 camp experiences were provided at full scholarships by the foundation for campers with financial need. He noted that three summer concerts were held at the Nature Center and the concerts in general were a great success. He stated that they are working to get the school partnerships back online with the Nature Center. He stated that the biggest event of the year is coming up on Saturday, October 23rd from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., noting that tickets will be limited and should be purchased ahead of time. He noted that pumpkin carving begins the previous week at no cost and interested participants can register on the website. The Nature Center received a grant from Xcel Energy in the amount of \$7,500 to partially fund a new exhibit called "Becoming a Bird Watcher".

b. Parks and Recreation Update

Community Services Director Maher stated that a breakdown of enrollments was included in the report and provided a summary. He stated that the summer concert series was expanded to the Fridley Civic Campus and Commons Park this year and good feedback was received from the community. He advised that a summary of shelter rentals was also included, noting that it was a busy summer for shelter rentals. He stated that rec and roll was a free program that took place in a number of the parks this summer and was able to reach a large number of youth and families.

Chair Heintz asked if the event is advertised ahead of time.

Mr. Maher replied that staff established a regular rotation between five different parks once per week so that those in the neighborhood could expect that regular schedule.

Chair Heintz stated that if the program is going to continue in 2022, perhaps there would be a way to notify people of the event.

Mr. Maher advised of the different methods of advertising staff used to get the word out. He noted that they also collaborated with the School District to provide free meals.

Commissioner Larson commented that in the past she received an email that provided a programming suggestion based on a past registration. She asked if that was a trial option when the City purchased the software or why the City did not continue to use that feature. She believed that feature would help to advertise potential programs to residents.

Mr. Maher stated that Fridley Recreation just launched a new e-newsletter that will be sent out on a monthly basis to everyone in the registration system and will highlight new programming opportunities. He did not believe that the system has the capacity to send an automated email option for similar programming. He stated that perhaps in the past a staff member sent targeted emails in attempt to fill the class. He noted that while that can be effective, it can also be quite time consuming.

c. Park Maintenance and Construction Report

Community Services Director Maher provided an overview of the report that was provided by staff. He noted that staffing shortage that caused some projects to not be completed.

Commissioner Borman asked for clarification on the location of Civic West.

Mr. Maher provided additional clarification on the location.

Commissioner Borman asked if there are any plans for that area that have been finalized.

Mr. Maher commented that funding has been identified to do some of the basics such as trails and seeding. He stated that there is a list of pending items that could be completed once a funding source is identified. He stated that the future amenities were included in an article in the most recent City newsletter.

ADJOURNMENT:

Commissioner Larson made the MOTION to adjourn the meeting at 7:33 p.m., SECONDED by Commissioner Borman. The MOTION PASSED unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Amanda Staple
Recording Secretary