

C. Grants Committee – Commissioners Joseph & Riggins

Commissioner Riggins said there has not been a meeting. Director Muck said the committee will reconvene after the new council is seated and they are assigned.

MATTERS FOR COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION:

A. Active Mobility Plan

Lindsay Bell, Senior Planner said tonight we would be going through the update for the Active Mobility Plan. The last Non-Motorized Plan was updated in 2011. A lot of progress has been made in the last twelve years. However, we are ready to update due to new technology and the latest guidelines. During the process it was given the name, Active Mobility Plan, because it encompasses the idea of integrating physical activity into everyday transportation and the wealth of benefits that provides. The process was kicked off last December with the Walkable Novi Committee. The committee has met four times. There was community input gathered through open houses in conjunction with the master plan update. Greenway Collaborative / Norm Cox has been our consultant on this project. They have pulled together information, developed preliminary plans and had other community input sessions in the May – June timeframe. Feedback was gathered with surveys at pop up events such as the Eggstravaganza and Superhero Showcase. Now the final draft is being presented for review and feedback before it is finalized. It will be posted on the website for the community to see. It will be taken to the Planning Commission, then hopefully be adopted by City Council.

Norm Cox from Greenway Collaborative spoke to the commission regarding the process and plan. He said beyond listening to the people, we took what we saw on the ground from the roadways, pathways, crashes, and did an inventory analysis. Traffic safety, mobility, demographics, and the facilities in place or planned were also considered. Looking at safety, policies and programs that support non-motorized transportation and deficiencies we saw in the system prioritizing the corridors. With that foundation there is a whole document. There are pictures, links, a wealth of new design guidelines and resources. Highlights from a regional standpoint from SEMCOG working with state and federal resources. This plan tries to be in sync with the best practices happening around the country. One of the most important elements was looking at the major mile roads in the community. Improvements have been outlined for roadways, various intersections, or crossings of the roadways. Improvements should be made for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other key elements.

Mr. Cox continued that it is an exciting concept to try to build on all the connections for the regional trail system to create a loop that goes through the community and provides an opportunity to connect some of the big state parks and regional trails. We want to create a backbone system where someone can get to all the significant destinations around town. There are three main components called the neighborhood Greenway Network working with connections to transit, shopping, and dining. This would take lower volume roadways trying to enhance the pathway systems, fill in some vital gaps, put in a few significant mid-block crossings and create a network that ties into the trail system to get across the community. This studied how it would fit into the capital improvement projects to make sure we take

advantage of those projects to take care of these things. In the near-term infrastructure projects, we see three miles of sidewalks, five miles of pathways and seventeen crosswalk improvements.

B. Commissioner Chair, Vice Chair Nominations & Committee Appointments

Director Muck started off by saying that everyone was very nice and willing to step aside for other people. The packets contained a form to vote for Chair and Vice Chair. Another person needs to be added to Walkable Novi. Alternates can be discussed at another time. Tonight, the main goal is to finalize the Chair and Vice chair which will take effect at the November meeting.

Discussion occurred around Walkable Novi and Chairman Dooley's future role on the Commission.

Commissioner Joseph was elected Chairman. Commissioner Riggins was elected Vice Chair.

Commissioners Tolcaz and Dooley appointed to Walkable Novi

Commissioners Torimoto, Staab, Josphe and Joshi appointed to Novi Parks Foundation.

Commissioners Riggins and Josphe appointed to Grants Committee.

C. Commissioner Parks and Facility Updates |

The Commissioners provided feedback in regard to the park and facility updates and how they want them to be handled during the upcoming year. Director Muck said they could be eliminated or decreased due to the amount of agenda items in 2024 including the ITC conceptual plans and master plan. Commissioner Tolcaz liked the idea of one per month for regular participation and prioritizing the newer parks. Commissioner Joshi agreed and suggested the less used parks should definitely be on the rotation because they are not regularly seen. She added Bosco and the RC Raceway should be added. Commissioner Torimoto said in terms of frequency he likes having the chance to revisit in a reasonable time period to see the changes. The new Student Representatives think one per month is a good number. They suggested visiting the busier parks in the summer to make sure everything is running smoothly. Chairman Dooley suggested suspending for six months. Vice Chair Staab personally goes out to the different parks periodically on his own. He has sent pictures to Director Muck to report random items he notices. He was ambivalent in the direction with the frequency. Commissioner Riggins said she would be okay with a six-month suspension or one per month.

Director Muck summarized; the commissioners should outline January – May targeting the newer parks along with "hidden" parks. The summer will focus on the big / heavily used parks such as Lakeshore and ITC. We will finalize a twelve-month schedule with twelve parks and give Student Representatives an opportunity to report.

STAFF REPORTS

A. Administration Division – Director Jeff Muck

1. Park Project Updates

Director Muck said the features are up at the splash pad and can be seen when driving by. The contractors are working on pouring the concrete around the pad, sidewalks, finishing the roof sheeting, and overhang. They will be working on the supports and then constructing the pedestrian bridge. This month pergolas, seating around the edges will be installed as well as landscaping. Most of this work will be buttoned up by the end of November. In the spring water will be turned on, health department inspections, and finishing up details. Director Muck is confident in a Memorial Day opening.

KMG Management staff have had projects done at Meadowbrook Commons including power washing and sidewalk repair around the ranches. Also, finishing preventative maintenance items such as changing furnace filters, smoke alarm batteries, switching out storm door glass and removing screens. The facility is getting buttoned up for the winter. The window installation is moving slowly with work still going on in the main building. The management team remains in constant contact with the contractor and crew. They have been addressing the residents' concerns throughout the process.

Director Muck has been working with the Historical Commission to install permanent flag holders on veteran's graves at the cemetery. Flags will be placed in the holders Memorial Day and Veteran's Day. Each cemetery has a new historical marker paid for by the Historical Commission that outlines the history of the cemetery and who is interred there. November 11th, which is Veteran's Day, the annual Wreaths Across Novi event will be held. Scouts will place wreaths on veteran's graves and a small ceremony will be held.

A memo was placed in the packet from the Beautification Commission working with Rick Meader, Novi's landscape architect. Plant identification signs were installed within the Fuerst Park Monarch Way Stations. These feature the common name, scientific name, and photo of each plant. A QR code on each sign will allow visitors to scan with their phone to get more information about the plants. The goal is to empower residents with knowledge so that they may be inspired to plant native flowers in their own gardens to help pollinators.

Commissioner Staab suggested commissioners attend HOA meetings to provide correct information about the parks. Chairman Dooley pledged to be very proactive in talking about Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services.

B. Recreation Division – Deputy Director Tracie Ringle

1. Programs & Services

Deputy Director Ringle started with staffing updates from the department. This week Steve Fellhauer started as a Recreation Supervisor for Sports. He is replacing the position Greg Morris held for years. Steve comes from Howell Parks and Huron Valley Recreation. Jeff Johns, the Recreation Supervisor for camps, youth and teen has resigned. His position is currently posted. Taking the recommendation from the Older Adults Needs Committee the part-time position in the OAS office has shifted to a full-time Recreation Supervisor position. Madison Lachance will be shifting back to that role from cultural arts. This leaves a gap in our department. Today an Arts and Events position was posted. Deputy Director Ringle said we will be happy when both these vacancies are filled.

Adding to Director Muck's Park Project Report, Deputy Director Ringle stated Northwest Park's trails are opened and look great. Fall is a great time to walk through that park. It is very wooded then opens to a meadow. The playground equipment will start to arrive next week. It will take about six weeks to build and will probably be completed at the beginning of December.

Saturday is Jack O' Lantern Jubilee at ITC Community Sports Park. Three hundred children are registered to participate plus many local business and community groups will serve as vendors to pass out candy along the trail.

The Novi Concert Band has a performance at 2:00 on the 29th at the Civic Center. The theme is Disney's Wonderful World of Music. The band will perform popular songs from Disney films. Attendees are being encouraged to dress up as Disney characters.

Fall youth volleyball and basketball games begin October 28th. Kudos to Jeff Johns and Chase Root who split the sports role to get these programs rolling. Deputy Director Ringle explained the new event 12 Days at Lakeshore Lodge. It is twelve consecutive days of programming at the Lakeshore Park building including holiday crafts, trivia, Lunch with Santa, owl prowl, gingerbread house decorating, cornhole tournament and more. There is programming for ages 1 – 100+. Programs for older adults will be held during the day. Every Recreation Supervisor in the department has a part in this unique event. The department is getting excited about decorating the building to give it a holiday feel. It is always fun to bring new events to the community.

C. Older Adult Division – Director Jeff Muck
1. Programs and Services

Director Muck said Kit and Madison are on their last night of the Mackinac Island trip with a group of seniors, so he provided the updates for the OAS department. Sip Sip Hooray was rescheduled to October 4th, it went off without a hitch. The participants enjoyed what could be the last warm evening of the year. The Pinnacle and Euchre Tournament was held October 7th with nearly sixty participants. The winners received gift cards to local eateries. The Fall Travel Fair took place on October 10th with 76 participants, which was the most since 2018. This shows seniors want to get out and about again.

The annual Veteran's Day celebration will take place on November 9th. Admission is free for veterans, and they will receive a gift of appreciation. Non-veterans can attend for a small fee. All will enjoy a meal from Mission Barbeque and World War II style entertainment.

There are two upcoming luncheons at Meadowbrook Activity Center. A Thanksgiving meal will be catered by Moe's on Ten will be served on November 16th. The holiday luncheon will be held on December 7th. Moe is bringing back the annual free Thanksgiving dinner the day before Thanksgiving to the community. Moe is a great partner with the city.

Director Muck continued with updates from the social services area. October's lifelong learning opportunities include estate planning basics, two different AARP safe driving classes, and a medication safety presentation. Facilitating federally based programs requires an annual review and update. The Emergency Food Assistance program update happened this week. The paperwork for 2023-2024 has been submitted by Social Service Coordinator, Sandy Fisher.

Again, the department will be hosting AARP tax counselor training beginning in November for new volunteers. Medicare Open Enrollment has started. Every beneficiary should review their Part D once a year. The OAS department offers counseling appointments.

December 14th the Civic Center will be hosting the Oakland County Veterans Resource Fair. All veterans and their families are welcome.

Director Muck continued, the Older Adults Means Committee and focus group facilitator presented at the October 9th City Council meeting the key findings. Number one, the participants are generally pleased with the older adult services offered, however there is a general belief that we are playing catch up with other communities on both facilities and programs. The focus group felt a single location community center is needed. 72% of the focus group participants said it was very or somewhat important to be renovated space rather than new construction. It was very clear the group was saying community center not senior center. The group also wants it in a central location that creates an opportunity for a sense of community, which is vital. This campus was referenced as an ideal location to have a community gathering space.

A warm water pool for exercise was one of the highest priorities. The participants understood new programming and a building is not free and expressed a willingness to pay. The OAS committee report recognized some quick wins that could be implemented right away including enhanced communication to seniors, adult focused newsletter, redesigned Engage to make programs and services easier to find. As Deputy Director Ringle mentioned, the increase of part-time staff to full-time is currently in progress.

The committee recommend that Council contract with a third-party provider which would be covered under the county millage to expand transportation services. A separate contract with Smart, Peoples Express or WOTA could run transportation for the whole community, extending hours and days. The committee recognized our current OAS transportation cannot keep up with demand due to lack of drivers and vans. This would allow our current vans to be used for recreation purposes such as DIA, Villa Barr, and other trips. This will be a topic of conversation for the new City Council.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Tolkacz

I appreciate Deputy Director Ringle updating us on the staffing changes. In terms of older adults there is a lot of stuff going on. I was thinking of Madison this week and hoping for better weather during the Mackinac trip. The third thing is I always feel like I come away from this meeting smarter than when I entered. For example, learning the difference between a competition and warm water pool.

Commissioner Torimoto

I always enjoy seeing the results of surveys. We had a chance to listen to the Active Mobility Plan. The amount of data is overwhelming, but the possibilities are very exciting. I already commented on the older adults needs focus group results, it was not what I expected. I learned a lot. Thank you again.

Commissioner Joshi

Almost the same comments. Welcome to the student representatives. Congratulations to the winners of the election. I am looking forward to the next update on the Active Mobility Plan after not being updated after many years. I was surprised to hear a few of the things from the Older Needs Committee update. We will see how that plays out in the future.

Student Representative DiDomenico

The meeting went really well. I was interested in how many reports there were, especially the Walkable Novi. There is a lot of data in those slides. It is really interesting how the city will change over the next couple of years to advocate for all these types of foot traffic.

Student Representative Sid

It went well. It was a getting my toes in the water kind of meeting. Walkable Novi was interesting to hear how we're going to do a lot of those things in the city.

Commissioner Riggins

It is always exciting to hear about all the different programs and everything that we have. I was really excited about the splash pad possibly opening Memorial Day 2024. I want to welcome the student representatives. I am excited to be Vice Chair. Thank you to those who voted, I appreciate it. It will be hard to fill Commissioner Staab's shoes and I hope he mentors me.

I will be attending the Jack O 'Lantern event and hope to participate in the 12 Days at Lakeshore Lodge.

Commissioner Staab

There was a lot of data in the Active Mobility Plan. I appreciate Commissioners Talkacz and Dooley giving us the updates. I also appreciate the update on the Older Adults Committee. It will be interesting to see how it unfolds. I want to remind people about the Veterans Day luncheon in the city on November 9th. There is excellent entertainment and food from Mission Barbeque. I wish Chairman Joseph well in his new position as well as Vice Chair Riggins. I want to welcome the new student representatives and let them know the meeting was 24 minutes longer than usual.

Director Muck recognized Chairman Dooley. Depending on the results of the election he might not be here next month. He has served this commission very well as chair over the years. He spoke on behalf of the entire PRCS team saying he has always supported us. Whether it is Dooley Dog Day, Veterans Day, Pour on the Shore, or bingo, he has always supported and set a great example. I want to express our appreciation.

Commissioner Dooley

Thank you. I want to communicate again everybody has talked about Older Adult Services and Walkable Novi. Both are a spirited group of people. The Older Adult Needs Committee truly represents what it means to be a younger older adult 50-55 all the way to someone that is truly a senior citizen. The committee is truly looking out for what is in

the best interest for older adults. Members of City Council are on the committee, along with Jeff, and everybody does a really nice job. Walkable Novi with Joe as the chair is a great group of people who take the job seriously. There is a lot of misinformation at times that goes out and scares people. We saw the presentation tonight with the Active Mobility Plan. No one is trying to take things away from the homeowner. It is always on the side of safety first. We look at various areas in the city to determine where a sidewalk may go, not just because we want to throw concrete down. It must be the appropriate place. Everybody gives feedback as far as the trails and walkways. It is a true labor of love as to what we provide for you and what Norm presented this evening. He did a great job.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Riggins and seconded by Commissioner Joshi.

Voice Vote

Unanimous

The meeting was adjourned by Commissioner Dooley at 8:27p.m.

DATE APPROVED: _____

Jay Dooley, Chairperson

Charles Staab, Vice Chairperson