

PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES COMMISSION

Thursday, December 15th, 2022 – 7 P.M.

Novi Civic Center – Council Chambers

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. with Commissioner Dooley presiding.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioners: Dooley (present), Staab (present), Joseph (absent / excused), Joshi (absent / excused), Riggins (present), Tolkacz (present), Torimoto (present)
Student Representatives: Bheemineni (present), Raghunathan (present)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Commissioner Riggins asked if the Meadowbrook Commons presentation could be moved to January. In addition, the ITC Community Sports Park Presentation was moved to January due to Commissioner Joseph being absent.

Commissioner Staab motioned for approval of agenda and second by Commissioner Tolkacz.

Voice Vote

Unanimous

CITIZEN COMMENTS:

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

It was moved that the minutes for the November 17th meeting be approved by Commissioner Tolkacz and second by Commissioner Riggins.

Voice Vote

Unanimous

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. Walkable Novi – Commissioners Dooley & Tolkacz

Commissioner Tolkacz explained that the Greenway Collaborative was part of the original Walkable Novi non-motorized master plan in 2011 and came back to reprise the 2011 experience with a 2023 experience. A full hour was spent discussing details. They were taking assessment, looking for feedback, and considering what should be in the new master plan. The group talked about challenges, how to communicate, balance for groups to have equal voice including reaching out to community groups and events that are scheduled.

The next meetings are planned for March 16th and June 15th.

B. Novi Park Foundation – Commissioners Joseph, Joshi, Staab & Torimoto

Commissioner Staab stated the last meeting was December 5th at Ascension. The meeting was well attended. Brian Adams was reappointed, and Jennifer Deegan resigned due to a move out of the city.

Commissioner Staab gave specifics on the account balances. He said the main emphasis of the meeting was Pour on the Shore. Responsibilities were doled out. Melissa Agosta will be the overall coordinator, but committee members have stepped up for various tasks. It was approved to transfer the handling of Parks Foundation finances to the city which will help gaining information for grants. Graduates of the Novi Ambassador Academy will be invited to a February social at Lakeshore Park with the Parks Foundation. These people are committed to wanting to be involved in the city and this will be a great segway into the foundation. It was reaffirmed that everybody keeps their same positions. The next meeting is January 30th. It was a great meeting, nice to get together and share ideas. President Landry felt it was the best

synergy the foundation has had in a long time. The main focus will be Pour on the Shore and recruiting new members.

C. Grants Committee – Commissioners Joseph & Riggins

Commissioner Riggins said there was not a meeting this month. Director Muck updated the status of many grants that have been discussed previously. The Oakland County Senior Citizen Grant for the pickleball courts has been submitted. We have also turned in the application for a \$50,000 grant for the splash pad to the Ralph C Wilson Junior Foundation. Today the Spark grant for the Wildlife Woods Pickleball Grant was submitted. A January announcement should be made about all three of these opportunities. The next Grants Committee meeting will be scheduled for February after we receive information on our submissions.

The Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Board put out their recommendations for funding for this year. Director Muck was surprised about the low amount. Comparatively it was about half of what the amount was last year. It might be a residual from the Spark grant or the fund's investment performance this year. There will most likely be more information at the mParks Board meeting which will be shared with the Grants Committee and Parks Commission at a future date.

D. Parks and Facilities Updates

1. ITC Community Sports Park - Commissioner Joseph – moved to January meeting.
2. Meadowbrook Commons – Commissioner Riggins – moved to January meeting.

MATTERS FOR COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION:

STAFF REPORTS

A. Administration Division – Director Jeff Muck

1. Park Project Updates

Director Muck started by saying the Novi Chamber has announced the annual gala. The Toast of the Town will be Saturday Feb. 4th at 6:00 at the Suburban Showplace. Part of the proceeds from the event will go to the Parks Foundation and Jessica Splash Pad. Visit the Chamber of Commerce website if you are interested in attending. The gala will have a Monte Carlo casino theme, members of Jessica's family will be there and hopefully a Fox 2 personality to emcee. The 90% plans for splash pad completion should arrive soon. Director Muck will share those along with schematics and architecture at the January meeting. The project will be going out to bid very soon.

The Lakeshore tunnel is another huge project for next year. It has been held up a bit due to DTE moving some electrical lines and poles. Our great engineering team and consultants at AECOM have been really pushing them. As of now the project is still on track for the spring replacement.

Director Muck attended the Southeast Michigan Trails Summit at SEMCOG last week. There was a panel of speakers that talked about grants and funding opportunities. There were interesting interactive sessions with SEMCOG counties discussing connectivity maps, gaps between communities and how to connect the trails together.

In the packet for tonight is the 2023 Commission Park's Report Schedule everybody moved down the line for which park they will report on in the upcoming year. Student representatives have volunteered to be a part of the 2023 schedule and should notify Director Muck of which parks they would like to evaluate.

B. Recreation Division – Deputy Director Tracie Ringle

1. Program & Services

Deputy Director Tracie Ringle began saying that the team is wrapping up 2022. Lunch with Santa was last weekend and there were 200 people registered. It was nice to have the large group here with many happy families.

The fall cornhole league finished this week. Sixteen teams competed in 168 games and two tournaments. Recreation Supervisor Chase Root is doing a wonderful job with this unique program.

Nearly sixty children are registered for the Pistons Holiday Basketball Camp which will take place the 28th – 30th of December.

The largest dance recital will take place on Sunday with 780 tickets sold for the four performances. The dance program has outgrown the space at the Civic Center, and we are actively looking for a new venue to hold future recitals. There are so many kids in dance, the program continues to grow, and we want to continue to show off their new skills to their extended families.

Concert band's last performance of the year will be Saturday at 4:00. It is a free event. The spring theatre show will be Seussical Junior, and the show will be in April. This follows Cinderella to be held in January.

Camp counselor positions have been posted to hit the dates when college students are home in December.

Daddy Daughter and Mother Son tickets are on sale. The dates are February 3rd and 4th for Daddy Daughter and Feb. 24th for Mother Son. Although we are wrapping up the year, we are moving full steam into 2023.

C. Older Adult Division – Director Jeff Muck

1. Programs and Services

Director Muck circled back with more information on the Chamber event. The price is \$125 a person or \$1100 for a table for ten, if registered prior to January 13th. The price goes up \$15 after that date. It is a good value for an evening out which includes appetizers, dinner, gaming, dancing, open bar, and a silent auction.

OAS will be starting a running group led by Lee Mamola, a nationally certified running coach. The group includes biweekly runs on Thursday and Saturdays, guest speakers, group communication, and support.

OAS partnered with the Rotary Club and Novi Middle school to bring back the holiday luncheon. It has not been held since 2019. Attendees were treated to a holiday concert put on by the Novi Middle School choir, orchestra and band followed by lunch with the student council.

Sixty older adults from Novi went to the DIA last Thursday to see the Van Gogh exhibit. There will be more similar trips in the future due to the large turnout. OAS hosted a holiday brunch today at Meadowbrook Commons with entertainment, a hot chocolate bar and holiday games. The next event is a Noon Year's Eve party December 29th with a brunch and magician. Nature. Nurture. Novi. had Justin Smith from Kensington Metro Parks come out to Lakeshore Park to host an owl prowl. Twenty-five people attended to hear a presentation then a hike in search for screech and great horned owls. The group ended up hearing many owls and actually saw a screech owl at the end of the hike.

Medicare Part D open enrollment ended on December 7th. Councilors John Howland and Megan Schira met with forty-one beneficiaries which is consistent with pre-COVID numbers. The Civic Center has been hosting AARP tax aid counselor training prepping for tax assistance 2023. Scheduling of appointments will start January 5th and will fill up very quickly. TEFAP, emergency food assistance program distribution numbers are back to pre-COVID numbers. OAS is working with the Area Agency on Aging 1-B to host the Aging Mastery Program beginning April 20, 2023. It is a ten-week program designed to provide baby boomers and older adults with tools to improve their wellbeing and celebrate longevity.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Tolkacz

Glancing up at the screen every so often I want to commend the people working on the audio visual. It looks very professional. I feel like I am on C-SPAN.

I was impressed and overwhelmed by the diversity of events that were talked about. Ranging from the Owl Prowl nature centric to a Monte Carlo night at the Toast of the Town. Deputy Director Ringle talked about Lunch with Santa for the little ones to cornhole which appeals to the young at heart. I appreciate and applaud all the efforts. There is a lot of depth and breadth in what we do. Thank you again for the great job you guys are doing.

Commissioner Torimoto

I have the same opinions of what you just mentioned. Also, next year there are some pretty big projects which are further additions to just an amazing variety of facilities that we have for people to enjoy including the splash pad and pickleball courts.

We have been fortunate this year and I am looking forward to more opportunities next year. Thank you again for everything that you are doing.

Student Representative Raghunathan

I would like to say happy holidays and New Year in advance. I am looking forward to the park project reports as well as the splash pad.

Student Representative Bheemineni

Happy New Year and holidays to everyone. I am looking forward to the park reports this year.

Commissioner Riggins

I am just amazed at all the different activities for example the new running group. I echo what the other commissioners said about the activities.

I want to mention the child seat checks this Saturday 9:00- 12:00 at Fire Station 4. I suggest anyone that needs this to go there.

It was a very efficient meeting today. Happy holidays to everyone. Thank you.

Commissioner Staab

I would like to wish everyone over the airways, audience, fellow commissioners, and student representatives a very happy holiday season.

I want to report that the Choralaies concluded their series of concerts with a holiday show. All three were well attended.

Pour on the Shore will be July 28th bringing it back from 2019. Commissioner Staab asked about the ITC Sports Park reorganization plan and MRPA.

Director Muck apologized for not having an update on the ITC Master Plan. The staff is meeting with the Spicer Group, the consultant on Tuesday which is the kickoff meeting. That will lay out the timeline of public engagement and your involvement as a commission.

mParks Annual Conference is in Lansing March 7th-10th.

Commissioner Dooley

I want to applaud the Parks Foundation for your willingness to recruit some of the Novi Ambassadors. This a great way for citizens to get involved in the city, learn about Novi and how it operates. It is highly encouraged for anyone willing to take the eight-week course to learn about Novi. It is very rewarding. I hope a couple of the Novi Ambassadors become part of the Parks Foundation.

Hot off the press, Miss Amazing will be celebrating its fourth year in the lovely City of Novi. It will take place indoors at the Civic Center, so we do not have to worry about the weather. I am looking forward to the continued partnership that our city has with this wonderful pageant for special needs young ladies.

I cannot believe this is the last meeting for 2022. It went by quickly. Thank you for your spirit, guidance, and the fun that we had in 2022 and I look forward to 2023. And from all of us serving the City of Novi we wish you a very happy holidays and Merry Christmas.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Voice Vote

Unanimous

The meeting was adjourned by Commissioner Dooley at 7:36p.m.

DATE APPROVED: _____

Jay Dooley, Chairperson

Charles Staab, Vice Chairperson