

PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES

THURSDAY, MAY 13, 2010 – 7:00 PM

NOVI CIVIC CENTER – COUNCIL CHAMBERS

DRAFT

The meeting was called to order at 7:02PM with Commissioner Dooley presiding.

ROLL CALL: Blair (Absent), Dooley (Present), Iszler (Absent), Jewell (Present), Policicchio (Present), Staab (Absent), Wingfield (Present), Kerbrat (Present) Raina (Present).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

It was moved by Commissioner Policicchio and seconded by Commissioner Jewell to approve the Agenda as written.

Voice Vote

Unanimous

CITIZEN COMMENTS: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- A. Approval of March 11, 2010 meeting minutes
A motion was made by Commissioner Jewell that the March 11, 2010 minutes be approved as written. It was seconded by Commissioner Wingfield.

Voice Vote

Unanimous

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- A. Walkable Novi – Commissioners Iszler & Policicchio
Commissioner Policicchio stated that he attended the beginning of the Walkable Novi meeting. They were discussing the importance of creating pathways for non motorized forms of transportation.
- B. Novi Park Foundation – Commissioners Dooley & Staab
Commissioner Dooley stated that the Foundation had a hotdog cookout scheduled for May 1st but they made the decision to cancel it due to the prediction of inclement weather. They were thinking of safety when they did this. They will reschedule for May 22nd, which will coincide with those who need to have team pictures and hope that the weather will be good.

STAFF REPORTS:

- A. Administration Division – Randy Auler, Director of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services

Director Auler summarized the memo which was included in the packet. An application was submitted and the City awarded a grant in 2007 for a land acquisition of approximately sixteen acres of land adjacent to City owned property in the southwest of the City, which eventually could be the location for the Singh Trail. The appraisals did not come in at the levels needed so re-negotiation was done with the State, the property owner and the cost was reduced. City Council approved that on May 3rd and we now have until June 30th to complete the closing and land transaction. It will take another six to eight months for the reimbursement to take place. An additional sixteen-plus acres will be included in the park system. The parcel of land is about one hundred and thirty-five acres, with the additional land taking it to about one hundred and fifty acres. When the Singh Trail piece comes to fruition, it will be an over two hundred acre park parcel.

Included in the packet are park entry signs that will be going in at the six parks, which do not currently have the new style signs, as we continue to brand those parks. As part of this process, we have two park properties which currently do not have names and for which we have ordered signs. We are targeting the sign installation for June 30th. The two unnamed properties are the one known as the Landings property on Walled Lake and the other is the property we acquired through the 2005 grant and closed in 2009, which is located between Nine Mile Road and Ten Mile Road off of Meadowbrook Road on the east and west side also known as Villagewood Lake and Orchard Hills West property. We have to determine what the names will be for these parks fairly soon in order to have the signs installed and the contract complete by June 30th. We can name the parks based on location or use. We may consider naming one Villagewood Lake Park and the other Landings Park. In the future they would be subject to naming rights opportunities. He asked for input from the Commission for the naming of the two properties.

He thanked the Commissioners for completing the evaluation of the Park Maintenance Standards. We will be sending out the assignments for next month. We will be doing these through the summer and fall so we can tabulate the data and coordinate the comments with Department of Public Services so that they incorporate that in to their daily operational maintenance.

Director Auler stated that the Oakland County Park Commission representatives and/or staff are going to attend the June 7th City Council Meeting to do a ten minute presentation about Oakland County Parks. Their millage renewal is up this fall so they want to share with City Council opportunities that Oakland County Parks has available to partner with and serve Novi as well as address the millage renewal.

There is going to be a staffing change because Derek Smith, who has been with us for nine years, has resigned his position. He is in charge of all of the sports for our department. He has accepted the position as Director of SELCRA (Southeastern Livingston County Recreation Authority) in Brighton. The Department is having a get together and the Commission is invited to attend. He helped coordinate the renovation of Power Park. There has been growth in the softball program as well as our affiliation with

MDSA. This has led to us hosting State and this year our first National tournament. We wish Derek well.

Director Auler opened the floor to questions.

Commissioner Wingfield stated that he had Power Park for the park evaluation. It looked great and he rated it 98%. He asked if what he did is what Director Auler is looking for.

Director Auler stated that the Commissioners did an excellent job in terms of the process. He will provide a summary sheet. There is one evaluation yet to come in. The Commissioners will get a summary of all of the comments from the review and a summary of actions that have been taken as well as percent of the standards we have met by category, park and as a system as a whole.

Commissioner Wingfield then asked if someone will be hired to take Derek Smith's place or will the job be absorbed in the department.

Director Auler stated that this is something that is currently being evaluated. The City is facing an eight and a half million dollar revenue shortfall. We are going back to the level we were in the 2001/2002 budget. There have been some changes in staffing within the City that have led to either eliminated positions through attrition or through layoffs with the positions then permanently eliminated. What we are doing is preparing a set of options on how we can best approach this.

Commissioner Wingfield asked, if the finances are there, whether the preferred option would be to hire another person to take the position.

Director Auler stated that the workload is tremendous with the Adult Softball, which we would like to expand in to Adult Basketball and Volleyball. We also have all of the Youth sports programs. We have to figure out a way that we can best grow those programs within our and the City's budget.

- B. Recreation Division – Nancy Cowan, Superintendent of Recreation
Superintendent Cowan stated with the staff changes we have a tremendous staff, including some part-time individuals, who have stepped up and are helping to run some programs in the interim of the decision process.

Wendy DuVall was our team lead on "Arbor Day". We had a successful Arbor Day with great volunteers who came out and planted despite the fact that it had rained the night before. The pictures from this are now up on our Facebook site.

We have also done an opening of the High School Art display which is in the Civic Center Atrium. It is a juried show from the High School students. Our Midwest Sculpture Initiative has installed the sculptures as of a couple of weeks ago in Fuerst Park. There are five on the walking trails and one here at the entry of the Civic Center. All of the artists are from the Midwest area/region. All of the sculptures were implemented via donation and funding outside of City funds. They are here for everyone to enjoy for the next year. Our hope is to continue this fund raising effort and put in rotating new sculptures again next year. If the funding grows we will be able to get more sculptures and put them in more places.

The annual Jaguars tournament was held this past weekend. Novi was again one of the tournament sites. Hundreds of teams were at ITC

Community Sports Park playing soccer on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Friday night got rained out but they were able to play on Saturday and Sunday. Our site held up well this year. Kudos to our maintenance crew, staff and concession. The Jaguars are a top notch organization and did a fantastic job.

"Charlotte's Web" opens tomorrow night. It is a classic children's show. Tickets are still available online or at the front desk.

Our Memorial Day Parade is right around the corner. It will be on Monday, May 31st, at 10:00 a.m. A ceremony will follow the parade here at the Novi Civic Center at 12:00 p.m. and is a great way to recognize our Veterans.

Our Sizzling Summer Arts Series and Grand Opening of our sculpture park take place on June 2nd at 6:30 p.m. We have a great partnership with Novi High School and are doing this in conjunction with the High School Arts Festival. Jazz artists will be there as well as fun community art projects. Mayor Landry will be there to speak that evening. We invite everyone to come out and join us that night.

River Day is June 5th. This is another opportunity for the community to help to take care of Rotary Park. This is our annual River Rouge clean up day.

We are seeking volunteers and groups who would like to participate.

We are hard at work preparing for summer. Lakeshore Park Beach will open on Memorial Day and is open through Labor Day. We are in the process of hiring lifeguards and staff for Camp Lakeshore. All of the other camp registrations are going on from "Project Broadway" to painting camp, sports camps and more. Our camps continue to grow.

Commissioner Dooley asked how the public can access the calendar to see all of the great summer events.

Superintendent Cowan stated that there are several different ways to access the events. One of the best ways is to visit the City of Novi website under Parks and Recreation and also under the "Engage!" guide.

Another great source is our Novi Parks Facebook page. We continually put up pictures from different programs and events. Many of our events are in the Novi News. We continue to have a great relationship with them. The cable channel within Novi and SWOCC also list our events. Our information is also available in all of our City buildings.

Commissioner Wingfield asked how the over all enrollment for classes are with the state of the economy.

Superintendent Cowan replied that we are still maintaining very well.

Over all, our registrations have held steady. Sports are still very strong. We are seeing a lot of late registrations.

Commissioner Wingfield stated that for Novi Youth Baseball they were down in number in the younger divisions but in the older divisions they were up so their numbers were similar to last year. He then asked how the decision to keep the lifeguards at Lakeshore Park came about.

Superintendent Cowan stated that there was a memorandum that was included in the City Council packet with budget which outlined the way it could be done without lifeguards versus with lifeguards as an option. At the last budget meeting it was recommended that it be put back in the budget. The budget is not yet approved but the recommendation is that the lifeguards be put back in.

Commissioner Wingfield stated that he felt that was smart.

MATTERS FOR COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION:

- A. Approval of the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Department 2010-2013 Strategic Plan

Commissioner Dooley stated that he would like to see a motion to approve the 2010-2013 Strategic Plan. He stated that the Commission looked at this Plan in the late fall of last year. He talked to Commissioner Staab, who could not be at this meeting this evening, and he is in full support of the Plan.

Commissioner Wingfield made a motion to approve the Strategic Plan as presented in the packet. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Jewell.

Voice Vote

Unanimous

CITIZEN COMMENTS: None

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Student Representative Raina stated that many of the activities like the High School Art Show and Arbor Day are good for High School involvement in the community. He knows that Arbor Day always has a good turn out of High School students.

Student Representative Kerbrat asked how many lifeguards will be hired this year. She knows that Novi just had a class for lifeguard certification. She was part of that class and just got her certificate and she was hoping to work at Lakeshore Park.

Superintendent Cowan encouraged Student Representative Kerbrat, or any individuals she knows, to put in an application. Some lifeguards have been hired back from previous summers. We will be hiring from eight to ten lifeguards depending on how many hours each lifeguard can work.

Commissioner Policicchio Microphone was off and he was inaudible.

Commissioner Wingfield stated that he would like to thank Derek Smith for his nine years of service.

Commissioner Jewell stated that he also would like to thank Derek Smith because he has done an outstanding job and will be missed. He asked if the Farmer's Market this weekend was sponsored by Parks and Recreation.

Superintendent Cowan stated that it was not. The Farmer's Market was sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce.

Commissioner Dooley stated that Derek Smith will be missed in Novi but that success will follow him in Brighton. He stated that Theresa McClure and her staff do an outstanding job. He hopes that those who use ITC Community Sports Park understand the fantastic job that she does.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Commissioner Jewell and was seconded by Commissioner Wingfield.

VOICE VOTE

UNANIMOUS

The meeting was adjourned by Commissioner Dooley at 7:33 pm

DATE APPROVED:

Jay Dooley, Chairperson

Paul Policicchio, Vice Chairperson