

**PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES COMMISSION**

**Thursday, March 15, 2018 – 7 P.M.**

**NOVI CIVIC CENTER – COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. with Commissioner Dooley presiding.

**ROLL CALL:** Dooley (Present), Thomopoulos (Present), Jewell (Present), Muzzin (Present), Pratt (Present), Staab (Present), Torimoto (Present), Student Representatives Jooho Lee (Present), Alice Wou (Present).

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

It was moved that the agenda be approved by Commissioner Pratt and seconded by Commissioner Jewell.

**Voice Vote**

**Unanimous**

**CITIZEN COMMENTS:**

Resident Karl Migrin, 49450 W. Nine Mile Road near Garfield intersection, said thanks to the Commission for volunteering their time. It's been a while since we've had a full board in attendance. Had a chance to walk the ITC Trail a few weeks ago and it held up well over the winter. There were ribbons around some of the trees, so we're getting closer to continuing that trail. Watches every few weeks on TV.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

A. Approval of Feb. 15, 2018 minutes.

It was moved that the minutes for February be approved by Commissioner Jewell and seconded by Commissioner Thomopoulos.

**Voice Vote**

**Unanimous**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- A. Walkable Novi – Commissioners Thomopoulos  
Commissioner Thomopoulos said the status is the same as last month. Still waiting on the appointment of new members from both Parks Commission and Planning Commission. It is on tonight's agenda for Parks and Planning Commission had a meeting last night. Hoping to meet in April.
- B. Novi Park Foundation – Commissioners Staab & Torimoto  
Commissioner Staab said there hasn't been a meeting in the past month and the next meeting is 3/26. Working toward Pour on the Shore planning.  
Commissioner Torimoto said the event is 7/27. The Foundation has a new board member, Julie Garavaglia; who is a community relations specialist from ITC Holdings.
- C. Grants Committee – Commissioners Dooley & Pratt  
Commissioner Pratt said there was a grants committee meeting prior to this meeting. Commissioner Dooley said the meeting was very productive meeting that covered a lot of ground.  
Director Muck said we had a significant discussion about a property we can't disclose at this time that could be looked at for acquisition in the future. The Grants Committee provided direction on a few properties that could be targeted for 2019 grants. We talked about the future of the water tower property

now that we've acquired that site and what sort of funding would be needed for that. The ITC Trail had some markings on the property a few weeks ago and no one knew who had done it. We talked to our departments and the road commission and came to the conclusion someone's GPS was off. Our consultant who is working with us on the ITC Trail did go out there today and mark some trees to route the pathway through the property off Nine Mile and Garfield Road. It'll be off Garfield Road and now we'll set it back a little bit off the road. That'll look nicer and we won't have to take down some of the old-growth trees. The trees are potentially going to come down in the next few weeks, as we have to do some prep work before the real path work begins this summer. There are two Land and Water Conservation Fund grants and one Recreation Passport grant that were brought to Council and passed unanimously Monday night. Thanks to Commissioner Staab for his letter of support on the Tim Pope playground grant. We also had Becky Staab and Sara Pope-Starnes there to voice their support. We did have Council ask about the design of the playground to make sure people involved with the build of the playground are now in support. Based on support from the Staabs, Pope-Starnes and the Parks Commission, he was able to explain that the original look and feel of the structure would be maintained. Chris Jackett is feverishly working on those items, uploading them to the DNR website with the 4/1 target to submit those.

Commissioner Staab asked when we'd hear back about those. Director Muck said mid-to-late December. Staab said, even if we do get approval, it'll be a while down the road before we do the work. It's just conceptual designs we've seen. Will mirror the best we can the current structure's design and maintaining the pickets from 21 years ago. Muck said we're looking 2-3 years out on a lot of these. There's a lot of work with engineering, submitting these and then a long waiting period before you get approval; then you get into construction. Staab said it's served the community well and is the most active play structure in the city. It's time to update it for 2019-20 and have it for another 20+ years.

D. Parks Updates

1. Fuerst Park – Commissioner Staab/Student Representative Lee

Commissioner Staab said the parking lots were blocked by the massive snow we had a few days before. Township Hall was all closed up for the winter. The kiosk marketing was promoting AARP tax aide, Finding Bigfoot and other Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services activities. Signage had history on the Fuerst sisters and the donation of the land.

Student Representative Lee said he wanted his photos to show positives of the park since the last time he visited. The park's location immediately behind the library is very convenient. It's pretty clean and the trails are all right. Noticed a tree memorial for the first time, as well as a Monarch butterfly field. Seems like the park is getting more use. Director Muck said it's a Monarch butterfly garden and waystation. Deputy Director Ringle said the Bigfoot cutout is part of the Finding Bigfoot Facebook project. Prizes are attributed. Lee said the paths are very clear. Garbage bins and things were very uniform and clean. There's one recycling bin in a far corner of the park. Could be better to add a second recycling bin, but didn't see any litter.

Commissioner Staab thanked Representative Lee for stepping forward and taking pictures.

2. Meadowbrook Commons – Commissioner Pratt

Commissioner Pratt said it's really nice and well shoveled. It looks well organized and signage is good. There was some construction and barricades were being moved around. Manager Kapchonick said that's where the generator is going and leftover pea gravel from last summer's parking project will be removed. The cement is rusted looking due to the sprinklers being on well water. Pratt said, during the summer, there's always really nice landscaping. Noticed a resident parking only" sign was protruding out a little bit. Verified the gazebo gets re-stained each year. Did not get up to the fitness equipment. Has previously covered parks, so covering a facility was a new experience for him. He enjoyed the assignment very much.

Commissioner Staab said Park Maintenance has been very diligent about replacing the discolored sidewalk as it dips and cracks since there is a lot of foot traffic along Meadowbrook Road. Asked when the generator would be operational? Manager Kapchonick said it should arrive in April and be hooked up immediately. Should be operational by mid-May.

### 3. Novi Dog Park – Commissioner Dooley

Commissioner Dooley said he enjoyed having a different park to look at. Not everyone knows where Novi Dog Park is, but it's behind the ice arena on Nick Lidstrom Drive. He went on Sunday when the weather was good and said it was in great condition. A lot of cars were leaving as he was pulling up, but those there said it was packed half an hour before despite snow still being on the ground. It's a wonderful place to take your animal and loved pet. The salt used to keep the parking clear is pet friendly. Dogs like to sniff and lick, so it's nice to know its pet friendly. Didn't realize there's a key fob to get in. You have to get a fob from the City of Novi and its open to Novi and Northville residents, and you have to complete a quiz and provide a list of vaccinations in the event they have interactions with other dogs there. Thought that was a great feature for security. Also found out there was a \$30 fee for residents and \$60 for non-residents, and a one-time \$20 fee for that fob key. There's also a \$12 additional fee per dog and limit of three per household. Gets a feeling that park is used four seasons and is very clean. It seems people take stewardship and keep it clean as far as waste is concerned. There's a small and timid dog section so people feel safe when they take their dogs into the park. When you're coming into the ice arena, it's very well marked as where they need to go. The signage is very, very good and people feel safe and secure when they're coming up to the dog park. The rules are there and clearly marked. Simple rules and people seem to obey the rules. The fob key is the only way you can get it and, for \$20, it seems like money well spent.

Commissioner Pratt said you need the fob to get in and people won't let you in. Commissioner Torimoto said he uses the park a lot in the warmer months, but there's a lot of wind since it's an open area. Wondered if other parks are doing anything we could consider to make it warmer.

### **MATTERS FOR COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION:**

#### A. Walkable Novi Committee Assignment

Commissioner Thomopoulos said she and Commissioner Doug Bauss were on the committee, but they're down an assignment since he's left. Do we want to ask Commissioner Muzzin to fill that assignment or reopen the discussion on assignments?

Director Muck said they could open this up to commissioners since it'd be an assignment until October when assignments are re-upped. Commissioner Dooley asked if anyone else was interested in the assignment? Asked Commissioner Muzzin if she's willing? Commissioner Muzzin said she'd be willing. Director Muck said they meet about three times per year, typically before Commission meetings, and discuss priorities for walking paths throughout the City. Commissioner Thomopoulos said there's a draft proposal and now is actually a great time to get involved. The next meeting will hear this year's plans. Commissioner Muzzin appointment motioned by Commissioner Thomopoulos and seconded by Commissioner Jewell. Appointed unanimously.

## **STAFF REPORTS**

### A. Administration Division – Director Jeff Muck

#### 1. Transportation Forum Update

Director Muck said City Council directed a goal of expanding transportation services in the City of Novi. Led by Councilmember Wayne Wrobel, he's met with Muck, Manager Kapchonick and Recreation Supervisor Jessica Mistak, who oversees the transportation program. We've held two public forums – one at Meadowbrook Commons and one at the Novi Civic Center – to provide an overview on the program and allow those attending a chance to provide input on potential enhancements and the prioritize those enhancements. We had small attendance, but good attendance. We were surprised at some of the input. We expected to hear a lot more about expanded hours and Sunday hours as a prioritization. We got more along the lines of marketing of service areas to publicize the 10-mile trip radius, to include the Meijer that sits outside the City. There was a lot of talk at both meetings about including those all-in-one shopping sites just outside the City at City rates. Holiday light trips, State Fair, designated days shopping trips at places like Busch's and additional runs Saturdays. We are going to do one more we're attempting to find a place for on the north end of I-96. We're looking at some of the apartment and condo complexes up there. After that, we'll put together a report summarizing our findings for City Council and here from these town halls.

#### 2. Park Radius Map

Director Muck said this is an internal document we use in the Parks Department and Grants Committee when we look at where we should look for park properties and what are the coverages for park properties. The circles are the one-mile radius away from each park. Park staff have been looking at this for several years, since before Muck was director. The circles are developed parks. You can also see our undeveloped parks, such as Beacon Hill off Meadowbrook, the Novi Northwest Park near Andelina Ridge and the ITC Trailhead Park at Nine Mile and Garfield. Those are designated with dashes so you can see what kind of coverage area we'll have if and when those parks are developed. It's more of an internal tool for staff with planning for grants when discussing where we should be targeting. This could potentially be something we share with Walkable Novi Commissioners Thomopoulos and Muzzin. Some of you are data driven and it shows some of the tools by our GIS Department to explore keeping people within one mile of the park.

Commissioner Staab asked for verification of Andelina Ridge's location. Director Muck indicated on 12 Mile next to the Detroit Catholic Central practice fields and Novi Northwest Park was acquired with a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant in 2015.

Commissioner Torimoto said population growth is on the west side of the city and asked how that would be captured on the map? Director Muck said population hasn't really factored into this map. Torimoto said, when he was on Walkable Novi, they looked at how to connect subdivisions, looking at where populations are now versus where they're increasing. But that growth spur from five or more years ago has slowed down and stabilized. The west side is more open. Muck said the west side near Beck has a lot of housing, but no specific park that services a certain area there.

Commissioner Muzzin asked for clarification on the dotted circles being future developed parks and how many years away those are? Director Muck said CIP plans are in place for Northwest Park in 2020-21, ITC Trailhead Park in the next two years. Beacon Hill is a small parcel being developed by the developer of the Beacon Hill subdivision as a trailhead park with a small shelter. That's being constructed right now. Within the next 3-5 years, you'll see most of these filled in. Commissioner Muzzin asked whether there's a distinction as to the services within a park or just that there's an actual park? Director Muck said this particular map just designates whether there's a park. It's not broken down into active versus passive.

Commissioner Pratt asked, once broken down into active versus passive, would the school playgrounds be included overall? Director Muck said they're included in the master plan, but they're not considered part of the park inventory.

Commissioner Torimoto said he's at Beck and 10 Mile where there's nothing, but they can ride their bikes to Novi Woods and use that as their park. Director Muck said it'd be a simple task for GIS to overlay school playgrounds onto this map in the future. Commissioner Pratt said the amenities and not just City Parks-owned would be a good idea.

B. Recreation Division – Deputy Director Tracie Ringle

1. PRCS Annual Highlights Report

Deputy Director Ringle said she's presenting the department's second-annual Annual Report. The department is based on a fiscal year of July-June, but we decided to do the report based on calendar year to make it easier for residents to read and understand. This is a draft and Chris Jackett will email you tomorrow to have a few days to read over it and provide suggestions. The next steps are to share with City Council and have on our website. We highlight our five core values, which are inclusion, excellence, innovation, integrity and environment. We pulled out a few stories, tidbits and stats that are things we're proud of having partnered with the community and business, grants and so on. For inclusion, we talked about Memorial Day, what we do for our veterans, the program at the ice arena. Survivors, our Cassell and Associates art show we do in the Atrium every year. Those are survivors of traumatic brain injuries and is actually going on right now. And chair volleyball we started this year for our older adult population. We have excellence with the stellar employees we have in our own department. Greg Morris was recognized as the City's Employee of the Year in 2016. Torry Yu was a finalist in 2016 and Amelia Purdy-Ketchum was recognized as a finalist this year. It's nice to have that recognition citywide tied

back to our own department. Light Up the Night we made some changes there and had our largest-ever total contributions and sponsorships there. We highlighted some improvements done at Power Park, at the Novi Dog Park with turf, the bike repair station and enhanced parking we did at Pavilion Shore Park. Just the things we do to make sure we're serving our community and what the expectation is. Innovation, ways we continue to transform our programs with grants, a list of grants we received in 2017, how we go about sponsorship. Transportation being a big one with the new demand-response software. Our Engage show on YouTube and social media. Our reception redesign with our comingling of our Older Adults and Parks registrations, which has led to an easier combination of services and people being able to find what they're looking for as a one-stop shop. Integrity, we mentioned Fuerst Park today and we had some money given by the Fuerst sisters and held. We were able to implement those funds to do some improvements here in the Civic Center in 2017. The completion of the senior service strategic plan that really guides the services we provide. Some of the paving and parking at Meadowbrook Activity Center and the ITC Corridor Trail which is ongoing as listed under one of our core values of environment. Some of these things we've gone further with as we're a few months into 2018. They're some of the few things we're proud of. Commissioner Staab asked about the timeline for review? Deputy Director Ringle said she'd like to have it in the City Council packet that goes out next Thursday, so she'd like to have suggestions back by noon Wednesday.

## 2. Villa Barr Artist in Residence

Deputy Director Ringle said, on Monday, City Council approved a resolution approving City staff to establish an artist-in-residence program at Villa Barr, which includes the requirements, rules and form of agreement required as we select an artist for that site. Villa Barr is our work in progress art park. It's a 4-acre sculpture park that was the home of Beth and David Barr, the sculpture. The City purchased that property with the intent of making it a cultural arts hub for the city. We're doing some repairs to the home, some updates and looking at what we're doing with parking and pathway. Artist in residence is a piece of that. The City has been working with a dedicated group of residents called the Friends of Villa Barr on the lease agreements, partnership, etc. The application is currently available through the Michigan Legacy Art Park at Crystal Mountain Resort in Thompsonville, where David Barr had a relationship as a founding member of the Michigan Legacy Art Park. They're currently advertising a dual residency between City of Novi and the Michigan Legacy Art Park. We're offering three residency periods anywhere between 6-15 weeks. We're anticipating three periods of fall, winter and summer scheduling for those. The City of Novi would provide the studio to them, all the tools in the studio to use and an honorarium of up to \$1,000, which was provided by the Novi Parks Foundation as an incentive to choose our location. The artist is responsible for all the supplies and materials used to create artwork while on site. They'll create a piece of art to loan to the City for a period of not more than five years. They'll working or consulting with local teachers to conduct projects or local workshops with students about their artwork. There's a lot of freedom. We want to make sure they propose what they want to do and what they see their connection being to the Novi community. We have an artist affiliated with the Michigan Legacy Art Park who has agreed to serve as a trial resident for a short time this summer to give us an idea of some of the nuances of living in that home and studio. The first application would be

due 4/30 with the anticipation that it'd be an October start date. Recreation Supervisor of Cultural Arts Amelia Purdy-Ketchum and Ringle are working on enhancing our website with the information we have on David Barr and his legacy, as well as some of the information mentioned here. It's currently being shared on an art website that is a go-to for searching for residency. We'll see what kind of feedback we get from the art community.

Commissioner Thomopoulos asked how much competition would we have for other residency programs? Are there thousands or just a few? Deputy Director Ringle said there's a good number. National Parks have a lot of artist-in-residency programs. In Michigan, there are a good number, but maybe not as many as you'd see in New York City or a destination that's a large metropolis. Ringle can send commissioners that Web address. David Barr's legacy is our niche. Sculptors familiar with David Barr and his sculptures across the world will look at Novi and Crystal Mountain.

Commissioner Thomopoulos asked if the time frame of 6-15 weeks and stipend seem commensurate with other residencies? Deputy Director Ringle said those recommendations came from the Friends of Villa Barr, who are professors and people who have administered artist-in-residency programs at different sites. We trust their judgment, but it's a learning curve. Whether that \$1,000 is a great incentive or if someone considered doing something larger and leaving it in the City, would we consider more money to do through a grant or something. We've taken our suggestions from the pros, but there will be some give and take moving forward.

### 3. Program & Services

Deputy Director Ringle said registration is two weeks in for summer camps. Camp PowerPlay and Camp Lakeshore are both already trending higher than they were this time last year. Camp PowerPlay is almost sold out. There are a few weeks left, so we're pleased with that. Our cultural arts camps are trending higher, too. We're pleased we're offering things people are interested in. We've asked a lot of questions as far as cultural arts through surveys. Our adult softball league teams are full in four of five nights. Friday nights still have availability. We just finished 3v3 adult basketball and the players asked us to continue the program into the spring and through early June. The May-August Engage! is in edits and will be in mailboxes mid-April. Registration for non-camp summer programs begins 4/1. Recreation Supervisor Cristin Spiller has held first-round interviews for camp counselors and second round is later this month. A lot of counselors are returning. We're also currently hiring lifeguards and sport field site supervisors. Those positions are great for high school students as a first job.

## C. Older Adults – Older Adult Services Manager Karen Kapchonick

### 1. Program & Services

Manager Kapchonick said the St. Patrick's Day luncheon was this afternoon. O'Brien Sullivan Funeral Home provided bagpipers and an Irish band. The residents also enjoyed door prizes and came dressed for the occasion. A Euchre Tournament will be held 4/7 at the Novi Civic Center. The Senior Socialites group from Wixom, South Lyon, Northville and Novi will be having a luau party 4/26 at Oakland County's Lyon Oaks Golf Club. A great opportunity for those 50 and older to network and party with other residents in other communities. We do two special events per year; one in spring and one in fall. We have a free speaker series called "Be in the Know" discussing scams 1 p.m. 3/20 and also sharing your

memories. That gives them direction for sharing their memories and passing them on to their families. That'll be 6:30 p.m. 4/11 at the Novi Civic Center. A new "Being Savvy When Paying for Prescription Drugs" program will be 1 p.m. 4/12 at the Novi Public Library. The last one is "What You Should Know About Choosing Your Beneficiary Plan" 10:30 a.m. 4/19 at the Novi Civic Center. There's a variety of different topics we want to make sure our residents are aware of and we're a resource.

Commissioner Thomopoulos said those are all very relevant topics.

Commissioner Dooley asked for detail about the Taste of Poland luncheon.

Manager Kapchonick said it is sold out. Novi Lakes' chef will be providing the food, another individual will be talking about Poland and have props, and we'll have some entertainment, too. That all started with one individual asking for us to do something about Poland for the past year and a half.

### **CITIZEN COMMENTS:**

Resident Karl Migrin, 49450 W. Nine Mile Road near Garfield, said its much nicer sitting here in person than in front of his television. Saw a picture of Bigfoot and thought he saw bullet holes in him. Representative Lee said Bigfoot was clean with no holes. Migrin asked whether the Novi Special water tower was a functional water tower? Director Muck said it is not, but it is structurally sound and empty. It is currently being used as a cell phone tower. As part of the agreement, the City gets the rights to those cell phone towers and that brings in a steady revenue stream for that property. Migrin said he's heard talk about a possible splash pad there and that'd be nice to use the water tower to pump water into that splash pad off hours. Or, if it ever needed to be moved, it could be moved to ITC Community Sports Park as a landmark. Residents in that area are still on well water and it could be used to pump water for watering the sports fields.

### **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:**

Commissioner Torimoto said he went to the Ice Arena a few weeks ago and noticed the signs of all the kids who are now Olympians or competing elsewhere. He thought it was really cool and showed off the quality of the facility. The facility itself was in fantastic shape. Is looking forward to it getting warmer and enjoying the facilities outdoor.

Commissioner Muzzin had no comments to add.

Commissioner Jewell said welcome to Commissioner Muzzin and thanked everyone for everything they're doing. Thanks to Representative Lee for going out to Fuerst Park and taking pictures.

Commissioner Staab commended the department for the preservation of the cell tower mechanism as a great source of revenue. Many years ago, the City couldn't make their mind up about those kind of issues and they moved it over to the high school football field, so they're getting the \$15,000 per year. Also, a good point Commissioner Torimoto brought up about the Olympians pictures and the people who practice there. Our city being their practice location was alluded to in Sports Illustrated in one of the Olympic issues. On 3/3, Choralaires and Concert Band had a joint concert that was well attended, followed by a fundraiser at Rojo in Novi. You'd all be amazed at the amount of revenue they were able to garner off that fundraiser. A good mix of attendees from kids to seniors. Appreciates Representative Lee for stepping up to help with Fuerst Park and pictures.

Representative Wou said the ice arena is in really nice shape. She went to the ice arena with her friends recently after being inspired by the Olympics. Excited for it to get warmer so they can start using ITC CSP, play sports and walk the trails.

Representative Lee said he's glad after doing a park report himself that the park conditions are good despite the unpredictable weather. It was good to see for himself and make a report.

Commissioner Pratt welcomed Commissioner Muzzin and said it's an exciting time to be part of the parks and rec board because of the money available to spend and the projects coming up. It's a lot to digest, but there are improvements happening. Thanks for making it happen.

Commissioner Thomopoulos welcomed Commissioner Muzzin and thanked her for volunteering her time and thanked Representative Lee for taking time out of his junior year schedule to visit the park and do a park report. We didn't cover park assignment for Commissioner Muzzin at this meeting, but said we should discuss those so she can participate in the visits. Is also looking forward to the spring weather. At the next meeting, she wants to include the volunteer opportunities to clean up the parks like River Day, Arbor Day, etc.

Commissioner Dooley said, thinking back a few years ago when capital improvements gave such little amounts to funding improvements in parks and rec, it's incredible how much your department is responsible for the increase in improvements the City allows. Kudos to all of you for your passion in putting parks and rec in the forefront in the City's eyes and with Council. Thanked Commissioner Muzzin and said it's gratifying to come to a City Council meeting and there's so many people volunteering for various boards in the City. Said she's going to really enjoy it and helping sway City Council's eyes as to what Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services are all about. Class four of the Novi Ambassadors just completed a little bit ago and is getting larger throughout the City. Aiming to get them all together soon. If there's a Novi Ambassador who didn't have an opportunity to be on one of the openings from the various boards, don't give up, continue to be proactive. You sat on the ambassadors for a reason, so don't ever lose your reason.

Commissioner Staab said it'd be nice to embellish on the amount of grants we acquired over the past few years, the number of total dollars and impact. Viewers and other residents need to know. As a movie once said, "using other peoples' money is nice."

### **ADJOURNMENT**

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Jewell and seconded by Commissioner Pratt.

#### **Voice Vote**

#### **Unanimous**

The meeting was adjourned by Commissioner Dooley at 8:29 p.m.

DATE APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jay Dooley, Chairperson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Shelley Thomopoulos, Vice Chairperson