

PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES COMMISSION

Thursday, Aug. 17, 2017 – 7 P.M.

NOVI CIVIC CENTER – COUNCIL CHAMBERS

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

ROLL CALL: Bauss (Present), Dooley (Present), Jewell (Absent), Pratt (Absent), Staab (Present), Thomopoulos (Present), Torimoto (Present), Student Representatives Jooho Lee (Present), Sanidhya Singh (Absent).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

It was moved that the agenda be approved as amended by Commissioner Thomopoulos and seconded by Commissioner Staab.

Voice Vote **Unanimous**

CITIZEN COMMENTS: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A. Approval of July 20, 2017 minutes.

It was moved that the minutes for July be approved by Commissioner Thomopoulos and seconded by Commissioner Staab.

Voice Vote **Unanimous**

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- A. Walkable Novi – Commissioners Thomopoulos & Bauss
Commissioner Thomopoulos said the next meeting is next month, so no further updates from last month's update
- B. Novi Park Foundation – Commissioner Torimoto
Commissioner Staab said Pour on the Shore was on 7/28 on a windy evening at Pavilion Shore Park. It went off without a hitch. Preliminary financials are in the neighborhood of \$14,700 that netted out. A little under \$400 down from last year. Good band, good refreshments. The only issue we're going to be looking on is to update and upgrade for next year is to upgrade the food area. We had some issues where we ran out of food and some concerns were expressed to us about that. We'll be working on that in the coming months. Thank you to everyone who participated and supported the foundation. Another worthwhile event.
Commissioner Torimoto might have more to add.
Commissioner Torimoto said the food is a challenge from the sponsors. As the event gets bigger and more popular, it's hard to meet the demand from what's given. The big positive is the volunteers. All three years he's been a volunteer and meets people from different aspects of the city. Had a chance to speak to one lady who was volunteering and she's been in Novi for 20-some years and had a lot of opportunities to volunteer in other cities, but was really excited to be here. The volunteers really made it happen through the contributions they made. It's quite significant to make sure it was a success. We had a great time.
- C. Grants Committee – Commissioners Pratt & Dooley
Commissioner Dooley said there are no real updates since there was no meeting this month. When you look at the Marketing Plan for Parks, Recreation and

Cultural Services, there are some line items that reflect the work the Grants Committee has done in this plan.

D. Parks Updates

1. Village Wood Lake Park – Commissioner Thomopoulos

Commissioners Thomopoulos said she visited earlier this week. For those who haven't been there, it's a neighborhood park with a wooded area that runs along the creek. You don't really see the creek because of all the trees, but as you walk down the trail, on your left side you see Village Wood Lake. The park is mostly grassy. There's a good of trees sprinkled throughout. You have a good view of the lake and a pleasant walk. It does have a loop. Snapped a pic of the sign and the gravel trail. The grass and trail are well maintained. Park maintenance is really excellent. There is one picnic table in good condition near the lake to have a picnic if you so choose. Was wondering if there should be additional seating, maybe a bench? When we sort out the memorial benches, maybe we could get someone to contribute. It would be nice at the end of the loop, if you walk that far and wanted to take a seat, because there's another good view from that location. Took some pictures of trees. There has been some tending to the trees since she was last there six months ago. Some really healthy trees and you see a good base under the tree. These particular trees had plastic wrapped around their trunks, either for their own protection or to prevent errant limbs from growing. Unfortunately, there were just a couple of trees near the front of the park that aren't doing so well. Hopefully those are on the list for the fall plantings. There were very few of those. For the most part, things are looking very good in this park.

Commissioner Torimoto asked if there were any garbage cans at that park? Commissioner Thomopoulos said there is one at the entrance and possibly another midway up the trail, which is good because they're used for dog walking.

~~2. Villa Barr Art Park – Commissioner Jewell~~

Commissioner Staab asked if it would be worthwhile if we mixed it up on an annual basis to get additional perspective.

Commissioner Dooley and Bauss agreed. Commissioner Dooley said we'd see parks we don't normally visit. Commissioner Staab it forces you to visit parks you don't normally. Commissioner Dooley said you could even throw a dart at a list of parks. Commissioner Torimoto said something good about doing it this time is you see the park in two different seasons. After twice, it might not be bad to see something different. Commissioner Dooley said it's nice to see the suggestions we make implemented. Commissioner Staab said maybe on an annual basis we switch.

MATTERS FOR COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION:

A. Commission Chair, Vice Chair and Committee Nominations

Commissioner Dooley asked when this would take effect?

Deputy Director Ringle said it's her understanding it would take affect at the next meeting.

Commissioner Dooley asked Commissioner Bauss whether he had given any thought to continuing as chairperson.

Commissioner Bauss said he doesn't feel a need to continue if anyone else would like to take that responsibility on who hasn't yet.

Commissioner Dooley said he'd do chair if no one else wants to do it. Asked Commissioner Thomopoulos if she'd be interested in doing chair?

Commissioner Thomopoulos said she would not be, but could do vice chair.

Commissioner Torimoto said he was chair before.

Commissioner Dooley said he's been chair before and he'd nominate Commissioner Thomopoulos for vice chair, but the logical procession is for the vice chair to slide into the chair role the following year.

Commissioner Thomopoulos said she is the newest commissioner. Asked whether Jewell and Pratt have had the chance to be chair and vice chair?

Commissioner Staab said Jewell has, but can't speak to Pratt. Deputy Director Ringle said she doesn't believe Pratt has been.

Commissioner Dooley said Pratt's schedule may not allow him to do so, through no fault of his.

Commissioner Bauss said there are two motions.

Commissioner Dooley said he'd nominate Thomopoulos for vice chair September through August. Voted unanimously 5-0 to appoint Thomopoulos as vice chair.

Commissioner Bauss said he'd nominate Dooley for chair. Thomopoulos seconded and vote was unanimous 5-0 to appoint Dooley.

Commissioner Bauss asked whether people wanted to mix committee nominations up again.

Commissioner Dooley said there were a couple changes during the year where he believes Commissioners Thomopoulos and Bauss went on to Walkable Novi.

Commissioner Bauss said he had been on Walkable Novi the year prior.

Commissioner Thomopoulos said she's happy to stay on Walkable Novi.

Commissioner Dooley wanted to make a motion that Commissioners Bauss and Thomopoulos continue on with Walkable Novi. Commissioner Torimoto seconded and vote was unanimous 5-0.

Commissioner Bauss asked if there was any desire to change Novi Parks Foundation?

Commissioner Dooley said he feels Commissioners Torimoto and Staab have done a great job, obviously with Staab being on the board. Motioned for them to continue. Staab and Torimoto said they'd be fine with it.

Commissioner Staab said he doesn't want to stand in anyone's way from learning more about the Foundation.

Commissioner Dooley said Staab is a foundation on the Foundation.

Commissioner Staab said he's been there since day one, but everybody should have the opportunity to see how we've come along over the last 4-5 years.

Commissioner Bauss said there's a lot of value in having some consistency and history there. Said there's a motion by Dooley, seconded by Thomopoulos, to appoint Torimoto and Staab. Voted unanimous 5-0.

Commissioner Bauss said Commissioners Pratt and Dooley currently sit on the Grants Committee. Staab and Thomopoulos motioned to keep it as is.

Commissioner Staab said his concern was what committee Commissioner Jewell sits on?

Commissioner Dooley said he was on Novi Parks Foundation.

Commissioner Staab said Jewell couldn't make the meetings on Mondays.

Commissioner Bauss said Jewell is having difficulty attending Commission meetings with his new schedule. Without him here, suggested leaving it as status quo and maybe have him approach it as ad hoc.

Commissioner Dooley said, if Jewell has interest in one of the committees, we can have that discussion next month. Staab said that sounds good. Commissioner Bauss called for vote; approved unanimous 5-0 to appoint Commissioners Dooley and Pratt to the Grants Committee.

STAFF REPORTS

A. Administration Division – Deputy Director Tracie Ringle

1. Park Updates

Deputy Director Tracie Ringle said Villa Barr Art Park removed three sculptures for donation to Dennon Museum in Traverse City and Michigan Legacy Art Park in Thompsonville on the grounds of Crystal Mountain Resort. This was decided between friends, family and the Cultural Arts Advisory Board committing to which three sculptures. The removal of these also help with us providing more parking and our parking project that's forthcoming. Nothing surprising there and we look forward to continuing our relationship with Dennon and the Michigan Legacy Art Park. ITC Corridor Trail's Community Sports Park segment we're hoping to break ground this month or into Sept. The Nine Mile-to-11 Mile phase segment is still in engineering, design and permitting phase for anticipated 2018 construction. Power Park's spectator bleacher covers slated for Sept. installation. Working on the behind the scenes for that project. It'll be a nice enhancement for late fall tournaments and next summer bringing in our national girls softball tournament. The Four Quarters renovations through the Fuerst Sisters Senior Citizens Wing money set aside through that family will include lighting, flooring, lighting and will displace our programs in those Four Quarters in Sept. We've begged, borrowed and stole every inch of space we have in this building and will have some card games in the Atrium in Sept. Pavilion Shore Park we're still targeting post-Labor Day construction for parking expansion. Suburban Sports Park Soccer Fields, we did an inspection of the turf and need to give it some more time, so we're going to hold off using that site until spring. Lakeshore Park is scheduled to go to Planning Commission 8/23.

Commissioner Thomopoulos asked if the 2018 portion of the ITC Trail would complete everything.

Deputy Director Ringle said she would have to follow up with details.

Commissioner Torimoto asked if the Suburban soccer fields would be year round or just at certain times?

Deputy Director Ringle said we'd have access when there are not events at Suburban that need to use the parking.

Commissioner Torimoto said he hasn't seen an announcement yet.

Deputy Director Ringle said the fields aren't usable yet and we want to keep traffic off of it, so we don't want to encourage people to do a pick-up game or check it out on their own yet.

Commissioner Dooley said he thinks they're doing it right. Commissioner Torimoto said it makes sense.

Commissioner Staab asked for the CIP and timelines and verification for things we're behind the eight ball on for 2018-19?

Deputy Director Ringle said internally we're starting to put our ducks in a row for our six-year capital improvement plan. Sometimes, things are out further, so we adjust and look at Council objectives. We're just beginning that process now and will be digging further into that in early Sept.

Commissioner Staab asked what's the timeline for making recommendations to Council and Planning Commission?

Deputy Director Ringle said she doesn't have that date off the top of her head with a bunch of dates for Finance and the first one is 9/1 to really look at internally what makes sense.

Commissioner Staab said that's fine and obviously you'd bring it to us as you slice and dice.

Deputy Director Ringle said she believes we have in the past.

B. Recreation Division – Deputy Director Tracie Ringle

1. Program & Services

Deputy Director Tracie Ringle said this is the last week of Camp Lakeshore and Camp Powerplay. Has to commend Cristin Spiller and her team of camp counselors. We've had a tremendous year of sold out camps and a lot of happy parents and campers, so a great experience for them. For the college-aged staff, thinks they get as much out of it as they put out. The same for our lifeguard and booth attendants who are going to finish up on Labor Day. Sending them off person by person to their college adventures. In lieu of our two day camps, next week we have Travel Camp. It has reduced attendance due to the majority of our summer staff going back to college. That's sold out and the majority of the week they'll be traveling to different locations in southeast Michigan and enjoying those experiences with the kids. This Friday is the last Sizzling Summer of the summer. It's Fairy Tale Adventure and we're going to show "Pete's Dragon." There's photo opportunities with Rapunzel and we're bringing in Ring of Steel Action Theatre and Stunt Troupe. Really a fairy tale theme throughout. There will be bouncers and horse demonstrations. That starts at 7 p.m. at Fuerst Park. That's another program we've had record attendance for this summer. Amelia Purdy-Ketchum has done themed events and brought more in than just movies. In the past, we'd have a band and realize it was really two different segments of our population. This ties that event together and brings people through activity to the movie. We have to thank Community Financial Credit Union for their continued presenting partnership with that program. At Pavilion Shore Park, there's a Movie on the Shore at 6 p.m. and that movie is appropriately "Finding Dory." And then Guy Louis will be there ahead of that to perform. A 6 p.m. start on a Tuesday, but this was ParkIt's largest event last year. They do parks throughout the region. It's the end of summer, people are winding down, but still in town during the midweek. We had really great attendance last year. Our final summer hurrah at Pavilion Shore Park is 9/14 with Eric Engblade music. They will perform bluegrass folk music. It's national Live Creative Day, so we wanted to tie it into that 9/14, a Thursday evening. That information is on our website and in Engage!, which is going to the post office this week and will be in homes and businesses next week.

Commissioner Bauss asked what type of performer Guy Louis was?

Deputy Director Ringle said he's a musical performer.

Commissioner Staab said his two grandsons were with them for two weeks and they thoroughly enjoyed going to Lakeshore. There was a video and Becky took a video of it and everyone was rocking and jumping up and down. And the next week they came behind the library at Fuerst Park and they had a magician and they thoroughly enjoyed that.

Deputy Director Ringle said she was glad they were able to visit both sites. We had always been in Fuerst Park and we had it at Lakeshore for the month of July to give Fuerst Park a little bit of a break. At Lakeshore we could go into different areas if need be.

2. 2015-17 Marketing Plan Report and 2017-19 Marketing Plan Update

Deputy Director Tracie Ringle said the marketing plan you've seen and had been sent a draft to both Commission and Council. It's been shared internally with different departments and is done. That's the final report. Doesn't think we made any changes. We'll be working off that for the next two years in our department and will be able to report on our achievements when we're complete with that.

Would like to report on our year-end financial numbers. We do a year-end annual report here on the calendar year, but our fiscal year ended June 30. So it's a little bit to wet your whistle. Our financial records are not complete. Finance is still working on year-end numbers, but these are the items that we track. There are little tidbits and things we've learned that will be in our annual report in Jan/Feb. time frame. Great news, our total revenue recorded was up 16.27 percent over last year. That's a great number, attributed to a bunch of different things. Our biggest program jump was in adult classes and clinics. That's attributed to our fitness programs being expanded and being heavily promoted from our older adults to 18 year olds. And also our cultural arts, having Amelia come on board and really push through with theater. We've had adults participate in that. And Mexico Lindo dance program. And she's adding a Polynesian dance program. So, really expanding those have increased those numbers for a 162 percent increase for adult classes and clinics over the last year. Another great spot, youth leagues increased by 54 percent. That's attributed to basketball being really well received. We had a boys lacrosse developmental league that had a 321 percent increase over last year. So, some great numbers there. There are some places we need to improve. Our sponsorship fell by 13.8 percent and we're still finding is that because of when we received. Sometimes checks are outstanding, so we'll be able to give a better deep dive into why that number was off. That's not a significant amount of money between 2015-16 and 2016-17. If you have a great year, you can't always repeat it. Maybe you give it a year and give it a go the next year. Those are just some of the highlights. Adult leagues we saw a drop in and we're looking at those, whether it's an adult soccer league that didn't run or a fall softball league that was low, although numbers this year are back up again. One of the things we challenge staff with when we do our data-driven decision making is we drill into why things change. So we are almost complete with our fall registration. We have some people who take late registration and we try to take as much as we can. Overall our registrations decreased by 8 percent for this fall. But revenue is basically the same and actually increased by 0.4 percent. Our house league decreased by 21 percent and our travel increased by 19 percent. So almost an offset there. Travel is obviously a little more of an expensive program, which led to the increase in revenue. The biggest drop in house soccer is the girls divisions, U9+ and some of the U5 and U6. Greg and Chase are doing a great job looking into why. We've found people are looking for more competitive options, so travel soccer is popular. We've found people are stepping away from house and looking to do travel. Some of the older girl house divisions didn't have enough to make teams, so we moved two teams to

Thunder, which is our travel rec that will play games outside of Novi in other communities. That was one of our solutions for that. We've done the same marketing as we've done in years past for the program. So what we'll do next is, some of those folks who didn't re-register, we'll survey them and ask why and really investigate and do some edits to our programming. They do a great job and we really try to be data-driven with our decision making and what we can bring back to you.

Commissioner Staab said he's glad you go the extra mile. People identify with trends, but then you dig down deeper and survey people who didn't come back. Are they not happy or did they go somewhere else or lifestyle change or whatever.

Commissioner Dooley said there could be less 9 year olds this year than last year. There are a lot of variables.

Commissioner Staab said in the business world, people tell him why things happen, but what would you do to change it and they sit there like a deer in headlights.

C. Older Adults – Social Services Coordinator Sandy Fisher

1. Program & Services

Social Services Coordinator Sandy Fisher said she's sitting in for Karen and she wanted to review upcoming events this fall. We're going to be doing another Throwback Thursday 1950s Sockhop. The partnership with local senior centers continues. This time we've added Farmington Hills, Livonia, Northville and South Lyon. It's going to be held right here 9/23 and tickets are on sale now. We've sold out all our tickets and are hoping to get some leftover tickets from other cities. We still have people coming in looking for tickets. Another thing coming up is our Novi Health and Wellness Fair Saturday, 10/7. It'll feature flu shot clinic, informational booths and free health screenings. We're currently recruiting exhibitors for that. Our Meadowbrook update is the parking lot improvement project is done. It's very good news and great to have some smooth parking for everyone who comes and does activities at the Meadowbrook Activity Center. Lots of positive comments about that. The City Council also approved a big generator for purchase for the apartment community. It's a process, so that's going to take about 10 weeks from getting approved to actually having the generator.

And a little bit of a report on the stuff she does. Coordinates many different social and support services for Older Adult Services. Every one of them almost is in this brochure. Our most active program is the durable medical equipment loan closet. Last year we had more than 800 actions with the loan closet and we receive a call almost every day about questions about the loan closet. In the winter, our most active program is our AARP tax aide program. We have volunteer counselors come in and help people do their tax returns without charge. Our department makes appointments and sends confirmation letters to more than 300 people for that program. Another program we have that's very active is our food commodities program. Last fiscal year, we distributed 5,777 boxes of food to low-income families. Last week, she attended training for The Emergency Food Assistance Program in Pontiac, held by OLSA. Got to hear about all the new procedures, what sort of logo has to be on what, that sort of thing. The last program to highlight is our Medicare/Medicaid program, done in partnership with our Area Agency 1B. We host two counselors. They're two

counselors who are very trained to provide a lot of information on Medicare and Medicaid. Last year, they were able to counsel 71 people. That includes individual counseling and Part D counseling. They also do presentations and classes for us to help people make decisions on their healthcare.

Commissioner Staab asked whether the generator for the apartment complex would've taken care of an outage like the one from the great winds in March? Coordinator Fisher said she believes so. It's just for the main building itself to make sure the elevators are working.

Commissioner Staab asked whether they had emergency lighting?

Coordinator Fisher said they do have some, but for many people, they have mobility issues, so having the elevators working is a big benefit.

Commissioner Staab asked whether there would be anything out at the ranches?

Coordinator Fisher said there would not be. But if there were an extended period of time, anyone living in the ranches could come into the main building.

Commissioner Dooley asked how the attendee list was going for next Thursday's 85 celebration?

Coordinator Fisher said more than 70 people are signed up for that, mostly a lot over 85 years old. It's a great birthday celebration with cake and ice cream. We ask some different questions like "what's your key to longevity," so it'll be a great event.

Commissioner Dooley said congratulations on that.

Commissioner Thomopoulos asked whether you publish their answers?

Coordinator Fisher said there's a booklet that they give out.

CITIZEN COMMENTS:

None

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Representative Lee said he passes. Commissioner Dooley asked whether school starts in two weeks and whether Lee would be sticking with us for the next meeting.

Representative Lee said yes and he would be during the school year. He's been glad to be here and make it throughout the summer although it's been really busy with sports and things. Asked whether this term ends in December? Deputy Director Ringle said she thinks so. Representative Lee said he is interested, but is also interested in City Council again. He's not really sure what he's doing for now. Commissioner Thomopoulos thanked Lee for joining them.

Commissioner Staab said his questions have been answered. Great report, good information. Is glad to see numbers are up with the initial metric you're charting. Wishes everyone a solid, safe Labor Day holiday coming up and back to the books right after that.

Commissioner Dooley said the marketing plan really does look great. Didn't have a chance to read it page for page, but it really is well done and easy to read. For those who are analytics in mind, it speaks to that, as well. Thanked Sandy for pitching in for Karen. The Novi Ambassadors had a conversation last week, but there's a proposal we're thinking about undertaking within the city with community activism and giving back to the community. It's something we're thinking about going to City Council – if not individually, maybe in email – to get their blessing and permission, and also with Pete as the city manager, something we're just thinking about doing just to keep in mind the spirit of what Novi is all about. Is teasing everybody, but you'll hear more about it once we get blessings from everyone we need to get blessings from, and then

you'll see us in the community in the not too distant future. Will tease everybody with that. Also wanted to compliment Commissioner Doug as chairperson in this year of September 2016 through August. Thanked Bauss for his leadership and said he did a great job.

Commissioner Thomopoulos said thanks to Commissioner Dooley for referencing an article from last months' National (Recreation and) Parks Association July issue and would like to highlight something in there that reinforces a stamen she's made before here and hopes it will generate some enthusiasm to fix some trails. They talked in the article – RAND Corp. did the study, but it was sponsored by the National Institutes of Health – and one of the things they found was that parks that have walking loops had 80 percent more users compared to those that did not have loops. And the level of physical activity was 90 percent higher in parks with loops. And seniors use parks with loops more than other parks. It just reinforces her request that we clean up the Brookfarm Park loop that goes through the woods and also the Rotary Park. Hasn't been to Rotary Park since clean-up day when they cleaned up one side, but not the side that makes it go into a circle. This article kind of reinforces, without analyzing and doing a psychoanalysis, why people prefer a loop. Maybe it's just always new interesting places to walk and you're not just backtracking where you did walk. We have great places to walk in Novi. The ITC Trail is phenomenal, it's top notch, but it isn't a loop, so it's not for everybody, because it could be quite the distance if you wanted to go the whole trail. With this data, if we could ask maintenance to put some priority on cleaning up those trails.

And then, the marketing plan was outstanding, but it made her think that it's very focused on programs we do, which is great and we love them. But not everybody goes through parks looking for a program. Some do just want passive or individual activity like walking. Made her think of marketing the parks from a vantage point of a flyer saying "want to go for a walk," and then highlights each trail like how you read a trail map and it says each trail is X distance, it has a gravel or asphalt base so people can choose a trail. Whether it's a half mile or two miles at ITC, or if they want wooded or dirt, they can do Lakeshore, just to highlight another aspect of the parks we have. Thanked Dooley again for highlighting the article.

Commissioner Torimoto said he's sad to see summer ending here, but looking back, his daughter only has one more year where she can attend Camp Lakeshore. She started going when she was at the age when they start accepting her. Now she's talking about wanting to become a CIT, a counselor in training. It's indicative of just how much fun she's had and just the other counselors and staff, and how they do a fantastic job. It's really motivated here to really contribute also, so thank you for that. Had a great time with the Sizzling Summer program. Noticed, not just with the size of the crowd, but when it comes to kids and watching movies, it really comes across all areas of peoples' interests and demographics. That was really a great program and it's great to see it do well. And the marketing plan, just like everyone else is saying. Some of the statistics you mentioned, including adult programs. The descriptions of some of what you're talking about is exactly what the marketing plan is talking about. Some of the fastest growth is in the adult programs and Older Adult Services, and also with peoples' interests. You see some connection of why it's being successful. And it's really a good indicator of the future, too. Thanks for everything you guys do.

Commissioner Bauss said thanks to all of you who come here, staff, commissioners. Your thoughtfulness and enthusiasm for Novi and what Parks, Rec and Cultural Services does for our community. It shows in your comments and you're just being here and your

commitment. Grateful for the opportunity to serve as chair this past term and look forward to participating in a different way now. It's sad that summer's over. Commissioner Thomopoulos said there's still a few days left. Commissioner Bauss said bring on football and cider and doughnuts. Commissioner Thomopoulos said she still wants more summer.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Staab and seconded by Commissioner Thomopoulos.

Voice Vote

Unanimous

The meeting was adjourned by Commissioner Bauss at 7:57 p.m.

DATE APPROVED: _____

Jay Dooley, Chairperson

Shelley Thomopoulos, Vice Chairperson