

administration are working on restarting purchasing of pickets for the Tim Pope Memorial play structure. That will go before the Foundation in October. The funds from the picket sales will go through the Foundation.

- C. Grants Committee – Commissioners Dooley & Joshi
Director Muck stated he had sent to the Grant Committee an email with some information on Proposal 1 which will be on the ballot in November. It is in regard to the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund. It was an information piece he sent. He can cover that in the next meeting, but it is just information. He is planning on holding the Grants Committee meeting prior to the next Parks Commission meeting because we have to talk about potential projects for next year and start getting ready to apply for those. The deadline is not typically until April 1st but we do need to start now or late fall in order to get paperwork, quotes and everything in line.

MATTERS FOR COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION:

- A. Commission Chair, Vice Chair Nomination
Commissioner Staab asked that since two Commissioner were not present what everyone thought about deferring items A and B until next month.
Director Muck stated for item A we will not vote until next month. If people want, they can contact him individually if they want to be considered for either of those positions. We can put together a ballot if no one wants to discuss it now. Commissioner Dooley did express that he is interested in staying on as Chair so he will put him on the ballot as a Chair candidate. If anyone is interested in either of those positions they can send him an email or let him know now and we will vote at the next meeting. He is not sure how it can be done in a Zoom meeting. Commissioner Staab suggested voting by mail. He then asked if there was comment on this by any of the other Commissioners.
There was no response.
Commissioner Staab stated he agreed with Director Muck's recommendation and noted that he was willing to continue as Vice Chair.
Commissioner Riggins stated she thought that Commissioners Dooley and Staab were doing a great job so she would pass this time.
- B. Commission Committee Appointments
Director Muck asked the Commissioners to let him know if they had any thoughts and we will do the same for Commission Committee Appointments. We will maintain the same committee appointments until next month. He will send out a reminder and anyone who is interested in those committees can send him an email before the next Commission Meeting.
Commissioner Joseph asked if he could be sent a list of the committees just to see what it looks like.
Director Muck stated he could go over the three committees and give information on their responsibilities. Walkable Novi meets three to four times a year. They are focused on the prioritization of sidewalks and pathways throughout the city. They may be going down to meeting two times a year. He asked Commissioner Smith to comment.
Commissioner Smith stated he remembers hearing that, but he did not remember the details.

Director Muck continued that for the Novi Parks Foundation, Commissioner Staab remains on that and has been a long-term member regardless if we appoint anyone else. The Foundation Committee meets every other month and their focus is on naming rights of parks and fund-raising including Pour on the Shore which we hope to get back to having again next year.

The Grants Committee is made up of two Commissioners and two City Council Members. They meet two to three times a year, based on need, to discuss especially grants we would apply for in regards to the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund. That committee in the past has done recommendations on acquisitions projects, mainly. Depending on if Proposition 1 passes or fails, there may be more money available for development projects. That is why we will be talking about potential applications for next year in preparation.

C. Park Updates by Commissioners

Commissioner Staab asked if this could be moved to the October meeting. He then stated he totally supports the park update program. For the new Commissioners, park updates are where Commissioners go out to a park twice a year and report at the assigned meeting by power point, pictures, etc. on the overall maintenance, cleanliness, etc. of the park. Each Commissioner is assigned two or three parks.

Director Muck stated this has been a really successful initiative by you, as Commissioners. It was brought forward around two years ago that we renew and start doing it. We had a Commissioner who used a Go Pro as part of his report. You can be as creative as you want to be with it and are comfortable. It is time to get back with it now that we are having more people out in the Parks. It will get your eyes and ears out in the parks. He would generate a list and calendar and send it out to all of the Commissioners and we would start next month with the updates. It is up to you to be as creative as you want.

Commissioner Torimoto stated as far as who will look at which park, he knows in the past preferences were asked. He feels it is good to be a user of that facility so that you have that perspective. He asked if that would be done again.

Director Muck agreed that could be done again. He will send it out and Commissioners can reply with their priorities.

Commissioner Smith stated he would like the Chase pathway next time and he has a drone now.

Director Muck stated he has shared this with other Parks and Recreation Directors across the state. Today he talked to a fellow Parks and Recreation professional and he loved the idea. It is a way to get his Commission out and about and more active and involved. He thinks he will implement this. Kudos to the Commissioners to get this back up and running. In the past when you have seen things that need to be addressed we have taken care of it and sent it to park maintenance or have been able to explain why or why we don't do something in the parks as well.

D. Fall Programming and Facility Plans

Director Muck stated in the past six months our staff has pivoted and changed and debated our programs and services weekly if not daily at times. Two weeks ago, things changed when the Governor came out with different order in regards to Michigan High School Athletic Association events and gatherings. Deputy Director Ringle is going to talk about our return to recreation.

Deputy Director Ringle stated two weeks ago was big news for us with organized sports and gyms and recreation centers being able to operate. That is a game changer in what we will be able to offer and increased staff motivation and excitement in being able to get back in to seeing our users and engaging with everyone. This allows us to move forward with some of the things we have run in the past. Soccer, our biggest youth sports program, begins on Saturday. Players and spectators will be masked up, but they are ready to go. Our volunteer coaches have been fantastic about talking to the teams and what that is going to look like. Chase Root, our recreation programmer, oversees soccer and has been fantastic in interpreting what the Governor's orders mean. He is active in soccer groups from MHSA, MSYSA and down to WSSL and has gotten us on a good path to be able to offer soccer as safely as we can.

We offer Basketball and Volleyball Leagues indoors in the fall and winter and we are going to be able to do that this year and are in the process of planning those. We are working with the Novi School District to use some of their facilities. Registration will be coming up soon. We are also looking at indoor tennis and some indoor badminton programs.

The indoor Dance and Karate will happen again. Most of our outdoor programs are through mid-October. Mid to late October is when we will have to move things indoors due to Michigan weather. To do this, there is a lot of work behind the scenes. Being one of those communities who offered Summer Camp, a lot of details about how to interact with families, how to interact due to COVID, when to engage with Public Health Officials, are in place. Between what Cristin Spiller put together for Summer Camp and modifying it with what Chase Root is doing with soccer we have created a Comprehensive Return to Recreation Plan. The Plan is on our City website in our sports programming on the Home Page. These are the guidelines that we as the Novi Parks Department will follow, what we want our coaches to follow, all the way down to parent expectation and participant expectation. There are two big ones to highlight. One is COVID and what a close contact definition would be and what we would do if someone were diagnosed with COVID-19. Essentially, we will work with our public health officials and notify the Oakland County Health Department who would do contact tracing. This is standard procedure and the School District is doing the same thing. The coaches and players are to be monitoring their health. People going anywhere should be taking their temperature. We are asking if anyone is aware that they have symptoms, has been in close contact or has been diagnosed that they contact the Parks Department and/or their coach. This goes for parents, players, and instructors. Our independent contractors, who run our fitness programs, karate, etc., are required to submit to us their COVID-19 plan. They will follow our plan but if they want to do something above and beyond, like they will be wiping down equipment between sessions, they need to submit those plans to us. We then approve or do not approve them depending on what they are submitting. It is another layer of protection and awareness of the COVID-19 situation. Novi Schools is asking us to submit a plan as well for when we have our league programs in their buildings. We have a lot of this in place already and will easily be able to answer their questions. We will need more staff for those programs, which we expected, but will be easy to do to fit their guidelines. We are not going to be sharing equipment or water, not

going to be doing hand slapping or group hugs which should be common knowledge. For spectator sports there is an order of two people per athlete at the High School level. We are going to be looking at that as well for our indoor sports in the school facility. We are not going to allow parents in to youth classes in our building. For dance classes parents are not going to be able go in to the class. There will be designated seating areas for the parents in our building or they will be asked to wait outside or in their car until their child is released from their program. Coaches are not sharing pinnies or balls during training and making sure player are using their masks. This is a really comprehensive plan. Chase Root and Cristin Spiller worked within our department and also regionally with other Parks and Recreation Departments and also nationally to look at where or standards fall in line. They have done a great job with this. She opened the floor for questions.

Commissioner Torimoto noted that one of the challenges when people don't comply with some of the rules is who is going to be responsible to take steps to mediate the situation. He asked who that responsibility falls on.

Deputy Director Ringle replied even at the High School level the referees are not required to monitor this. The coaches are going to monitor the players and make sure they follow the rules. Our Site Supervisors are young, being high school or college students. They can make mention of it but enforcement is not something we see them taking on. She believes there will be peer pressure from other parents making mention of the situation but there is not an enforcement. Commissioner Torimoto stated, his personal opinion, having been a coach the biggest challenge is the parents. That is why he asked.

Deputy Director Ringle added that our professional staff will have a good presence at a lot of their events, especially the first few weeks to monitor the situations if we have to make adjustments to the Return to Recreation Plan. We can see if there are guidelines not being followed. We have our eye on these things as professional staff.

Director Muck added what we saw when we ran Summer Camp was full compliance from kids and parents. It is a testament not only to our staff for putting out the expectations but also that people want to get back to this and not take the chance of not being able to have it. We are following what is mandated to us by the State and Associations and if we all want to play we have to follow these rules and enjoy getting back out there.

Commissioner Riggins asked for clarification if the guidelines are recommendations and not necessarily mandatory.

Deputy Director Ringle replied that the guidelines include some of the Governor's mandatory orders. It is a mix. We would expect someone who is diagnosed, had close contact or is concerned about having COVID to make that call out to us. Chances are, we would hear from the Health Department and contacted first. That is an expectation. The masks, six feet apart and things like that are a Governor's mandate.

Commissioner Staab stated it is a great set of guidelines and he thinks will be warmly received by most participants.

Director Muck stated that Citizen's Comments was accidentally missed but he does not see anyone who has joined the meeting, nor did we receive any e-mail correspondence. He just wanted to acknowledge this.

Commissioner Staab asked if the guidelines were something the Commission needed to affirm or was this for informational purposes.

Director Muck confirmed it was for informational purposes because they could change tomorrow.

Commissioner Riggins asked when it was stated there were no Citizen Comments, how would someone do that in this format.

Director Muck stated it is much like City Council. We provide options on the City website under the Commission. They have an opportunity to join in under a separate Zoom link. You get a separate one as a panelist. They have an opportunity with a link they could call in and/or watch as well. There is an opportunity for them to submit comments that way as well.

STAFF REPORTS

A. Administration Division – Director Jeff Muck

1. Park Project Update

Director Muck stated that, weather permitting, construction will start next week on the Pickleball Courts at Wildlife Woods Park. These are much awaited and are also partially funded through the Novi Parks Foundation. Let's keep our fingers crossed there are no construction delays and we can get the courts open this fall while we still have some good weather. At the pre-construction meeting, the construction company sounded like they were ready to go and do not see any major issues. That project also includes redoing the front canopy entryway at Meadowbrook Commons. When we redid the parking lot two years ago, it caused us some issues that would not allow people to be dropped off under the canopy at the front entrance. They had to be dropped off at the side of the entrance. This project will address that and our seniors will be able to be dropped off at the front entrance again and stay out of the elements with everything being ADA compliant. He knows the residents at Meadowbrook Commons are looking forward to that.

At Lakeshore Park they are finishing up roof and windows and interior doors and windows and making a lot of progress on those. The Parks Maintenance Storage Building, which is an add-on to the existing restroom toward the rear of the park, is currently being completed. There has been a lot of sidewalk and concrete work over the last week especially. They are finishing the final grades for concrete and stormwater management. If you have been by there lately you will see a lot more progress.

At the Bosco Fields we are still working with the contractor on weed control and fertilization. He has an on-site meeting tomorrow with the contractor, their applicator and the Parks Maintenance Team to talk about the next steps for fall and winterization. We would like to be on the fields next spring but there are still some applications that need to be addressed.

The Water Tower was approved by City Council to move forward. We are waiting on dates from T-Mobile and once they give us those, that will be a project that will be done this fall.

We are hoping for good weather because a lot of these are scheduled to be wrapped up by mid-October.

Commissioner Torimoto stated he continues to see people fish at the pond at Bosco Fields. He asked if that park is open for fishing and if you need a

Michigan State Fishing License to fish there.

Director Muck replied that he is pretty sure that anywhere you fish in the State you should have a fishing license so he would say, yes. We are not going to police that. If someone called the DNR and they came by a person would want to have a license. About half of that pond is on the property we are leasing from the School District. The other half is on private property where the Griffin Funeral Home is scheduled to go in. He understands that there are fish in the pond. He has seen people fishing there as well.

B. Recreation Division – Deputy Director Tracie Ringle

1. Program & Services

Deputy Director Ringle added to the response to Commissioner Torimoto. She stated that she is not sure what the cut-off is, if it is 16, 17 or 18, but if you see kids fishing, they are fine without a license.

For our programs, soccer starts this Saturday and has taken up some staff time getting our program back up and running.

Outdoor fitness continues to do well. We have multiple programs running and we were able to add Stretch and Strength outdoors. Stretch and Strength is one of our programs which is more highly used by our older adults and it is taking place on the campus of Meadowbrook Commons. We are starting to re-engage in a safe way with our older adult community. Jessica Mistak has been putting together some programs and has some in the works including a walking program on that campus and other older adults can join in. There is also a quilting program with people making separate pieces and then putting them together as one unity quilt. She is engaging the older adults and they are appreciating that.

Our S'mores Run, which we have done for about five years, is where you run a fun mile and pick up all of the ingredients to make a s'more and are able to make it over the bonfire. We are running it two ways. We are running it virtually and in person. There are great, fun medals. We will run that on the ITC Trail and are taking registrations.

Parks and REcess, which she talked about last meeting, is an alternative for kids who are doing virtual school to come and do programs. It is from 4:30 to 5:30 in the evening, Monday through Thursday. We have anywhere from ten to twenty children signed up for each session. The first week has been going well. Chase Root is leading a soccer theme this week. The themes change every week. We continue to take registrations for those as they continue through October.

Theatre and performance have not come back. Novi Choralaires and Concert Band remain on hiatus as does Theatre. We are getting creative with our Theatre vendor, In the Mitten, and are offering a variety of virtual programs. Being able to do Zoom productions is something the industry has been modifying and coming up with. We are going to take advantage of those opportunities and offer that as well.

These are some of the things that are coming in the next Engage which she just signed off on today. The Community Relations Department will get that out to mailboxes the last week in September.

Our Veterans Program will also be included. Typically, we would have a Veteran's Day Luncheon here but we are going to do a different kind of

recognition this year. We are going to ask our veterans to share their stories, either written or we will film some of those and be able to share them. We will also list their names on our scrolling message board in front of the Civic Center. We also have a few more things in the works that have not yet been confirmed. Cristin Spiller is working on this as well.

C. Older Adults Division – Director Jeff Muck

1. Program & Services

Director Muck stated Commissioner Joshi just sent him a message that she had something come up and apologized that she was not able to attend this evening.

Director Muck stated the Loan Closet continues to be our most popular support service with almost one hundred interactions with residents in August. Sandy Fisher, our Social Services Coordinator, made the comment that it seems like a lot of residents are doing their spring cleaning now because they are requesting to donate items to the loan closet. That increased from an average of two donations a month to ten donations in August.

We also have an Ask a Lawyer program with ten requests for a free consultation in August. We are getting back to some of those programs and services.

We also run an emergency food assistance program. We had a distribution recently in September. We had to make several required changes to that program. They no longer require signature forms due to COVID safety concerns. It has been replaced by a questionnaire so now our staff has to ask each participant how they are qualified to receive those food commodities. What we are finding is most of those participants do qualify on their income level. Sandy is doing a good job on this food assistance program.

Medicare open enrollment begins on October fifteenth. We are hosting virtual versions of all of our annual fall Medicare programs, including Medicare 101, What's New in Medicare 2021, and some one on one counseling on Medicare part D. If you know of anyone who is in need of those kind of services have them get with our OAS Department because that is important.

Sandy was interviewed by the Techno Tadpoles. They are a robotics team from Village Oaks Elementary and Novi Meadows. She was interviewed via Zoom. The students are working on a community project focusing on why people are not active enough to stay fit and how they can be motivated to be active. The Tadpoles took turns asking questions about the programs we offer to older adults to help them stay active.

Jessica Mistak has started picking up some of our other OAS programming. We did a Senior Day at the Michigan State Fair which was held virtually on Friday, September 4th. The Michigan State Fair distributed 200 Fair Boxes to us to distribute to Novi seniors. The boxes included items like playing cards, hand sanitizer, facemasks, gloves, a roll of toilet paper, lip balm and some other items. Those were a big hit especially at Meadowbrook Commons. If you are interested in seeing some pictures from that you can go to the Boomers and Beyond page on Facebook where we posted some pictures. The Michigan State Fair actually posted some pictures of our distribution.

We are getting a new fourteen passenger van for OAS Transportation. That is replacing our 2009 van. That is an eleven-year-old van that has plenty of miles

on it running OAS patrons around the City. That was approved at the Monday, September 14th City Council Meeting.

Deputy Director Ringle mentioned Stretch and Strength is outdoors. It is good to get Seniors back in that popular program.

Senior Transportation rides continue to increase every month. In June, when we started to provide rides outside medical appointments, there were 473 trips. That went up in July to 555 trips and we hit 600 trips in August. It is good to see that increase, getting our seniors out and about visiting facilities and getting social interaction.

Commissioner Staab stated it was good to see the approval on the van. He asked if there was any co-op on the funds for the van. In the past Ascension Providence had donated.

Director Muck replied not on that van. That is on cycle and is not within the two-year cycle. We did get some Cares Act funding for Senior Transportation. We do have an item that will go forward on the next City Council Agenda in regard to our annual request for Smart funding.

CITIZEN COMMENTS: None

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Smith complimented the staff of the Parks and Recreation Department. It has to be crazy to adjust every day to everything, especially bringing on soccer and sports. Keep sane.

Commissioner Joseph stated he had an opportunity to walk through Power Park where the cross-country team had gone through and done their work. It looks really nice back there and is much easier to walk through now that there are not a bunch of fallen logs. It looks like they still have some work to do but they did a nice job. If there is an opportunity to expand that work to other pieces of the neighborhood trail access back there it would be good.

He also had an opportunity to go through Lakeshore Park as well. He thought the addition to the restrooms in the back was going to be a shower facility but having it as storage makes more sense and a lot less liability. Everything looked like it was coming along great. A shout out to Motor City Mountain Bike Association and the trail coordinators there. He has been riding more frequently there in the last few months. They have done a lot of work there in the past two years and it looks like a completely different trail. He appreciates that partnership and the trail coordinators and all of the work they have done.

Commissioner Riggins stated she is grateful to be here. The Return to Recreation is such a blessing to get out and be engaged in the community again and to do things in our City. It is a wonderful thing they are putting together. She asked everyone to stay safe.

Commissioner Torimoto stated it is great to see the professional staff and the kids and parents to be able to get out safely. He has been using the ITC Trail a lot lately as a neighborhood connector. He is seeing a lot of people at ITC Community Sports Park enjoying the Tim Pope play structure, basketball courts and tennis/pickleball courts. He had not realized there were pickleball courts there. The programming is fantastic. Thank you for that.

Commissioner Staab thanked everyone for attending and gave kudos to the staff for the work on the guidelines. It was a good meeting learning about the innovative ways

the department can continue to deliver recreation to the community. Director Muck and Deputy Director Ringle can be very proud of the innovation of the department.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Voice Vote

Unanimous

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

DATE APPROVED: _____

Jay Dooley, Chairperson

Charles Staab, Vice Chairperson