

PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES COMMISSION

Thursday, Sept. 19, 2019 – 7 P.M.

NOVI CIVIC CENTER – COUNCIL CHAMBERS

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

ROLL CALL: Dooley (Present), Staab (Present), Joshi (Present), Pratt (Absent), Riggins (Present), Smith (Present), Torimoto (Present), Student Representatives Alex Fortsch (Present), Ananya Kamalesh (Present).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

It was moved that the agenda be approved as amended by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Torimoto.

Voice Vote

Unanimous

CITIZEN COMMENTS:

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A. Approval of Aug. 15, 2019, minutes.

It was moved that the minutes for August be approved by Commissioner Riggins and seconded by Commissioner Smith.

Voice Vote

Unanimous

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- A. Walkable Novi – Commissioner Joshi
Next meeting will be held in October. Question was raised regarding the timing of the completion of the Beck/11 Mile Road sidewalk segment.
- B. Novi Park Foundation – Commissioners Staab & Torimoto
Commissioner Staab said the Foundation meets next on Sept. 30. Anticipate receiving final report on 2019 Pour on the Shore at that meeting.
- C. Grants Committee – Commissioners Dooley & Joshi
Director Muck said we are applying for a \$2,000 Michigan State Youth Soccer Association grant and keeping an eye out for other potential grant opportunities. Committee to meet again in late 2019.
- D. Parks Updates
 - 1. ~~Wildlife Woods Park~~ – Commissioner Pratt
 - 2. ~~Village Wood Lake Park (Aug.)~~ – Commissioner Pratt
 - 3. Novi Dog Park – Commissioner Torimoto
Commissioner Torimoto said people enjoy the dog park and it was in good shape. We may need to tighten the bolts on the lock mechanisms, replace the storage bin and replace a missing hook on the leash hanger.

MATTERS FOR COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION

- A. Lakeshore Trail System Update by Commissioner Smith
Commissioner Smith gave an overview of the Lakeshore Park trail system, conditions, maintenance efforts and Motor City Mountain Biking Association activities. He also showed a three-minute video of a trail route from a cyclist's perspective.

B. Introduction of Recreation Supervisor Alyssa Golles

Supervisor Golles introduced herself. She'll be overseeing the cultural arts division. She said she went to college at Eastern Michigan University and comes to Novi after working most recently with Northville Parks and Recreation. She said she's excited to be here.

C. Commission Committee Appointments

Commissioners submitted their interest forms for committee and park update appointment roles. Director Muck said Management Assistant Chris Jackett would send results out in tomorrow's weekly update email.

(Committee appointments were made for Parks Foundation [Staab, Torimoto], Walkable Novi [Riggins, Smith] and Grants Committee [Dooley, Joshi] to begin as soon as the October meeting ends to allow for November reporting.)

D. Commission Chair, Vice Chair Nominations

The commissioners discussed the process and opted to do both nominations and elections tonight. Commissioner Riggins motioned (seconded by Commissioner Smith) for Commissioner Dooley to be appointed chair. Commissioner Dooley motioned (seconded by Commissioner Riggins) for Commissioner Staab to be appointed vice chair. Terms run from November 2019-October 2020.

STAFF REPORTS

A. Administration Division – Director Jeff Muck

1. Park Project Updates

Director Muck gave updates on some park construction projects at Bosco Fields, Lakeshore Park, the shoreline stabilization at Lakeshore and Pavilion Shore Parks, the Water Tower Park and ITC Corridor Trail. He said the ITC Corridor Trail grand opening is the same date as Dooley Dog Day on Sept. 28, but any commissioners able to come help with the opening would be appreciated and can then swing by ITC Community Sports Park afterward. For the Strategic Community and Master Park Plan, we'll be coming back very soon with a draft. Our consultants are working on the first initial draft with us and we expect to receive that back in October. We had more than 1,200 people who responded to the survey online and we also received feedback in person at Spring Palooza and Sizzling Summer on what kind of park amenities they want, their perception of the parks, our programming. The next steps is we'll receive a preliminary plan for review by you. The plan does require a 30-day plan review by the public, so that will be posted and people will be able to comment on that. We will then adopt a final plan, take that to Council for adoption and then submit to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources by the end of this year. Ideally in November, but maybe the first Council meeting in December. He showed an image with 2,000 feet of boardwalk on the ITC Corridor Trail.

Commissioner Joshi asked how the delay on the Lakeshore stabilization project's start will impact the completion schedule? Director Muck said they should still be able to complete that in a few weeks. We definitely want that done before the winter.

Commissioner Torimoto asked about the event 9 a.m. time for ITC Trail grand opening? Deputy Director Ringle said to arrive 8:30-8:45 a.m. to volunteer.

Director Muck said we're inviting people to walk between 9-11 a.m. because that's when we'll have people out on the trail.

Director Muck said the Parks Maintenance staff has been real busy. When soccer season ends, it gives them a chance to work on the baseball fields and other projects. ITC Baseball Field 1 was rounded off around the baseline. ITC Baseball Field 4 they fixed some low spots and the transition lip between the infield and the outfield was evened out so it's not hazardous to ball players. They've also been doing some top dressing, seeding and filling in low spots on the soccer fields at Wildlife Woods. This is why the development of Bosco Fields is so important. It's an area that doesn't have proper drainage and takes a beating during the spring. If you've been out there, lots of standing water. This is something they've had to put a lot of work into. This is also where we'll be meeting for the ITC Trail event and then walk down to access the ITC Trail. Commissioner Staab asked for his memory to be refreshed on the Bosco arrangement. Director Muck said we have a 25-year lease arrangement.

B. Recreation Division – Deputy Director Tracie Ringle

1. Program & Services

Deputy Director Ringle said we're battenning down after another successful summer with all of our camps: Camp Lakeshore, Camp PowerPlay, our arts and sports camps were fantastic, Villa Barr and Sizzling Summer. She said she'll be able to report numbers at the next commission meeting. There's a new art installation at Villa Barr and Golles did a great job with her first time on camera for the City of Novi. Also there is Jeff Zischke from Scottsdale, Ariz. She spent about six weeks at Villa Barr and is due to leave very soon. He installed a large wooden piece named Bosque Urban. The location of the piece is parallel to Napier Road and adjacent to the parking lot. You can see it from a quarter mile away, so it'll draw attention to the park and draw people into the park. The piece will stay there until it's determined it needs to be decommissioned. It is wood, so we'll need to identify a community group that's willing to take on that as needed. It's very exciting to add a piece. It's large; about 23-feet long by 8-feet wide. The actual gravel pad is 30-feet by 8 feet. Equiknossos behind it gives it a little bit of scale there. We will receive a Keep Michigan Beautiful award for the enhancements at Villa Barr. Those include the pathways for enhancements, the benches, the interpretive signage, the improvements to the home and the garden maintenance. A nice recognition for our parks team, maintenance team, facilities team, engineering team coming together to make the park what it is today. Out there yesterday it was fantastic. The leaves are starting to turn yellow, but it's a fantastic park to see in any season. On the same vein, we are currently accepting applications for the Atrium art exhibit. That's what you see here and artists may have their work displayed for a month. Items are hung on our display boards or placed in our display cabinets, so we can include pottery, jewelry, etc. Upcoming Stephanie Hall from the concert band is a photographer, as well as a musician. She took portraits of all the members of the concert band, as well as some park scenes, and those will be on display coinciding with a performance the concert band has here at the Civic Center on Oct. 20. The concert band members have not seen the photos yet, so it'll be a little bit fun for them to see what's displayed. Fall means our S'mores Run is coming. It'll be a little bit different this year. It'll be held on the ITC Trail leading off from ITC Community Sports Park Oct. 12 and registration is going on now. You get to stop

along the way to get all the pieces to make s'mores and there's fire pits, too. It's very family friendly. Enjoy some time with families and friends on Oct. 12. Dooley Dog Day will also take place in September, so we always appreciate that celebrating the fall soccer season, and spring, as well. We had more than 125 actors who are now in rehearsal for "Mary Poppins Jr.," which is the most we've had for a production. We keep growing incrementally and it's a very popular show. Shows are going to take place Nov. 14-17 in partnership with In the Mitten Productions. They keep challenging us to make improvements to our sound and lights and experience for everyone who participates, so we appreciate that and look forward to "Mary Poppins Jr." Our new soundstage has arrived. We talked about it a few months ago and it's here. We look to have the graphics added on it. Our Community Relations team is designing the graphics using park scenes on three sides of the stage. As it drives through Novi, you'll see pretty scenes of our parks. We thought that'd be a good marketing tool. It will premiere at Light Up the Night. It's smaller, easier to use and move than taking out the 10,000-pound stage. We're down to a 6,000-pound stage, which gives us a lot more flexibility when it comes down to using it for events. Our Parks Maintenance definitely looks forward to using it.

Student Rep. Fortsch said he'll be singing on that stage with the choir the first time it's used.

C. Older Adults – Older Adult Services Social Services Coordinator Sandy Fisher
1. Program & Services

Coordinator Sandy Fisher said Oct. 12 we had a Senior Socialites event called Dancing Through the Decades with more than 140 in attendance. They danced the night away to music from the 1950s-90s from the Rick Leider Band, a delicious dinner and dozens of vendor tables were there, as well. Great fun was had by all. The September speaker series registration numbers are strong, particularly for the Brain Health series taking place at Meadowbrook Activity Center. So far, about 40 people have registered for those classes. Our annual Pinnacle Tournament is Saturday, Oct. 5, which includes a dinner, as well. We're also hosting Cultivate Novi Oct. 12 from 9 a.m.-noon. Topics include "Why is my Tree Dying," "Woody Invasive Species," "Rain Gardens," "Food Canning" and much, much more. We are working right now on planning the 2019 Veterans Celebration, which will be Nov. 7 at 10:30 a.m. from breakfast to lunch. Sponsors include Edward Jones, Mission BBQ, Provident Dental and retired Army Capt., Vietnam veteran and local businessman John Branstetter will be giving our address this year. We'll also be lucky to have student singers from Novi High, the award-winning choral group. The Novi High School Interact Club will be volunteering at the event and providing a handmade card to each veteran. For fitness in August we did have our first-ever Get Fit Festival and about 60 people came to see live demos to see if they're ready to get fit. We did receive some great feedback from the vendors, lots of positives, and we're probably going to do that one again. Fall registration is well underway. Our most active program right now is the durable equipment medical loan closet. That program keeps her busy and, for the last fiscal year, we had 1,134 interactions with the loan closet. That's donations, people borrowing things and bringing it back. She said she receives at least one call every day asking about borrowing stuff from the closet and lots of grateful people who really appreciate that service. Every winter, we host the AARP tax program. It seems earlier and earlier she's talking to them

about trainings, which will start her in November. Last year, we were able to help more than 500 people get their tax returns. We host the last day for our district and were able to help more than 100 people. Procrastinators unite. Fisher said she also coordinates two food commodity programs. Last year, they were able to distribute 464 food commodity boxes of food. Part of one of those programs is The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) through Novi Youth Assistance. They're the name on the paperwork and we work through OLSHA on that and the Focus HOPE program, as well. Every year, she gets to go to a training in Pontiac because it's a federal-based program. She said one program she's really proud of is a partnership with Area Agency for a Medicare/Medicaid assistance program. We have two awesome counselors who do one-on-one counseling. Its open enrollment time coming up, so to the thousands of people watching this, make sure you do your Part D checkup. If you don't want to do it on your own, you can come and make an appointment with one of our counselors. John and Megan do a fantastic job. Because thousands of boomers are turning 65 every day, we do our one-on-one programs three times per year. Next Monday is the first day of fall, so it is fall prevention awareness time for us and Fisher said she'll be doing lots of Facebook posts about ways to prevent falls and also hosting lots of Matter of Balance programs with a session on community health.

CITIZEN COMMENTS: None

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Student Rep. Kamalesh said asked Commissioner Torimoto that, if her dog is a small shih tzu and thinks he's a big dog, since he likes to socialize with the big dogs, is he allowed to? Torimoto said it's not about the size, since it's called the "small and timid dog side" and he's seen small dogs in the big dog area. He's also seen bigger dogs in the small area, too. Director Muck said small and timid can be any size, but Kamalesh's dog sounds like it'd fit in on the big dog side. We don't have any restrictions on weight or breed or anything.

Student Rep. Fortsch said his dog is a small dog who is scared of big dogs, so he goes to the small dog side. That park around the water that says Novi, that sounds like a cool idea.

Commissioner Joshi thanked Commissioner Smith for the wonderful presentation and the PRCS Department for all the wonderful stuff we keep learning about every time, and for all the updates to the parks.

Commissioner Riggins said she thinks it's wonderful the City of Novi is going to win the Keep Michigan Beautiful award. She loves the city and has been here for so many years and thinks it's awesome they're going to win something like that.

Commissioner Smith thanked the past Parks Commissioners and past City Council for all the work that's been done with the mountain bikers for the trails at Lakeshore. It's a gem we have there.

Commissioner Torimoto said he's really excited to see the progress in the parks, the recognition and expansion at Villa Barr Art Park, and also to see what we put together as a strategic plan for the long term. Welcome to Golles and he's looking forward to hearing what she comes up with.

Commissioner Staab said thanks to Commissioners Smith and Torimoto for their presentations, and to staff Muck, Ringle and Fisher, for their presentations and keeping us abreast. Welcome to Golles even though she was just down the road. You've got an exciting area that will keep you hopping. He appreciates it and encourages viewers to

get out and participate in our many events, especially Sept. 28 with the opening of the ITC Trail and then Dooley Dog Day.

Commissioner Dooley said he echoes all those comments. Welcome to Golles as part of our family and team. He said he wanted to share with everybody something he's seen. We've had some beautiful summer evenings with not many clouds out there. If you have an opportunity on your deck or during a walk, look up in the sky and you'll see something pretty wonderful. The Monarchs are getting ready to get themselves to a state where they're going to migrate south. They're always flying west toward the sun. From his deck, he said he counted more than 100 monarchs between 7:30-8 p.m. before it got dark. It's a pretty phenomenal thing to see that particular butterfly doing that. It's a site to behold. If you like relaxing and look up in the sky, it's not a bird, it's a monarch.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Voice Vote

Unanimous

The meeting was adjourned by Commissioner Dooley at 8:06 p.m.

DATE APPROVED: _____

Jay Dooley, Chairperson

Charles Staab, Interim Vice Chairperson