

PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES COMMISSION

Thursday, July 11, 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 (Absent), Student Representatives Alex Fortsch (Present), Ananya Kamalesh (Absent).

Commissioner Dooley welcomed new Commissioners Riggins and Smith to the team.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

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

Voice Vote

Unanimous

CITIZEN COMMENTS:

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A. Approval of June 20, 2019, minutes.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- A. Walkable Novi – Commissioners Joshi
Commissioners Joshi said there was a lot of discussion about the top-20 priorities. After a lot of discussion, it was decided to keep the top 20 as is, but to also come up with more connectivity projects for the ITC Trail and Bosco Park. Director Muck said some sections along 10 Mile were not in the top 20 and, although they were not scored high, the committee directed staff to get some estimates on that. The other small segment is related to the presentation some of our staff will be making today on the Northwest Neighborhood Park segment and potentially moving that forward, as well.
- B. Novi Park Foundation – Commissioners Staab & Torimoto
Commissioner Staab said Pour on the Shore is Aug. 2 at Pavilion Shore Park. Expanded offering of services beyond several craft beer tastings, we'll also have bourbon and some wine availability. Food will also be supplied by three different food trucks (*note: was two trucks in the end*). The next Foundation meeting is July 22. Tickets are going fast and he guaranteed a fun night of good sociability and fun to help support the worthy cause of the Novi Parks Foundation.
Commissioner Dooley asked about the parking situation. Commissioner Staab said there will be parking. There will be a shuttle service from Vibe Credit Union on 12 Mile back and forth.
Commissioner Staab asked Director Muck if there was an update on numbers. Muck said it's around 160 right now. Staab said that seems stronger than last year. Muck said there's usually a big influx right around the event.
Commissioner Joshi asked how often will the shuttles run? Director Muck said it'll run continuously throughout the event.
- C. Grants Committee – Commissioners Dooley & Joshi

Director Muck said he sent an email to the committee last week on the Rec Passport. It does sound like the legislation on making the Recreation Passport an opt-out instead of an opt-in is moving forward. It's been referred to the House Transportation Committee for further review and they're optimistic it could happen this fall. Commissioner Dooley asked when the next Grants Committee meeting is? Muck said there currently isn't one scheduled, but there currently aren't any grant opportunities pending. If an opportunity to look at any properties or go for any grants comes up, we would call that meeting.

D. Parks Updates

Commissioner Dooley explained monthly park updates to the audience and how the commissioners visit different parks each month on a rotating schedule.

~~1. Fuerst Park – Commissioner Staab~~

2. Rotary Park (May) – Student Rep. Fortsch

Student Rep. Fortsch said two Fridays ago, he visited Rotary Park and wanted to provide a presentation. He said he lives near it, so he walked over and the playground looked great. Everything was pretty clean. The bathrooms looked clean and they said they'd be even more clean in the future. The whole pavilion area and tennis courts looked nice. He walked to the nature trails off Nine Mile and they looked pretty clean. He talked to some people who were walking on it and told them it was great they were out there on a Friday afternoon. Fortsch said there were a couple construction poles in one corner, but it didn't look too distracting, so it was fine. There's a new path that goes through where there used to be trees. It's a new place. There was a woman chilling by the creek. It's fun. The trail off Roethel Drive was clean. It used to be a bad place, so that's good now.

3. Lakeshore Park (June) – Commissioner Joshi

Commissioner Joshi showed pictures of the signage around the entrance. She said she went over Fourth of July weekend and there's a lot of construction going on. It had just rained, so everything was wet. She said, after the parking lot, you can still turn and see the lake in the distance. Joshi said they sectioned off the parking lot so you can ride your bike or walk to the back. You have to stay to the right. Things are going on full swing over there. All the shelter benches have been removed and moved to where the parking is for the trails. She said that's about where she stopped because she forgot to put bug spray on. She said she took a few other photos showing construction in the park. It seems like a lot has been done in the past two weeks.

Commissioner Dooley asked Director Muck if we were on target? Muck said yes and he'd update everyone more later in the agenda.

MATTERS FOR COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION

A. Novi Northwest Park Presentation by Chris Jackett, Greg Morris, Cristin Spiller

Director Muck said we're big on continual staff development and ongoing education. We accomplish that through attending conferences and seminars. All of our staff who are Certified Parks and Recreation Professionals must maintain their certification and must obtain two CEUs every two years, so we're really focused on that. Part of professional development that we haven't done in the past is park development projects or large CIP projects. With the large volume of projects we have going on such as Bosco, ITC Trail, Lakeshore, we offered an opportunity for any staff who might be willing to volunteer to work on our Novi Northwest Park development. So the three staff

you see before us are CPRP certified and volunteered to serve on this. This is their first crack at a park development project and taking it pretty much from scratch. Recreation Supervisor Greg Morris introduced himself, Management Assistant Chris Jackett and Recreation Supervisor Cristin Spiller. He said they were approved in Feb. 2018 to lead this project and they are very excited about the future of Novi Northwest Park. The park was purchased in fall 2015 with the assistance of a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant. It is 9.94 acres, located on 12 Mile Road, east of Napier Road as an offshoot of 12 Mile Road. The topography slopes downhill to the southwest. It was officially designated as parkland in Aug. 2017. We have support from Catholic Central, the City of Wixom, Oakland County and Oakland County Parks and Trails Alliance. The vegetation is mainly woodland and brush, except for the northeast corner, which is very heavily populated with trees. Morris said the budget currently is \$506,233. This is a three-phase project, with the first being trails in 2021 costing \$163,075. Followed by a playground in 2022 and parking in 2023. Morris pointed out an orange line on a map being displayed and said that will be sidewalk, as Director Muck mentioned they're working with Walkable Novi to determine when that would be put in. That part of 12 Mile Road is currently dirt and is scheduled to be paved in 2022-23, so that's very exciting.

Recreation Supervisor Cristin Spiller said, when starting to put the conceptual plan together, it was decided to keep the park in a very natural state. She said they'll be working with Parks Maintenance to put in trails that entail minimal tree removal. The main trail loop will be an ADA-compliant trail with dirt trails between them so kids and families can go and explore the different aspects of the trees and woodlands throughout that area. Also throughout the trails, they're also hoping to have some interpretive signage about what sort of trees and plants are throughout the park. Spiller said another piece is the playground area and showed examples of natural playground options that look like boulders, logs or fossils.

Management Assistant Chris Jackett said, with any park development project, people want to know "when is it coming?" He showed a timeline staff is working on and said there are some internal dates, as well. Jackett said, over the next couple months, they're planning to reach out to residents who live near the park and in general to update them on the project, get a survey out about their thoughts on the amenities of the project and to hold a community meeting with some of those residents to get some feedback from them in person, as well. He said, as they get into the winter, they'll be looking to reach out to some funding partners to get some assistance that way and to also take the feedback received from residents to get some designs together for the actual layouts of the playground and any tweaks to the trails and so forth. Going forward, they'll be working with the budget schedule Supervisor Morris mentioned and looking to post a request for proposal of a bid at the end of 2021, hopefully get things going in the summer of 2021 for the trail portion, followed by the playground the following year and the parking lot the year after that. Throughout that project, Jackett said they planned to utilize the Recreational Passport grant that Director Muck had mentioned and any other developmental grants they're able to track down.

Commissioner Dooley said the designs and keeping it natural for the kids is excellent. He asked whether residents in summer 2019 would have a lot of power in decision making or if that would go more to SurveyMonkey in terms of ideas? Supervisor Spiller said they'll get feedback through SurveyMonkey and, a couple weeks later, they'll have the community meeting where they'll be able to provide some additional feedback and pick and choose some options they feel would work in our park. Dooley asked whether

it would be just the nearby residents that will have a say in that or if it will be open to the entire city. Spiller said it'd be open to the entire city.

Student Representative Fortsch asked whether it would be keeping the name Novi Northwest Park or taking on the name of whoever pays for it, like ITC Community Sports Park? Management Assistant Jackett said that's another component of it they'll be looking at with naming rights as an option, as well. That will depend on if someone comes forward similar to ITC Community Sports Park.

Commissioner Staab asked what the buildout and present occupancy was of the subdivision located next to the park? Supervisor Spiller said she believes Adelina Ridge is built out or very close to being built out. When staff walked through to take pictures last year, you could walk through home lots and, when they went back this past winter, it was all homes. Staab asked who the developer is? Spiller said it was Pinnacle.

Commissioner Joshi asked if this park would be the first of its kind in Novi or if it's similar to Lakeshore? Management Assistant Jackett said they're looking to make it something unique, but there is a nature aspect to the southern playground at Lakeshore that could draw some comparisons. But it is looking to be a little bit different than some parks you'll see throughout the city.

B. Lakeshore Park Playground Options by Director Jeff Muck

Director Muck said thanks for questioning the staff on Northwest Park. It was good seeing people take questions at the podium other than himself. Well done and thank you.

Director Muck showed a couple static boards with images of playgrounds on them. He said Lakeshore Park is a destination park with access to three picnic shelters and more than 10 miles of trails. The upcoming renovations with the new community building will allow us to expand Camp Lakeshore and add additional recreation programs to the park year round. One of the features of the park redesign is construction of a new playground. As we talked about at the previous meeting, the new playground was designed with many features in mind, including playability features, durability, accessibility and aesthetics. It's important to have different structures for children ages 2-5 and 5-12 years old, and swings were incorporated into the final design because those were features specifically mentioned by the public during Lakeshore input sessions. Muck said the playground will also meet or exceed all accessibility standards. He said they've been working with Brighton-based Penchura LLC as the preferred contractor based on their successful history providing playground accessibility to the City, including playground installations at Pavilion Shore Park, Rotary Park and Ella Mae Power Park. He said they went over some concepts at the May meeting and, based on feedback, have narrowed it down to two concepts. Concept 1 includes three elements which would be the first of their kind in Michigan; the Crap Trab, the Single Super NetPlex and the We-Go-Round. The Crap Trab is a rope-based structure with ground-level access to all components. The Single Super NetPlex also provides rope-based activities with a spiral belt ramp leading to a double slide. And the We-Go-Round is a wheelchair-accessible merry-go-round. Muck said all of these are inclusive and provide opportunities for children of all abilities. He said the design also includes motion and spinner features, which are all inclusive elements. The new accessible friendship swing would be the first of its kind in Novi, as well. It's where the child or parent or toddler face one another while they swing. That is Concept 1. Concept 2 includes two elements that would be two elements that would be the first of their kind in Michigan; the Double Super NetPlex and the We-Go-Round, which was on Concept 1, as well. Double Super NetPlex provides rope-based activities along with another first-of-

its-kind spiral belt ramp. The We-Go-Round is a wheelchair-accessible merry-go-round. Similar to concept one, this concept features motion features, spinners and swings, including the friendship swing. Muck said tonight he would like Commission's feedback for a recommendation to City Council.

Commissioner Dooley said he's glad they chose these two. They saw a number of different concepts and these were the final two per a unanimous vote, which is now a difficult decision to choose one of the two.

Student Representative Fortsch asked whether the playground would have wood chips or rubber chips? Director Muck said engineered wood fiber. He said Council could elect to go to the poured-in-place surface, but that is an expensive option.

Commissioner Joshi asked about the We-Go-Round and whether the wheelchair needs to be tied down once inside? Director Muck said it doesn't need to be. It doesn't need to be secured.

Student Representative Fortsch asked if the Crap Trap is made of rope and, if so, what's to stop someone from falling? Director Muck said all of these are designed so you keep in mind entrapment possibilities. Designers keep that in mind, as well as fall heights that are designated. You can only go above a certain height, so those are all kept in mind.

Commissioner Smith asked what the life expectancy of the rope was? Director Muck said most playgrounds have about a 15-year life expectancy. Muck said you see more issues with plastic slides deteriorating than rope.

Commissioner Joshi asked if Concept 2 had multiple exit points so kids can enter and exit from different spots? Director Muck said you enter and exit the Double Super NetPlex from basically all the areas around the base.

Commissioner Joshi asked if the rest of the stuff was the same between Concepts 1-2, like the swings? Director Muck said yes, that was based on Commission's feedback. They said they really liked the We-Go-Round and 2-5 play structure. What you may also notice is in Concept 1, not only do you get the Crab Trap, but also Global Motion. Joshi asked if that was not in Concept 2? Muck said it was not because the Double Super NetPlex is a more expensive option. Both concepts are the same total out-the-door and install price of \$250,000, which is what the budget has been set for Lakeshore.

Commissioner Joshi said she liked the area in Concept 1 because the kids can be somewhat separated and you also get the spinning Global Motion. Director Muck said it does spread the play out more and you're not focused on one main structure, so you get a little bit more playability by having those separate.

Commissioner Dooley said Concept 1 looks like the maintenance upkeep would be easier than with Concept 2 and the large structure. A lot could go wrong with one, as opposed to two. Something small could potentially be needed to be fixed and you could gravitate towards one while one is being worked on. With Concept 2 and the large structure, it would be down for a while.

Student Representative Fortsch said for Concept 1, the Crab Trap is just wild to him. He asked if kids are inside of it while other kids are on the outside of it? Director Muck said yes and that Fortsch is hitting on one of the most appealing things about that structure. There is a lot of interaction with a lot of kids on it.

Director Muck said he's hearing a lean toward Concept 1. Commissioner Joshi said, for her, yes.

Commissioner Dooley asked if Commissioner Riggins had any thoughts since this was her first time seeing these? Riggins said she also likes Concept 1 because it's more spacious where kids can go to one thing and then the next thing. And if one breaks down, then the whole thing breaks down. She said she's leaning toward Concept 1, too.

Commissioner Smith said he also likes Concept 1. No one likes standing in line to get on something.

Commissioner Dooley asked whether a vote was needed? Director Muck said a motion to take Concept 1 to City Council would be appropriate.

Commissioners went down the line with a roll call vote and opted for Concept 1 unanimously.

STAFF REPORTS

A. Administration Division – Director Jeff Muck

1. Park Project Updates

Director Muck said ITC Trail is getting close to completing the boardwalk and the contractor is getting close to completing the final cuts south of 10 Mile in that area. The asphalt should be laid in late July and should go fast as long as the weather holds. From there they'll install the beacons and crossings at 10 and 11 Mile. They could be looking at an August full opening, optimistically. Bosco Fields are under way in 2019 and had delays due to the weather. Now that it's cleared up, they are making progress. They completed drainage structure, storm sewer and four fields have been set to subgrade. They're going to continue site grading and underdrain, parking lot and sidewalk work. He said he does have a progress meeting tomorrow morning. The goal is to have the fields available for use in spring 2020. The new sidewalk is in along Beck. As far as Lakeshore, there has been a lot of site clearing going on and now they're moving into the site balancing work. We'll update that sign and our website as progress continues to be made out there. The Lakeshore and Pavilion Shore shoreline stabilization has a construction meeting scheduled for Monday, so he does anticipate that starting in the next month or so of that meeting.

Commissioner Joshi said she was walking through Pavilion Shore and asked if there was an ordinance against smoking in parks where there are kids? When walking around in circles, that's what hits her. Director Muck said there is no ordinance specifically related to smoking in parks and one of the issues is enforcement. There are ordinances for buildings, but not out in open areas.

B. Recreation Division – Deputy Director Tracie Ringle

1. Program & Services

Deputy Director Ringle said they talked at the last meeting about getting prepared for summer and getting sports scheduling issues resolved. Now we're here. Recreation Supervisor Cristin Spiller put together a program called Parks Explorer and it is asking people to discover some of the amenities in our parks. That is underway and in Engage! and on social media, as well. Ringle said we've been swinging along with our Sizzling Summer program. We've had some great performances, including yesterday at Pavilion Shore Park and had a great turnout in the shade. Tomorrow, OAS Manager Stogner and Ringle will be out at the Splish Splash Pop-Up Water Park at Fuerst Park. The weather looks fantastic for that. Camp Lakeshore and Camp PowerPlay continue and are doing great. We're also running a musical theatre camp this week, so there are a lot of kids in and out of the building. They all are coming and going with smiles, so that's a wonderful sign of a wonderful program we have here. Our Luau on the Shore is coming up Aug. 3 at Pavilion Shore Park, taking advantage of the tent and setup from the night before with Pour on the Shore with Polynesian dancing, food, a number of crafts and a number of activities there. It's something free for the

community. They purchase the food, but otherwise the event is free. We are working on Villa Barr docent nights. We had some programming planned for Villa Barr with four dates scheduled to take place there for people to come and understand Villa Barr, art and so forth. We've whittled that down to two evenings Aug. 15 and 22. On Aug. 15, from 6-7:30 p.m., it'll be performance night at Villa Barr with music, dance and poetry, which are all things the Barr family were involved in, and all great ways to get people involved with the arts in Novi. We'll be shuttling people from ITC Community Sports Park. On Aug. 22, we'll be hosting a tour, starting at the Civic Center at 6 p.m. Then we'll go to Fuerst Park and learn about the art there. Then Villa Barr and to Pavilion Shore Park. At Villa Barr, we'll have artists doing plein air, creating art while they're out in the park. We're looking for people to RSVP to that, so they can call our office and let us know they're interested in doing that tour. Ringle said some Commissioners would recognize or were involved in the next item. She showed a four-minute Parks Commission volunteer Engage video from <https://www.facebook.com/CityofNovi/videos/340856536836750/>. Ringle said they do a number of videos throughout the year and staff acts as hosts. They're also on the City YouTube channel and shared on social media, as well.

C. Older Adults – Older Adult Services Manager Derek Stogner

1. Program & Services

OAS Manager Derek Stogner said he's now two months in the job and they're busy with summer, as well. They're partnering this fall with the Costick Activity Center in Farmington Hills to offer a water aerobics class for senior adults. We don't have a community center ourselves, so we're going to be shuttling people from the Meadowbrook Activity Center to the Costick Center for the class. The cost of the class is going to Farmington Hills and they're offering the shuttle service for free. On Aug. 17, he encouraged everyone to come out to the Get Fit Festival at the Civic Center from 9 a.m.-noon. Almost all of the fitness instructors will be here on site with tables to answer questions and give 10-minute live demonstrations people can participate in to get a taste of OAS's fitness options. If people see the flyers and say "what's Capoeira" or "what's vinyasa," they can come talk to the instructor or even try it out before the fall session starts. Outdoor awareness is probably wrapping up a Birding 101 class across the hall as Programmer Brittany Leick is hosting herself. We had about 12 people sign up for that. We're really excited about it as we got together with Keith Salowich from Forestry and Community Relations for a Saturday, Oct. 12, from 9 a.m.-noon for a mini-conference event called Cultivate Novi, which is a fall environmental preparation. Some of the talks we'll have are called "Why is my tree dying," "Woody invasive species" and "Fall gardening tips." We'll get some more as we get more speakers, but those in particular are coming from our own Forestry. That'll hopefully be a quarterly or semi-annual event as we expand our outdoor awareness individual speaker series. Stogner said he and Judy Klein are both on the committee for the Senior Day at the State Fair Aug. 29. State Rep. Kathy Crawford is the chair of that. It's a big event they have every year. People come from all over the state from different senior centers and senior living facilities come together. It's a lunch and a program, door prizes and entertainment. Suburban Showplace has undergone some expansion, so it'll be a bigger event this year. Last year, we were able to take 75 and this year we have 100 tickets to the event. We already have more than 60 people signed up. It's a popular

program that fills up. We just had Red, White and You luncheon at the Meadowbrook Activity Center. It was a big success. We had 123 people attend and our room capacity is 128, so it was essentially a sellout. It was a 27 percent increase from last year where we had 97 folks. Those luncheons and entertainments are always really popular over there. At Meadowbrook, we had a new conduit installed with streetlamps repaired from an improvised system that had been rigged up up front. That's been fixed and is ready to go. We're working on finalizing some details to do the same with some streetlights in the back. We're working with Facilities to replace three HVAC units on the roof. We had a meeting about that today. They're functioning, but they're end of life and approaching 20 years old. Two 5-ton units and one 25-ton unit that serve on the activity side of the building near where we have the luncheons and Meals on Wheels in the lobby. Facilities is developing a scope of project for us right now to put it out to bid because it'll be about a \$50,000 project. We're hoping to have the units in place by the end of September. With health and social wellness, we have programs coming up with Ascension July 24 at the Civic Center called "Living gluten free" and celiac disease. It'll talk about how it can be a healthy lifestyle even if you don't have a disease attached to it. We'll have some medical experts there to answer questions. On Aug. 14, we're hosting a "Grandparents raising grandchildren" support group for the first time. It's sponsored by Oakland Living and Human Services and the Area Agency on Aging 1-B. It's free support and kinship to caregivers 55 and older who are raising their grandchildren in Oakland and Macomb Counties.

CITIZEN COMMENTS:

Resident Dorothy Duchesneau of 125 Henning said that somebody once said in the city, "actions have consequences." She said, per several meetings with the neighboring residents, the discussion was two large Austrian pine trees on Lakeshore Park's northeast corner were to remain standing as a buffer between the park and the residents. Prior to the Fourth of July, they were suddenly cut down without any warning or notice to the neighboring residents. She said it's real hard to put back a tree once you cut one. Since it takes quite a few years for a tree to grow, anything you plant now is not going to produce the buffering there. Duchesneau said she'd like to make the consequence and that neighbors were told pine trees can't be planted larger than 10 feet. These trees were in the 50-60 feet apiece. She said she thinks it's only fair that, for every 10 feet of the trees that were cut down, a 10-foot pine tree takes its place. That might take 10-12 pine trees, but that would at least cover the length of the buffer zone covered by these pine trees – that were labeled as healthy by the City – were providing. She said the replacement trees should not be counted in any way, shape or form as the replacement trees that are already supposed to be replanted in the park. Duchesneau said this should be in addition to the two trees that should not have got cut.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Representative Fortsch said welcome to new Commissioners Smith and Riggins. He said he hopes they have fun. Sorry to the resident whose trees got cut down.

Commissioner Riggins said she's happy to be here. She thinks her first time went very well.

Commissioner Staab said everyone in the audience and viewing at home should attend Pour on the Shore Aug. 2 from 6:30-10:30 p.m. Tickets can be obtained online or at the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services office.

Commissioner Smith said he's excited to being at his first meeting and working with everybody, and learning more about parks and recreation in Novi and making it better than it already is.

Commissioner Joshi said welcome to Commissioners Smith and Riggins. She said she also wanted to talk about people getting upset on social media about all the construction and trees getting cut. It hits a nerve with the majority of the people, including her, and she's glad to see plans for parks like Northwest Park or whatever it might be called in the future, and Bosco Fields. Even if it's not a park park, it's a green space. ITC Trail, she said she's excited to see that happen in the future.

Commissioner Dooley said he also wanted to also echo thanking Commissioners Smith and Riggins for their first meeting. He said the Commission is not a bashful group by any means. He said the parks are what we have in the City of Novi and, when citizens come to our meetings and voice their concerns, don't think we're not listening to your concerns. Let's hope for a rash of good weather. Bosco is looking great. He said he's never seen anything like that so quickly with the weather they've had. If you haven't been over to Beck and 11 Mile, it's something to be seen.

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 8:05 p.m.

DATE APPROVED: _____

Jay Dooley, Chairperson

Charles Staab, Interim Vice Chairperson