



C. Grants Committee – Commissioners Joseph & Joshi

Commissioner Joshi spoke about the strong discussion on the rescue plan funding for local municipalities. They talked about the different projects and parts of the grant for reconstruction. There was a long list to go through including adding pickleball courts, updating pathways around the diamonds at Power Park and trying Northwest Park. The good, spirited discussion helped set priorities. Grant cycle timing was also discussed.

Director Muck continued that the Grants Committee was formed to give staff direction, help timing, and set priorities. He thanked the parks commissioners and city council members who are on the committee.

D. Parks and Facilities Updates

1. Wildlife Woods Park – Chairman Dooley

Chairman Dooley started by saying Wildlife Woods is his one of his favorite parks in the city because of the potential. The City of Novi website lists all the various parks within the city. The beautiful website highlights what Wildlife Woods entails, the amenities and clearly marks these distinctions. Photos were shown in the presentation. The first was entering from Deerfield and Parkview by the play structure and tennis courts. The next slide showed a walking view through the entrance to the fitness equipment, park benches, and pickleball courts. There is a lot of work being done for the long-term beautification of the park. The fitness zone is at the end of the trail. The machines are excellent. There are four pickleball courts which are in pristine condition. The second entrance by the new development off Wixom Road was highlighted. The field is probably beautiful in the fall, when there is a lot of wildlife and fireflies in the summer. The road is well maintained and fairly new. The rules are clearly marked in the parking lot.

Director Muck stated that work is being done for the ITC Trail connector.

Chairman Dooley felt there is no danger in the parking lot with the construction. He continued that the shelter has bathrooms, picnic benches, and a grill. He added that the softball fields are in very good condition. He emphasizes the potential of what Wildlife Woods is going to look like when it is done. It is going to be one of the centerpiece parks in Novi.

2. Bosco Fields – Chairman Dooley

Chairman Dooley also spoke about Bosco Fields which he had the opportunity to visit over the weekend. The fields are in magnificent condition, the grass is strong, turf solid and there are no drainage issues. Coming off of Beck Road the fields are clearly marked with the field numbers. The parking is in the middle of all the fields. Dooley Dog Day was Saturday Chairman Dooley had the opportunity to work with Council Member Justin Fisher, Chase Root, and his team which were there from early morning until 3:30. They grilled 1,000 hot dogs for families and citizens who attended. It was a beautiful day, and everyone was appreciative of the City of Novi.

Commissioner Joshi's question about ages for the exercise equipment was answered by Director Muck with response being twelve and older. Commissioner Torimoto suggested a coming soon sign for the splash pad to be placed at Bosco Fields. Director Muck stated the family has gotten some signs donated.

Commissioner Staab reinforced that the pickleball courts were partially funded by the Parks Foundation.

## 2. Ella Mae Power Park – Commissioner Staab

Commissioner Staab showed several slides highlighting Ella Mae Power Park which is one of the most active parks in the city. He visited on a beautiful Monday morning after torrential rains on Sunday. A slide was shown of the most recent play structure that was dedicated in July 2021. The foundation funded the smaller playground in 2016. He said the ballfields were not muddy, the drainage was good, and they are in pristine condition. The grass is as green as any fertilized lawn. Slides were shown of the concession stand, men's room both were well maintained. The trash bins had minimal waste so kudos to the parks maintenance team for keeping the park clean. Tom Holzer Ford has the naming rights and has been a long-time sponsor. The last slide was of the park rules by the front entrance.

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

- A. Summer Camp Presentation- Recreation Supervisor Jeff Johns  
Director Muck announced that Deputy Director Tracie Ringle unfortunately was not able to make the meeting tonight therefore, Jeff Johns will be taking her role at park commission and covering some of her report. Director Muck reminded everyone that former Recreation Supervisor Cristin Spiller was able to take a great career opportunity to go to South Lyon Recreation Authority to serve as their director. We were very happy to have Mr. Jeff Johns apply for the vacant position. Commissioner Staab served on the interview panel and overwhelmingly Jeff was our top choice.  
Recreation Supervisor Jeff Johns introduced himself and provided background on his eight years of municipal experience. Before joining the City of Novi, he worked for Independence Township, another CAPRA accredited agency. There he oversaw day camps, aquatics programs and special events. He supervised full time and part time employees. He also worked for New Baltimore when he moved back to Michigan after living in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Florida. He attended Central Michigan University.  
Recreation Supervisor Jeff Johns continued saying that spring is very busy getting camp up and running with everything in place for the campers to have a wonderful engaging summer. Staffing is 99% complete. Registration has been expanded as we continue to build back from the pandemic. Camp Powerplay currently has forty-five kids signed up for every week. Camp Lakeshore upped the numbers to seventy-five a week in addition to one- and two-day options. He is hoping to grow those numbers for summers to come. Field trips are planned and ready to rock and roll. The trips will include Pinz Bowling, Cranbrook Institute of Science, Emagine Novi, Spicer Orchards. These are just part of the wide variety of trips.

### **STAFF REPORTS**

- A. Administration Division – Director Jeff Muck  
1. Park Project Updates

Director Muck recapped the Northwest Park grant for \$100,000. He is working with Deputy Director Ringle and Jeff Johns on park development. The agreement from Oakland County has been received and is currently being reviewed. The initial planning for construction, timing, and phasing has started. Novi Road and Trans X has had quite the transformation of that piece of property with the RC raceway. A final walk through will take place next week along with a few finishing touches needed before opening to the public. The project has gotten 4,500 Facebook likes and many messages and comments about when it will open.

Director Muck anticipates the Wildlife Woods trail connector's paving and restoration happening over the next few weeks. The exercise equipment has QR codes that can be scanned, and it will show how to use the equipment. City Council approved the equipment order for the splash pad to save a seven – ten percent price increase. It has been ordered and processed. Monday night Director Muck will be taking forward the contract for the site plan to get moving with the engineering firm on the site plan. Everything is time sensitive, but we are moving forward.

Director Muck added that there is a flood of activity in the parks. Our maintenance team is getting their seasonal crew up and running.

B. Recreation Division – Recreation Supervisor Jeff Johns

1. Program & Services

Recreation Supervisor Jeff Johns, began by saying that there is one more interview scheduled for camp counselor and would like for an additional counselor to get certified as a lifeguard. The summer camps are full however, we are implementing a new waitlist system. The waitlist rosters will be provided a time sensitive email with a link to register. This information was communicated to people on the waitlist a few weeks ago.

The popular theater program In The Mitten will be offering four different summer camp options. Dawn Roe, the artist in residence at Villa Barr is hosting her community program Monday May 23<sup>rd</sup>. The next resident artist is a dancer, and she will begin her term starting in June. She will be offering public performances and workshops for young dancers at Villa Barr. An adult painting program will start later this summer with classes specifically for older adults. The Sizzling Summer Art Series is beginning next month with programs on Wednesday morning and Tuesday evenings.

Doggie Dive In is back next week with about twenty dogs ready to jump into Walled Lake from Lakeshore Beach. The dog park membership continues to be popular, currently there are 416 dog park members.

Facility rentals are making a strong comeback. Last June there were three rentals and this year there are twenty-one booked so far. Staffing is a bit of a challenge, but we are hopeful to get set with the summer crew to handle these rentals.

Youth baseball and T-ball begins the week of June 13<sup>th</sup> with 113 kids registered. There were not enough registrations necessary to conduct a girls softball league. The men's adult summer softball league is full and there are a few openings for coed.

The July / August edition of Engage is anticipated in mailboxes the third week of June.

C. Older Adults Division – Director Jeff Muck

1. Programs & Services

Director Muck stated that the Fuerst Field of Honor on Wednesday, May 25<sup>th</sup> has eighty-two veterans and fifty-two guests signed up to attend the dinner which is being sponsored by Mission Barbecue. There will be two hundred flags and thirty-two medallions along the trail. The medallions will tell the story of five Novi residents who gave their life in the line of service to their country. As well as some educational information about Memorial Day and branches of military units. VFW Post 1519 is assisting with the ceremonial laying of the wreath, playing of taps, and 21-gun salute. Novi girl scout troops are attending to lead the recitation of the pledge of Allegiance. The honor trail will stay up through Memorial Day. We would like to invite the community to come out for the event. There will be a patriotic concert, honoring the veterans we lost in service as well as the eighty plus in attendance that evening. There will be free hotdogs and refreshments for the community.

There are twenty-nine veterans registered to walk or ride the float in the Memorial Day parade. They are also invited to attend a continental breakfast at Meadowbrook Commons with the residents. At this time twelve organizations are participating in the parade including the Novi High School Marching Band.

Director Muck continued with updates on last night's patio vegetable program held at Lakeshore Park with thirty-nine participants. Laurie Imboden from MSU extension did the presentation on container gardening. The participants received a to go kit with seeds to get a small garden started at home. Classes like this are part of the initiative for more programs and services for older adults. Travel numbers have been increasing. Sixty-two registered for trips in April and May has thirty signups so far. An informational meeting was held for the Grand Hotel trip through mParks. Travel is back and people are ready to get out and start traveling.

A new program called Sip Sip Hooray will be taking place at Lakeshore Park June 9<sup>th</sup>. People will bring their own drinks and we will provide the live entertainment with top hits from the 60's – 80's. Currently twenty-three people have registered. Director Muck went on to say Sandy Fisher the Social Service Coordinator joined the Quality of Life Working Group for implementation of Oakland County's Blueprint for Successful Aging. She represented the department at the first meeting on May 6<sup>th</sup>.

Finally, the Cutting the Cord presentation about getting away from cable was well attended and the popular topic will be offered again in July.

Questions were asked about the time frame for the Fuerst Field of Honor and Memorial Day Parade. Director Muck provided details on the events. He also added that the CERT team will be out in droves to help with the events.

**COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:**

Commissioner Joseph

Welcome to Jeff. We are glad to have you and it sounds like you have hit the ground

sprinting. There is a lot of activities not only for the younger children but for older adults. The diversity of programs is keeping it fresh. The lifeguard training was discussed. I wanted to mention the forward thinking of self-serve or self-protective of the waters at Lakeshore was a big deal. Farmington Hills is actually struggling to find lifeguards and they are not able to open some of their facilities. Kudos to the team for looking to do that. Shout out to the Chorales for the spring concert which was a little bit smaller than the winter show. The RC track looks awesome, and I was one of the naysayers initially due to concerns about how the Hines track looked. Jeremiah's looks pristine and exactly like the graphic renderings that he provided. It is incredible seeing it come to life. I have been riding the ITC trail and noticed signs referencing ferries. I found it extremely humorous and appreciative because of the many dogs walking the trail. Regarding the grants committee and the CIP plan, it is great to see the city looking forward. The plan goes out to 2028 when opportunities such as the trust fund or grants become available. It is great that we have these projects teed up and ready to go rather than scurrying around. So, accolades to the Parks Division of the City and City Council.

#### Commissioner Torimoto

Welcome again to Jeff and I am looking forward to working with you. We are definitely not just coming back from COVID, but with energy. The camps are beyond what we used to do plus the opportunities for travel. I think the problem in the short term will be staffing. Partnership with volunteers, IT tools to get things done efficiently trying to do more with equal or less. Congratulations on some great programs.

#### Commissioner Joshi

I would also like to welcome Recreation Supervisor Jeff. I would like to echo what Commissioner Joseph said about the grants meeting. It is really nice to know how much thought has been put into all these projects in the future and the work that goes into it. I am looking forward to Summer Palooza tomorrow with the 90' weather. We have a lot of exciting programs lined up. It nice to know we are getting the staffing for counselors for summer camp. Recreation Supervisor Jeff Johns added that the field trips will be going outside the city for the first time since COVID.

#### Student Representative Raghunathan

All the updates tonight were wonderful. Wildlife Woods has so many amenities. I think the QR code for the equipment is really helpful for those who do not know how to use equipment. The play structures at Ella Mae Power Park looks great. Director Muck provided more information on the Patio Vegetable class that was held.

#### Student Representative Bheemineni

Nice to meet Mr. Jeff. I personally live near Wildlife Woods. I used to go there a lot when I was younger, but it was a bunch of flatland and grass. So, it is nice to see that it has evolved and developing. I am excited for the future.

#### Commissioner Staab

Welcome aboard again Recreation Supervisor Jeff. As in the interview process, we said right up front you are going to hit the ground running but it is not running it is a sprint. It looks like you are up to the challenge. It is good to see the field trips are diverse with

Emagine, bowling, and cultural education. To tag along with what Commissioner Joseph said the Choralaires concert two weeks ago had 70-75 folks. It was the first spring concert since 2019. It is nice to get back in the groove with a new director. They are always looking for talented singers so they will be back in the fall. Take advantage of the Memorial Day activities next Wednesday, Field of Honor and the parade on Monday.

Chairman Dooley

I would be remiss not to mention the field of Honor next Wednesday. Please tell your friends that this is what Memorial Day is all about. It is the people that actually came back from wars to remember those that did not have the opportunity to come back. We should never lose sight of that.

The city should be very proud that last Saturday was year three of Miss Amazing. It is a pageant for special needs young ladies from as young as six to adults. There were sixteen contestants. It was held at Fuerst Park the morning and early afternoon were beautiful. At 3:30 storm clouds started to come, and the event was moved to indoors thanks to Mrs. Patel. Channel 7 came out and did a nice exposé on the event. My wife and daughter are the two chairs of the event. They want to say thank you for all you do for those who look for opportunities like this.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

**Voice Vote**

**Unanimous**

The meeting was adjourned by Commissioner Dooley at 8:00p.m.

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

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Jay Dooley, Chairperson

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Charles Staab, Vice Chairperson