

PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES COMMISSION

Thursday, Feb. 15, 2018 – 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), Thomopoulos (Present), Jewell (Present), Pratt (Present), Staab (Present), Torimoto (Present), Student Representatives Jooho Lee (Present), Alice Wou (Absent).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

It was moved that the agenda be approved by Commissioner Pratt and seconded by Commissioner Jewell.

Voice Vote

Unanimous

CITIZEN COMMENTS: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A. Approval of Jan. 18, 2018 minutes.

It was moved that the minutes for January be approved by Commissioner Pratt and seconded by Commissioner Thomopoulos.

Voice Vote

Unanimous

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- A. Walkable Novi – Commissioners Thomopoulos
Commissioner Thomopoulos said a meeting was scheduled this evening, but there wasn't quorum due to vacancies on both the Parks Commission and Planning Commission. Will be rescheduled once vacancies are filled.
- B. Novi Park Foundation – Commissioners Staab & Torimoto
Commissioner Torimoto said there was a meeting 1/22. A lot of items from that meeting will be covered in detail tonight. There was a donation from the Dresner Foundation, which focuses on family and health. There were some scholarship updates on youth able to take advantage of that program and discussion on some of the capital assets. And the biggest change with Pour on the Shore will be how food is provided, via food truck instead of donated food. Villa Barr artist-in-residency construction to get up to code is ongoing.
- C. Grants Committee – Commissioners Dooley & Pratt
Commissioner Pratt said Director Muck will talk about it in matters for commission discussion.
- D. Parks Updates
 - 1. Pavilion Shore Park – Commissioner Jewell
Commissioner Jewell said he was at the park this morning. A lot of City staff was out there plowing and cleaning, too. Was impressed with the signage, between the hours, the rules, the history and educational aspects. Everything was very bright and inviting. There were a lot of kids out and riding bikes, walking dogs. Commissioner Pratt asked about a Rouge River sign at the park and whether it was new? Director Muck said it has been there for at least a year and there's one at Rotary Park, too.

2. Villa Barr Art Park (Aug.) – Commissioner Jewell

Commissioner Jewell said he went by today and there was a dumpster on the property. You can tell someone's been out there. There are stakes around the property, trees are marked, there are pink ribbons. Progress is starting out there. The road going down Napier is treacherous.

Commissioner Thomopoulos asked when that is getting paved by the county? Director Muck said sometime in 2018.

Commissioner Thomopoulos asked whether there was a projected opening date? Deputy Director Ringle said early fall is targets; September or early October, so the parking lot and entry drive would be in.

Commissioner Staab asked how Napier was? Commissioner Jewell said the roundabout is nicely done, but then you get off the asphalt and it's really bad with potholes.

3. Village Wood Lake Park – Commissioner Thomopoulos

Commissioner Thomopoulos said she went last week before the big snowstorm. The sign is visible and the trash can is accessible. Suggested replacing the trashcans to match the Pavilion Shore ones as they age out. Director Muck said that's a goal to get the same look throughout all the parks for tables, benches, etc.

Commissioner Thomopoulos said there are some healthy evergreen trees. Noted this park received a lot of new deciduous trees in recent years. Suggested additional picnic tables or benches at the park. Gravel path is not plowed, but does get quite a bit of usage. Overall the park looks good.

Commissioner Pratt asked if anyone had ice shanties out there? Commissioner Thomopoulos said no. Commissioner Pratt said it's one of the deepest ponds out of all three connected in the Village Wood area. Commissioner Jewell said there are a lot of shanties on Walled Lake.

MATTERS FOR COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION:

A. LWCF Grant Application – Lakeshore and Pavilion Shore Park Shoreline Stabilization

Director Muck said the grant committee of Commissioners Pratt and Dooley, and Councilmembers David Staudt and Kelly Breen, met last month to discuss projects and other items for park acquisition. Have now switched to developmental grants. Brought to their attention the deteriorating shorelines at both Lakeshore Park and Pavilion Shore Park. This is in the capital improvement budget, so we'll be looking to offset costs with the grant. When Pavilion Shore Park was installed in 2013, several shoreline trees were removed as part of the construction. Coir logs were installed to attempt and spur shoreline plant growth. They were bundles filled with straw, flax, rice, coconut material. It was meant to be biodegradable, but was also meant to establish the native shoreline plants. Those logs failed due to the wave action and winter ice flow. Maintenance staff has reported on it. Lakeshore Park has similar issues. They don't have the core logs, but are affected by the wave action. We add sand to the beach annually because it washes out and washes away. Part of that is also due to the runoff from the tunnel from the rest of the park. We're looking at this for a long-term solution for both parks' shoreline areas. Staff met with DEQ. Members from our engineering, maintenance and parks staff. DEQ said we could not do concrete retaining walls, they wouldn't authorize those. They'd want us to use stone and natural features. We have some initial cost estimates, which we placed into the

CIP. Now that the grant committee has looked at it, we decided we want to go for a Land and Water Conservation Fund grant. What we want to do at Pavilion Shore Park is to restore shoreline erosion. There are several different techniques we could end up using, such as soil wrapped in geo-textile liner, rip-wraps over geo-textile liner, cobble blocks. We'll also ask the engineers if there's any kind of protection system that will also deter geese, if possible. Lakeshore Park is the same thing we want to do, but also includes a handicap-accessible ramp down to the sidewalk that we've heard from residents and councilmembers that they want accessibility to Lakeshore beach. Also, emergency vehicle access ramp down to the beach that can be used by police and fire rescue boats to launch, as well as where our parks maintenance team hauls in their equipment to maintain the beach. None of these plans include any kind of dock or boat access or watercraft access. The Land and Water Conservation Fund we feel is a great fit for this because in its verbiage says it's meant for use to develop public outdoor recreation such as beaches, fishing areas and picnic areas. It does require the City to 50 percent match, which is no problem since we already have money laid out in the CIP. Projects can be a minimum of \$30,000 or a max of \$300,000. Our engineering team is estimating this project will be a minimum of \$320,000 for both parks. We've actually had to go back and ask our engineering for finer detail. We initially thought we'd be able to submit one grant for both parks. You have to do each park separately. We had them go out and do each park separately, so we do anticipated the costs could be higher. The grant application is due 4/1. If we are awarded the grant, we'll be awarded in Dec. 2018. We are asking you for your questions and recommendations, as we will be taking these to City Council. These do require a public hearing and approval by the City's highest governing body, so we will be taking these to Council on 3/12. Some history on the Land and Water Conservation Fund, 100 percent of applications were funded in 2017. However, only 58 percent were funded in 2016. One area of caution or concern with this is this is dependent on federal funding and the federal budget. And there has been some news about that in the news lately. We do ultimately need to do this project no matter what, so hopefully we can get some grant funding for this.

Commissioner Pratt said this grant does weigh heavily on the recreational component. Asked what is there besides the shoreline restoration? Director Muck said Lakeshore does hit on handicap accessibility.

Commissioner Pratt asked whether fishing docks would be considered at Lakeshore? Director Muck said that hasn't been considered for Lakeshore, but there may not be a lot of room for that. Commissioner Thomopoulos they have it at Pavilion Shore with the fishing dock already. Director Muck asked whether you wanted to mix the beach area with people fishing and the fishing lines.

Commissioner Pratt said he was thinking of over near the lifeguard shack.

Commissioner Dooley asked to verify, if Commission approves to move forward, that this could go before Council 3/12. Director Muck said yes. Commissioner Dooley said it sounds like a great idea and it's been talked about a few times. It could be a unanimous decision to move forward.

Commissioner Staab asked how the 100 percent of submissions was determined in 2017? Director Muck said 19 eligible applications were all awarded in 2017 for a total of \$2.7 million.

Motioned to support the grant applications by Commissioner Staab, seconded by Commissioner Pratt. Unanimous roll call vote.

- B. Recreation Passport Grant Application – Tim Pope Playground
- Director Muck said this one will be a little bit more of discussion and asking for input. This will be going before Council for approval on 3/12. We wanted to go over some concept design and options since the Tim Pope Playground is a much-beloved playground and has been around for a long time. This is also in our CIP. We want to outline what the Recreation Passport means. The Tim Pope Playground was built in 1997. For those of you familiar, the typical life expectancy for a playground is about 15 years, so it's well past that for the Tim Pope Playground. The Recreation Passport is the license plate tab you can get to access to all state parks and recreation areas when you renew your registration. This is the funds generated from that passport going back to the local communities. It's used to develop public recreation and one of the benefits of the Recreation Passport is there is an emphasis on using it to renovate existing facilities. The grant does require a 25 percent minimum match. We can request a minimum of \$7,500 and a max of \$150,000. We have budgeted for the Tim Pope Playground \$259,000 in FY 2019-20. What we discussed within the committee is whether we should try to get that \$259,000 funded or if we should try to go big and enhance Tim Pope and really make it more of a destination playground than it already was. What the committee recommended was we should go forward and attempt to get another \$150,000 on top of the \$259,000 in order to get more enhancements to that site. That could mean a lot of different things as we get into discussions about the design. It could mean shade structures over areas of the playground, additional handicap accessibility, multiple entrances, surfacing, it could mean additional benches, ground features and all of those sort of items. This has a 4/1 application deadline. We would know in Dec. 2018 whether we would be funded. These are much harder to get. Only 34 percent of requests were funded last year and only 47 percent in 2016. It was 64 eligible applications were submitted for \$2.4 million and only 22 for \$1.4 million in 2017. We have a strong opportunity and we can put together a strong application, but percentages with this are not very high.
- Director Muck said conversations have been going on about Tim Pope Playground for about three parks and rec directors now. One of the concepts done by previous staff is a modern concept, but does not have a lot of look and feel to the current structure. This was put together by a playground that featured a lot of current looks and trends, such as the ropes. If we start looking more into what Tim Pope is now, we have Concept B and C. Concept B is where we're trying to replicate the existing look and feel with custom features, including the recycled wood. It's the closest match we've had designed so far to the existing playground. Concept C is just a very stripped down, basic design and product. There's nothing custom about this. The difference between B and C is when you add in the recycled wood, lumber, putting in the slats and trying to really replicate the feel of the existing one, that's where your costs start going up. We need to drill down more into this based on our conversation tonight.
- Commissioner Thomopoulos said a personal preference having taken her kids there for year. She likes Concept B that replicates what is there. To honor what was there that he added, but to also allow kids in the future can enjoy what our kids did. It's unique and there are a lot of places to hide. This playground really drives imagination games and sets up roll playing. Plus, it's big and there are a lot of things to do there, which is a benefit of it. It looks like B could be funded by

what was originally budgeted. Likes the idea that we could expand beyond that because there are newer things that playgrounds can do. Doing B+ would be desirable, but if we apply for a grant, we could have some money to do that with. If we have this budgeted for just one calendar year right now, and the worst happens where we don't get this grant, is there a possibility we look at a B+, but phase it in so that "+" aspect could be done at a later year as funds become available? Vote would be for B because of historical and it was a great play structure. Her kids loved it. It was something they wanted to go do.

Commissioner Pratt seconded Concept B, the original. Since everyone plays on it with their cleats, maybe use a different type of matting that goes all around the playground. And look at the slides, too; because that's where you get your scuffs because you get the metal and the other stuff from the cleats. Would ask the playground people what kind of coating they have.

Representative Lee said supports Concept B, as well. When he was around 10-11, he'd go and it seemed older than the other structures around Novi, but that makes sense since it was built in 1997. It should still be preserved as Option B since it's still really unique to the rest of the parks.

Commissioner Jewell said he agrees with all of the same comments. His kids were out on it in 1997 when they were 6 and it was first built. Likes Concept B+ because it takes on the same set of aesthetics as is currently out there. If there's something you can do with the cleats, it seems like whatever they came from playing is what they wore when they played on it. Likes the recycled wood since the wood out there is aging and takes a lot of maintenance and there's a chance of arsenic. How you go through and restore that stuff.

Commissioner Torimoto said the same goes for him, too. Keeping the intent of the original design makes it pretty unique with the woods and everything around it. Concept B, for sure.

Commissioner Staab said he supports Concept B+, plus he wants to keep the integrity of the pickets since they have donated money to the project. And to answer Commissioner Jewell's concern about arsenic, there was testing done two directors ago and a firm former Director Randy Auler brought in, and it was determined by that firm there was no problem from that standpoint. His family was in on the ground floor when it was built and will be in on the ground floor when it's rebuilt or renovated. Proud to take his grandkids out there now. It's a heaven of activity and a magnet for kids who enjoy themselves out there. Like Commissioner Thomopoulos said, we need to keep the imagination and innovativeness of it where kids can expand their minds.

Commissioner Dooley said it's been a passion of Commissioner Staab's for years and asked if he could provide some history on the playground. Commissioner Staab said Tim Pope was a City Councilman who was born and reared in Novi, graduated with one of the first Novi High School graduation classes. He was tragically involved in a traffic accident on Grand River Avenue in around May 1995 with a closed head injury. Was at St. Joe's in Ann Arbor until Oct. 1995 when he passed away. He left behind two children – Abby and Andrew – and his wife, Sarah. The family's been involved a lot over the years, trying to maintain the integrity of the park. We were able to raise money, a sinking fund, to maintain it, whether it needed paint or to be blasted or new mulch. That was a unique project. Tim Pope worked as chief liaison for State Sen. Dave Honigman in Lansing. He was a well-known state rep. and state senator out of Commerce. When we did the fundraising, we not only did contributions, but we had some

people do some different things to dig deep and fund the project. A company out of New York came out and worked with Mills school elementary kids to come up with this design and sort of brainstorming activity. It was grassroots throughout the community and really southeast Michigan. When we did the build, it was Father's Day weekend in 1997. We had coverage on WNIC and WWJ. We were sweating bullets all weekend to get that done. We had Mayor Kathleen McLallen was out there helping set posts. Hugh Crawford, City Councilman at that time, was out there among the leaders. People throughout Michigan and southeast Michigan say they helped out with that project and I didn't know. It's a jewel of Novi.

Director Muck said we do intend to keep the inside slats and have been talking with the designer about that. He and Commissioner Staab met with a designer on that a few years ago about keeping the design and name.

Commissioner Staab said we can make sure to have a proper commemorative plaque out there.

Director Muck said, to Commissioner Thomopoulos' point, we do have a sign out there that was developed with the family two years ago that lists all the donors and history, as well.

Commissioner Staab said its 21 years old this summer. If the life expectancy is 15 years, we've been a good steward of this over the years and now it's time to renovate and get it into the 21st century.

Commissioner Dooley said he likes Concept B+, as well.

Motioned to support the grant applications by Commissioner Jewell, seconded by Commissioner Thomopoulos. Unanimous roll call vote.

Director Muck said staff will take that to Council and then submit the grant application.

Commissioner Staab asked to verify whether it would be at the 3/12 Council meeting. Director Muck said it would be. Staab said he may send a letter of support since he'll be out of state. He expects there to be support for this.

STAFF REPORTS

A. Administration Division – Director Jeff Muck

1. Villa Barr Collaborations Update

Director Muck said he traveled to Crystal Mountain and the Michigan Legacy Art Park to meet with Renee Hintz, the executive director at Michigan Legacy Art Park, and Chris McInnis, the chief executive officer and owner of Crystal Mountain resort. The meeting centered around David Barr and constructing an art park on the property. They're very appreciative of the City's efforts and want to maintain a partnership between our organizations. Hintz has been instrumental in forming the Friends of the Villa Barr group and providing guidance with our efforts to start an artist-in-residency program. She's just a great resource as we move forward with Villa Barr Art Park. The City transferred the sculpture Equation 1 to Michigan Legacy Art Park last summer, per the estate of David Barr's wishes. Equation 1 is meant to be the centerpiece of the David Barr park at Crystal Mountain and signage is planned to mention the ties to David Barr Art Park in the City of Novi. They'll be having a dedication ceremony, most likely in late June. They're planning to invite Mayor Bob Gatt to say a few words, and the Friends of Villa Barr group is planned to be invited, as well. We're going to try and get Studio No. VI up there to document this and also get some interviews with Hintz and McInnis. The Dennon Museum Center in Traverse City has opened a newly

expanded gallery with work from David Barr. We donated Yellow Rollover and Caduceus. Those are now at their new home in the museum. They had a soft opening on 1/20 and will hold a formal dedication and naming of the galleries later this spring. David Barr's work is at home up in the Traverse City area and Crystal Mountain. We really discussed a lot of the ties between Novi and his work is expanding across Michigan. We will definitely be inviting them down when we do our grand opening in the fall for Villa Barr. It's something really unique that's touching all points of northern Michigan and here in Novi.

2. mParks Facility Design Award – Pavilion Shore

Director Muck said Novi received the Outstanding Facility Design Award for Pavilion Shore Park from the Michigan Recreation and Park Association, also known as mParks, at last week's annual conference. mParks honors exemplary park and recreation professionals, citizen advocates and also community programs submitting applications to the association's annual awards. The design awards were judged based on degree of innovation, aesthetic quality and construction viability. The award recognized our innovation in creating a functional pavilion design that connected with the history of the park's former uses as a dance hall and casino. We feel this is a truly citywide award, as staff from PRCS worked with team members from our Community Development, Engineering and Integrated Solutions – which is our facilities and parks maintenance teams – on the development and the façade and surrounding landscaping. We're going to work with our Community Relations team to put out a press release on this award. We keep getting recognized for our work at a state level, so we wanted to share the good news. We've done presentations on this park, the shelter design, many of you were at the grand opening of it, so this award is for you at well.

Commissioners applauded.

B. Recreation Division – Deputy Director Tracie Ringle

1. Program & Services

Deputy Director Ringle said there's a lot going on, as always in Novi. We introduced a Finding Bigfoot program last month and that continues for about another month. We've had a lot of community engagement with that. Our blue-eyed Bigfoot has been to a lot of parks and some local businesses in Novi. Our Mother-Son Dance is coming up Friday, 2/23. Registration looks great at 225 so far. That program is always well received. It's a chance for moms and sons to get some time together outside of sports fields. Spring break is right around the corner. We have some camps coming up, including one with a STEM focus – which is science, technology, engineering and math – for students K-6.

Horseback riding at the Wildwind Equestrian Center in South Lyon and also an art camp. So something for all types of children and for parents who are looking for a little relief during spring break. We are putting our final touches on our summer camp programs. Registration begins 3/1. We have our perennial favorites with Camp PowerPlay, Lakeshore, sports camps, etc. We're enhancing some of our cultural arts camps this year. We found some of our camps are offered 10 a.m.-3 p.m. or 9 a.m.-noon, so we contracted to have before and after care so parents have a better opportunity to put kids in a program that fits their schedule. We anticipate that'll be a great incentive to be able to increase attendance, as well. We've had demand from families asking us to do this. It also allows them extra time to finish projects or start on another project during before and after

care. We are working with Novi Community Education to offer some programs in collaboration with them to offer some programs that may have needed some additional marketing. We each are taking registrations concurrently and some take place at the Civic Center, and others at the schools. It allows us to run some programs together that may not have been running through either one solely. We did some programs this past fall and winter and are looking at offering those programs for camp. They're really kids empowerment and science-based programs. We're thankful to be able to do that and offer more programs for the community.

C. Older Adults – Older Adult Services Manager Karen Kapchonick

1. Program & Services

Manager Kapchonick thanked commissioners for taking the time to look at the older adult strategic plan. It's ready to be posted on the website and for us to start working on the goals. Winter session 2 begins 3/5 has registration ongoing and approximately 18 different classes are offered to individuals ages 18+. Our lifelong learning division has two speaker series coming up. One is retirement planning for elder law perspective on 2/28 at 6:30 p.m. at the Novi Civic Center. The other is "10 things you need to enroll in Medicare." That is 3/8 at 1 p.m. at the Novi Public Library. With social enrichment, we had our Valentine's lunch yesterday and wanted to recognize our sponsor, Wellbridge of Novi. They sponsor each one of our lunches, come to our event and help us out. It's a great opportunity for them to meet our residents and answer any questions they may have. The next one coming up is our Looking for Leprechauns luncheon, which will be held 3/15 at noon at Meadowbrook Activity Center. That one will be sponsored by O'Brien-Sullivan Funeral Home. This week we had our food commodities as part of our Focus Hope program we hold monthly. This month we serviced 34 families with food that helps supplement their budget and food income. It's a program you have to sign up for and is income based. We also have the TEFAB program held on a quarterly basis. On transportation, Council member Wayne Wrobel is holding a town hall meeting for transportation. We're encouraging residents to come to that meeting to share their experiences with the senior transportation. That will be 2/20 at 5 p.m. at the Novi Civic Center.

CITIZEN COMMENTS:

None

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Representative Lee said he hopes Commissioner Dooley's voice feels better. Lee said glad to be back again and hearing about the progress being made at the parks. Has a strong opinion on some of the parks and is glad others share the same opinion.

Commissioner Dooley said Lee can work with commissioners if he wants to help with next month's park updates at Fuerst Park or the Novi Dog Park.

Commissioner Pratt said congrats on the Design Award. He heard there were a lot of applicants. With the potential grants, its awesome stuff coming. Hopefully we can get a few of those and make improvements. The OAS Strategic Plan, as strenuous as that is, it's the best feeling ever when you get to post it. Congrats on that, as well. You guys do great work. His daughters enjoyed the Daddy Daughter Dance.

Commissioner Thomopoulos said thanks to Director Muck for sensitivity and thoughtfulness given to the handling of the Barr assets, as well as recognizing the tie in with Crystal Mountain. A lot of thought has gone into it and the level of detail to ensure

a high standard of care for the Barr items. It's a great gift to the City and a gift that will keep giving, especially once the park is accessible for the public. Also excited about the Pope park. Kudos to PRCS for working with Novi schools. Was thinking of Walled Lake schools during the discussion and realizes some residents also go to Northville schools (and South Lyon schools). She said she tends to get Novi school information even though she's not in the district. Doesn't think it's necessary to work with all of the school systems, but something to keep in the back of your mind. PRCS does a good job with marketing, but its always good to have additional marketing.

Commissioner Jewell said congrats on the Design Award and thanks for keeping an eye on all the grants. Applauds staff for looking into them and going through the process which he assumes is painful. Thanks for doing it. It takes a lot of time. Same for the Pope project. It means a lot for a lot of people in Novi and is a good neighbor for the ITC CSP. All three of you should be applauded for the information and detail you provide.

Commissioner Torimoto said he had a fabulous time at the Daddy Daughter Dance. Skimming through the OAS Strategic Plan, it looks great. Very visual and went back to the previous plan to talk about what was achieved. Very excited about all the capital projects coming up.

Commissioner Staab said thanks for the input. Congratulations for getting the OAS Strategic Plan behind you. Regarding the grants, there was a movie years ago called "Other People's Money" and he's a big supporter of seeking out other peoples' money. For years, we didn't do that as judiciously and with as much due diligence as we do today. Make sure the people of the City of Novi don't expect it to be flown into us, but we're looking for other revenue flows to keep our park systems improving. Looking forward to the remodel of the Pope play structure. Interested in seeing the conceptual drawings so he can prepare a few comments for the 3/12 Council meeting.

Commissioner Dooley said it's nice when we have a full group of people at the meeting. Asked whether there were any updates on the interviews for the seventh commissioner seat that is vacant? Director Muck said Council did a first round of interviews with applicants. They had an overwhelming amount of applicants. More than 20 applicants, so had to be split between two Council meetings. Had some highly qualified candidates at the first batch. The next round is at 2/26. Understands Council would appoint at that meeting, so a new commissioner should be at the March meeting. Dooley asked whether any ambassadors applied? Muck said at least one person interviewed at the first meeting who mentioned the Ambassador Academy. She was well spoken and mentioned both the CAPRA and police accreditations, and how she had learned about that through the Ambassador Academy.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Jewell and seconded by Commissioner Pratt.

Voice Vote

Unanimous

The meeting was adjourned by Commissioner Dooley at 8:07 p.m.

DATE APPROVED: _____

Jay Dooley, Chairperson

Shelley Thomopoulos, Vice Chairperson