

PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES

Thursday, April 16, 2015 – 7:00 P.M.

NOVI CIVIC CENTER – COUNCIL CHAMBERS

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. with Commissioner Jewell presiding.

ROLL CALL: Jewell (Present), Bauss (Present), Ferrell (Absent), Pratt (Present), Staab (Present), Torimoto (Present), Wingfield (Present), Student Representative Kodali (Absent), Student Representative Thakore (Absent).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

It was moved that the agenda be approved as written by Commissioner Pratt and seconded by Commissioner Wingfield.

Voice Vote

Unanimous

CITIZEN COMMENTS: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A. Approval of the February 26, 2015 minutes, no March meeting

It was moved that the minutes for February be approved as written by Commissioner Pratt and seconded by Commissioner Staab .

Voice Vote

Unanimous

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. Walkable Novi – Commissioners Torimoto and Bauss

Commissioner Bauss stated the Walkable Novi Committee meeting was last month. Director Muck stated implementation, status of projects, and prioritizations were discussed and that went forward to the Planning Commission.

B. Novi Parks Foundation - Commissioners Staab and Ferrell

Commissioner Staab stated there was a meeting last month. "Pour on the Shore" will be on Friday, July 31st. Executive Director, Rachel Zagaroli and staff have craft beers, wine and entertainment. It is the major fund raiser for the Novi Parks Foundation for 2015. We have a major \$4000 sponsor already. It will be held at Pavilion Shore Park. They are working on renewal of one of our Naming Rights donors.

He deferred to Director Muck to talk about the activities at the Villa Barr.

Director Muck stated Recreation Supervisor, Rochelle Vallance, attended a seminar on grant funding put on by Michigan Festivals and Events Association. She will be pursuing grants focusing on the Villa Barr property with the possibility of reaching out to the Foundation for matches on those grants. For some of the grants municipalities cannot apply so the Foundation may need to apply and provide matching funds. She recently attended the Art Park at Crystal Mountain. That was David Barr's first Art Park and a vision of where we are going with Villa Barr. Supervisor Vallance will bring this information to the Art Advisory Board and will share it in the quarterly update.

Commissioner Torimoto stated he has spoken with Executive Director Zagaroli about "Pour on the Shore" and she had mentioned needing volunteers and getting the Commissioners involved.

Commissioner Staab stated that is still to be determined and information will be forthcoming.

Commissioner Torimoto asked how to get information about the sponsorships.

Director Muck stated Executive Director Zagaroli has put that information together and has sent it out to previous Golf Outing sponsors. He will make sure the information gets in the Commissioners' packets next week.

C. Grants Committee – Commissioners Jewell and Wingfield

Commissioner Wingfield deferred to Director Muck.

Director Muck stated it is in his reports under number 4 but will move forward with it.

Last time they met they designated some properties, one of which is at the corner of Nine Mile and Garfield. City Council unanimously approved us to move forward to apply for that grant. We had a local resident express hope that we be able to acquire that property and included that information in our grant application. The grant was submitted before the April 1st deadline and we are now waiting for scoring to come back. We will have an opportunity to adjust that application and increase our scores. We would get a final decision from the Trust Fund Board in December. He stated the property is ten acres and is located at Nine Mile and Garfield adjacent to the ITC corridor trail. It is meant to serve as a trailhead park with very limited amenities. We want to retain the wetlands and woodlands features of that property. It will mainly be an access point to the ITC corridor trail because on the planned trail from Eight Mile to Providence the only other stopping place or restrooms are at ITC Community Sports Park.

STAFF REPORTS:

A. Administration Division – Director Jeff Muck

1. Paul Policicchio Memorial

Director Muck stated he will defer to Commission members because the Memorial is for a Commissioner who passed before he was on staff. Prior to his coming on staff, funds were collected in Commissioner Policicchio's memory with a dedication to be made of a park bench. Recently, there have been several members of the Parks Foundation who want to take it to another level. They would like to make a gathering spot at Pavilion Shore Park with possibly a couple of benches and some landscaping. He asked the Commissioners for their thoughts or what they might like to see since they knew Commissioner Paul Policicchio. He could then take it back to the landscape architect and start talking about some tentative designs and costs. Park Foundation members have indicated a desire in raising some additional funds so we can have more than one bench.

Commissioner Wingfield asked if anyone had spoken to his wife.

Director Muck stated Foundation Members have talked to her and she is great with the idea at Pavilion Shore Park but other than that she has been very private. Commissioner Wingfield stated he served with Commissioner Policicchio for many years and he was very supportive of Pavilion Shore Park in the early stages so that park is appropriate.

Commissioner Pratt asked if there were still phases there to put a playground or shelter.

Director Muck stated in 2015/2016 we do have plans to erect a shade shelter and restroom facilities. This summer we will be putting in some additional benches and tables. We want to plan the memorial area as part of the overall conceptual plan.

Commissioner Pratt stated it would be nice to have his name on a shelter.

Director Muck stated he wanted to let the Commissioners know that this is going forward.

2. CIP/SIP Budget Update

Director Muck stated last night was the initial budget hearing for City Council and it did pass unanimously. There were two motions and two discussions on it but the 2015/2016 budget will be moving forward in May for approval. There will be a Public Hearing and then final approval. Highlights of the CIP/SIP related to Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services is a full time Recreation Programmer position which consolidates two of our part time positions. Pavilion Shore Park restrooms and shade shelter as well as ITC Community Sports Park pathway resurfacing and repair are also included. Commissioners are invited on Friday, April 24th at noon to the ribbon cutting as we open the new Ella Mae Power Park playground. It will be held in conjunction with Paralyzed Veterans of America who are holding their Open House here on that day. Even if the playground is not fully functional that day we are still going to cut the ribbon and have a celebration. This has been a combination of City Council and Parks Commissioners weighing in, Novi Parks Foundation's contributed funds for the surfacing and Paralyzed American Veterans gave input on the features of the playground. We are hoping for good weather.

Commissioner Wingfield stated for quite a few years the City has been operating with a combined Forestry and Parks Asset Manager position which has stretched that person thin. He stated part of this budget does include a Forestry position which was approved last night. We think that will help enhance our parks getting more maintenance attention.

Commissioner Pratt asked if that position was housed at DPS.

Director Muck stated the Forestry position is through the tree fund. He was unsure whether it would be out of DPS or Community Development. He also stated another motion was made last night for \$100,000 to be taken from the Parks Fund balance and allocated to Capital Outlay for additional projects for 2015/2016.

Staff will be meeting later on to determine the best use for those funds. City Council recognizes the needs of the park system.

3. Northwest Neighborhood Park Update

Director Muck stated this is the park we have been working on acquiring on Twelve Mile. It is ten acres and we have been calling it the Northwest Neighborhood Park. Today he received the project agreement from the DNR. That is close to one of the final phases. We have done an environmental study, title search and boundary survey. The project agreement will go to the City Attorney and then to City Council. We can then work with the property owners to secure the property. We are optimistic that we may have an opening or ribbon cutting in summer or early fall to open the park.

4. Nine Mile Park acquisition

Director Muck stated he just did the update on this park. It is a long process. Even if the grant is funded we wouldn't be looking at taking that property on until June or July of 2016 with development past that.

B. Recreation Division – Deputy Director Tracie Ringle

1. Programs & Facilities

Deputy Director Ringle stated our summer camp registrations started on March 1st and numbers are increasing as parents are thinking about summer. We already have thirty-two people registered for our newest camp, Camp Power Play. This spring we had the Eggstravaganza and the Mother/ Son event. Both events sold out with a thirteen percent for the Mother/Son event and a six percent increase for the Eggstravaganza event. Our Girls on the Run program is popular. We offer it at five school locations right after school. There are 50 participants who will also participate in a 5K run on May 17th. This program is run by volunteer coaches similar to our sports leagues. Spring soccer starts this weekend and is up 20 players from last year and up 67 players from two years ago. We have 657 players in Spring soccer between our house, recreational travel and select teams. We have art in the atrium which is special because it is done by survivors of traumatic brain injury. They are patients of Cassell and Associates and do artwork as therapy. Their artwork is here and available to the public through a sealed bid auction through April 23rd. April 27th our Adult Spring Softball League starts. There are 80 teams. There are 12 teams in our Older Adult Softball League. Our Novi CARES series has a Cemetery clean up this Saturday from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. April 25th is Arbor Day at Lakeshore Park. May 9th is Earth Day at MSU Tollgate Farm. May 30th is River Day at Rotary Park. These are all volunteer based programs. The S in CARES stands for Shredding Days. We have a partnership with Corrigan Record Storage to do low cost paper shredding at their site on the first Saturday of every month. "Spring into Novi" is a new City event. It is Saturday, May 2nd and replaces the traditional "Fall for Novi" with a similar format. It also kicks off our Novi All Seasons Market. Our department is going to take an interactive approach and have some demonstrations and some hands on activities that highlight some of our programs.

In addition to our All Seasons Market on Saturdays there is a Wednesday evening Farmer's Market at MSU Tollgate Farm starting on June 17th. Our Cultural Arts division is working on "The Case of the Dead Paparazzi" which is a murder mystery event that will take place at Twelve Mile Crossing at the Fountain Walk site. The event is May 1st with registration through April 24th for teams of four. They already have a good response for that event.

Director Muck stated on Monday's City Council Agenda we are bringing forward a recommendation to approve a new contract with Suburban Ice, our Ice Arena management company. We are extremely pleased with their financial accountability, programming, staff and upkeep of the rink. City Council will be moving forward with a recommendation for a three-year contract with two one-year renewal options.

Commissioner Torimoto asked why the Open House event went from fall to spring. Deputy Director Ringle stated city staff had a chance to weigh what seasons would be more engaging for the community. Fall is very busy time and having it in spring was thought to be a way to enhance attendance.

2. Commemorative Tree Program

Deputy Director Ringle stated the Commemorative Tree Program is a City program implemented more than ten years ago. It is a cross coordinated program between our department, DPS and our Landscape Architect out of the Community Development Office. We had an opportunity to look at that program and enhance it by offering more park locations and more tree species options. We have also revamped our internal process to make it smoother. It enhances our parks and facilities and gives people an opportunity to commemorate a loved one in a unique way. We are looking to add benches and tables, as Director Muck mentioned, for Pavilion Shore Park. This is an opportunity to enhance and expand the Commemorative Program. There are currently about fifty or sixty commemorative trees in the community and we expect that to grow with our promotion through the sponsorship program.

Commissioner Jewell asked the cost for the program.

Deputy Director Ringle stated it is \$500 per tree and includes a two-year guarantee on the tree. Most trees are an inch and a half to about two and a half inches in caliper depending on the tree species. It also includes a 12 inch by 8 inch granite plaque engraved how you wish, which is guaranteed for ten years.

3. Sponsorship Program Guidelines

Deputy Director Ringle stated as a department we are very fortunate to have great business support. We offer a good product and have a positive reputation. In the fiscal year 2013/2014 our program participation was over 225,000. We have access to multiple demographics which is something our business community is interested in. One of her goals, coming in to her position, is to create and implement a comprehensive program that meets the needs of our sponsors as well as our own. One of the new things to be offered is fence banners at Power Park. A comprehensive approach benefits all. Sponsorships are crucial. They help us offer what we do and meet the expectations of our community through special events, sports, etc. We are going to have a comprehensive piece professionally done so we have something to take with us when we meet with businesses.

Commissioner Bauss asked besides banners, what other kinds of opportunities would there be. He asked if they would be able to do something like sponsor a sports team.

Deputy Director Ringle stated that is something we have done in the past and are looking at again. We have a couple of sponsors for baseball teams. It is a good smaller scale opportunity for locally owned or a small business to get in and understand what our department is about and have access to those markets. Special event sponsorships are something we have done continually. She would like to see us take that to the next level. If a business is interested in a target market they could be involved in certain special events across the board.

Commissioner Wingfield asked how many of the fields at Power Park are named. He is aware of Tom Holzer.

Deputy Director Ringle replied there is only one field that is currently named. There are Naming Rights opportunities through the Novi Parks Foundation.

Commissioner Jewell asked if the fields could be named at ITC Community Sports Park?

Director Muck replied yes. There is a package which will come out through the Foundation soon.

Deputy Director Ringle stated the Parks Department and Novi Parks Foundation will work collaboratively knowing there are opportunities through both.

C. Older Adults – Older Adult Services Manager Karen Kapchonick

1. Meadowbrook Commons – Tom Gordon, KMG

Manager Kapchonick introduced Tom Gordon of KMG who manages Meadowbrook Commons.

Mr. Gordon stated KMG Prestige is a professional property management company whom he and his team work for. The City of Novi is their customer through contract. They manage almost all aspects of the Meadowbrook Commons property. They work with the department on the budget process and have a nice 20 year Capital Need Assessment Plan they work with and is about 5 years old now. After July 1st they will be completing another updated 20 year Capital Needs Assessment Plan. Mr. Gordon gave an overview of KMG Prestige Management and what they do. He stated they have been with Meadowbrook Commons for over ten years. He has been there as a manager for six years. Mr. Gordon stated Meadowbrook Commons has 175 apartment homes and ten buildings. The main building is three stories with 115 one and two bedroom apartments. There are 60 ranches in nine buildings around the main building. There are seven different floor plans. They serve people 55 years and older and are pet free and smoke free. Having the Senior Center there is a great concept. Transportation service helps many be independent. There are 80 people on the waiting list. Meadowbrook Commons has been 100 percent occupied for almost five years and all of the rents have been collected.

Commissioner Bauss asked how the waiting list works and if it is preferential for Novi residents.

Mr. Gordon replied it is first come first served with Novi residents receiving preference. If you do not live in Novi but have a son, daughter or grandchild who does live in Novi you get second preference.

Commissioner Bauss asked if he knew what the breakdown is.

Mr. Gordon replied that he does not.

Commissioner Jewell asked how likely it is to get in.

Mr. Gordon stated some people come off the waitlist because they find other accommodations or have to make other arrangements due to health. Some people on the waitlist are not ready to move in yet so those further down get an opportunity to move in. He stated it is hard to second guess the waiting list.

Commissioner Wingfield asked about how the management cost is structured.

Director Muck stated there is a management fee and they work closely to budget capital improvement projects. He complimented Mr. Gordon for the Town Hall Meeting he holds every year which Director Muck, the City Manager and Finance Director attend and answer questions for the residents.

Commissioner Wingfield asked if the rental rates charged are comparable to the senior rates in the metro area or to Novi. He asked how the rates are structured.

Mr. Gordon replied they do market surveys every year before they determine rents for the budget. They have a comprehensive set grid they use for market.

Commissioner Bauss stated rents have to be the hardest part.

Director Muck complimented Mr. Gordon and Finance Director Carl Johnson. They are very articulate in how they explain rate increases to the residents. Commissioner Staab asked if all units are private paid.

Mr. Gordon confirmed this.

Commissioner Staab stated there is land behind Meadowbrook Commons and asked about expansion.

Mr. Gordon stated he is not sure if that has been discussed.

Director Muck stated it has not been actively discussed in his year here but is something that can be taken under consideration.

Director Muck asked Manager Kapchonick to talk about the gazebo.

Manager Kapchonick stated the Novi Rotary Club became part of a project at Meadowbrook Commons and built the gazebo. It was built in the fall right before winter started so we did not have a chance to do a dedication. A dedication will take place on Thursday, May 21st at 11:30 a.m. acknowledging and thanking them for all of their hard work. They will also acknowledge Mr. Gordon and Rachel Zagaroli who were part of that committee. We are looking at having benches put in and the possibility of a concert during the summer months. They would also like to do landscaping for hummingbirds and butterflies.

Commissioner Jewell thanked Mr. Gordon for his report.

2. Programs & Services

Manager Kapchonick stated they are busy because they have many outstanding volunteers. They recognize a volunteer each month. This month they are recognizing Glen Davis who does the pinochle and euchre programs. This past week the City did a volunteer appreciation dinner and all of their volunteers love going to it to socialize and meet other volunteers. This year it was a Buddy's Pizza. In April there are three new upcoming events. There is an India Club for those of Indian descent to get together twice a month here at the Civic Center and play popular Indian games. The first meeting had twelve people. This Saturday we have two new events. The first is Boomer University being held at Oakpointe Church starting at 9 a.m. It is an event that has guest speakers, a band and a variety of vendors. The vendors are organizations who are looking for volunteers or participants. She gave examples of many of the vendors. They have sold over 700 tickets. On Saturday afternoon here at the Civic Center will be our first Euchre Tournament. We currently have over 41 participants. For our Social Service section of our Department March was known as the Fall Prevention month. We worked with the Fire Department and had them come to Meadowbrook Commons and had them look at residences and find potential fall hazards. We do "A Matter of Balance" program through St. John's Community Health and we also do a Balance Training with our own fitness program. Through the AARP Tax Program we serviced over 300 individuals who had their taxes done right up to the last day. We appreciate the partnership with AARP because without them many individuals would be lost trying to do their taxes because many of them are accustomed to getting things through the mail rather than electronically. Saturday, May 2nd is our Kentucky Derby Novi style at Meadowbrook Commons. We have the Memorial Day Parade on Monday, May 25th and she encourages everyone to become involved and for veterans to participate. The parade starts at 10 a.m. The information about the parade is on the City website.

Commissioner Wingfield stated he received a flyer on Boomer University and asked if it starts at 9 a.m. and is pretty structured.

Manager Kapchonick replied that it is a structured program starting at 9 a.m. because there are sessions until around 11 a.m. and then walking around and visiting the different vendors.

Commissioner Jewell asked if the Euchre Tournament was the same Saturday and where it was held.

Manager Kapchonick replied it is here at the Novi Civic Center and starts at 4 p.m.

MATTERS FOR COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION: None

CITIZEN COMMENTS: None

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Pratt stated it is good to see the department get some recognition in the budget and a full time position. He expressed kudos for that accomplishment.

Commissioner Torimoto stated he had an opportunity to go to the volunteer appreciation dinner at Buddy's Pizza. He is coaching and had his first practice for the kids that night. He saw many of the volunteers from Meadowbrook Commons and sat at Glen Davis's table. He will be doing parking duty again for the Memorial Day Parade.

Commissioner Bauss thanked the department for all of the hard work they do, the innovative programing and keeping things fresh.

Commissioner Wingfield stated it is good City Council has always supported Parks and Recreation and now it seem we are getting more recognition. He thanked Mr. Gordon for coming and for everything he does at Meadowbrook Commons. He asked where things currently are with the Dog Park.

Director Muck stated we are reseeding it. There had been a small problem with drainage coming off the hill so DPS put some drain tile in and took care of the issue. We are now at about 280 memberships. We will have to monitor usage. The good part is with all of the memberships we can put some of that money back in to improvements in the park. The park is open, fully functional and heavily used.

Commissioner Wingfield stated at the Northville Dog Park they have a little dog area and two big sections so one can be closed to reseed or rest the turf. He asked if that might be a possibility at some time at the Novi Dog Park.

Director Muck stated the work done to our Dog Park should help alleviate some of the muddy issues. One of the things we may consider is putting in new fence to rest areas which he knows is a common practice.

Commissioner Wingfield suggested thinking about more parking.

Director Muck stated parking has been talked about and is something we will have to take forward as a future recommendation for a CIP. They were working under certain parameters and budget constraints when they first designed and built it. He knows there was one day when there was a tournament at the Ice Arena we had some spill over. During the next season people can park at the Ice Arena and walk down the hill. Director Muck stated that park has so much potential. There has been some talk about putting in a path around the perimeter of the park which would be half to three quarters of a mile.

Commissioner Bauss mentioned the path could be tied in to other existing paths so people could walk to the Dog Park.

Commissioner Jewell asked about a little shelter where people could go when the temperature gets high.

Director Muck stated this is where sponsorships and naming rights through the Foundation come in to play. This would be a prime opportunity for a business which is oriented toward dogs or their owners.

Commissioner Staab thanked Mr. Gordon for attending. He stated the Saturday night before Mother's Day is the Choralaires concert from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Novi Middle School. You can get tickets at Novi Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services. He attended the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner which was fun and the food was good.

Commissioner Jewell stated he appreciates everything the department is doing. He thanked Mr. Gordon for everything he is doing at Meadowbrook Commons. He stated while listening to the radio, WCSX was giving kudos to Novi. They were in town visiting different places and gave Novi Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services accolades saying Novi has some of the best parks they have ever been in. They come in for three days and visit the city and see what is happening in the community. They were giving Novi rave reviews. He stated it is nice to be a part of it with the parks growing, the grants and the budget from City Council to help us grow and expand.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Voice Vote

Unanimous

The meeting was adjourned by Commissioner Jewell at 8:05 p.m.

DATE APPROVED: _____

Jerry Jewell, Chairperson

Charles Staab, Vice Chairperson