

**PARKS, RECREATION AND FORESTRY COMMISSION**

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2007 – 7:30 PM**

**NOVI CIVIC CENTER – COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**DRAFT**

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 PM with Commissioner Schwarzlose presiding.

**ROLL CALL:** Dooley (Absent), Goyal (Present), Kristock (Absent), Policicchio (Absent), Radcliffe (Present), Schwarzlose (Present), Staab (Present), Wingfield (Present), Zyczynski (Present).

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Commissioner Staab asked that the Foundation Report be added to the agenda. Commissioner Schwarzlose stated that there are two dates regarding future meetings that need to be corrected. The November meeting of the Novi Beautification Committee is actually on the 12<sup>th</sup>. The December meeting of the Novi Beautification Committee is on the 13<sup>th</sup>. A motion was made by Commissioner Zyczynski and seconded by Commissioner Staab that these changes be made to the agenda.

**Voice Vote**

**Unanimous**

**CITIZEN INPUT:** None.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Approval of October 11, 2007, meeting minutes.

Moved by Commissioner Staab, seconded by Commissioner Zyczynski.

**Voice Vote**

**Unanimous**

**TEAM REPORTS:**

A. Director's Report

**2007-2010 Strategic Plan - Quarterly Progress Report**

Director Auler stated that the Park Commission and City Council adopted the 2007-2010 Strategic Plan previously. That planning process included an evaluation of the Department and its services and was modeled after the "good to great process" created by Jim Collins. We have now added another section, the balanced scorecard, to that plan in terms of how we measure our progress. The purpose of the balanced scorecard is to measure our progress toward the strategic outcome but it also provides a means of how we link resources to focus on those strategic initiatives to

get the outcome we want. The goals and objectives are not being worked on exclusively by one section but are more of a cross function within the organization through a team process. The next quarterly progress report will be a power point presentation. There are fifteen strategic objectives identified in the plan. Enhanced citizen quality of life is ultimately our overarching objective in the plan. We do this in a variety of ways including delivering excellent recreation services, improving our customer satisfaction and loyalty, serving a diverse community, and expanding our funding sources and evaluating opportunities to build advocacy partnerships. Advocacy partnerships are partnerships which are win-win relationships to help bring resources to the organization and provide better service to the community while reducing cost to the taxpayer. We also provide a quality product, and measure this against CAPRA. This is an acronym for Commission on Accreditation for Parks and Recreation Agencies. There are 157 standards for organizations to be measured against. It is a comprehensive look of your organization in all facets. Once you go through that process a team of professionals from across the country come in for five days. After an intense process the Department is graded as to whether you receive certification or not. They make a recommendation to the CAPRA board at the national conference on an annual basis. There are currently 76 departments in the United States which have received their accreditation. This is something we will be undertaking in the next eighteen months. It takes eighteen to twenty-four months to begin and complete the process. This is something we have identified in the strategic plan.

The balanced scorecard gets into a strategy map. As we got in to our strategic plan we broke down four service areas. The first is customer service. The next is the financial component or how we are going to fund the services at the expectation of the community and how we are going to build partnerships that can help those programs and services to be provided. The next is internal operations which are things we are going to do to make services at a quality level and make them cost effective. This is to streamline our processes to increase our efficiency and effectiveness in all facets of our operation. The last one is how to develop our team and continue to grow as a team, develop our capabilities, build our competency and serve the community more effectively.

The Strategic Plan goals were captured on the balance score card. The four categories are Customer, Financial, Internal, and Team Learning and Growth. The strategic theme which is tied to our strategic plan, the fifteen strategic objectives, the strategic measures which are done quarterly or annually to determine if we are on track with each objective to reach our goal in 2010. We have determined the first year targets but have not completed the three year targets but will work with these through the committees. The way we measure these now on a monthly basis is on a department created scoreboard. This represents the key measures from the balanced scorecard. It shows at a glance how we are doing and if we

are achieving our goal. Green represents on pace, yellow represents on pace but not at the pace we need to be and red represents that the pace needs to be increased. We are on pace for sponsorship and advertising dollars. We are behind pace on naming rights dollars. We are on pace for volunteer hours. Volunteer hours are essential because we cannot provide many of the services without them. You can equate a dollar value to the volunteer hours. The National Center on Philanthropy provides numbers annually on what a volunteer rate is. Last year this rate was around nine dollars an hour. Customer satisfaction rating is on pace. Under Capital Improvement Projects complete, the ones budgeted, we are behind on, partially due to having to go through the Planning Commission process and Zoning Board process. Pick and Click online registration is doing well. Program participation is on goal. Recreation Services Revenue as it applies to recreation programs being totally self sufficient and reduce our general fund subsidy by ten percent, we are on target. Regarding recreation services expense we are behind and need to look at some cost containment. We are on target for Civic Center rentals. On CAPRA standards our goal is to be able to achieve at least 31 of the standards this year, we have not yet begun that process but are organizing how we will achieve that. Overall, from looking at our strategic plan objectives and doing a balanced scorecard, it gives us a quick overview of the Department and where we are with our service and how we are doing. Operationally, this enables us to align our resources to make sure we are on the right track and focuses staff on doing the right thing, the right way, at the right time. We are on track for achieving what we want in the first year and are hoping to exceed that. Director Auler stated he would be glad to answer any questions.

Commissioner Zyczynski stated that this is exciting and nice to have it reported out this way.

Commissioner Staab stated that he knows Director Auler has contingency plans for those areas which are not on pace. He stated that he know there is a lot of activity going on as far as naming and hopefully will come to fruition.

Commissioner Schwarzlose asked if any of the 76 departments that are certified are in Michigan.

Director Auler stated that there is one and he believes that it is Canton. He then stated that is an important measure because it sets the stage not only locally, but it sets the stage and will soon be a pre-requisite for one of our goals of winning the National Gold Medal Award. Besides this being a good tool for overview in terms of presentation to City Council, citizens groups, commissions, it is a testament to our team. The team is the one that makes it happen.

Director Auler stated that he wanted to recognize a couple of the teammates on their personal achievement. Wendy DuVall, who manages the youth sports programs and some of the other programs, recently participated in, completed and received her National Youth Sports Alliance certification at level one. She is working on her level two certification now. She has also invested a significant amount of her own personal funds in professional development through MRPA. This speaks to her character and commitment to the profession and the community.

Tracie Ringle, who is our Communications, Marketing and Resource Development Coordinator, recently took and passed her Parks and Recreation Professional Certification; which is the license for our profession so that we meet certain standards. We are proud of her accomplishment.

Tim Zylka, who is in our parks operations team out in the field, received his Certified Landscape Certificate. He is one of only 32 individuals in the state who have received this certification. Tim manages the Lakeshore Park complex. If you have an opportunity to go out to Lakeshore Park, you will see many improvements which Tim has implemented. Specifically, these are the kiosk and flower area at the mountain bike trailhead, the beautification projects around the large shelter and around the day camp facility. He and some other teammates built the entryway in to the park.

Our team is really embracing the concept of continuous employee development which is one of our strategies.

Commissioner Wingfield asked where we stand on phase two of the lights for Power Park and if they will be ready by next April.

Director Auler replied that we are learning more as we go through this process. We are behind on the lights and he is hoping that the lights will be in by April, but he cannot guarantee it. Before we can go out to bid we have to get our specs together. Even before that, we have to get the plans reviewed by the engineering office and the Plan Review Center to determine the “bleed over” of the lights, the type of light and the quality to meet certain criteria.

Commissioner Radcliffe asked if the scoreboard of strategic targets is something that is going to be broadcast to the community on the website or in another way or if it is primarily internal. She thinks it is a great vehicle to sell what the Department is working on.

Director Auler replied that it is something the Department plans on using when doing presentations for City Council or to homeowner’s associations

or those kinds of groups. It might be something that could be put on the website but we would have to look at the terminology that would go with it to explain the process for the citizens to understand. It is something we are going to use as a tool to communicate with the citizens, partners and potential partners. It shows where we are, where we are going, here is how we are doing, here is where we need help and here is how you can help us.

**B. Park Operations**

Director Auler stated that we do not have any major issues or topics to report on. We are focusing on the capital improvement projects, winterizing the parks and preparing for winter functions.

**C. Recreation Services**

Superintendent Cowan stated that we have been working on developing a strategic plan for senior services for the past couple of months. Some focus groups were held last month with a variety of community members and they gained a lot of valuable information. She felt it was a useful process to go through and they appreciate everyone who participated. They have taken the information and have been working with some other noted experts and agencies in the field as well as a great deal of research to formulate trends and critical issues for our community for the future in this area. We are currently working on the strategies and priorities we will use to reach some of our goals and that plan is very close to being complete. We are also utilizing the information from the older adult survey which was completed. To follow up on that, Dr. Miller will be here from the National Research Center at the November 26<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting to formally show the results and speak about how our community responded and how that would relate to us in the City of Novi. We invite everyone to tune in to that and look for that information.

Flag football and soccer seasons were very successful and wrapped up with good weather. The participants were very happy with those programs.

The Storybook Stroll took place at Lakeshore Park on October 20<sup>th</sup>. It was a new Halloween event we developed this year, over 300 children participated in the event. Well over 1200 people came out to enjoy a great event at Lakeshore Park. Thanks to all of the volunteers and sponsors. Commissioner Staab worked very diligently at a golf game all afternoon.

Our theatres held numerous performances of "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer". Some of our first school performances, which were day time performances, were so popular that it was decided to add a third one.

Upcoming activities include basketball and volleyball seasons have started for our youth. All of our volunteer coaches are in place and prepared for the season.

The “Ringing in the Holidays” program is coming up on November 30<sup>th</sup>. We would encourage everyone to come out and be part of that event. The popular Electric Light Parade will be taking place again this year as well as a variety of different activities for children and families. We have added a kid’s run this year called “Jingle Bell Jog.” This will take place before the parade for children five to ten years old. Information has been preliminarily sent out to the schools and we will be sending out more fliers next week.

We are utilizing survey monkey quite extensively now to review all of our programs. A big part of looking at our numbers and tracking customer satisfaction is to make sure we have good feedback from the participants in our programs. They are now sent those links after programs and are able to complete those surveys. They are also up on our webpage so that people can take part in a survey if they are part of a special event.

Mallory Wethers, who has been interning with us for almost six months, will complete her internship at the culmination of “Ringing in the Holidays” on November 30<sup>th</sup>. She has done a great job for us, has been a great addition to our team and has contributed a great deal. We have enjoyed having her with us and wish her well.

#### D. Novi Parks Foundation

Commissioner Staab stated that tomorrow is the Gala, “Diamonds Are Forever” at Rock Financial Showplace. There are tickets still available. The event should be a high spirited formal affair. The awarding of the Hugh and Kathy Crawford Award will take place. There are also still raffle tickets available. To purchase these you can call the Parks and Recreation office or Commissioner Staab’s cell phone.

The Foundation elected their new slate of officers for the 2007-2008 year. Linda Blair will lead the Foundation. Commissioner Staab will be the Vice-president. Brian Bartlett will be the Secretary. Justin Fischer will be the Treasurer. Justin just joined the Foundation and is a finance person for Ford Motor Company, so they thought he would be a good Treasurer.

There are many Naming Rights prospects that they are working on right now but there is nothing yet to announce.

Commissioner Wingfield asked how many tickets have been sold for the Gala.

Commissioner Staab stated about 175. He can't answer about the raffle tickets because their sales have not ended yet.

Commissioner Schwarzlose added that should someone want to attend they should feel free to call (248) 245-2608 with an RSVP and you can pay at the door.

**CITIZENS INPUT:** None

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

- A. Establishment of Commission Committees and Appointments to Committees

Commissioner Schwarzlose asked if there were any questions regarding the committees.

Commissioner Zyczynski stated that the Special Projects Committee looks huge. She asked what role the Historical Commission is playing with the Fuerst Farm property.

Director Auler stated that these are committees of the Commission. We have never worked exclusively and these projects are not necessarily the projects we will work on. It is a list of potential projects. There are certainly other projects that could be included, these are just a sample of ideas. Director Auler stated that he has talked to the Chairperson of the Historical Commission. If the City of Novi, Historical Commission or the Parks Commission takes a lead on identifying what the best use of the Fuerst property is for the community now that the library bond has passed and look at that as a whole concept they can see how it all might work and set the stage for upgrading it. Right now there are barns that are in extremely poor condition and are off their foundation. The home needs a lot of work as well. What the best use for the barns and home should be determined. With the expansion of the library, Township Hall will need to be relocated in the spring. He does not see this as being the sole function of this Commission or the Historical Commission or any other group. If this is a project that comes our way we would involve many people in that process. One project is coming our way and that is moving Township Hall. It makes sense if it has to be moved to move it only once because of the significant cost. Then we need to decide where to move it and where will it best fit. It then makes sense to look at the whole complex. There was a five-year plan done at one point. He has a copy and has reviewed it. Is it a complex like Celery Flats in Portage that City Council saw and has managed or will there be another type of use? We will have to move Township Hall and it makes sense to involve as many people as we can as we have always done, from the preparation of our Strategic Plan to the preparation of our five-year Community Recreation Plan and the Senior Plan.

Commissioner Zyczynski stated that what she understands Director Auler to be saying is that what are listed are only potential projects.

Director Auler confirmed this. He then stated that she had previously worked on a committee that worked on developing a pathway plan. This is not on our list but it is certainly one that could be a lead role for us. We would explore how to phase in those pathways or the Singh Trail and what opportunities there are of acquiring easements through power line borders within the community to develop a trail system. This list is not inclusive or exclusive. It is only a sample list.

Commissioner Zyczynski then stated that the strategic planning for the “Boomers” and seniors is really getting at the Senior Center concept.

Director Auler stated that services are really what the team is working on now. They are beginning to talk a little bit about our Commission Meetings receiving that now that we have the survey information coming back in the very near future. The work that Superintendent Nancy Cowan and her team have done will be shared with a committee of the Commission so that a strategy can be developed.

Commissioner Wingfield asked if the Chairperson of the Park Commission is involved in committees.

Director Auler stated that the Chairperson is not assigned to any committee but can sit in on any committee. That is why there are two on each committee. The Chairperson can come in and be the third person. If there are three people on a committee and the Chairperson comes in then we have a quorum situation.

Commissioner Wingfield then asked since there are six people and four suggested committees that each commission member would select one committee to be on.

Director Auler replied that is correct. He then stated that Student Commissioner Goyal has done a tremendous job of working with Mallory Wethers and our team on young adult programs. Student Commissioner Goyal and the other Student Commissioner would serve on the young adult committee to help continue building activities for youth within our community.

Commissioner Schwarzlose stated that if there are not further comments or questions he will name the appointments to the committees and if anyone has any concerns with the appointments it can be discussed.



Appointed to the Long Range Planning Committee with Superintendent Cowan will be Commissioner Staab and Commissioner Radcliffe.

Appointed to the Community Connection Committee with Tracie Ringle will be Commissioner Zyczynski and Commissioner Wingfield.

Appointed to the Young Adult Committee working with Derek Smith will be Student Commissioner Goyal and Student Commissioner Kristock.

Appointed to the Special Projects Committee working with Director Auler will be Commissioner Dooley and Commissioner Policicchio.

Commissioner Zyczynski stated that she does have a big interest in the Senior Center project but she also has a big interest in the greenways and pathways. She stated that if those become projects she would be interested in also being part of that.

Director Auler stated that is the advantage of setting up committees with two members. When work begins on projects that a Commissioner may have an interest in there can be one more that works on the committee.

Commissioner Staab agreed with the Long Range Planning commitment. He would also be interested in the Community Connection because of his longevity in the community and having being involved in Community Development in the past.

A motion was made by Commissioner Zyczynski and seconded by Commissioner Wingfield to approve the Committee appointments.

**Voice Vote**

**Unanimous**

**CITIZENS INPUT:** None

**COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:**

Student Commissioner Goyal stated that she liked the idea of the scoreboard.

Commissioner Wingfield stated that he, Superintendent Wiktorowski, and representatives from the Novi Youth Baseball League had a chance to evaluate the fields a couple of weeks ago. He is looking forward to having a meeting with Director Auler to work out some of the issues.

Commissioner Radcliffe stated that she wanted to congratulate Wendy DuVall, Tracie Ringle and Tim Zylka on their certifications. It is a great testament to them and the Department.

Commissioner Zyczynski stated that she has a compliment for the Forestry Department from a citizen. There was a tree on the city easement in front of their house that had died. They were very pleased with how it was taken down and replaced and are very happy with their new tree. She also congratulated Wendy DuVall, Tracie Ringle and Tim Zylka on their on going educational improvements. She thanked Mallory Wethers for her service to the community and the team and wished her well.

Commissioner Staab stated that he wanted to thank Superintendent Nancy Cowan and Mallery Wethers for his opportunity to try to be “Charlie Brown” at the Halloween Storybook Stroll. They had a costume for him but it must have shrunk. He had a great time and he would be glad to help at any time. He appreciated Mallory coming to Novi and helping. He wished her well in the future. He congratulated Tracie Ringle, Wendy DuVall and Tim Zylka on their certifications. The Choralair’s Christmas Concert is on December 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>. Tickets can be purchased at the Parks and Recreation office. He stated that if anyone wanted raffle tickets for the Gala they could call him or the Parks and Recreation office. Anyone can call also if they are interested in attending the Gala. He thanked the committee that put together the Gala.

Commissioner Schwarzlose congratulated the staff on their accomplishments. It proves that the Department continues to have the leaders in the industry. One would think going in to the fall and winter that things would be slowing down but the Gala is tomorrow, “Ringin in the Holidays” is November 30<sup>th</sup>, the Choralair’s concerts are on December 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>. The Novi Theatres has performances on December 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. You continue to be busy and perform at the highest level.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting was adjourned by Chairperson Schwarzlose at 8:19 PM.

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Signed, Reagan Schwarzlose, Chairperson

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Signed, Karen Zyczynski, Vice Chairperson