

PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES

THURSDAY, JULY 8, 2010 – 7:00 PM

NOVI CIVIC CENTER – COUNCIL CHAMBERS

DRAFT

The meeting was called to order at 7:02PM with Commissioner Policicchio presiding.

ROLL CALL: Dooley (Excused absence), Iszler (Present), Jewell (Present), Policicchio (Present), Staab (Present), Wingfield (Present), Kerbrat (Absent) Raina (Absent).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

It was moved by Commissioner Jewell and seconded by Commission Wingfield to approve the Agenda as written.

Voice Vote

Unanimous

CITIZEN COMMENTS: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A. Approval of June 10, 2010 meeting minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Wingfield and seconded by Commissioner Jewell to approve the Minutes as written.

Voice Vote

Unanimous

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. Walkable Novi – Commissioners Iszler & Policicchio

Commissioner Iszler stated consultants have been selected for the non-motorized master plan and compliance plan and will be submitted to City Council for approval. Mark Spencer from the City discussed potential layout of north and south recreational trail routes.

B. Novi Park Foundation – Commissioners Dooley & Staab

Commissioner Staab stated that the golf outing is at the Links of Novi on August 5, at 10AM. They need golfers, sponsors, and volunteers. The early bird special has been extended and the next meeting is this coming Tuesday evening. To sign up go to website or call Novi Parks & Recreation. Numbers at this point are not very strong.

STAFF REPORTS:

A. Administration Division – Randy Auler, Director of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services

Director Auler discussed the capital improvement projects. At Fuerst Park they are getting ready to finish up Phase 1. Patio furniture, trash cans, and WiFi signage is to be installed. Fuerst Park Garden received bids and will have a recommendation to City Council at their next meeting. Once the bid is approved and under contract, the work will begin, with completion expected at the end of August. An arbor made out of rebar was explained as a suggestion from City Council leadership who had visited Westerville, Ohio and seen the design. Currently this is being explored. Another piece of the garden will be a sculpture of a monarch butterfly to be installed at no cost to the taxpayers or to the budget. This is part of our agreement with Midwest Sculpture Institute. The garden is also not costing taxpayers any money because the Novi Park Foundation is funding the entire cost of the garden. We are just beginning to go out for Requests for Purchase on Phase 2, which will include an extension of walkway lighting along 10 Mile that matches with the Library lighting and additional work within the interior of the park with the goal to have work done by next spring.

The second item is the National Softball Tournament. We are hosting this August 4th through 8th with teams coming in from all over the Midwest to play fast pitch. This is also during the Foundation's golf outing, which is August 5th. This will be a stretch for staffing capabilities.

Regarding staffing, we are currently reviewing applications to hire two part-time recreation programmers and have realigned some of our existing staff to better meet community needs. Wendy DuVall is coming out of the recreation program area. The two part-time recreation programmers will back fill that position. Wendy will now oversee the operations piece as it relates to the operations of the Civic Center rentals, operations of Lakeshore Park and Concessions and Shelters operations. The maintenance side of facilities is now housed with the Information Technology Department and Ron Valente and Doug Flees from our staff have been realigned to that division within the City. Park Operations, which is maintenance, is being performed by DPS as it has been. Derek Smith's previous position is being turned into a full-time program position solely focused on sports for both youth and adults, with two part-time individuals reporting to that position. We have advertised and are reviewing the applications. Nancy is out this week on vacation so we will begin after she returns.

Another capital improvement item is an energy savings item set to save in the neighborhood of \$20-35,000 over the course of time. We received a grant for energy efficiency operations and that is on the City Council agenda for Monday night as well. This is retrofitting a lot of the equipment at the Ice Arena to make it more energy and cost efficient.

During the budget process, we proposed having the subsidized cab operation be available only during the hours that the van operation was

not available. Implementation was through the City Council budget process at the same time the agreement with the cab company was up. They elected to not renew their agreement. The majority of their rides were taking place during the same time that our van hours are operational. We went out to bid, and with none being received, and as such we are now implementing on July 19th the expanded van hours we originally proposed as part of the budget. The van hours will run from 8:30 in the morning until 9 at night – Monday thru Friday, Saturday 9 – 5, and no service on Sunday. If anyone needs service outside those hours they can contact a cab company and pay the rates. Out of the subsidized cab service there are 51 registered users and 90% of the uses are during the hours we are running the van operations.

Director Auler announced that he accepted the position of Director of Parks & Recreation for the Westerville, Ohio Parks Department. He stated that it was probably the second toughest decision he's ever had to make. This is an excellent opportunity and ultimately comes down to not passing up a career opportunity like the team in Westerville with the resources that are available to the community in terms of staffing, financial, community engagement, and sponsorships. He is very excited and at the same time very sad about leaving here. He has made a lot of good friends at the Commission level and Foundation Board, City Council and Staff, and citizens within the community and that is what has made the decision the hardest. We have done a lot and he thanked the Commission for their hard work. Commissioner Staab has been here the longest, with Commissioner Wingfield coming back, but we have been through the thick and thin way back when. We've made a difference from expanded parkland with no cost to the citizens, to improvement of facilities, to economic impact and a 20% plus increase rating in all of our survey data in terms of quality experience, customer satisfaction, and the importance parks serves in our community. Commission has a lot to be proud of during that time and will continue to steer the ship in that direction. He appreciates the support given to him, both professional and as a friend. Nancy will probably be the individual who serves in an interim basis, when information becomes available. Nancy will certainly be your liaison for the Park Commission, Nancy and Evie, and then also for the Foundation Board and Walkable Novi Committee.

- B. Recreation Division – Nancy Cowan, Superintendent of Recreation
Speaking on Nancy's behalf, the Sizzling Summer Art Series is going well with the second jazz concert moved inside due to the heat. We had approximately 70 people in attendance. Overall the Series has to date through the series of shows, over 1,000 people who participated.

The Senior Center is going well. As you may be aware Rachel is out and will be out a while longer with some recent surgery. They have all picked up the slack at the Senior Center.

In addition, we have been down a person in Derek's position, and relocating Wendy to her new role, she's been doing triple duty, and then with my announcement, the staff have done just a tremendous job. In terms of other events, we have the Art Exhibit out in the atrium and it continues to be well received, with shows lined up for the next four months. September 19th is the International Festival, the name has been changed, I believe to Ethnic Eats and Tunes Festival and will be held in partnership with the Chamber's farmer's market. The following weekend is Fall for Novi.

The Engage booklet is being finalized now (Sept. – Dec.) and will hit homes in mid August. Our numbers are holding in sports with only a decrease in the day camp operation.

MATTERS FOR COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION:

CITIZEN COMMENTS: None

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Wingfield expressed his appreciation for Randy's service to the community, and best of luck.

Commissioner Staab wished Randy congratulations and the best in new ventures. Thank you for all of the hard work.

Commissioner Jewell also wished Randy the best with his new endeavors.

Commissioner Iszler added her good luck and thank you.

Commissioner Policicchio added thank you for the improvement to the parks, programs and facilities during the trying times in Michigan largely through his leadership and effort. He will be missed and continued success and good luck.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Commissioner Policicchio at 7:25 pm

DATE APPROVED:

Jay Dooley, Chairperson

Paul Policicchio, Vice Chairperson