

**PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES COMMISSION**

**Thursday, Jan. 16, 2020 – 7 P.M.**

**NOVI CIVIC CENTER – COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. with Commissioner Dooley presiding.

**ROLL CALL:** Dooley (Present), Staab (Present), Joshi (Present), Pratt (Present), Riggins (Present), Smith (Present), Torimoto (Present), Student Representatives Ananya Kamalesh (Absent), Saketh Ogirala (Present).

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

It was moved that the agenda be approved as amended by Commissioner Staab and seconded by Commissioner Smith.

**Voice Vote**

**Unanimous**

**CITIZEN COMMENTS:**

None

Commissioner Dooley acknowledged former Student Representative Alex Fortsch as a unique person who represented himself and Novi High School very well. Dooley said Fortsch was always prepared, kept it lively, comically and had great insights. His role ended at the end of the year.

Fortsch said this Commission has meant a lot to him. He came to the Commission with the civic goal of helping with things he cares about, which are the parks in this city and the city's environment as a whole, which is something to be protected. He said he thinks his time on this Commission has been such a blessing to him and to serve with each of the other unique individuals on the Commission. Fortsch said he was also glad Ogirala is taking over, as he'll do a great job.

Commissioner Dooley said they've never done this before, but gave Fortsch a thank-you card and his name plate.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

A. Approval of Nov. 21, 2019, minutes.

It was moved that the minutes for November be approved as amended by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Pratt.

**Voice Vote**

**Unanimous**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- A. Walkable Novi – Commissioner Riggins & Smith  
Commissioner Smith said there was no meeting this month, but there is one next month just before the next Commission meeting.
- B. Novi Park Foundation – Commissioners Staab & Torimoto  
Commissioner Staab said they had a get together at Ascension Dec. 3 and have not had any meetings or activities since then. They do have a meeting scheduled in January.
- C. Grants Committee – Commissioners Dooley & Joshi

Commissioner Joshi said we didn't have a meeting this month or last month, but we do have the AARP FitLot grant to discuss later in this meeting, which was also discussed in November.

Director Muck said he had emailed the committee an update. We're monitoring the Recreation Passport legislation and keeping an active eye on that, as it could be potential funding for the City down the line. Our understanding is there are discussions happening between the Secretary of State Office and DNR. The mParks Conference and Trade Show is rapidly approaching in two weeks. Commissioners should have received invitations to attend and we have at least three who plan to attend. mParks was able to partner with SEMCOG to offer sessions for a day at the conference. It's the first time that's ever happened. If you're interested in going, please contact the mParks office. It's going to be a good day full of educational opportunities. Some of the things you would be able to learn more about is the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, some of the ballot proposals and you would have access to the trade show and a free lunch. We look forward to seeing you there. Also at that conference, Management Assistant Chris Jackett will be there attending the DNR grant workshop to learn more about what this year's changes to the applications and processes are.

D. Parks Updates

Commissioner Dooley gave an overview of how the parks updates are conducted.

1. Villa Barr Art Park – Commissioner Staab

Commissioner Staab said he was out there last Sunday, the day after ice and snow. He showed images of the park rules and informational signage throughout the park. Signage described where David Barr drew inspiration from for different art pieces. The house – in conjunction with City Council and the Parks Foundation – got new windows put in and has been used as an active artist-in-residence program. Staab encouraged people to go visit. The air was very fresh. With gravel paths, it's pretty easy to get around. He remembers when this location was on a dirt road, but now it's on a nicely paved road just south of the roundabout at 10 Mile. Staff should pat themselves on the back at how well it's been maintained. It adds another dimension to Novi besides active parks; it adds a cultural services side that people enjoy and come from miles around to view. Commissioner Torimoto asked how does the gravel hold up with water gravel? Commissioner Staab said it held up pretty well. There were some areas with ice after 2-3 inches of snow, but nothing bad.

2. Lakeshore Park (Dec.) – Commissioner Smith

Commissioner Smith said he was out in early December when it was dry and sunny. There's signage showing much of the park is closed, but you can still access the trails. He showed pictures of the construction zone progress from his visit. People are going back to the bike tracks and there are also deer tracks. He said it's amazing how up north it feels despite being in Novi and also showed the new emergency boat ramp.

~~3. Meadowbrook Commons (Dec.) – Commissioner Pratt~~

4. Novi Ice Arena (Nov.) – Commissioner Torimoto

Commissioner Torimoto said he went to the ice arena during a holiday weekend skate. He went on the ice with his daughter and it was pretty crowded, which it usually is for the holiday skates. You check in and go downstairs to the red rink.

The floor is a cushiony material, but there's no major damage and it's always pretty clean. There are some lockers, but people are pretty comfortable leaving their stuff out. They have hockey and figure skates, but they ran out of my daughter's size. The skate rental is very well organized where you get the skates and go. It was quite crowded. You could skate in a loop and, in the middle, there were some figure skaters trying to do some tricks. There's all levels and people really considerate. It's really safe. The Zamboni comes through and everyone goes to the benches or spectator area. Its mixed use, hockey, figure skating, ice skating, etc. He said he was looking for damage around the edges and there was only minimal, mainly near where the Zamboni comes out. There's one wood board that's loose in the spectator area. There's 1-2 where there's a wider gap between boards where a skate could get stuck in it. In terms of facilities, being able to just walk in and play hockey in a facility as nice as this is just an asset that we have. People are pretty considerate. You've got beginners and hot shots.

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

- A. Novi Northwest Park Public Input Results
- Director Muck invited the project trio to the podium, where Recreation Supervisor Greg Morris, Recreation Supervisor Cristin Spiller and Management Assistant Chris Jackett introduced themselves.
- Supervisor Morris said a public input session was held on Nov. 6 to gather information, as well as to provide insight to the process of creating a park. Eighteen people attended from various areas of Novi, including residents from Andelina Ridge, Catholic Central and members of our leadership team, including Deputy Director Ringle and Director Muck. We gathered quite a bit of information with attendees expressing their need for parking, as well as stating their concern for the trails and their placement in comparison to the surrounding neighborhoods. After a round of questions, we had an activity for them to complete, which included having storyboards for each phase, including trails, playground options, parking and a comment board. Each attendee was given \$240,000 in the form of sticker dots where they would get the opportunity to allocate them to the amenities they'd prefer. Each amenity already had \$100,000 already allocated, so their money would add on to it. On the trails and playground boards, we had various items listed, including trail material and playground equipment. On the parking lot, it was a "yes" or "no," with a "yes" involving a \$125,000 commitment, in addition to the \$100,000 already allocated. If they wanted one, they would have the remaining money left over. Results showed they preferred crushed stone over asphalt for the trails; a nature-based themed playground, which included a treehouse, mushroom seats and informational signs; and a paved parking lot. Other comments included the need for the removal of invasive species, possibly adding a rain garden or porous pavement to infiltrate water, and completing a sidewalk along 12 Mile Road, which we actually heard quite a bit about. Overall, it was a great fact-finding exercise for both us as staff and for residents to see what's behind putting together a brand new park. The energy in the room was great.
- Supervisor Spiller said two weeks prior to the input meeting, we put a SurveyMonkey survey out to residents that ran from Oct. 15-Nov. 6. The survey was posted on the City of Novi website and both the City of Novi and Novi Parks Facebook pages, and also in the update letter that went out to residents in the

surrounding area of the park. Over the three weeks, we received 324 responses. Spiller recapped some of the responses. She said the question of "Do you have children? If so, what age?" ranged in age from 1-26. There were 287 respondents who visited other Novi parks, led by ITC Community Sports Park, Lakeshore and Rotary Parks. When ranking in order of importance, the results were trails, then playground, then utilizing the natural features of the area, then parking area and then interpretive signage with nature facts, trivia, etc. Other amenities would like to see that related to the park and could be implemented included a monarch butterfly garden, art in the park, geocaching, a gaga ball pit, benches throughout the entire park, connectivity to other parks and a lending library. We were thinking more like the small libraries you see at Rotary and ITC. We asked whether they lived within a one-mile radius of the park and 230 of the respondents did. When asked how would they most likely travel to the park, 46 percent said they would walk, 32 percent said they would drive and 25 percent said they would drive to the park. Spiller said the combined takeaways from the meeting and the survey had kind of a mixed response regarding parking. In the survey, parking was ranked third; but in the meeting, everyone opted in for parking and spent a large chunk of their budget to have paved parking at the park. Both groups wanted trails and we will work with City staff to find the best placement for trails with taking minimal trails down throughout the area, as we did get the feedback that they want us to keep it a very natural-based park. The results for both the survey and the input meeting said they wanted a designated play area, but nothing stated they needed a large piece in the park, so we're looking into smaller nature-based pieces that could create a large, unique area for the residents.

Management Assistant Jackett said we received a lot of good feedback from the survey and the input session, which brings us up to what are the next steps in the process. Following tonight and any feedback Commission may provide, we'll take everything we've gathered and reach back out to our own GIS and Engineering Divisions to work out what's the best route for the trails in the park. We'll be working with a playground supplier to look at options for what might be the best playground there for consideration and get a couple options for that. Throughout the whole while, we'll be working on gathering options for developmental grants both through the state and through niche organizations that may be able to help us with the trails, playground and so forth. We are also working with the Parks Foundation to look at naming rights, which will be discussed at the January Foundation meeting through Executive Director Rachel Zagaroli. From there, if we're unsuccessful in securing naming rights, we also have the option to have a naming contest, which could be opened up to residents and go that route to be interactive again and give residents some more ownership with the park. This leads us up to probably the tail end of the year when we'd be prepared to do a Request for Proposal leading into next calendar year. As budgeted, the project is open for the trail phase at some point after July 1, 2021. The project is split up into three phases, with the trails during that first fiscal year, the playground the fiscal year following in 2022-23 and parking lot following in the 2023-24 fiscal year.

Commissioner Smith said he was at the community meeting and said he thought it was exceptionally well run. He liked the idea of budgeting the money and it really made people think about the decisions they were making and they couldn't say "I want everything." It had a basis in reality, so that was excellent.

Commissioner Pratt said one of the questions had kids ranging in age from 1-26, so who attended this meeting? Supervisor Spiller said no students showed up. The 1-26 was the ages in the survey responses, not in the ages attending the meeting. Pratt asked if there were any kids there with parents? Spiller said there were not. There was the intention to run a children-ran section of that meeting, but no children attended. Management Assistant Jackett said we did have current parents and some representation from Catholic Central High School, so that touched on some of the younger age groups. Pratt said the State and DNR, when doing their playground rebuilds, have been really going to the schools. If you get down to that point, that could be really nice to do.

B. AARP FitLot Grant Application

OAS Manager Stogner said he had mentioned at the last meeting that he had attended a one-day conference in Lansing for AARP's Age Friendly Communities initiative, which he'll talk about later in his report. One thing AARP is doing for their 60th anniversary is every state in the country, Washington DC, Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands, they're gifting an outdoor fitness park called FitLots. He showed images on the projector screen and said they're permanent outdoor structures with exercise equipment that can be adapted for a bunch of different abilities, routines and they're 1,400 square feet. They're there for group classes, so there's bar and beams where you could attach resistance beams, do cardio or strike stations. This must go inside existing parks. Fifteen states have received this grant so far. They're doing Michigan this year. In addition to being inside an existing park, the grant application must be managed by a parks and recreation department. It must be located in a mid-size to large community of at least 50,000, so we fit that community size they're looking for. They want an easily accessible park location. Preferences are given to communities that are in or have applied to the AARP network of Age Friendly Communities, which he'll talk about later in his presentation about getting in front of Council to at least apply for it Feb. 28. One of the nice things about this grant is the City wouldn't be responsible for any of the construction work or costs. AARP would hire a contractor to do the work for us and there's a long list of warranties on the equipment. Stogner said, when he asked Jeff Keesler from the AARP who's overseeing this grant for Michigan, about repair funds, they're talking about things like that that in case there are things that don't go to warranty, so we could maybe get it where there'd be no cost to the City for damage. Director Muck said, when this was taken to the Grants Committee before the holidays, we had a robust discussion about where would be an appropriate place for this. There are a lot of criteria to this and we've settled in on proposing Wildlife Woods Park for a few reasons. Wildlife Woods is a park we are putting a lot of emphasis on this year. We have a brand new access road coming into the park. Our pickleball court is going to be going under construction this year. It's actually under the design phase of the plan. And we have long-term plans to connect to the ITC Trail, which is on the border of the Wildlife Woods property into Wildlife Woods, so it makes sense to put the FitLot here. We are proposing the FitLot in the corner near the parking lot so you keep the pickleball courts, shelter and FitLot separate. We don't have a lot of parking directly next to the FitLot, but there is the traditional Wildlife Woods parking at the schools' lots. Another reason this makes sense is the new Villas of Stonebrook that are going in just north of Wildlife Woods Park is an age-targeted community. This would set us

for some nice age-targeted activities between the pickleball and the FitLot. We only talked about one other location, with the new Bosco Fields location, but we had some concern about access at that site. We wanted to bring this to Parks Commission – the Grants Committee wanted us to bring this to you – and then take that direction to City Council and apply for the grant.

Commissioner Staab said he appreciates Wildlife Woods with the pickleball courts and age-targeted community, but his only concern is he would demographically say a large percentage of older adults live east of Novi Road. But we don't have facilities as far as existing parks that would satisfy the criteria. Staab said he's thinking out loud and doesn't think Brookfarm or Rotary Parks would be good fits. He said his gut, based on what he knows about the neighborhoods, would have more people from the AARP community in those neighborhoods. Director Muck said there is currently a small version of this at Meadowbrook Commons with four stations. While it's not necessarily promoted for the residents of Meadowbrook Commons, it is available to the entire community.

Commissioner Pratt said location itself he's a little concerned with vehicle traffic and how people are going to get across from the neighborhood back there. Secondly, down the road, would there be leagues there or a walking track where we could add a little more fitness to it. Just putting it out there, what else is there. It is a park he walks a lot and if there's a future walking track, the thing with fitness at that park is it's not a walking park. People are going to be driving there. It's a destination instead of people stumbling upon it and walking it, but that neighborhood will add a lot there. He asked what the access to get there would be if traffic is big and what sports occur there right now? Director Muck said there's very little there due to drainage. Pratt said it may be a good spot for a fitness park, put in a potential fitness walk and make it a fitness destination. Commissioner Joshi said the pickleball going in as a targeted activity for that population, so this would add on to that even though there's nothing there now. That's the thought process even though a lot of that population is on the other side of Novi.

Commissioner Staab said, when the Foundation came with the commitment for the Tim Pope and pickleball money, there was a Councilman who said we like the dollars for the pickleball court, but they weren't in a position at that time – back last May – to commit that it would be at Wildlife Woods. Staab asked if there was a commitment for Wildlife Woods as the location now? Director Muck said yes, Council approved the design that was specifically laid out for Wildlife Woods.

Commissioner Dooley said we sometimes get lost and take things for granted. He said he agrees it's a destination location, but that's why people are going to come. When people go to work out, those who go to work out on a regular basis go to a regular location. It may be a few miles away, but they're going to go to that location. Like this, if people are really excited about the pickleball courts anyway, so they know that's a destination they're going to have to go to at Wildlife Woods. While they're at that destination location, they're going to have something like this, as well. Dooley said he thinks this will be a very happening park. Commissioner Joshi said even more so if you can add on to it. Dooley said that ITC Corridor connection is a very enticing factor.

Commissioner Staab asked how far the ITC Trail was from Wildlife Woods? Director Muck said it was a half to a quarter mile away. When they were

designing it, it comes through the woods close to Wildlife Woods maybe a half mile away.

Commissioner Torimoto asked if we're a network Age Friendly Community. OAS Manager Stogner said we're not presently, but he'll discuss that more further. He wants to get the City to apply to it by their early February meeting.

Commissioner Torimoto asked if, from the AARP standpoint, they give us the grant and build it, then what? Stogner said they get their AARP logo on the banner canopy, so they get the advertising. After 10 years, we can replace it with a City logo or whatever, but we have to keep the AARP logo up there for 10 years. Torimoto said some of this isn't so age specific, but you could walk across from the Island Lake subdivision to use it.

Commissioner Pratt asked if we get to choose or is it turnkey? OAS Manager Stogner said they're set kits this company puts up.

Commissioner Joshi asked if they were OK for the weather? OAS Manager Stogner said they are.

Commissioner Dooley asked what the next step for Commission would be? Director Muck said a recommendation to Council would be appropriate.

Commissioner Riggins asked if AARP would add trainers sometimes to educate people on the equipment. OAS Manager Stogner said not that he's aware of. Commissioner Pratt asked whether we work with AARP currently? OAS Manager Stogner said we do; via speaker series, tax preparation, driver safety, training programs and more. Director Muck said Meadowbrook Commons with the existing stations, we have incorporated some of our walks. The exercise stations are incorporated into programs already and he could see the same happening here, especially when the ITC Trail is incorporated.

Commissioner Pratt asked if we found this grant or if it was presented to us? OAS Manager Stogner said it was presented to him at an AARP conference he attended in October.

Commissioner Pratt asked if all the AARP classes we offer now help add to the grant? OAS Manager Stogner said it may. The programs we do with AARP are pretty common for municipalities and nonprofits to do. Specifically in the grant they mention being given an edge is being a part of that Age Friendly Community initiative.

Commissioner Riggins asked if other cities are applying to this grant, as well? OAS Manager Stogner said yes and they're doing one of these in every state. Other cities are competing for it.

Commissioner Pratt motioned to submit what's presented by the PRCS Department in full support of this going forward for the grant process, seconded by Commissioner Smith. Passed unanimously.

Commissioner Dooley asked what date this would be at City Council? Director Muck said they'll have to look at that because they also need to submit the resolution of support for Council to approve for the other application. We're not sure if they'll be on the same agenda, but they may need to be. OAS Manager Stogner said Feb. 28 is the application deadline for the grant.

## **STAFF REPORTS**

### **A. Administration Division – Director Jeff Muck**

#### **1. Park Project Updates**

Director Muck said the Tim Pope Play Structure has been fully completed and is fully operational. We've scheduled a re-dedication ceremony for 9 a.m. May 2.

Commissioners, the Parks Foundation, people we have information on who supported the original construction, Council and the community as a whole will all be invited. Look for more on that in the spring, but we already have a commitment from members of the Pope family to attend on that day. We did gain approval by City Council for our submittal of our master plan. City Council wanted to make sure their thanks was passed on to the Commission for their work reviewing and working on it. Many, many positive comments, including that it was the best plan they've seen come out of this department. It was a very good, robust discussion and a lot of support from City Council and we're waiting on DNR approval of that.

Lakeshore Park update- Director Muck said the parking lot, pathways and sidewalk are all stoned in and are ready for when the asphalt is available in the spring so we can start that. We now have four walls and it is progressing rapidly. Access to the mountain bike trails has been maintained and open throughout the duration of the project. We were able to provide the Motor City Mountain Bike Association a significant amount of the displaced soil from the project and they were able to utilize that on the trail system. Instead of incurring costs and hauling that offsite, they were able to use that to enhance some of the trail features. They were very appreciative of that. Muck showed images of the building and construction area. We're making some significant progress and you can see things really starting to form. What that means for the future is still in flux with weather related. We had some setbacks in the fall, but in March they're hoping to construct the large pavilion near the new building, April paving on the site – of course, weather dependent – but we hope asphalt would be available early in the month typically when the plants open back up. In early May, they'll do the bathroom/garage building on the south end of the park. Those will be reopened so our mountain bikers will have facilities to use. Mid-May will be the playground install. Commission helped with that and Council approved, so the playground is basically sitting in a warehouse waiting to be installed right now. Some of the initial grading and work is ready to go. We're looking at June to install the library kiosk machine and bring library materials to our north-end residents, subject to our paving schedule. Our goal is to open Memorial Day and have the building ready for Camp Lakeshore. We will continue to update you as we move through that.

Commissioner Staab asked if the trees along the western fenceline are new trees? Director Muck said they are all existing trees we were able to maintain as a buffer. That fenceline was a no construction zone, but we will be coming back and enhancing it in the spring and/or fall. Staab asked if trees will also be planted on the opposite side, too. Muck said they would.

Director Muck said a separate project was work on Lakeshore Park Beach, restoring shoreline erosion using rip-rap over a textile liner. We installed a handicap-accessible ramp at the beach on the east end. This doesn't extend all the way down to the water, which we did on purpose due to erosion concerns. We plan to use a Mobi-Mat or similar product that's basically a plastic mat that would lead from the platform we built down into the water. The nice thing about that is it's adjustable. Our lifeguards can set that and adjust that as needed to the varying water levels. If we had done concrete all the way down into the lake, we would've had erosion issues we were too concerned about. We felt this would be a good option. We did renovate the emergency vehicle park maintenance access ramp down onto the beach. Muck said he wanted to



emphasis it was for emergency and service vehicles only. We've already had a couple comments where people thought we built a public boat launch. That is not a public boat launch. It's only for emergency service vehicles and we will be signing that as such on both sides of the gate. We also reinforced the retaining wall and filled it in with soil and seed, and also installed two new concrete picnic slabs on the east side of the beach area. One is handicap accessible, as well; addressing some accessibility needs at this beach. That gives you a closer look of what we put in between the ramp for handicap accessibility and the handicap-accessibility picnic table pad. They also did some concrete slab work around the tunnel. Down the road, we also did some work on Pavilion Shore Park. We did shoreline erosion and used the same heavy rip-rap over a textile liner. Muck said, during construction, they were not going to take this across the entire face of the park, but as we moved into construction, we determined it was going to be necessary to also place it in front of the flagstone area next to the overlook. Water was eroding the base of the flagstones. To prevent that and having to come back again and mitigate that, we did put the rip-rap across the entire face. Muck said this is minor compared to what you're seeing on the shores of Lake Michigan and some other great lakes. Statewide shorelines are having issues. This should set us up for a long time to come up there. Restoration will continue into the spring. The crews are for the most part done, but will come back to do any additional restoration, such as seed, topsoil or irrigation. Commissioner Staab said he received a lot of comments earlier in the fall about the erosion from residents in and around the area. What comments have been received from them? It looks nice compared to what it was. Director Muck said we've gotten the positive comments that its great and we saved shoreline and looks good. But we've also received some negative comments where people are concerned that now they can't get into the water. It's a balancing act of we save the shoreline or allow access. Staab said that's why we have a public beach right down the road. He said he thinks it looks very nice and can't wait until Pour on the Shore.

## 2. Recreation Center Committee Update

Director Muck said this will be a standing agenda item for the next few months. City Council directed us to form a Recreation Center Committee. Commissioner Dooley is on that committee, along with Mayor Pro Tem David Staudt, Councilmember Kelly Breen and a couple other citizens, including Kim Capello from the Parks Foundation. We had our first meeting Dec. 16. Most of the meetings centered on the purpose of the committee. We showed an inventory of private- and public-owned recreation facilities in the city. There are more than 40 that offer some type of recreation activity, whether it's indoor courts, fitness centers, pools. We reviewed that, had some discussion on that and started some basic discussion on what we would be looking for as far as amenities and how would a recreation center be funded. The most important thing that came out of that meeting was a discussion and direction to staff to take to City Council a request for Council to fund \$100,000 in consultant fees to be used toward exploring the recreation center. That could mean surveys, feasibility studies, or a consultant who walks the committee through the process. Council has approved that and we've already started with a survey that will be coming out to 5,000 homes via postcard that asks some basic questions about level of support, amenities and funding. Commissioner Smith said he's already received his. Muck

said the next meeting Jan. 27 will not have the results of the survey back yet, but it is expected to be a robust discussion as we dive into the issues of what we want to do with potentially releasing an RFP for a consultant, what would the scope and timeline look like. If we are going to go for a ballot proposal for August, we're on a tight timeline. That has been the indication from Council and the committee that they are looking at an August ballot.

Commissioner Dooley said everyone is looking forward to that meeting on Jan. 27, including the city manager.

B. Recreation Division – Deputy Director Tracie Ringle

1. Program & Services

Deputy Director Ringle said we haven't met since November, so she'll start with a wrap-up of December events. We had our annual Light Up the Night event that was well attended and went off without a hitch. Thanks to Recreation Supervisor Spiller for leading the department and hosting that every year. We had our holiday concerts with our Concert Band and Choralaires; we had our Happy Pawlidays, which is our dog park event where the dogs can come meet Santa and take photos; and we had Lunch with Santa, as well. Wrapping up the holiday season, we had another successful run of programs and engaged a lot of our community members in a nice time of year to do that. Last Friday, we had our second Nerf Wars event for children. It sold out and had a lengthy waiting list, and Supervisor Spiller is investigating options to get adults involved last year. The majority of the comments were "when is it going to be my turn to participate," so a lot of the parents want to do that. We're going to look for opportunities to do that in the future. Our Camp Arctic Adventure that we host to give parents a chance to do things during their child's mid-winter break is 99 percent sold out. Recreation Programmer Chase Root leads that effort, does a great job with it and people continue to participate in that event. Our shelter rentals for summer kicked off this week and we had a good number of weekend dates reserved, especially at Lakeshore Park, so people are looking forward to using that new facility and having access back again to the water and gem that Lakeshore Park is. Our Chili Chilly Softball Showdown, led by Supervisor Morris, is not chilly again. We've had to reschedule that into February in hopes our fields will be frozen and ready to accept players. Fingers crossed that we'll actually start winter. Our youth basketball and volleyball practices start Saturday morning if the weather cooperates to get those seasons kicked off. Our Daddy Daughter Dances are Feb. 7-8 and registration is online on par with past years. This year's theme is a glow dance. Spiller does a great job of keeping it fresh with new themes and décor and outfit suggestions for those who come. When you walked in today, the Atrium was quite crowded and that is children who are taking part in the audition workshop for "The Little Mermaid Jr." Auditions are (Saturday) for that. We already have a record number of 130+ pre-registered already for auditions for shows that will be in (April). We'll be looking to how we accommodate that many interested people in the program and how to move forward with the expanding theatre program we have here. At Villa Barr, our next artist in residence is Shannon Timura. She does sculpting out of chicken wire and a cement-type material that she does outdoors. Ringle said she's interested to see what she brings here to the City of Novi in March and April at Villa Barr. We are actually entering a contract for someone at Villa Barr to access the condition of the pieces that are there. We have them and want to make sure we

have them for a good, long time, so it's something we need to dedicate some resources to. We have somebody who is an expert in those pieces and telling us what we need to do. He's also going to work on some welding and some more securing methods for the sculptures, and in the spring he'll be powerwashing the pieces there so they'll look nice and fresh there, and be ready for the next steps of painting and sandblasting on some of those pieces. At the mParks Conference Jan. 28-31, Villa Barr will be a site where we'll invite people from across the state to visit and learn about our process, our tricks and just be able to show off what we do and point some people in the right direction in their communities. Lastly, summer camp registration begins March 2. A good number of our camps will be included in Engage! with March and April in mid-February, with all of our camps listed online by Feb. 15 at [cityofnovi.org/camps](http://cityofnovi.org/camps). We are looking for people to staff our camps and also be lifeguards, so those applications are on our website right now. Some great summer jobs for some of our young community members.

C. Older Adults – Older Adult Services Manager Derek R. Stogner

1. Program & Services

OAS Manager Stogner said we're looking to take the AARP Age Friendly Community initiative to Council in February. It's basically a network nationwide of communities that share expertise and best practices who prioritize livability and quality of life for older adults. The one thing he noticed at the conference was they were looking for – and State Rep. Kathy Crawford was there, as well – is that Novi is ahead of the curve. We wouldn't be doing anything for the first time; with our Older Adult Services and parks master plan, a lot of these are things the City already does. We're kind of joining the network of this is what we already do. This will hopefully give us a way to share resources, share ideas and give a national branding to AARP of the things we already do here. Michigan at that conference we attended became the fifth state to join that network. Eight Michigan communities are already members: Auburn Hills, Royal Oak, Southfield, Grand Rapids, East Lansing, Highland Park, Lansing and Jackson. Our OAS Advisory would be the driving force behind the initiative and Stogner would act as the community contact with AARP. There's another day of workshops later in February that he'll be attending to learn more about the nitty gritty of the process once you apply. The application is simply a letter from the Mayor or City Council to join it, along with an application you turn in. It will help with our AARP FitLot grant, as well. Outside of that, we're accepting applications for two new members of our Older Adult Services Advisory Board. We have four people right now and would like to get that up to six. If anyone has anyone they know, send them Stogner's way for a questionnaire and in-person interview to get some more members to that excellent board we have already. If you look at the current issue of Engage!, we had a small feature on Novi resident Florence Baptist. She's a volunteer for our older adult services. Baptist is 90 and started participating in older adult programming in 1994 taking our Stretch and Strength class, which she still takes to this day. She's also an active volunteer with our volunteer hour tracking and works in our kitchen for Meals on Wheels and special event parties. She's a great lady and awesome representative of older adult services and Novi in general. Our Nature. Nurture. Novi. recreation program is doing really well. This past weekend we had 34 people attend a Pruning like a Pro class led by Novi City Forester Keith Salowich. Jan. 24 we'll do a presentation

on solar panels and we're actually looking to do our next Cultivate event in May. Special event programming had a lot of great holiday programming; our Christmas party, our luncheon we do with Rotary at Novi Middle School, we had a caroling event and our New Year's party were all really well attended and had good reviews from our surveys. Right now, we have registration open for our Happy Hearts Valentine Party on Feb. 14. We also currently have our fitness and speaker series registration and flyers out, and signups are going on for those. Social services began taking appointments Jan. 7 for the AARP tax aide prep service. This is a free volunteer service AARP does nationwide in conjunction with local agencies and nonprofits. We already have more than 100 signed up. Last year we helped more than 500 people and this year we're looking to service more than 600. It's a very popular service. Also with AARP we're doing a Smart Tech Driver class Jan. 23. Participants will learn about blind spot warning systems, forward collision warnings, smart headlights and kind of the self-driving-type technology cars are moving towards. Cars and self-driving sometimes have things where it will stop or park for you. It's an opportunity for older adults to learn about that type of technology and keep up to date with it. We have a joint pain relief and cell therapy talk Jan. 28. There's some new stem cell and cell therapies that can repair joints and sports injuries, age injuries. Commissioner Dooley asked what's going on with the Jigsaw Tournament? OAS Manager Stogner said we do have that set up in conjunction with National Jigsaw Puzzle Day Jan. 29. We're still trying to get people signed up for it, but it's kind of an experimental thing of a jigsaw puzzle competition with our residents.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS:**

None

**COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:**

Commissioner Riggins said happy New Year to the residents of the City of Novi and she's happy for everything that's to come this year.

Commissioner Smith said happy New Year and it looks like a very exciting year. He said he's excited to get Lakeshore Park open and he's jealous of the drone photography.

Commissioner Joshi said happy New Year and she's glad to be here.

Commissioner Torimoto said he's very excited about some of these projects coming to fruition and engaging in the planning process with Lakeshore and Tim Pope. He'll get his neon suit out for the Daddy Daughter Dance. It'll be his ninth year in a row attending.

Student Rep. Ogirala said it was a nice experience to meet everyone and hear everyone talk, to hear about how excited everyone is about building onto a park.

Commissioner Pratt said it's great to see everyone here and staff themselves. He said he's been in parks and recreation for a while now and there's always three types of programmers. You have the wild-idea forward-thinker programmer, the popular programmer who probably searches out popular programs and you have the detailed programmer. You have the mix of every person in each individual. You produce programs that he's impressed by on a daily basis. Thank you for doing what you do, because it's beyond what a lot of the state of Michigan is currently doing right now. Major kudos to what you guys are doing producing top-notch programs. It's great to have you all here. Your forward thinking on these projects, you're not just thinking of the now, but you're thinking down the road with erosion and water table and things from a parks perspective is great to see not just what residents want now, but what residents want and how it's going to last. Major kudos to you and your planning department.

Commissioner Staab said he appreciates everyone attending tonight's meeting tonight from staff. He appreciates all the commissioners being able to make our first meeting of the New Year. It was a very interesting meeting, as always. He appreciates all the information.

Commissioner Dooley said he echoes all the comments. Thanks to the team of Morris, Spiller and Jackett for your presentation of information. Dooley said he echoes what Commissioner Pratt said about forward thinking and doing surveys to get great input, take that input from the citizens of this city, and activate and execute is really a tribute to you and the direction from the senior leaders of this department. It's a privilege to sit on this commission. We enjoy coming here every third Thursday of the month and we take our parks seriously when we do our presentations, and it's an absolute joy to represent you and the citizens of Novi and the 30,000 or so watching this evening. We said it earlier about Fortsch, but Student Rep. Ogirala can bring his wealth of knowledge, but also spread the word about what the city has to offer in this capacity.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

**Voice Vote**

**Unanimous**

The meeting was adjourned by Commissioner Dooley at 8:23 p.m.

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

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Jay Dooley, Chairperson

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Charles Staab, Vice Chairperson