

**PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES**

**Thursday, November 20, 2014 – 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:** Torimoto (Absent-Excused), Bauss (Present), Ferrell (Absent), Jewell (Present), Pratt (Present), Staab (Present), Wingfield (Present), Student Representative Kodali (Present), Student Representative Thakore (Present).

**WELCOME/INTRODUCTION OF NEW DEPUTY DIRECTOR: Tracie Ringle**

Director Muck explained the selection process and thanked Commissioner Wingfield for his assistance in the process. Deputy Director Ringle was originally in the Parks Department and has been in the Community Relations Department for the last few years gaining a more extensive knowledge of the City and supporting Parks through events and through our marketing and communication efforts. Deputy Director Ringle started on Monday and we are glad to have her.

Deputy Director Ringle stated she has worked the City for twelve years. The first six years were with the Parks Department. She then took some of her duties up with her to the Community Relations Department including, Engage! and marketing and press releases for the Parks Department. She is now able to take her knowledge from the two departments as well as her educational background in Parks back to the Parks Department. The Parks Department has a great forward momentum and she is excited to be a part of that.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

It was moved by Commissioner Bauss and seconded by Commissioner Pratt to approve the agenda as written.

**Voice Vote**

**Unanimous**

**PUBLIC HEARING**

A. Citizen input on the 2015-2019 Strategic Community Recreation and Master Park Plan (Draft)

Eleanor Thompson who lives at 24071 Glen Ridge in Willowbrook Subdivision 3 stated she is speaking as a subdivision board member on behalf of some of her neighbors. Brookfarm Park once had a path you could use to walk through the woods. Now there are cement walkways on the outside of the woods. The gentleman who lives on the right side of the park told her he spent over \$4,000 cleaning up a lot of the ash trees that were down there. She feels the park was better than it is now because you could walk in the woods. She heard from an older lady, who also lived next to the park, that she had taken a large, long, branch which had fallen and dragged it and put it next to a garbage can in the park hoping when the City truck came they would take it away or grind it up. They put the branch back in the woods and according to Parks and Recreation it was done for environmental reasons. She stated what they want is all of the dead stuff ground up and for the weeds to be

sprayed. They want to be able to walk in the woods. She stated the homeowners at the end of the creek do not want the stop signs there and would like them taken out. She stated that they do not want a parking lot at the park. She suggested people park in the Village Oaks School parking lot.

Director Muck stated her concerns are noted. He stated she had contacted the Parks and Recreation department before and her concerns were forwarded to the Department of Public Services. Much of it has to do with forestry and our standards as it applies to Woodlands and Wetlands regulations within the City. He stated there are plans for a small parking lot at the end of Ripple Creek so that people can access the park. It will only be about 5 spots. The issue she has with the stop signs would have to be addressed by the Department of Public Services. He stated the parking spaces are still in the design and engineering phase and before anything is completed the neighborhood and residents will be made aware of the plans.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS:** None

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

A. Approval of the October 23, 2014 minutes

It was moved by Commissioner Pratt and seconded by Commissioner Wingfield to approve the minutes as written.

**Voice Vote**

**Unanimous**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

A. Walkable Novi – Commissioners Torimoto and Bauss

Commissioner Bauss stated he had just come from a Walkable Novi Committee meeting where they discussed the Annual Non-Motorized Prioritization Report for 2014-2015. There were good participation and community comments coming in to the Committee.

B. Novi Parks Foundation - Commissioners Staab and Ferrell

Commissioner Staab stated Tuesday, November 18<sup>th</sup> there was a Foundation meeting. In attendance were Director Muck, Deputy Director Ringle, Executive Director Zagaroli, Member Randy Balconi, and himself. They are looking at alternative fundraisers. They are looking at a fundraiser that would be revolving around Pavilion Shore Park with beer and wine tasting linked to Villa Barr for a fundraiser. We are looking at a meeting on December 18<sup>th</sup> at Randy Balconi's Interior Environments. There were no final numbers for the Golf Outing because Linda Blair was unable to attend the meeting. This past golf outing will be the last one as they are looking at alternative fundraisers.

**STAFF REPORTS:**

A. Administration Division – Director Jeff Muck

1. Capital Needs Assessment

Director Muck stated we have received our Capital Needs Assessment. We had a firm come in and look at our parks and make recommendations and evaluations on our amenities, structures, ball fields, playgrounds, pathways and accessibility from parking lots. We are using that as a tool to plan our next ten years of budgetary items for our Capital Improvement Program. We are now in the middle

of prioritizing and a lot of that is based on infrastructure. We will be looking at our fields especially. There will be more information as we go through the budget process.

Commissioner Wingfield asked if they would be able to see the results of the assessment by the outside groups.

Director Muck confirmed this.

## 2. Programs & Facilities

Deputy Director Ringle stated one of the largest events, Light Up the Night, is coming up on Friday, December the 5<sup>th</sup> at the Civic Center Campus, including the Library, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

The team has put together some opportunities, as an initiative by the Commission, for some outdoor recreation opportunities. Greg Morris has been working on a Chilly Chilly Softball Showdown at Ella Mae Power Park in late January. The Walking Club runs all year long but they will add some winter dates and incorporate some disc golf, maple syrup and a naturalist and look into winter education tying in to that. There will be a Camp Artic Adventure in mid-February for 6 to 12 year olds with activities inside and outside the Novi Ice Arena. The Creative Arts Department is doing a "Snap a Snowman" Contest which will encourage people to build a snowman and share it via social media for awards. We are working with the DNR at Maybury State Park to look at a partnership in offering a "Snowshoeing 101". All of these are included in the upcoming January through March Engage! which will be in mailboxes by mid-December. We received notification from our theatre production company, "Sky's the Limit", to exercise their right to opt out of their contract. We will continue to move forward with Novi Civic Theatre productions and are looking at ways to do this internally. We are confident that program will continue to be a success and serve the Novi community.

Commissioner Staab asked the effective date of the opt out.

Director Muck stated they notified us on Tuesday and there is a sixty day opt out. There are no programs or services within those sixty days so that will expire in January and there will be no break in service.

Commissioner Wingfield asked Deputy Director Ringle if she will continue to do the Engage!.

Deputy Director Ringle replied that Community Relations will continue to work on Engage!. Her role will change to the internal side so she will still have a connection. Community Relations is looking at how they are going to move forward with that as far as staffing but there will not be in interruption in service.

## 3. Dog Park update

Director Muck stated we currently have approximately 175 members for the Dog Park after a couple of months, which exceeds our expectations. We were anticipating around 200 as we celebrated our first year. We will keep the Dog Park open through the winter, conditions allowing. Our notification system is very good. If we had to close the park for any reason, members would receive a notification by e-mail.

Commissioner Staab stated at the Foundation Meeting a couple of citizens stated they would like to see some poles with bags at the back of the park. If we could get some sort of naming sponsorship it would be great.

Director Muck stated a naming rights agreement is an option for the Dog Park to help maintain our operations there. As far as other amenities that might be added to the park, what we want to do is see in a year how the park reacts and how our patrons utilize the park and then reevaluate what potential amenities might be added.

Commissioner Wingfield stated he has been to the Dog Park several times. The dog loves it and it is great. There are some areas right when you walk in and high traffic areas that may get really muddy. He suggested a little shelter at the top of the hill and a few more benches. He has talked to some people at the park, not telling them he is on the Commission, and these are things they have suggested. He is especially concerned about the grass.

Director Muck stated this is something they are in discussion with the DPS and they are aware of the grass area as you enter the park and he is glad for the input on the shade structure and benches.

Commissioner Bauss stated he has heard nothing but glowing remarks about the Dog Park but there is concern about parking.

#### B. Older Adults – Older Adult Services Manager Karen Kapchonick

##### 1. Meadowbrook Commons update

Manager Kapchonick stated they welcomed 7 individuals. Three moved in to the apartments and four moved in to the ranches so Meadowbrook Commons is still at 100 percent occupancy.

The gazebo has been built thanks to the members of the Rotary Club. It was built in one day and a couple of weeks later the shingles were put on. There will be a dedication in the spring. The Rotarians raised about \$8,000 for that project.

##### 2. Programs & Services

Manager Kapchonick stated last week they had the Veteran's Brunch. The brunch was sponsored by the Novi Youth Council. Sixty students participated by serving the Veterans and their guests. We will continue this program and in addition work with the Rotary Club on a Veterans activity next year as well.

We had our "Freaky Fright" Halloween party this past week. At this party we had to do everything in reverse because our meals did not show up in time.

Programmer, Sarah Douglass, did a great job.

The Thanksgiving luncheon was a sellout which means we had over 128 individuals participate.

The Christmas party which is coming up in two weeks is sold out also.

On Wednesday, November 26<sup>th</sup> we invite Novi residents to Moe's on Ten for a Thanksgiving dinner. We will also provide transportation for those who would like to attend. It is a free Thanksgiving meal. Contributions are welcomed and go to our Novi Meals on Wheels program.

The Rotary Club in cooperation with Novi Middle School will be sponsoring the 41<sup>st</sup> annual Senior Holiday Lunch. The students serve the lunch to the seniors and have an instrumental music presentation. Novi Public Schools provide transportation.

The DIA is offering a free program for older adults on December 8<sup>th</sup>. They will provide transportation to the DIA and have a tour with coffee and lunch. We are still accepting registrations.

##### 3. Transportation

Manager Kapchonick stated since they have been busy it has kept transportation on the go. There have been over 1,100 rides this month which is about 148 more

than the previous month. Out of those rides we serviced around 450 for medical needs. We service around 939 residents and around 235 Meadowbrook Commons residents.

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

A. Commissioners shall select from the members a chairman and vice-chairman to preside at all Commission meetings

Nominations opened. Commissioner Wingfield nominated Commissioner Jewell as Chairman of the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Commission. The nomination was seconded by Commissioner Bauss.

**Voice Vote**

**Unanimous**

Commissioner Wingfield nominated Commissioner Staab as Vice-Chairman of the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Commission. The nomination was seconded by Commissioner Bauss.

**Voice Vote**

**Unanimous**

B. Review and discussion to approve the Five Year Strategic Community Recreation and Master Park Plan

Director Muck gave a recap on the Five Year Strategic Community Recreation and Master Park Plan. He stated we will be reviewing this plan on an annual basis and updating it. We have had Public, Commission and City Council comments and have made some minor changes. He wanted to point out we have added to our Walkable Novi section and added more detail and action plan. He thanked Manager Kapchonick for all of her hard work and time on this plan. He is presenting the final draft for Commission approval. Pending Commission approval it will go to City Council on Monday night for their approval and pending their approval it will be placed on file with the DNR (Department of Natural Resources) and sent to SEMCOG (Southeast Michigan Council of Governments).

Commissioner Pratt made a motion to approve the Five Year Strategic Community Recreation and Master Plan with the existing changes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Staab.

**Voice Vote**

**Unanimous**

C. Review and discussion to approve Novi Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services participant and spectator Code of Conduct

Director Muck turned over the discussion to Recreation Supervisor Greg Morris. Supervisor Morris stated as part of the CAPRA accreditation it is important that we have a Participant and Spectator Code of Conduct. It will be part of the registration process and parents would see it when they register. Coaches would get it as part of their coach's meeting and in coaching manuals. He referred to the document which is broken down into coaches, spectators and players. We have already been utilizing a coach's code of conduct in their manual. The code of conduct for spectators and players is new. Research was done evaluating codes of conduct in

several communities and one was put together that would work for the City of Novi. He asked the Commissioners to look at it and get their thoughts and input on it. Based on Commission recommendation we will move to add it to our CAPRA files and get it out to our coaches, players and spectators.

Commissioner Wingfield stated Novi Youth Baseball League has a code of conduct for the coaches who were encouraged to have a team meeting and go over the code of conduct with parents and players. Coaches were asked to sign them. He thinks this is an excellent step.

Commissioner Pratt thinks this is a good idea because a signature holds people accountable. He suggested the code of conduct be posted at each venue. Commissioner Pratt made a motion to accept the Code of Conduct with the addition of a signature required for coaches. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wingfield.

**Voice Vote**

**Unanimous**

**CITIZEN COMMENTS:** None

**COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:**

Commissioner Pratt welcomed Deputy Director Ringle. He stated he likes the signs as you walk into the gymnasiums that tell about our programs. He sees people reading them. He stated that even though Ms. Thompson stated they did not want a parking lot at Brookfarm Park, our goal is to get people in to our parks and accessibility is important even for those who live in the subdivision so he is glad we are talking about parking. She had a good point about going and informing the residents what the plans will be for that park.

Commissioner Wingfield welcomed Deputy Director Ringle back to the department. He thanked Director Muck for letting him be involved in the evaluation process. This is his second time to participate and it is a great process. He stated the MRPA conference is in Lansing this year and asked if the department would consider paying for a day for a Commissioner to go. He went a few years ago and it was very beneficial. He noted that Light Up the Night will be on December 5<sup>th</sup>.

Student Representative Kodali congratulated Deputy Director Ringle and also Chairperson Jewell and Vice Chairperson Staab. He asked where he could view the Master Plan.

Director Muck stated we have copies at the Novi Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services office and after City Council approval it will be on the website.

Student Representative Thakore congratulated Deputy Director Ringle, Chairman Jewell and vice Chairman Staab. She asked if the department tracked attendance at the Dog Park.

Director Muck replied the fob system can break it down by day and even by hour. She asked how it has been going and in the cold there seems to be less attendance. Director Muck stated depending on weather it may be less.

Commissioner Bauss congratulated and welcomed Deputy Director Ringle. He stated he is looking forward to the Novi Theatre continuing and interested in the steps it takes to grow that program. His family has benefited from participating. He stated he lives

close to Brookfarm Park and appreciates all that has been done to the park. He looks forward to improvements. Regarding the path through the woods Ms. Thompson was talking about, there was one before the creek was redone. He was involved in an Eagle Scout project that went in to the woods and cleared the path. A month later, trees were taken out as well as many fallen trees. He stated it would be nice to have the path again. There was a winding path that went along the creek and through the woods.

Director Muck stated the path with access to the creek has been referenced in the Capital Needs Assessment. He does not know where it falls in the ten year plan. Commission Bauss thinks parking is needed and four or five spots would be beneficial. Commissioner Staab welcomed Deputy Director Ringle. He thanked Manager Kapchonick and Supervisor Morris for being at the meeting. He appreciates the efforts on the Five Year Strategic Plan. He looks forward to implementation and is feels it is an active plan. He looks forward to seeing everyone at Light Up the Night on December 5<sup>th</sup> and wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Commissioner Jewell welcomed Deputy Director Ringle and thanked Manager Kapchonick and Supervisor Morris for attending the meeting. He thanked Manager Kapchonick for all of her hard work on the Five Year Plan.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

**Voice Vote**

**Unanimous**

The meeting was adjourned by Commissioner Jewell at 7:48 p.m.

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Harry Torimoto, Chairperson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jerry Jewell, Vice Chairperson