

PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES

Thursday, November 18, 2010 – 7:00 PM

NOVI CIVIC CENTER – COUNCIL CHAMBERS

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 pm with Commissioner Dooley presiding.

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

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

Voice Vote **Unanimous**

CITIZEN COMMENTS: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- A. Approval of October 14, 2010 meeting minutes
A motion was made by Commissioner Wingfield and seconded by Commissioner Tecklenburg to approve the Minutes as written.

Voice Vote **Unanimous**

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- A. Walkable Novi – Commissioners Iszler & Policicchio
No report
- B. Novi Park Foundation – Commissioners Dooley & Staab
Commissioner Staab stated that the Novi Parks Foundation will be featured in Ad in the program of the Choralaires' Holiday Concert Series coming up in December. The Foundation is looking for people to be involved.

STAFF REPORTS:

- A. Administration Division – Acting Director of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services – Nancy Cowan
 - 1. Fuerst Park Amenities
Superintendent Cowan stated that Fuerst Park is the newest park in our system. It is heavily used for our "Sizzling Summer Arts Series" and other programs throughout the year. As we have utilized this park we realized that many more users are coming to it than we originally thought. We see a good mixed use between families, adults, teens and older adults. With the amphitheater close to the library, as well as the new gardens which are in place, we have been asked as a Parks and Recreation department to take the

feedback we have heard from community members who have used the park as well as Commission members and talk about what other amenities we would like to see at Fuerst Park.

Commissioner Wingfield asked if most of the organized or structured activities there were successful.

Superintendent Cowan replied that we did get a good response and are redesigning our summer series next year to target those audiences where we got the biggest attendance. For us the biggest timeframes were Tuesday mornings at 10am for "Puppets in the Park." We had three hundred to four hundred individuals at those each time. This coming summer we would like to do a "Tunes for Tots" or some kind of Tuesday tots series at 10am for six weeks through June and early July. Our other big attendance is our "Movies in the Park" and our concerts. Surprisingly, Friday nights have been very popular. We are planning to do a series in July and August on Friday nights that will either be movie or concert related so that families and other individuals can come out and enjoy those. The "Movies in the Park" saw three to four hundred individuals at each event as well. The summer jazz had fifty to sixty people each time and it was the same with classic movies.

Commissioner Wingfield asked if there were any plus or minus activities with the High School being right there. He also asked if the kids use it to hang out and have there been any issues.

Superintendent Cowan stated that we haven't seen any issues at all. In fact, she sees many High School students passing through there. Some of them do hang out to stop and talk. There is also Wi-Fi in the park so once in a while you will see someone with their computer doing work.

Superintendent Cowan stated that the staff has done some brainstorming. People who have been out at the park have asked us if there is a playground and what our plans are when they see us at the park in our staff shirts. We have had a lot of inquiry about a splash pad within the City and have talked about that and whether it is feasible in Fuerst Park. We also talked about some natural playground elements and not necessarily the large playground structure that are the bright colors but rather a natural wood structure or climbing wall kind of features or boulders. There are also some natural play elements which tie in to the musical theme of the park like drums or wind chimes to interact with. We see a lot of preschoolers in that park because of the library and some of the programs that we are doing. So we could consider some of the rockers that look like ladybugs and grasshoppers, etc. and smaller elements in the park which are more passive.

Commissioner Dooley asked if what Superintendent Cowan is saying is that she is looking for some input from the Commissioners on a task force to be a part of the meetings planning events in 2011.

Superintendent Cowan replied not so much with the event planning but with the service improvements or capital items for the park that we might like to raise funds for or look at grants.

2. Quarterly Park Maintenance Standards – July through September Superintendent Cowan stated that the Park Maintenance Standards are in the packet. She thanked everyone who turned theirs in. There is a ranking by month as well as the percentage for the quarter. Matt Wiktorowski, who oversees many of the parks and DPS, will be in attendance at the December meeting to give an update on any park projects, seasonal items and to answer any detailed questions you may have.

Commissioner Dooley asked what the purpose is of Matt Wiktorowski being at the December meeting as opposed to this one.

Superintendent Cowan replied that he had a scheduling conflict this week.

- B. Recreation Division – Superintendent of Recreation – Nancy Cowan Superintendent Cowan stated that the Recreation Division has been very busy wrapping up from fall and moving in to the winter season. There was a Coach Appreciation Dinner which was held for all of our volunteer soccer and flag football coaches. We are looking to make an annual appreciation dinner for all of our coaches. It would probably happen in the spring where we could recognize our hundreds of volunteers who spend time on youth sports. We track and calculate the number of individuals and hours spent. It is tremendous what they give. The Mayor and Commissioner Dooley were at the Appreciation Dinner to give some words of support. It was a great event lead by Theresa McClure and Matt Ostermeyer.

We have made some changes to youth sports in basketball and volleyball. Some of our younger players will get more clinic instruction with some more professional coaches who also then mentor our volunteer coaches. This has been very successful for our basketball program so far and looking forward to rolling in to volleyball season this winter. Those registrations are going on currently.

We have a couple of large events coming up. In early December we have several performances by the Choralaires, the Novi Concert Band as well as our "Melodies of the Season". A press release will be done for those in the next week containing all of them. Coming sooner is our "Cinderella" production which has been fifty plus tremendous individuals who are doing their last dress rehearsal tonight for their second week of performances. Their first weekend of performances was last week and Friday was sold out and we added General Admission seats. Saturday was a little lighter and Sunday was again very full with lots of Girl Scouts and families. There are three more performances this weekend. They are on Friday night and Saturday and Sunday are matinees. She encouraged everyone to attend. Kudos to Lauren Sorrentino who is the director of this show.

Our "Light Up the Night" event, formerly known as "Ringling in the Holidays", will take place on Friday, December 3rd from 6 pm to 9 pm. We have fliers at our desk, on the website and are being posted around town in a larger format. This event has traditionally been at Main Street and has had an electric light parade, some activities and Santa. This year, with the new library in place and with the expanded Civic Center campus, we saw a great opportunity to move it back here to the heart of the City and show off our beautiful campus. Not only is it a holiday tree lighting of our beautiful new twenty-three foot tree in front of the Civic Center but also the holiday decorations will stay through the entire month of December. All of our decorative poles will be lit with LED lights. The library is partnering with us this year on the event. On that night we have a variety of activities. We have visits with Santa Claus for free. You can get your picture taken with Santa. There will be ice carving demonstrations, a Craft Show, holiday performances including scenes from "The Nutcracker" done by a local dance company. Best Buy will be doing some games for kids. Dan Dan the Choo Choo Man will have his train. A wreath lot will be run by the Boy Scouts on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Glenda's will also be doing a tree lot for the weekend. We are hoping the community will come and support these. There will be over fourteen vendors from restaurants from around the City. There are also activities going on at the library. There will be a magician, crafts, and face painting. We also have a special project. Over twenty five hundred of our Novi Elementary students are creating their own luminaries. They are cutting snowflakes out of white paper bags. We are teaching them the cultural lesson that, like all snowflakes are different so are individuals. All of the pathways between Parks and Recreation, the Police Station and the Library will be lit with 2,500 luminaries that night. Artificial flames will be used. She encouraged everyone to attend. Mayor Landry will light the tree at 6:30 pm and give the "Spirit of Giving Award" for this holiday season. Our sponsors have been a huge part of making this happen. Providence Hospital, ITC, Friends of the Novi Library and the Library, Best Buy, Rotary Club and Youth Assistance. Community Bank just joined us yesterday and they have a tie in with WICB who are going to do some radio spots for the event. WICB will be here not for a live broadcast but will be playing holiday music and interacting with individuals in the City. That partnership has the potential to grow in to other events like the "Sizzling Summer Arts Series".

People have asked, with the economy, why we are still doing these big events. Fortunately, we have been able to continue because of the partnerships. They make it possible for us to provide these opportunities for our community at low costs. When you look at the surveys which we have recently done, community events rate very high in what people want to see and why they live here. We anticipate 2,000 plus people to attend and hope that you will join us.

Commissioner Wingfield stated that he did not realize there was an Appreciation Dinner for the coaches and he thinks that was a great idea having coached numerous teams in Novi. He thinks that is a great way to

recognize people and he would like to be involved in the next one and maybe say a few words. He commends who ever came up with the idea. We could not have our programs without them. He asked if it was going to be done after every season or once a year.

Superintendent Cowan replied that our plan is to do it once a year for all of the sports. We have a lot of coaches that coach multiple sports and some that coach only one season. We would like to find a time to bring all of our coaches together.

MATTERS FOR COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION: None

CITIZEN COMMENTS: None

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Student Representative Kerbrat stated that her sister, who is in elementary school, is very excited about the "Light Up the Night" luminary she is making and plans to make it very special and creative. She is very much looking forward to attending herself.

Commissioner Jewell stated that he agrees with Commissioner Wingfield about the Appreciation Dinner for the coaches. Being a former coach, it is outstanding that you recognize the volunteers. We have a lot going on and he is looking forward to "Light Up the Night" because he thinks it is going to be an outstanding event. He thanked Superintendent Cowan for her outstanding work doing multiple jobs.

Commissioner Tecklenburg stated that he also agrees that the Coaches' Appreciation Dinner is an outstanding idea. "Light Up the Night" sounds like an exciting event and he is glad that it is being brought back to the Civic Center campus.

Commissioner Wingfield stated that things are going well and that Superintendent Cowan has done a great job. Just because we are in a tough economic time does not mean that Parks and Recreation shuts down and if it weren't for our partnerships we might have to shut some things down. There are some great things coming up for the holidays.

Commissioner Staab stated that bringing the "Light Up the Night" to the Civic Center campus is an excellent move. We should continue to show off our campus. On the same weekend, on December 5th at Church of the Holy Family at 4 pm is the Choralaire's Holiday Concert. For tickets you can call Parks and Recreation. He also thanked Superintendent Cowan for all of the information and for the great job she is doing.

Commissioner Dooley stated that he wanted to recognize people from the Coaches' Appreciation Dinner. He was privileged to have been there that evening. He and the Mayor addressed the many volunteers who did attend. It was very enlightening and long over due to do something like this. Theresa McClure, who is a very humble individual, and is a tireless worker takes no credit for the work she does. The coaches who were there gave her a standing ovation because she truly cares about the children in the City of Novi. The

Coaches' Appreciation Dinner would not have happened without Superintendent Cowan's blessing and Theresa McClure's work. He also thanked Aubree's Pizzeria & Tavern in Novi/Northville for going above and beyond their donation for the dinner. Kudos to Bob Roberts and his people at Aubree's.

Commissioner Staab wished all of the listeners a Happy Thanksgiving.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Voice Vote

Unanimous

The meeting was adjourned by Commissioner Dooley at 7:35 pm

DATE APPROVED:

Jay Dooley, Chairperson

Paul Policicchio, Vice Chairperson