

PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES COMMISSION

Thursday, February 19th, 2026 – 7 P.M.

Novi Civic Center – Council Chambers

The meeting was called to order at 7:00p.m. with Commissioner Dooley presiding.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioners: Joseph (absent/excused), Riggins (present), Dooley (present), Gopalakrishnan (absent/excused), Staab (absent/excused), Bagley (present), Torimoto (present)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Commissioner Riggins motioned for approval of agenda and second by Commissioner Bagley.

Thirty-seven minutes into the meeting there was a motion to move Director Muck's report to the March meeting. He was still attending a city finance committee meeting. Motion for approval was made by Commissioner Riggins and second by all.

Voice Vote

Unanimous

CITIZEN COMMENTS:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

It was moved that the minutes for the January 15th meeting be approved by Commissioner Riggins and second by Commissioner Bagley.

Voice Vote

Unanimous

PRESENTATIONS

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- A. Novi Parks Foundation – Commissioners Joseph, Riggins, Staab & Torimoto
Commissioner Torimoto said the last meeting was two days ago on February 17th. Marcel, the new executive director, and Victoria the event coordinator were in attendance. They have been brainstorming and presented their ideas at the meeting about Pour on the Shore. The conclusion was there are some challenges on the feedback from the surveys. They are looking at ways to improve certain areas, for example the food, pricing and music. The event has evolved from the original craft beer focus to a broader concept. The next meeting is March 10th. Marcel and Victoria will come back with specific data, potential layouts and decisions on how to proceed. Commissioner Torimoto, the treasurer for the foundation will report on the financial status. There was questions and discussion about more surveys to the community for ways to improve the event. It was explained that approximately 300 people attend Pour on the Shore each year. The craft brewery industry has declined in recent years, so it is time to rebrand the event.
- B. Active Mobility Committee – Commissioners Gopalakrishnan & Dooley
Commissioner Dooley mentioned there was not a meeting this month. The next meeting will be March 19th right before the PRCS Commission meeting. Hopefully there will be updates then.

MATTERS FOR COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION:

A. No Smoking / Vaping in Parks Signage Options

Deputy Director Ringle reminded the commissions of the smoking and vaping discussion held a few meetings back. It was recommended a park rule would be the best option to pursue. This was agreed upon by council. The next step is to design signs to encourage people to follow the new rule. Deputy Director Ringle presented some fun options that draw attention to the new initiative. These would be Novi branded with the colors, font, keeping it specific to each park. The Commissioners suggested looking into students designing the signs. These would be placed in different locations some even on the same post as other park rules. ITC, Ella Mae Power Park, Novi Dog Park and Lakeshore were all included in the discussion of where to place signs with content specific to the location.

The rule prohibits smoking and vaping 100 feet from entrances to buildings owned or leased by the city. Within a public park this applies to open-air pavilions, play structures, gazebos and other park features. It was clarified that the rule would be self-policed. The young staff at the parks will not be put into uncomfortable situations to enforce. The vape cartridges were mentioned by Commissioner Bagley because she has seen them become an issue at Oakland County Parks with litter after event.

STAFF REPORTS

A. Administration Division – Director Jeff Muck

1. Park Project & Initiative Updates

Tabled to March meeting.

2. CIP Milage Renewal

Tabled to March meeting.

B. Recreation Division – Deputy Director Tracie Ringle

1. Programs & Services

Deputy Director Ringle began her update with the Daddy Daughter Dance that happened a few weeks ago. It was a sellout with 750 attendees. This was the first time since Covid that the attendance has been that high. There was a nice article in the Novi Note about the event which featured several residents. Recreation Supervisor John Gillingham was in charge of the dance, and he is also preparing for summer camps. March 10th camp registration opens for Novi residents. We anticipate a sell-out which is typical on the opening day. People are being encouraged to get onto their Civic Rec accounts to make sure everything is set with password and correct address to determine residency. Applications are currently being accepted for camp counselors. The Beetlejuice Junior production in partnership with In the Mitten was very successful. Nearly 1600 tickets were sold for the production that took place at Novi Middle School. The next theatre opportunity is New Sheriff In Town for the younger actors and Aladdin Junior for the older kids. Aladdin will have two cast and will take place at the Civic Center in April.

The first artist in residence for the season arrives March 2nd. There will also be a local artist to use the red studio during the day and evening at their leisure. The visiting artist will stay in the home. These are the first of six artists this season.

The Cultural Arts Committee is a newly formed committee that was directed by City Council. The first meeting was in January. The group will continue to meet monthly on Thursdays before the PRCS Commission meetings. The committee is charged with developing and presenting a citywide public art strategy in coordination with planning and community development departments that enhance the character of Novi city

centers, expands public art opportunities and recommends zoning and public mechanisms to incentivize privately displayed public art as recognized for public benefit. Council approved the goal of establishing a public art fund beginning in fiscal year 2026 funded approximately \$1 per resident annually from the general fund with year to year roll over supplemented by grants and private donations. The Cultural Arts Committee will develop and forward recommendations on the public art locations, concepts and funding priorities for City Council review and approval. Any funds considered for this allocation would come through the budget process so there is no guarantee that there will be funding. The committee is looking to have five members. The application is on the city website.

Deputy Director Ringle continued saying winter youth basketball and volleyball are underway and soccer registration ends today. This summer there will be four different programs offered for soccer players to continue to improve. Many are being led by coaches involved in our program because they want to see it grow and provide more experience for our players.

The Novi Parks team together with parks maintenance will take part in the Novi Chamber of Commerce Community Impact Day. This is an initiative that chambers across the state are participating in on May 13th from 1:00-4:00. This event is to engage volunteers to support the community by participating in meaningful projects. It will be followed by a thank you picnic at Lakeshore Park. The projects submitted are the Villa Barr gardens to help continue the beauty in the vision of David Barr. The other project is park entry ways, cleaning signs and maintaining the beds underneath. The staff will be leading these projects.

C. Older Adult Division – OAS Manager Kit Kieser

1. Programs and Services

OAS Manager Kit Kieser started with social programs highlighting the upcoming events. March 14th will be the Blarney Bash, St Patrick's Day Celebration at Meadowbrook Activity Center. It will feature an Irish meal and entertainment by the Motor City Irish Dancers and their musicians.

The annual Euchre Tournament will be held Saturday April 5th. Participants will have lunch then complete eight rounds of euchre and the top three winners will receive prizes. The Choralaires will be hosting Songs and Sundae's at Meadowbrook on April 21st at 7:00. This will be a sneak peek of their spring concert.

March 25th Captain Theisen will be hosting the nature program Buzz About Bees at Lakeshore Park. He will be sharing his beekeeping experience and talk about the lifecycle of the honeybee. Honey fresh off the comb will be available for tasting. April 21st -26th Novi will celebrate Arbor Day with activities throughout the week including birdwatching, a guided hike, and fun challenges presented by Novi Youth Council. The week will end with a celebration of Arbor Day on April 26th which will feature sapling giveaways, informational tables from local organizers, tree planting, and the annual garlic mustard pull. OAS manager Kit Keiser encouraged the commissioners to spread the word to organizations or friends about participating in the garlic mustard pull.

March 27th will be Melodies at the Museum at the DIA. It is a free event where a bus takes participants to the museum.

The Spring Travel Fair will be held at the Civic Center on April 8th at 5:30. The event provides an opportunity for the travel companies to showcase their upcoming trips. AARP Tax service is going strong every Wednesday now until tax day. As newly trained counselors become available the site coordinator adds additional appointments. Initially there was 470 appointments after several more were added the program has reached capacity at 503. There is a waiting list, but we are not seeing many cancellations.

The Oakland County Resource Veteran's Fair is returning to the Civic Center on

Thursday March 26th from 9:00am to noon. Oakland County is asking participants to preregister on their website.

The Memorial Day webpage is active, and registration is open online for entries.

2. PRCS Team Retreat

OAS Manager Keiser explained a highlight of every year is the PRCS staff retreat. Two weeks ago, our team was fortunate to dedicate a whole day to team building. She gave a shoutout to Brandi, Torry and Dana who held down the fort while we were out of the Civic Center. It gave us a change of scenery and a chance to spend some time together. Recreation Supervisors John Gillingham, Milah Loose and OAS Manager Keiser were tasked with setting the agenda, planning and facilitating the activities for the day. Pinz in South Lyon was the location. The bulk of the day was spent on three exercises: Translating the Vision, building a vision board with person and professional portions, and an event builder activity. OAS Manager explained the sessions in detail. A lot of fun, laughter and teamwork occurred during the day with the tasks, lunch, bowling and arcade games. The activities reinforced the Novi Parks vision to be seen as an essential service whose benefits are recognized and valued in the community.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Bagley

I love a short meeting, and I have been in a lot of them today, so this is nice. Thank you so much I appreciate sharing all the ideas for signage and all the programming happening. I am always impressed and amazed. Both of the presentations were very thorough in terms of the work that is being done. Thanks for giving insight to it. Thank you for sharing the retreat. It is something that is needed and it is amazing.

Commissioner Riggins

Great meeting. I like short ones too.

I can't wait to see the signage, what is created with the Novi colors. The retreat sounds wonderful. The chaos cards made me think of my day at work today.

Commissioner Torimoto

Thank you for the reports. I think creativity and using the talent we have is impressive. Utilizing the artist in residence to start engaging through activities that we already have in the community is a good idea. Engaging community volunteers to actually run programs and camps for soccer as another opportunity for engagement is really fantastic. It is great to hear those initiatives. I look forward to seeing the vision board.

Commissioner Dooley

There is never a dull moment in the City of Novi especially in the parks department. I agree with all the comments. I am looking forward to the young adult participation in developing the no vaping signs. Ebony articulated getting young kids involved will give them good reasons to have commitment.

It goes without saying you continue to amaze us with all that you do and the leadership that you provide in the various departments.

I am looking forward to the March meeting and having a full team. I love to discuss Miss Amazing. This will be the sixth year that we are having the event in the City of Novi. I will explain more at the March meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Voice Vote

Unanimous

The meeting was adjourned by Commissioner Dooley at 7:42p.m.

DATE APPROVED: _____

Joseph, Chairperson

Dooley, Vice Chairperson