PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES COMMISSION

Thursday, October 15th, 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), Bagley (present), Dooley (present), Gopalakrishnan (absent/excused), Riggins (present), Staab (present), Torimoto (present)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:
Director Muck said due to Commissioner Joseph's absence 7C will be tabled. Commissioner Staab motioned for approval of agenda and second by Commissioner Bagley.

Voice Vote **Unanimous**

CITIZEN COMMENTS:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
It was moved that the minutes for the September 17th meeting be approved by Commissioner Bagley and second by Commissioner Riggins.

Voice Vote **Unanimous**

PRESENTATIONS
A. The Novi Parks Foundation 2026 Community Impact Award
The Novi Parks Foundation 2026 Community Impact Award was presented to social media intern, Srinidhi for her outstanding work promoting the mission and values of the Foundation across social media. The follower base and interactions increased significantly year over year. This was awarded by NPF Secretary Mark Sommerville and Marcel Badia Executive Director.

B. American Academy for Parks and Recreation Administration
Director Muck explained the American Academy for Parks and Recreation Administration that he was elected to in 2024. It is an organization of distinguished parks and recreation professionals who are leaders. He recognized former PRCS Deputy Director, past Parks Commissioner and Novi resident Scott Pratt as a 2026 inductee into the academy. Throughout his thirty-year career Scott has consistently demonstrated leadership in Parks and Recreation not simply being about managing systems but envisioning what those systems can become. His experience spans local, county and state government and gives him a broad understanding of the profession.
Mr. Pratt said it is a full circle moment. He began his career thirty plus years ago, getting acknowledged nationwide then coming back to Novi. "I am very excited about this and thank you Jeff for honoring me."

C. CAPRA Re-accreditation
Director Muck continued with updates on the 2026 CAPRA reaccreditation. He acknowledged Kit Keiser who could not attend tonight. She led the accreditation efforts. OAS Manager Keiser wanted to thank the Commissioners for their support along

the way.
CAPRA is the National Accreditation for Parks and Recreation Agencies. It measures the quality of the operation management services to the community. There are 222 current agencies, including three in Michigan with this designation. Novi was first accredited in 2016 then reaccredited in 2021 and 2026. This process requires the support of every department across the city involving human resources, public safety, treasury, and finance. Reaccreditation will occur again in 2031 however; the standards are changing. The number of standards are being reduced but more specific evidence will be required. A published rubric for scoring is going to be implemented which should decrease subjectivity.
The award was displayed and the certificate will be hung outside the office. OAS Manager Keiser prepared the presentation, which will also be in the admin packet for City Council and available for community presentations.
The Commissioners had many additional questions about CAPRA.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. Novi Parks Foundation – Commissioners Riggins, Staab & Torimoto
Commissioner Staab said the last meeting was September 30th. The next will be on Tuesday, October 20th. Commissioner Riggins explained that most of the discussion was about the award presented tonight plus potential honors in the future. Commissioner Torimoto, the NPF Treasurer, added they are looking at the structure of financial management. The Foundation will be supporting Diwali activities in this regard. In addition, marketing and social media is going to continue to revamp because it has done well.
The date for Pour on the Shore 2027 is July 30th.

B. Active Mobility Committee – Commissioners Dooley & Gopalakrishnan
Commissioner Dooley gave the highlights from the meeting which took place earlier tonight. There were a number of committee discussions items including 2026 projects and nine upcoming projects which were listed in order of priority. Three CIP sidewalk submittals and 2027 access to transit grants were covered too. The next meeting will be in January.
Commissioner Dooley shared that the ITC to Bosco trail is open. It is interesting that an ambulance can travel down the trail and turn around to its original destination. This is a tribute to Novi thinking about safety first and the beauty of what Novi has to offer is a secondary outcome.

C. Programs and Services Update- Commissioner Joseph – Tabled to future meeting

D. Programs and services Update – Commissioner Staab
Commissioner Staab met with Recreation Supervisor Jenneva Kayser serval times to gather data, pictures and information about the cultural arts division. His presentation began with a picture of Sizzling Summer with a listing of all the events. His grandkids attended on July 15th and were able to craft clay models and enjoyed the experience. 986 people attended Sizzling Summer over the eight different sessions.
Novi PRCS has been deeply rooted in the youth theatre venue for many years. Over the year there are four theatre productions. There are four dance recitals during the year featuring the fifty-five dance classes offered.
The Diwali Fest will be held November 5th at the Civic Center with lamp lighting, cultural performances and food trucks.
The Novi Choralaires have been in existence for fifty-two years. Three major concerts are held during the year with two at Christmas time and one Mother's Day weekend. There are more members this year than in the past. They will have a retreat this

weekend. The Novi Concert Band has been in existence for fifty-five years and perform four concerts during the year. The first concert will be this Sunday at the Civic Center. Many pictures were shown of the real gem, Villa Barr Art Park. The Novi Parks Foundation provides funding for the artists in residence program. Six artists will be chosen for 2027 from the forty-three applicants. Commissioner Staab told the commissioners to notice the beautiful walkways and sidewalks throughout the park. These have been paved to help people with mobility issues enjoy the Villa Barr Art Park. $12,500 was provided by the Foundation for the pathway enhancements. A video of Amanda Thatch, an artisan resident demonstrating weaving and spinning was included in the presentation. Commission Staab said Villa Barr Art Park makes Novi unique compared to other agencies in Michigan and country. The atrium has twelve different artists display their work throughout the year. Commissioner Staab suggested the Commissioners attend one of the events to enjoy the cultural services standpoint in parks and recreation.
Recreation Supervisor Kayser thanked Commissioner Staab for learning about the programs and sharing with the rest of the Commission. She is excited about a lot that is happening, growing and changing. A big thing developing for 2027 is full day theatre camps. Expanding these camps will help parents that work full time and cannot access these programs currently since they need all day care. Cultural arts camps will be a big focus for 2027. Recreation Supervisor Kayser also explained the growth of applications for the Villa Barr Artist in residence is due to her boots on the ground efforts with art centers, promoting locally and using the Call for Entries platform.

MATTERS FOR COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION:
A.

STAFF REPORTS
A. Administration Division – Director Jeff Muck
1. Park Project & Initiative Updates
Director Muck stated that the ITC Bosco Trail Connector is open. It has already been used a lot with several residents expressing how much it is appreciated.
The CIP informational meetings have wrapped up. They were sparsely attended but the response was positive. Election Day is November 3rd. Early voting starts Saturday the 24th.
The R/C Raceway Parking Lot agreement was approved by City Council on Monday.
The prairie restoration contractor visited Northwest Park again last week. Most of the time was spent on Canda thistle control which will be a priority along with mowing treatments in the coming year. This is to restore pollinators and native plants.
Meetings have been scheduled with the ice arena user groups next week to formalize use of office and locker room space in the facility. In addition, meetings will be held with several companies with expertise in sponsorship and naming rights. A new logo plus branding is being created which were all items per City Council's direction for the next twenty years of the Novi Ice Arena.
Monday night City Council held a discussion regarding electric bicycles, e-bikes, electric mopeds, motorcycles and dirt bikes concerning potential ordinances or regulations for each. Direction was given to city staff to return with an update on signage, educational campaigns and more options to consider.
There was further explanation answering questions from the Commissioners. Several bills are pending at the state level concerning e-bikes / e-motos.

2. NRPA Conference Recap
Director Muck reiterated the highlights of the conference, which were the CAPRA reaccreditation and Mr. Pratt getting his fellowship induction. Deputy Director Ringle,

OAS Manager Kit Keiser and Director Muck attended the conference and trade show at the end of September. They participated in educational sessions covering topics such as the new CAPRA standards, AI usage, employee engagement and evaluations, revenue and cost recovery, relationships with school districts, and more. The Exhibit Hall was the best Director Muck has ever seen at the National Conference. They were able to interact with representatives from our current registration software provider, as well as companies specializing in sponsorships and sports facilities. A new dog park membership software is being investigated with Northville. It could make it easier to join, renew, document and send reminders.
Director Muck concluded that the biggest take away was how many instances of "we already do / did that" we experienced at the conference. It is a testament to the high level our team and city operates. Plus, the importance of achieving and maintaining accreditation. Our team is very grateful for the opportunity to attend the state and local conferences. The state conference will be in March. Many employees in our office are certified professionals, CPRP, and need continuing education credits to maintain certification.

B. Recreation Division – Deputy Director Tracie Ringle
1. Programs and Services
Deputy Director Ringle shared that soccer season is wrapping up. The annual Under the Lights Night will take place on November 10th. This encourages younger players to continue the sport by giving the experience of a high school player.
The golf pro from Riverbank has resigned his position. We are hoping to work with the new pro to continue the senior golf league and not impact the program. However, it might delay registration.
Twenty-five have signed up for the boys' volleyball interest list. We are looking forward to providing an opportunity this winter by beginning a league. It is a growing program across the country with many high schools having club teams.
A survey will be sent to the Novi and Northville older adult softball players to gauge reactions to proposed rule changes. Many of the players participate in leagues in both locations. The goal is to keep the communication and rules consistent between the two since many players cross over and play in both Novi and Northville.
Fall basketball and volleyball league games begin this weekend at the Novi Community School gyms. Recreation Supervisor Junge has been replacing last minute coach changes, practice days and navigating school facility conflicts. There has been a 1.2% increase in basketball, which was already a large program which fills up the space we have access to in the schools. There was a 43% decrease in girls' volleyball. The drop in enrollment is due to the increase in travel leagues and private facilities. Players looking for recreation are attracted to a different spot than those looking for advanced play.
2027 field rental application will open in November. The fee will increase due to escalating cost of paint, turf maintenance and staffing.
Recreation Supervisor John Gillingham delivered the remainder of the report with topics in his area, youth programming and camps. Next Friday, October 23rd 6:00-7:00 there will be a parent child Nerf Night at Lakeshore Lodge. November 4th from 5:00-6:00 a Nature Lanterns Light up the Season part of Nature Nurture Novi Junior programming will be held at Lakeshore Lodge. Children ages six to twelve will celebrate the beauty of fall transitioning to winter.
December 12th the annual Brunch with Santa event will take place at Lakeshore Lodge. The attendance has been decreasing for the later timeslot, so the approach is different this year, holding an 8:30-10:00am followed by 11:00am- 12:30 events. Moe's on 10 will cater the early slot and Guido's will provide the traditional pasta lunch for the second.
Recreation Supervisor Gillingham thanked the sponsors Goddard School, Pristine Dental

and IEP Urgent care for their support of putting on a wonderful community event.
Winter break camp will run from 8:00-5:00 on December 21st - 23rd and December 28th – 30th. Families can register for individual days or a six-day bundle.
Engage is being prepared for January – April. Information will be included for winter and spring programs as well as summer camps. The Daddy Daughter Dance will have a glow theme and take place February 19th and 20th. The Mother Son Game Night will take place on March 12th. Summer camp information for Lakeshore and PowerPlay will be in the upcoming Engage. After reviewing attendance data from last summer, the hours will stay the same. The resident rate will increase to $240 per week. The two-day option will be eliminated. The refund / transfer policy is being restructured due to a pattern of families registering for multiple weeks then cancelling at the last minute. The goal is to encourage families to make firm commitments and allow us to use available spots to interested children.
Recreation Supervisor Kayser said there is a lot going on in Cultural Arts which was discussed previously in the meeting. Her full attention is on the Diwali Fest.
Deputy Director Ringle clarified that the PRCS team is very analytical. Reports and data are reviewed from a cost and policies perspective as part of CAPRA. The team has a great mindset for implementing changes by what is happening in the data.

2. Diwali Fest Update
Recreation Supervisor Jenneva Kayser said she is excited about the Diwali Fest on November 5th from 5:30-8:30pm. Last year about 3,000 people attended but it is hard to know exact numbers because the event is free. The efforts of the Diwali Committee focused on maximizing the use of the campus, spreading out the crowd by making it easier to navigate. Much of the event will remain the same as the first year but there are new things to offer. Similar to 2026 there will be a craft vender expo in the Atrium with eleven booths, displaying goods such as henna, jewelry, clothing and handmade décor items. There is a full slate of high energy dance performances scheduled. Nine groups will entertain in the Four Quarters throughout the night. Six food vendors will be outside on Novi Way. The evening will kick off with a ceremony with words from city leadership similar to last year.
The goal is increase the areas of the campus utilized to spread people out. A heated, lighted tent will be in the manager's lot for people to sit after getting their food from the vendors. With the event being later in the season having a warm cozy place to eat was important.
A fantastic artist working with Indian cultural themes applied for the Atrium gallery. Her work will be displayed during November to accompany Diwali. At the event the artwork will be displayed gallery style upstairs in front of the Clerks and IT offices. A photo booth was donated and will be set up in the studios or Activities room. These new areas create other zones for people to move about.
Due to the construction at the high school, there will be less parking available close to the Civic Center. A free shuttle for citizens will bring people from the parking lot by the stadium to the Diwali Fest. The two shuttles will run throughout the evening. Recreation Supervisor Kayser said, "we're anticipating just as much enthusiasm, festive atmosphere and fireworks as last year".

3. Facility Use Policy
Deputy Director Ringle began by saying there has been work done with the Finance & Administration Committee, city staff, and city attorney to create a comprehensive document for facility use and rentals of facilities. It had been many years since this was looked at completely instead of just bits and pieces. The facility use policy was approved by City Council on Monday. It includes updated policies for use by political candidates, homeowner associations, and community rental of Lakeshore Lodge.

Beginning in January private events will be allowed at the Lakeshore building. The beautiful facility is in high demand. Since Lakeshore Park is busy in the summer with camp, beach and shelter rentals, public rentals will only be from October 1st – May 15th. Operational hours will be Monday – Friday 5:00-9:00 / Saturday and Sunday 8:00am-9:00pm. The limited hours are out of respect for the neighbors. Maximum occupancy is 110. It is anticipated that rentals will be for bridal showers, small company events, retirement parties, baby showers and family gatherings.
Amplified sound is not allowed. The outdoor patio use is limited; no tables or chairs can be set up outside, which will contain the rental in the building.
Cancellation policies for the Civic Center, shelter rentals, and Lakeshore Lodge will become stricter. Large rentals and popular space cancellations affects others with lost opportunity. There were enough cancellations recently to make this a concern.
The information about Lakeshore Lodge will be in the next Engage. Pictures, videos, and information will be on the website for those wishing to rent. There is a lot going on behind the scenes. The rates will be $120 per hour with a two-hour minimum on the weekdays for residents. Weekends will have a three-hour minimum with $140 per hour charge for residents.
Additional conversation occurred regarding the alcohol policy. It will be included on the website and in the paperwork. Deputy Director Ringle explained getting the policies in simple language with bullet points is currently being worked on and will be available soon.

C. Older Adult Division – Director Jeff Muck
1. Programs and Services
Recreation Supervisor John Gillingham provided the report since OAS Manage Kit Keiser was unavailable.
Medicare open enrollment runs from October 15th to December 15th. There are numerous programs and individual appointments available through OAS Social Services and partnering with other organizations.
Non-profit, Dementia Friendly Services based in Saline reached out to OAS seeking a host for a monthly dementia-friendly movie series. The first showing was the Ghost and Mr. Chicken starring Don Knotts on October 14th at Emagine Theater in Novi. The cost was $5 per person. Dementia-friendly movie showings create a warm inclusive environment for families and individuals with sensory sensitivities, require on-screen captions and people living with dementia.
Upcoming lifelong learning programs include Estate Planning Basics on October 27th, Healthy Living for Seniors - November 9th, Talking to AI - November 10th, One on One Technology - October 30th and November 20th.
Nature Nurture Novi is combining nature with fun by hosting Plant and Pour Bingo on Wednesday October 28th at Lakeshore Park. Participants can bring their own beverage and play ten rounds of bingo with a chance to win new houseplants.
October 20th the Novi Choralaires are returning to Meadowbrook Activity Center with their fall celebration. Participants will enjoy cider and donuts while listening to a performance by the Choralaires.
Tuesday November 10th is the annual Veteran's Day Celebration at the Civic Center. Jeff Phillips and Friends Band, the Novi High School Choir and the essay contest winner will be featured.
The annual Thanksgiving luncheon is on Thursday November 19th at the Meadowbrook Activity Center. Participants will have a traditional meal and enjoy Motown hits from the Denise Davis Duo.
Recreation Supervisor Madison LaChance and Account Clerk Derek Brooks are currently on the Mackinac Island Grand Experience trip with forty-eight travelers.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Riggins
Tonight's meeting had a lot to cover. I enjoyed all the presentations and awards that were given. Charlie's presentation was amazing with the information from Jenneva. I did not know there were that many programs in existence for thirty or more years.
I am glad we are doing CAPRA and operating at a high level. That is awesome. Make sure to get out and vote.

Commissioner Bagley
I second a lot of Salene's comments. The presentations were very impressive, especially the Cultural Services. Seeing all that we do in addition to hearing is very exciting.
I appreciate the e-bike / e-moto update. Thank you, Jeff.
I love the CAPRA re-accreditation. It is hard to meet all the benchmarks so kudos to the whole team. It is a testament to the work that is being done.
986 attendees at Sizzling Summer is impressive I will check one out next year.
Great meeting with so many amazing things. Thank you for the NRPA update I love the exhibit hall and seeing the innovation that is happening. The department is doing so many things right, as we can see. I am looking forward to Diwali.

Commissioner Torimoto
I agree with what has been already said. Big congratulations to Srinidhi. It is great to see the younger generation getting involved in civic service. Congratulations to Scott Pratt as well. It was nice to have him back.
CAPRA reaccreditation is similar to the audits structure in the corporate world. It is not always the most exciting, but it is amazing to see how much the team is covering.
I learned a lot from Charlie's cultural services presentation. I will watch the video about weaving. Recreation Supervisor Jenneva Kayser shared that last year a donor approached her with a loom to donate. It needed some refurbishing, but it was worth a couple thousand dollars. An artist was selected for the residence that was a weaver and technician. She was able to repair the loom and use it during her stay. It is now ready for future visitors.
Commissioner Torimoto said he was going to attend the Diwali Fest since he missed it last year. The Lakeshore facility rentals should be interesting. There was a quite a bit of discussion about the appropriate use when it was built. It will be interesting to see how it turns out. Thank you for everything you are doing.

Commissioner Staab
I want to thank Jenneva for all the information for the cultural services presentation.
Congratulations again on CAPRA. Philadelphia (where the NRPA conference was held) is one of my favorite cities.
The e-bike information was interesting. Especially with what is pending in the legislature.
Congratulations to Scott on his fellowship award.
There were very comprehensive reports by Jenneva, Jeff, Tracie and John. I appreciate all the details. As Tracie said, this department is ingrained, embedded in detail and actionable items. Everybody has a benchmark to attain.Get out and vote and have a safe Halloween.

Commissioner Dooley
I don't know what I can add to the incredible comments on the meeting tonight. Thank you for the passionate remarks.
I was very impressed with City Council on Monday night talking about e-bikes and e-motos. There was some good audience participation. People expressed concerns for

the safety of kids, especially at nighttime. The comments resonated with council and there was good discussion. As a member of the Mobility Committee this issue is important to us.
I am so impressed with accreditation being a three-time winner. Only one or two criteria have ever been missed. I don't think there is a parks department in the country that can match that percentage. Kudos to your great coaching and training in all the various departments that make up Novi Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services.
Dooley Dog Day has been an event for twenty-one years. I was happy to see a full house of people that came to get a hot dog. Thank you to the City Manager and Mayor who came to shake hands and support. It is really encouraging. Embracing what the city is all about. We are lucky to live in the City of Novi, and we should be proud every single day. There is so much the city can offer. Thank you again. You are top notch, A+ all day long.

Commissioner Dooley allowed Novi resident Nicole Herman to address the Commission. She said it was her first time attending a Commission meeting. She is a passionate resident soccer coach, appreciates Dooley Dog Day and Bosco fields. She came to the meeting representing Echo Valley Homeowners Association because she is passionate about the ITC Trail. Edinborough, Andover Point and Echo Valley are isolated with no access to sidewalks let alone the ITC Trail. These subdivisions would like more access to the trail, and support to obtain grants to fund projects. Commissioner Dooley explained that the Mobility Committee will give this attention, due diligence and consideration.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Voice Vote **Unanimous**

The meeting was adjourned by Commissioner Dooley at 8:27p.m.

DATE APPROVED: _____

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Joseph, Chairperson Dooley, Vice Chairperson