

**City of Inver Grove Heights Minutes of the Proceedings  
Of the Park and Recreation Advisory Commission  
Wednesday, June 14, 2017**

**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair Eiden called the June 14, 2017 Park and Recreation Advisory Commission Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Chair Eiden welcomed our newest Commissioner, Mary Gerhardt, to the Commission.

**2. ROLL CALL:**

**Present:** Chair Al Eiden; Vice Chair Kevin Sethre; Commissioners: Patrick Farley, Deb Tix, Mark Freer, Willie Krech, Joe Boehmer, Kathryn Bauer, and Mary Gerhardt

Parks and Recreation Director Eric Carlson

**Absent:** Recording Clerk Sheri Yourczek

**3. PRESENTATIONS:**

**A. Introduction of Guest Services Coordinator – Lisa Lamey**

Parks and Recreation Director Eric Carlson introduced our new Guest Services Coordinator, Lisa Lamey.

Lisa Lamey, Guest Services Coordinator, commented that she has been here for a little over a month now. She grew up in White Bear Lake and lives in Hugo. She has been in the Recreation field for about 20 years, 16 of that professionally. She has worked in North Carolina, Florida, Illinois, and now in Minnesota. She has had experience working in recreation centers, and has experience with membership operations, facility operations, youth, adult, and family programming, aquatics, and staff development. A lot of her experience has been at college campuses. She is very excited to move over to the public sector. She has three kids at home, but also likes to Golf.

Commissioner Freer asked what she will be doing with her position?

Coordinator Lamey responded she will be working Guest Services and will oversee the front desk operations, managers on duty, childcare, working closely with Bethany with Marketing, as well as with our different programming areas to make sure the services we are offering are what guests are looking for.

Chari Eiden welcomed her and wished her the best success.

**B. Introduction of Park & Recreation Intern – Chase Lonetti**

Director Carlson stated the next person they would like to introduce is our Summer Intern, Chase Lonetti.

Chase Lonetti introduced himself as the Parks and Recreation Summer Intern for 2017. He recently graduated from Minnesota State University Mankato in May. He has a degree in Recreation, Parks, and Leisure Services. He is working on and in charge of the following:

-Community Gardens

This takes place at Salem Hills. They have 27 plots that are filled. They added some fabric on the walkways which makes it better to look at, and the plot owners love the new idea.

-Random Acts of Fitness

For this program, we go out and recognize people that are outside and being active in the Community. They receive a goodie bag as an award for being outdoors.

-Lawn of the Week

This started up last week. We go out and find lawns with curb appeal and interesting and creative lawn designs or care. They get a sign placed in their yard as well as a gift card to our Sponsor, Ace Hardware.

-Huck Finn Fishing Derby

This was held last Friday at Simley Island Pond. We caught a lot of fish and gave away some great prizes.

-Twins Clinic

Coming up on Friday, June 16<sup>th</sup>, and free to the public. The Twins Organization will come and put on different skills and knowledge for ages 6 to 16 years old interested in softball and baseball.

-Penny Carnival

Coming up July 11<sup>th</sup> from 4:30 to 6:30, at the VMCC Parking Lot. We will have a bouncy house, a number of carnival games, and an ice cream truck.

Commissioner Farley asked where the Twins Clinic was being held at.

Intern Lonetti responded that it is being held at Rich Valley Park.

Vice Chair Sethre commented on the Fishing event down at Simley Island. When he drove by it seemed like it was well attended, but it seemed like there was a lot of people trying to squeeze in parking.

Intern Lonetti responded that they were encouraged to use the McDonalds and Cub Foods parking lot, but some didn't. There were 40 participants.

Chair Eiden asked how long he will be with us?

Intern Lonetti responded he would be here until the end of August. He is learning a lot of things and hopefully this will help him down the road in the future.

Commissioner Freer commented that the Garden plots were nice. He has one of them down there. He noticed one of the plots doesn't seem to be attended to or planted. At some point those weeds are going to get into other areas, it would be nice if that would be dug up or sold off to someone else. It is a lot better there than it has been.

He went to the Twins Clinic last year, and felt it was a great event. The Twins Staff came out and did a great job with the kids.

Chair Eiden welcomed him and hopes he has a very busy summer to learn a lot wherever you go into the future.

### **C. Presentation of Aquatic Program Update – Tammy Abrahamson**

Director Carlson stated Tammy Abrahamson, our Aquatics Coordinator, has a presentation she will be giving this evening.

Tammy Abrahamson, Aquatics Coordinator, gave the following update on the Aquatics Program:

-There are 1,500 kids that take part in our swimming program annually.

-We just started our summer session this week.

-We hosted two youth swim meets this past year in connection with the SUNS Swim Club. This is a youth swimming club out of Woodbury that uses our facility to practice and then they had the two swim meets. This brought in about 400 kids to our facility.

-We also coordinate with our School District. This year they had 15 home swim meets for the boys and girls swim teams. They practice over 500 hours here.

-We also held the Elementary School Swim Meet that happens at this time every year. This year we had 80 participants.

- Most recently they got a new timing system. It has offered us the ability to do some new things, maybe they can do some new dive-in movies with that new scoreboard that looks really nice in color.
- We offer five different fitness classes. The latest is an Aqua Zumba class.
- We began the Log-Rolling Program that we had a Grant for. We hosted ten different dates that we called “give it a try” days. With that we are excited that this coming Sunday night we are offering a Log Rolling Club. They hope to continue to grow that club.
- They showcased themselves at the Minnesota State Fair along with Key Log Rolling, which is who we purchased the log from. We have applied to go there again this year.
- Key Log Rolling also came to our facility and held a log rolling tournament. We had 26 participants.
- We had two Log Rolling birthday parties so far. This seems to be going over pretty well, and we hope it gains more interest.
- The pool is open for the Summer now Monday through Friday from Noon to 7:30 and Saturday and Sunday’s from Noon to 6:30.
- Lastly, Staff is excited about this coming Fall when things are getting a little sprucing up in the water park area. We are excited to see some new play features come in and everything getting a fresh new look.

Chair Eiden asked if we are still host to Regional Competitive Swimming Meets?

Coordinator Abrahamson responded that the State High School League is re-doing Sections right now for swimming, and some conversations at the high school level is that we may still get a Section meet, but it may not be one that is local. For example, Simley High School may not be in it. They want those Section meets to go to a neutral site, so we may be hosting a different Section that’s not necessarily associated with Simley High School.

Chair Eiden asked if she could describe the pools that are over there and the opportunities people have with them for the viewing audience.

Coordinator Abrahamson responded there is the water park that has a zero-depth entry with area that gets up to 3 1/2 feet deep. It has a play structure in the middle with some other play features. There are two large water slides in the back of that section.

We also have an eight-lane lap, 25-yard, pool. We leave four lanes open for lap swimming and four lanes open for open swimming unless we have a program in there, like swimming lessons or a fitness program.

We also have a diving well. That is 13 feet deep and also has two-one meter boards, and one-three-meter board. These pools are open Monday through Friday Noon to 7:30 and Saturday and Sunday’s from Noon to 6:30 over the summer.

Chair Eiden thanked her for the report and update.

#### **4. ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

**A. You can find information regarding the City of Inver Grove Heights by visiting our web site at:**

[www.invergroveheights.org](http://www.invergroveheights.org)

**B. Find us on Facebook at Inver Grove Heights Parks & Recreation**

**C. Follow us on Twitter at @IGHParks**

**D. Next Meeting: July 12, 2017. Regular Meeting 7:00 p.m.**

#### **5. CONSENT AGENDA:**

**A. Approval of Agenda**

Chair Eiden stated he would like to move Agenda item 8C up to B. Please interchange the two.

**B. Approval of Minutes of May 10, 2017**

**Motion to approve the Consent Agenda by Commissioner Freer, seconded by Vice Chair Sethre .**

**Aye: 9**

**Nay: 0      Motion carried.**

Vice Chair Sethre wanted to take a moment to commend Sheri. She does the minutes and spends a lot of time with it. She should be commended for her diligence and her attention to detail.

Director Carlson responded that at one point during his early years, Sheri would actually attend the meeting, but then with the advances in technology, it was easier for her to do them from home, be able to watch the tape, rewind it, etc. She has done the minutes from home for the last five or longer years. It's worked out well and she does do an excellent job. Thank you for recognizing her efforts to put your comments and conversations on paper.

Chair Eiden suggested that maybe sometime you could ask her to stop in and wave and say hello so we can see her smiling face.

Director Carlson responded they could do that. They can bring her in and have her introduce herself.

(Sheri thanks them greatly for the recognition as she types this from home and will discuss attending a meeting with Director Carlson in the upcoming months).

**6. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

None

**7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

None

**8. REGULAR AGENDA:**

**A. Consider Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Park and Recreation Commission**

Chair Eiden turned this portion of the meeting over to Director Carlson.

Director Carlson stated the month of June is the time when the Commission selects a Chair and a Vice Chair to preside over Commission meetings. We need to do that this evening. We always do that after the City Council makes their appointments to the Parks Commission and they just did that with the appointment of the new Commissioner, Mary Gerhardt. It would be appropriate at this time for any member of the Commission that would be interested in serving as the Chair for this coming year, to indicate so. We would need to vote. Is there anyone that you would want to nominate as the Chair for the Parks Commission?

Chair Eiden stated he is not a candidate for this position this year. He has been here nine years in this seat. There is a lot of talent here so we need to move on.

**Commissioner Krech nominated Vice Chair Sethre to be the Chairperson. Commissioner Bauer seconded.**

Commissioner Sethre commented he has no problem accepting the nomination and would gladly sit in as the Chair.

Director Carlson clarified that Commissioner Krech, seconded by Commissioner Bauer, nominated Commissioner Sethre to the position of Chair. Are there any other nominations for consideration?

Chair Eiden moved to close nominations.

Director Carlson asked one more time if there were any more nominations for the position of Chair?

Commissioner Freer asked if he could nominate himself, and if so, he would like to run.

Director Carlson responded that Commissioner Freer has nominated himself to the position of Chair. Given two nominations, one for Commissioner Sethre, one for Commissioner Freer. Those that want Commissioner Sethre, please signify by raising your hand.

That would be six for Commissioner Sethre. (Farley, Boehmer, Gerhardt, Eiden, Krech, and Bauer)

Those that would like to vote for Commissioner Freer for the position of Chair please raise their hands.

That would be three for Commissioner Freer. (Sethre, Freer, Tix)

That means that Commissioner Sethre has a majority of the votes and is appointed as the Chair of the Parks and Recreation Commission for this coming year.

Commissioner Krech asked if Commissioner Freer would be interested in the Vice Chair Position?

Commissioner Freer responded he would not be interested, but thank you.

Director Carlson asked if there was anyone interested in being nominated, or does anyone want to nominate someone for the position of Vice Chair of the Parks Commission for this coming year?

Commissioner Eiden nominated Katie Bauer for the position of Vice Chair.

Commissioner Bauer accepted the nomination.

Director Carlson asked if there was anyone else interested in the position of Vice Chair?

With no other nominations, Commissioner Bauer is nominated as the Vice Chair of the Parks Commission and would serve in the absence of Chair Sethre.

Commissioner Eiden congratulated both of them.

The remainder of the Commission thanked them for volunteering and congratulated them.

Director Carlson stated that Chair Sethre and Vice Chair Bauer will now run the remainder of the meeting.

### **C. Consider Support of the Rich Valley Regional Greenway Master Plan**

Director Carlson stated this evening we have John Mertens with us from Dakota County. He is going to go over a short presentation about the Rich Valley Regional Greenway. There has been a number of public meetings held to get feedback from the Cities of Eagan and Inver Grove Heights, as this could potentially go through both. We are looking for the Commission's support of the attached resolution. Assuming your support, we would then go before the City Council on Monday, June 26<sup>th</sup>, to present the Master Plan. If they support the Master Plan we ask them at the first meeting in July to pass the resolution in support of the Greenway. The County will then go to the Met Council and get that added to their collection of Regional Greenways, so they can get Regional and State funding for the actual construction and acquisition of the Greenway.

John Mertens stated he will give a brief overview of the Greenways in general, a status update on some of our projects, and then move forward into Rich Valley details.

#### -Dakota County Greenway Vision

Establish a County-wide system of interconnected greenways that provide multiple functions:

- corridor-based recreation
- non-motorized transportation infrastructure
- ecologically functioning habitat
- improved water quality

#### -Collaborative Process

- working together with all of the Cities
- plans cover design, cost estimates, engineering feasibility, land protection, project delivery, operational maintenance, natural resource stewardship, cultural resources interpretation.

#### -Consistent with Local Plans

#### -Master Plan Purpose & Outcomes

- Identify preferred greenway trail alignment
- Guidance for greenway development
- Metropolitan Council designation as a regional trail/greenway
- Grade separated crossings analysis & cost estimates
- Natural resources recommendations
- Cultural resources interpretation

#### -Draft Master Plan

- Rich Valley Greenway connects from Lebanon Hills Greenway over to the Mississippi River Regional Trail.
- 5 miles.
- Destinations along the way are Pinewood Elementary, Rich Valley Park, Pine Bend Bluff Scientific and Natural Area, Pine Bend Elementary, and a few small City parks.

We look for existing parks, trails, schools, activity areas, and we work from there.

- Natural Resources are a key feature to these corridors.
  - There are several here. Lebanon Hills Park, next to Xcel Energy which has a significant Oak forest, Flint Hills land, and the larger Pine Bend Bluffs area.

Project is split into two segments. The west and the east.

#### -From the West

The preferred alignment is the more northern alignment. Each of the plans also have alternative alignments.

This one is an extension of the highline trail that comes into Eagan, over trunk Highway 3, over the railroad, and then continuing through the power line corridor, where they tie into an existing City Trail, that brings them down to Cliff Road. Once along Cliff they incorporate a trail for a short time until they get to Akron, and then at some point Cliff will be moved which frees up the corridor for the greenway. Or they shift it onto Flint Hills.

#### -The East

The preferred alignment goes north and ties in up by Pine Bend Elementary. There is a south alignment that follows 117<sup>th</sup>. Preferred is the north alignment. We have worked closely with Flint Hills and they are comfortable with the lines and will be working in the short term on a feasibility study. It is key to have the Flint Hills property as a keystone section. They hope to refine that line even more than it looks now.

A couple of the more challenging sections of the Rich Valley Greenway:

- Trunk Highway 3 crossing. It's not so much the large bridge structure, but the power lines at that crossing. We have had meetings with Xcel Energy. We will be looking at that closer as to how to do it.
- Highway 52 recommended crossing is a UP spur line rail line. We chose the least active of the lines. We utilize the bridge structure that is already there and do a trail south of the piers. This ties into the Mississippi River Regional Trail.

Project Prioritization

-We have cost estimates, but they have a prioritization. Highest is land control. Working our way from west to east. We will be working with Flint Hills on the land there.

Next Steps:

-May-June 2017

-Public Review of Draft Master Plan

-July/August 2017

-Adoption of Plan by County Board

-August/September 2017

-Submittal to Metropolitan Council

Chair Sethre asked if you still have easements to square away with Flint Hills?

Mr. Mertens responded they feel if we work from the west to east, it will be due to density.

Chair Sethre stated there is a small dash line at Rich Valley Park, is there a path there?

Mr. Mertens wasn't sure how they will go about it, but they hope to have connectivity to that park. That could possibly set up that park as a Trailhead for the Corridor.

Commissioner Farley stated this is for the Master Plan. This is a proposed concept, as opposed to something that is specifically looked at in the very near future.

Mr. Mertens stated that is correct. The Master Plan is the first plan of what is a very long process. These are 20 - year development projects. This may not take as long due to length. This is a first step of a system plan, and then the Master Plan brings us closer to actual construction projects. It is a concept plan now.

Commissioner Krech stated if you follow the railroad tracks from Cliff Road under the highway, and ties into the existing trail there. Do you connect there? He wasn't sure how you would get there otherwise, because if you follow the tracks that tuck under, unless the railroad lets you do that, he wasn't sure.

Mr. Mertens stated that was correct. It does vary from project to project. As long as we are not impacting their operations, they are pretty good to work with. The alternative would be to build a structure similar to what we are doing under 110 right now.

Director Carlson stated we are asking you to support the Master Plan and make that recommendation to the City Council. You support the attached resolution and that you suggest to the Council that they also support the attached resolution. For your information, this resolution is similar to the resolution that the Commission and the City Council ended up approving for the Mendota/Lebanon Regional Greenway.

Chair Sethre stated this goes to the Dakota County Commissioners so they continue as to whatever proposal that is involved.

Mr. Mertens stated this will go before the County Board. The will establish the vision of what is going to happen.

Director Carlson stated we are asking you to support the attached resolution for Rich Valley Regional Greenway.

**Motion made by Commissioner Krech to accept the attached resolution for Rich Valley Regional Greenway as proposed. Seconded by Commissioner Freer.**

**Aye: 9**

**Nay: 0 Motion carried.**

## **B. Consider Approval of Arbor Pointe Playground Equipment Replacement Proposal**

Director Carlson stated Brian Swoboda our Parks Superintendent is here this evening to give his presentation.

Brian Swoboda, Parks Superintendent stated he is here this evening to get your approval to replace the 22-year old Arbor Pointe Playground equipment. On April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017, you asked him to put a timeline together which you approved. We have done all that was on the timeline and received four proposals. Part of the proposal was to include play structures for those aged 2-5 and one for ages 5-12 in a 3,000 square feet perimeter. Total expense was \$50,000 for the playground itself. Any additional total budget projected, for example, wood fibers, benches, curb, etc., would cost approximately \$75,000 from the 444 Fund. We received the proposals, we got a subcommittee together to score the four proposals. We looked at the play value, durability, esthetics, and warranty. After they met we recommend that Minnesota/Wisconsin be the playground structure that we picked. They scored the highest. The neighborhood meeting that we held had 30 residents in attendance. They selected color, play features, and any other amenities they would like to see in the park. The color scheme they hear most often is the Papaya color so the structure wouldn't get so hot. Several switched out features in favor of the spiral climber. They were also able to comment on what other structures or amenities they wanted in the park. They heard items such as a basketball court, sand volleyball court, soccer nets, backstops, and lighting along the trail. All excellent ideas, but up to you to pursue or not.

Commissioner Eiden wanted to congratulate all involved in this project. He was delighted to see 30 residents down there. He was curious to hear if he had a chance to speak to Mr. Faust (spelling?) down there.

Superintendent Swoboda did answer all of his questions. He seemed to think the plan at the neighborhood didn't include the 5-12 play structure. He didn't feel there were things to do there for the 12 plus age group, and he agreed with him that there is not. He encouraged him to reach out to other neighbors and/or Commissioners to compile a neighborhood group to come up with amenities they wanted to see there.

Commissioner Krech asked about cabling at one of the parks? There is a cable maze in some Eagan park. Have you seen anything like this? It's at a school off of Cliff and Johnny Cake Road he believes. The kids there thought it was a great thing to climb on.

Superintendent Swoboda said it sounded interesting. Depending on what amenity you pick there is plenty of room to put one or two different amenities. They would like to keep the play structure in its remaining spot. We talked about the vandalism there, but they still felt it was in the right spot.

Commissioner Freer said they have something like that out at Como Park. The picture you had up had a couple of kids in wheelchairs. The picture indicated they could wheel around in this area. Is this taking into consideration amenities that would be used by the handicapped? Is there specific play equipment there for them to use? Is there a designated swing?

Superintendent Swoboda responded that it would be handicapped accessible with engineered wood fibers so they can move up there, and off the chair onto the platform. Some items there they will be able to use yes. There is nothing specifically designated though.

Commissioner Krech stated there was also a new type of swing at that park too, is there something like that in this plan?

Superintendent Swoboda responded that sounded like the new type of swing that a child and parent use together. This company is the company that has piloted this swing and it's very popular in other Cities.

Commissioner Freer stated this neighborhood, Arbor Pointe, was part of his bus route. 80 to 90% of the kids are middle school or higher. It's a neighborhood in transition. Most of the kids are getting into the aged 12 to 14 age

range, and some are moving out. This equipment does play into what will probably happen over the next few years there. There is a set group of older kids there, it would be nice to have some type of investment there for their recreation that we can do at a lower cost. He isn't sure what that would be. Most of those kids are active in school things, not on playgrounds. Basketball courts are nice if there is a parking lot, but there isn't one there. This is strictly a neighborhood park.

Chair Eiden said one parent commented that his kids were older and the playground area should probably be for the younger kids because the older kids would be at the middle school for their activities. He asked if you have this plan created and implemented, could there be expansion down there from where that playset sits?

Superintendent Swoboda responded that was correct. The perimeter is around 2,500 square feet. We allowed them 3,000 square feet. That is so they can get this much equipment in the space.

Commissioner Krech asked if we are under \$50,000 to do this?

Superintendent Swoboda responded the play equipment is at \$50,000. The engineered wood fiber, benches, pavement, sidewalks, etc., that would be the additional budgeted amount not to exceed \$75,000.

Chair Eiden had a question. This vendor is Minnesota/Wisconsin. We had an issue about not being able to get parts after 15 years. Would we be in the same situation with these folks do you know?

Superintendent Swoboda was fairly confident they would be able to get parts. Part of the process with the subcommittee was looking at warranty. They did have the best warranty. They have had them before and their products have held up very well.

Commissioner Boehmer commented that someone mentioned soccer nets. We could put some of those up, there couldn't we?

Superintendent Swoboda responded they could.

Chair Sethre commented the residents were encouraged at the meeting to bring up anything, and they did.

Superintendent Swoboda stated this is one of the more smaller play structures within our parks system.

**Motion by Commissioner Krech to approve, but not to exceed the budgeted amount of \$75,000 and to price out the fiber and any extra expenses. Seconded by Commissioner Freer.**

**Aye: 9**

**Nay: 0 Motion carried.**

## **9. ADMINISTRATIVE PRESENTATIONS:**

### **A. Department Happenings**

Director Carlson stated you have the Department Happenings report where we highlight different areas of what is happening in our Parks, Golf Course, and the Community Center. You also have a copy of the annual data report that is a part of the Department Happenings report this month. We have summarized data from 2016. He will stand by for questions.

Commissioner Krech commented this report is pretty extensive. It's interesting as there are a lot of things in here. It's a good way to follow up on where the money is going and what you are accomplishing with it.

Commissioner Eiden asked about the Walking and Hiking Club. There are two programs right now. One is Silver Sneakers, which is a local program, and the County has a Steps Program too. There used to be a Hiking Club within Inver Grove Heights. Have you reached out to those people?

Tracy Petersen, Recreation Superintendent, responded that the Hiking and Walking Club is an initiative that our new Recreation Coordinator, Jessica Anderson, has implemented with our Active 55+ demographic. It's an informal group of people who walk/hike together in Inver Grove Heights Parks and in Dakota County. You can walk daytime, evening, or even weekends. It's open to anyone. The connection with Dakota County with this piece is that the Dakota County Public Health has offered to train in a few volunteers as hike or walk leaders. Those people are provided with information on safety, how best to use the trails, and emergency type information. That is the connection there. The Simple Steps Program is a separate Dakota County Program that has been in existence for about eight to 10 years. That is their initiative to get people out walking and they have a tracking system that you keep track of your miles and you can earn prizes. Silver Sneakers and Silver Fit are our programs at the Community Center and those correspond with insurance reimbursement. Once people are signed up for that, the City is reimbursed if you work out or do some sort of active activity at the Community Center.

Commissioner Farley wanted to point out that Silver Sneakers program is just not our region, it's a nationwide program.

Chair Eiden commented about the Babcock Trail Feasibility Study. As most know, he hasn't been in favor of what was going on. He has been to two meetings now. They created some interesting and good plans. He thinks this project has taken on an expansive nature, but has been well done. However, he is disappointed in the public turnout. These people have put together a lot of time and effort to get public input. He has only seen five or six citizens at those meetings. There are a lot of people in that area. Groups have asked for your input so we can see what you would like. Please take the time to respond.

Chair Sethre would like to expand briefly on that. The proposal goes south of Upper 55<sup>th</sup> down to 65<sup>th</sup> Street. The first proposal was the trail going North of Upper 55<sup>th</sup> to 494. They have also produced two proposals for trails on either side of Babcock. It now goes South. There is a proposal to reconfigure the road. He had a question on page 2 of 17. It's the table summary of the funding needs of the parks system. At the bottom of that there is some text he can't read. What does this mean?

Director Carlson stated that is the next item on the agenda.

Commissioner Tix asked what the number of softball teams are at this year?

Superintendent Petersen didn't have the exact number, but believes it is in the 20's. They have seen a significant drop. There is no Church league, and they have never had a Women's league. We are running leagues on Tuesday's and Thursday's. As she mentioned in the Department Happenings, other Communities are seeing that drop as well, maybe not as significant as us.

Commissioner Tix responded she was at a Commission with the Rosemount League Director and its half the teams if that for leagues. The only leagues that are actually staying are the ones that have larger leagues. Burnsville for example, as they have many fields, and leagues. They seem to be relatively steady, although the Women's program is declining.

Superintendent Petersen stated that Woodbury has lost at least 30 teams this year, and they have a pretty big program. This year was a significant decline. We will have to think about that. There may not be any options to increase those numbers, but we are looking into trying other things for next year. The highest we have ever been at has been the 50's. It seems to be the trend to decline.

Commissioner Tix asked to be kept updated on that. She felt maybe tournaments would be an option.

Superintendent Petersen stated we have a wonderful complex, and it has been nice for more options to have the youth play at, but the drop has been hard to see. It's nice to see a mix of adults and youth out there.

Commissioner Tix mentioned that our athletic complex is at least top five, maybe even top two, in the State for the actual fields themselves on how well they are maintained.

## **B. Discuss the Parks Capital Improvement Plan**

Director Carlson stated this item is to review the Parks Capital Improvement Plan. The City Council had a planning session with the City Administrator back in February. One of the outcomes of that meeting was the Council wanted a report. They expected to see the following three things:

1. New items
2. Park maintenance and replacement
3. Repurposing

This would be brought forward at the June Council session.

He has put together the information in front of you this evening. It happened to go to the City Council before this Commission, but that was due to timing. The Council knows you have not looked at it first.

At the meeting, they reviewed the information and didn't commit to anything. They did indicate that they were interested in having a meeting about this topic. He stated Chair Sethre asked a question earlier about this report regarding establishing a meeting with the City Council and this should be the only topic of conversation at that meeting. That way we can see what you both share as a vision so the appropriate funding is in place. If that is a shared vision of the existing system, or another system, as long as it is a shared vision, and funded appropriately, we as staff will know how to take care of it and plan for the future.

He can walk through a presentation he has put together, or stand by and answer any questions.

Commissioner Freer asked if the topic of discussion with the Council should be regarding different items that should be there in the system, or those that aren't there? Or is it more of a financial discussion?

Director Carlson responded it is a little of both. There are some Council members that wonder if we need what we have. There needs to be an understanding between the City Council and the Commission about what we want our parks system to be. What level do we want to provide amenities to the Community? Do we want to be a Community that provides amenities similar to surrounding Communities or do we want to provide more than what our neighbors have? Do we want a system to have more than our neighbors, less than, or similar? How does that position us as a City moving forward for those moving into our Community and how does that make us attractive to new residents. All of that comes with a cost, but we need to figure out where we want to position ourselves in the Community.

Commissioner Freer asked regarding the cost, is that a discussion on how to come up with that money, or the fact that we need a certain amount of that money?

Director Carlson responded that is part of the discussion. If we try to maintain what we have today, based on our information, we would suggest we need more funding than what we receive today. Some of the funding we get today is going to expire and not be available in the near future. There is a need to increase funding for that as well. The report suggests that we need an additional \$75,000 of funding annually to be able to maintain what we have today. In the next few years, \$50,000 of that money is going to disappear, so in reality we need \$125,000 to be able to maintain what we have today. If the Community doesn't want to support that, then that is fine, but that means some of what we have today we will not be able to replace.

Commissioner Freer felt that as a Commission we have never sat down and discussed this plan itself. He doesn't know that we want to get in front of the Council without being on the same page, at least on some of the items. He thinks we should have some discussion at some point before meeting with the Council so we know where the Commission stands on financing.

Commissioner Eiden commented that as Chair he was aware of Director Carlson's dilemma with going to the Council with this package. It would be good for them to see this packet. He also noted at the end when they suggested a meeting with us, they are thinking that whatever we do as a Commission, we better go through this and do the things that you are talking about as suggested by Commissioner Freer.

Director Carlson stated as Commissioner Freer suggested, it might be a good idea for this Commission to meet in a Work Study Session. It could be more than a single work study session. Maybe in July and then August, we spend an hour, or an hour and a half before the regular meeting talking about this topic. That would be in preparation for the joint meeting with the City Council in September or October.

Commissioner Eiden stated they are halfway through the process right now. It would be good to talk with them while they are in their budgeting process to alert them with what we have come up with. He felt late September would be a good time for them.

Director Carlson mentioned if it was fine with the Commission then, we can plan on discussing this at a Work Study Session in July and August, or August and September. He will work to schedule a joint meeting with the City Council for September or October. We want to have at least two conversations amongst just this Commission.

### **C. Review Commissioner's Handbook**

Director Carlson stated each year in the month of June we take on new Parks Commissioners and this month we are happy to have our new Commissioner with us. Due to that, we provide the Commissioners with a Handbook that includes facts about the Department, information about being a Commissioner, and what your role is. Some of you have already looked at the information, and he hopes others will as well. He will stand by and answer any questions you may have.

Chair Sethre stated there is a lot of information to digest. He encourages everyone to read it.

### **10. COMMISSION COMMENTS:**

Vice Chair Bauer felt they really had a great meeting at Arbor Pointe Park. It was great weather and it was fun to talk to all the parents and the kids. Thanks to all who turned out.

Commissioner Tix would like to welcome Mary to the Commission.

Commissioner Krech also welcomed Mary to the Commission. There are a lot of spots she can help out with.

Chair Sethre appreciated the confidence that the Commission has bestowed on him. He values his time and your time and will make an effort to make sure we run these meetings as efficiently as possible.

Commissioner Eiden handed out some papers for their reading pleasure at another time. He got the candidate list for appointments for Commissions. There were 13 people who applied for the open positions on the Commissions. A whole lot of good souls out there. He sent out a memo and asked them if there were three things they would be willing to do for the Commission. He received responses from four of them. He has attached their responses so you can see them. Maybe we can use this list for Subcommittees to get these people involved. Perhaps we can find ways to involve them over the years. He also appreciated Commissioners Sethre and Bauer for taking over the responsibilities for this group.

Commissioner Gerhardt thanked everyone for welcoming her. She appreciates everyone for being so warm. She also thanked Director Carlson for meeting with her ahead of time and providing her with all of the information. It was really helpful for getting her up to speed. She really looks forward to working with all of you.

Commissioner Boehmer welcomed Mary to the Commission. He thanked the new Chair and Vice Chair for taking the positions.

Commissioner Farley agreed with Commissioner's Boehmer's comments.

Commissioner Freer welcomed the new Chair and Vice Chair. He appreciated their volunteering. He wanted to thank Al Eiden for the nine years that he devoted to the Chair. He has learned a lot just watching him run the meetings. His leadership was fun and enjoyable for him to learn from as they grew as a Commission, and will continue to grow as a Commission.

He wanted to add that he has met with Director Carlson and wanted his approval to explore the possibility of having an Archery Range in the Community. If there is anyone in the Community watching this that is interested, please email him with your interest at [moony426@yahoo.com](mailto:moony426@yahoo.com). Please let him know of any interest and maybe that is something we can add to our amenity list.

## **11. ADJOURN**

**Motion by Commissioner Freer, seconded by Commissioner Farley to adjourn the meeting at 8:39 p.m.**

**Aye: 9**

**Nay: 0      Motion carried.**