



Inver Grove Heights Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee

Wednesday, January 10, 2024 at 7:00 PM

8150 Barbara Avenue, Inver Grove Heights, MN 55077

AGENDA

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

3. Presentations

4. Announcements

A. Next Meeting – Wednesday, February 14, 2024, 7:00 pm

5. Consent Agenda

All items on the Consent Agenda are considered routine and have been made available to the Commission at least two days prior to the meeting; the items will be enacted in one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Commission member or citizen so requests, in which event the item will be removed from this Agenda and considered in normal sequence.

A. Approval of Agenda

B. Approve Minutes from November 2023 Meeting

6. Public Comment

Public comment provides an opportunity for the public to address the Commission on items that are not on the agenda. Comments will be limited to three (3) minutes per person.

7. Unfinished Business

Items that are brought back to the Commission for action from a previous meeting

8. Regular Agenda

A. Rock Island Swing Bridge Lighting

B. 2024 Work Plan - Work Session Date Selection

9. Administrative Presentations

A. Parks and Recreation Director Updates

1. Heritage Village & South Valley Park – Construction Updates

2. Parks & Recreation Department Restoration

3. Dog Park Update

B. Department Happenings

1. Parks Superintendent Update

2. Recreation Superintendent Update

10. Commission Comments

11. Adjourn

January 10, 2024 - Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee Agenda



**Parks & Recreation Advisory Commission
Staff Report**

SUBJECT: **Approve Minutes from November 2023 Meeting**

MEETING DATE: January 10, 2024

ITEM TYPE: Consent Agenda

CONTACT:

PURPOSE/ACTION REQUESTED

BACKGROUND

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATION

ATTACHMENTS

1. November 8, 2023 Parks and Recreation Advisory Meeting Mts

**City of Inver Grove Heights Minutes of the Proceedings
Of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission
City Council Chambers - 8150 Barbara Avenue
Wednesday, November 8, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.**

Televised on Town Square Television

1. Call to Order:

Chair Steve Cook called the November 8, 2023 Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call:

Present: Chair Steve Cook, Vice Chair Niki Barker; Commissioner's: Curt Ellingboe, Willie Krech, Sandra Christensen, Ben Stone, William Skar, Abby Heidenreich

Parks and Recreation Director Adam Lares, Recreation Superintendent Julie Dorshak

Absent: Commissioner Tracy Mulcahy (excused), Parks Superintendent Brian Swoboda

3. Presentations: None

4. Announcements:

A. No December meeting

B. Next meeting – Wednesday, January 10, 2024, 7:00 p.m.

5. Consent Agenda:

A. Approval of Agenda

B. Approve Minutes from the October 2023 Meeting

Motion by Vice Chair Barker, second by Commissioner Krech, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Ayes: 8

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

6. Public Comment:

Parks and Recreation Director Adam Lares stated he does not have a presentation for the dog park prepared. He provided information from the city website as follows:

On October 22nd, staff received a report of a bullet coming into the dog park at Heritage Village Park. At that point a police report was filed and investigated by a local officer. The location was viewed where it was reported, they were unable to substantiate whether or not there was a bullet. Following that, an additional report was received by staff regarding the same incident. At that point he, along with the City Administrator, evaluated the situation and out of safety it was determined to close the dog park. All information is still being looked into. On Tuesday a report was put out stating the local police department and additional partners were looking at the dog park with metal detectors. Results were received. Discussions are underway regarding how to open the dog park.

Chair Cook asked for information about the trail still being open.

Parks and Recreation Director Lares replied the trail is the county owned Mississippi Greenway. The county made an assessment for the greenway and decided to have it remain open.

Chair Cook asked if both reports received were about the same incident.

Director Lares replied that is what he understood.

Kathleen J., Allen Way, asked when a determination would be made about whether to open the park and next steps. If it turns out there was a stray bullet from the South St. Paul Gun Club, would be to bring the fence in. There are 9 acres for the big dogs. Bringing in the fence 3 acres, making 6 acres, making for an additional buffer zone.

Karen Taylor, 8815 River Heights Way, said she has no reason to not believe that the person who experienced the incident was not a real occurrence. She does not intend to use the dog park when the gun range is open. She would not recommend it to any of those she associates with there. She said this is a legitimate concern. She said people love the dog park, not having it open is a waste of so much money. She suggested moving it in some way so they are able to continue to use it instead of being at the mercy of South St. Paul.

Alayna Hagen, Allen Way, said there has not been any proof from police that there really was a gunshot or bullets. If that is the case they should be opening things up. If there is no proof, such as a bullet or casing, she questioned why they wouldn't open the dog park.

Commissioner Stone requested clarification.

Commissioner Krech replied the rifle range has a 6' long, 24" concrete culvert people shoot through to hit a target. It should not go up in the air unless someone shot upwards.

Commissioner Stone asked how far away that was.

Commissioner Krech replied approximately 1,000 feet.

Vice Chair Barker stated it is assumed the gun club it is where it came from.

Commissioner Stone questioned if the dog park was down range from the gun range.

Commissioner Ellingboe replied that the gun range is to the north, away from the park.

Commissioner Krech replied shotguns are shot to the north, rifles are shot to the south through the pile of dirt.

Commissioner Stone mentioned it sounded a little crazy to have an open outdoor gun range surrounded by a dog park and trails.

Commissioner Krech replied there will be an inclusive playground. \$15-\$20 million dollars has been invested in the area. They need to be certain of where it came from.

Julie Olson, Corcoran Circle, asked what the South St. Paul gun range says about all of this.

Commissioner Stone asked if it was a city range or club.

Commissioner Krech replied South St. Paul allowed the gun range in. It is run as a nonprofit. There are a lot of high school trap teams there. People are allowed in to line up rifles and shots. He said a camera would have to be placed to make sure someone did not shoot up into the air.

Ms. Taylor stated she spoke with the Dakota County Sheriff today who was a part of the investigation. She said she asked who determines how a range should be built for safety. She was told the city does.

Vice Chair Barker questioned if there was no oversight.

Ms. Taylor responded there is not any state or county oversight. It is up to the individual city.

Parks and Recreation Director Lares addressed the three questions asked:

1. When will the park be open and what are the next steps:

Out of an abundance of safety and caution, information and facts are consistently being looked at before articulating next steps. Information is still being explored.

2. Why don't they open the dog park if there has not been a bullet confirmed:
All information is being explored and assessed. Out of caution and safety, this is why it will remain closed.
3. What is the South St. Paul gun range saying:
He does not have a public comment from the gun range to release. Based on conversations, the range has been very open and welcome to the city to visit and learn more.

Chair Cook asked how a determination would be communicated to the public.

Director Lares replied information would be shared on the city website and social media outlets. The website is ighmn.gov/dogparkclosure. Two updates are currently listed, one from October 31st and the other from November 7th.

Nancy P., Copperfield Way, commented that someone driving by could shoot as people are walking in the dog park. She said if there was no proof there was an actual gun shot, it could have been the shooting range, and someone heard a gun go off and may believe they were being shot at. She said if a bullet casing cannot be found, to open the park.

7. Unfinished Business: None

8. Regular Agenda:

A. Recommend Approval of Resolution to Authorize and Accept January 1-August 31, 2023, Donations and Sponsorships to the Parks and Recreation Department

Recreation Superintendent Julie Dorshak stated the department has received approximately \$11,445 worth of sponsorships and donations over the last eight months. Staff recommends Commission approval of the resolution to accept those donations. These vary from in-kind services to monetary donations for spring and summer programs.

Motion by Commissioner Christensen, second by Commissioner Krech, to approve a Resolution to Authorize and Accept January 1-August 31, 2023, Donations and Sponsorships to the Parks and Recreation Department.

Chair Cook requested information on the protocol for accepting donations.

Superintendent Dorshak replied donations have been received throughout the last nine months. It would be challenging and cumbersome to communicate this to the Commission and the City Council on a regular basis.

Commissioner Ellingboe asked if the money could be spent before it is accepted by the Council and Commission.

Superintendent Dorshak replied yes. If they were not accepted, those businesses would have to be refunded for their donations.

Ayes: 8

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

B. Park Dedication - STUART DEVELOPMENT CORP – CASE NO. 23-46S

Parks and Recreation Director Lares discussed park dedication for Stuart Development Corp. The request consists of 157 townhome units located north of Vista Pines. This equates to \$4,000 per unit. Due to the proximity of this development to Vista Pines Park, staff recommends dedication in the form of cash in the amount of \$628,000 into the Park Acquisition and Development Fund.

Motion by Commissioner Krech, second by Commissioner Skar, to accept Park Dedication in the form of cash, for Stuart Development Corp. Case No. 23-46S.

Ayes: 8

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

C. Approve PRAC 2024 Meeting Schedule

Chair Cook presented the meeting schedule for 2024:

- There is a change to the October meeting. It will take place the 3rd Wednesday this month.
- The July park tour will be in place of a meeting.
- No meeting in December.

There was an error with the May date, it should read May 15th.

Motion by Commissioner Heidenreich, second by Commissioner Ellingboe, to approve the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission 2024 Meeting Schedule as amended.

Ayes: 8

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

9. Administrative Presentations:

A. November 6 Council Work Session Updates

1. Heritage Village Park – Final Phase

Parks and Recreation Director Lares stated the subcommittee recommended taking the remaining 10 Master Plan amenities for Heritage Village Park and condensing them to one final phase. This Commission voted 7/1 to put it forward as a recommendation to the City Council for consideration. Information was presented to the City Council on November 6th. Council gave staff direction to attend the legislative meeting on November 14th with the understanding of combining the remainder into one last phase, Phase 6. The House Committee will determine whether to bond. This will come before the Council as a possibility for a bonding request.

2. Northwest Area Park Acquisition

Parks and Recreation Director Lares stated the Council was made aware of the work done by the Subcommittee and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee on the potential of a 4th park in the northwest area. It was determined to be proactive and engage with a landowner regarding a potential acquisition of 20 acres. This was presented to the Council on November 6th. Council gave direction to staff to start engaging with the landowner.

B. Department Happenings

1. Recreation Superintendent Update

Recreation Superintendent Julie Dorshak provided the following update:

Community Center:

- Fitness room updates will take place next week.
- The second sheet of ice is up and running in the ice arena.
- Administrative tasks this time of year:
 - Updating contracts with user groups, establishing fees/charges for 2024.

Programming:

- Ghostly Gathering took place. This event was extremely well attended with 232 paid admissions, parents/guardians were free. There were likely over 700 people.
- Starting to work on the Holiday in the Heights programming

- Tree Lighting event, Friday, December 1, 6:00 p.m.
- Skate with Santa
- Breakfast with Santa
- Cookies and Canvas
- Frosty's Open Swim
- Visit IGH, Light Up the Heights Holiday Contest, December 11th
- Working on the winter brochure. In households by November 29th

Recreation Superintendent Dorshak mentioned if the Commission wanted to be notified more about sponsorships, staff could entertain the option to do it more often. There are different categories for different levels of sponsorships. Each level gets a different level of appreciation and recognition. A sponsorship campaign is done twice a year. Currently, there are approximately \$8,000 worth of sponsorships for Holiday in the Heights. She suggested coming before the Commission in January with a presentation showing how packages are put together and presented to the public.

Chair Cook asked for an update on the Bright Sides Room, how things were progressing, and if there was money in the budget.

Director Lares replied part of the VMCC's Capital Improvement Plan for 2024 has \$20,000 set aside for design on what that space could eventually end up being. There will be community engagement with options for the space.

2. Parks Superintendent Update

Parks and Recreation Director Lares provided an update based off of an email sent by Parks Superintendent Swoboda:

- South Valley and Heritage Village Park will continue construction through this year. Buildings will be finished by the end of the year. To be completed in spring 2024:
 - Landscaping, irrigation, concrete walks, blacktop at South Valley.
- Crews are busy with:
 - Irrigation blow outs
 - Trimming trees in the parks system
 - Leaf cleanup and mulching
 - Dormant seeding on dormant spaces and athletic fields
 - Removing tennis and pickleball nets
 - Prepped and repaired hockey rinks for flooding
 - Equipment maintenance and seasonal changes
 - Turf aerating
 - Picnic table repairs
 - Final finish mowing and flail mowing of parks, trails, and boulevards
 - Trash and trash reduction of containers in parks for the winter months
- Friends of the Mississippi River have hired two contractors for the removal of ash, buckthorn, and invasives at Seidls Lake. (Paid for by the County).
- Emerald Ash Borer trees have been removed from right of ways and parks for the season. 175 trees were removed.
- Tennis and pickleball bids will be taking place next Wednesday at 10:30.
- Infrared trail patching has been done at Sleepy Hollow Trail, Arbor Pointe Trail, City Hall Pond Trails, and numerous other locations.

Chair Cook asked when the flashing crossing signs would be installed from the county by Vista Pines.

Director Lares replied he received an email from the county stating the lights on top of the trail entry points are in and installed. Within the next two weeks the striping and signage should be installed.

10. Commission Comments:

Vice Chair Barker said Happy Veterans Day and thanked them for their service.

Commissioner's Heidenreich, Ellingboe, Krech, and Christensen, had no comments.

Commissioner Stone asked if the city had gun ranges.

Commissioner Ellingboe replied just private for gun qualification or gun safety training.

Commissioner Krech stated the gun club has been there since around 1950.

Commissioner Krech suggested telling the gun club to stop rifle shooting or having it only during a certain timeframe.

Commissioner Skar mentioned the residents who attended this meeting shows how much people care and depend on park services and how it brings the community together. He said it is nice for the Commission to hear about how much people care about the things they do.

Chair Cook said people seemed to be reassured by being able to come and ask questions.

Vice Chair Barker said the Heritage Village Park area was vetted prior. They never would have put a playground/park in where people are going to go without making sure first.

11. ADJOURN:

Motion by Commissioner Skar, second by Vice Chair Barker, to adjourn the meeting at 7:56 p.m.

Ayes: 8

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

Minutes prepared by Recording Secretary Sheri Yourczek



Parks & Recreation Advisory Commission Staff Report

SUBJECT: Rock Island Swing Bridge Lighting

MEETING DATE: January 10, 2024
ITEM TYPE: Regular Agenda
CONTACT: Adam Lares, Parks & Recreation Director, 651.450.2587

PURPOSE/ACTION REQUESTED

The PRAC is asked to receive a brief update to the riverfront - lighting of the Rock Island Swing Bridge.

BACKGROUND

During the 2023 legislative session, the State of Minnesota awarded funding to Dakota County for a potential projects within the city of Inver Grove Heights.

The project appropriation provides \$458,000 to add lightening or make other improvements to the Rock Island Swing Bridge (RISB) and the surrounding trail head area. The trail head, parking lot and restroom building in this area are owned and maintained by Dakota County, but the actual bridge is the City's property. Therefore, discussions have been taking place regarding the County transferring the state appropriated funds to the City for a lighting project on the bridge. City and County staff have been working with staff at the state to understand the process and timeline for accessing these funds. As a result, and in order to comply with the state's timeline for spending the funds, staff presented to Council (Dec 4, 2023 - Special Meeting) the possibility of the City spending \$9,500 in City funds for the development of preliminary concepts that could be used to gather public input and develop the official work plan and budget needed to entered into a grant agreement with the state.

Council gave staff the direction to enter into an agreement with SEH to begin the preliminary lighting design of the RISB. As a result, SEH met with the Heritage Village Park Future development subcommittee group and staff on January 3, 2024, to extract feedback and direction to provide several lighting concepts for the bridge. These concepts will be presented to the full PRAC at its February meeting and where the commission will choose which options go out for community engagement.

FISCAL IMPACT

RECOMMENDATION

ATTACHMENTS

None



Parks & Recreation Advisory Commission Staff Report

SUBJECT: **2024 Work Plan - Work Session Date Selection**

MEETING DATE: January 10, 2024

ITEM TYPE: Regular Agenda

CONTACT: Adam Lares, Parks & Recreation Director, 651.450.2587

PURPOSE/ACTION REQUESTED

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission is asked to provide a date for a work session for their 2024 Work Plan development meeting.

BACKGROUND

At the beginning of the year, the PRAC has a work study to develop their annual work plan as a commission. Last year they opted to have their meeting prior to their regular scheduled February meeting. The work study was held on February 8, 2023 at 5:30 pm. If the commission elects to do as they did last year, the work session would be Wednesday, February 14, 2024, at 5:30pm.

FISCAL IMPACT

n/a

RECOMMENDATION

n/a

ATTACHMENTS

None