



Inver Grove Heights Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee

Wednesday, August 14, 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. Tuesday, August 27 – South Valley Park, 6-7:30pm
 - B. September Meeting – Wednesday, September 11, 2024 at 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 June 12th, 2024, 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. Natural Resource Management Plan - South Valley Park
9. **Administrative Presentations**
 - A. Department Happenings
 1. Parks Superintendent Update
 2. Recreation Superintendent Update
10. **Commission Comments**
11. **Adjourn**

August 14, 2024 - Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee Agenda

**Inver Grove Heights
Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission
City Hall Police Conference Room - 8150 Barbara Avenue
Wednesday, June 12, 2024 - 7:00 p.m.**

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Cook called the June 12, 2024 Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. SWEARING IN - COMMISSIONERS

A. Chair Cook awarded outgoing Commissioner Curt Ellingboe a plaque to recognize his three years of service.

Parks and Recreation Director Lares administered the Oath of Office to incumbent Parks and Recreation Commissioners Chair Steve Cook and Niki Barker, and new Parks and Recreation Commissioner Kurt Stangler.

Chair Cook led a round of introductions to welcome Commissioner Stangler.

3. ELECTIONS

Motion by Commissioner Krech, second by Commissioner Stone, to nominate Steve Cook as Chair.

Ayes: 8 (Cook abstained)

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

Motion by Commissioner Krech, second by Commissioner Stone, to nominate Niki Barker as Vice Chair.

Ayes: 8 (Barker abstained)

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

4. ROLL CALL:

Present: Chair Steve Cook; Vice Chair Niki Barker; Commissioners: Kurt Stangler, Bill Skar, Sandy Christensen, Ben Stone, Tracy Mulcahy, Willie Krech, Abby Heidenreich

Absent: None.

Others Present: Parks and Recreation Director Adam Lares, Recreation Superintendent Julie Dorshak

5. PRESENTATIONS:

A. Jamie Muscha, Community Center Manager - Veterans Memorial Community Center (VMCC) Memberships

Community Center Manager Muscha introduced herself and reviewed VMCC membership data from 2023.

She highlighted the variety of membership types offered (10-time passes, annual, employee, military, monthly, and non-revenue). She commented that given the consistent growth in memberships throughout the past four years, and the retention rate for members in 2023 being

63.5%, the VMCC is clearly providing positive experiences to members. She noted that so far, the retention rate for 2024 is even higher, and there is additional revenue coming in from admissions (e.g. Open Pickleball, Open Skate, single passes for nonresidents) and room rentals. So far in 2024, there have been almost 250 bookings, leading to over \$30,000 in rental revenue.

Chair Cook asked about scholarships for memberships.

Community Center Manager Muscha said she could provide more information about that later.

Commissioner Skar asked about creating internships for students.

Community Center Manager Muscha said she would explore opportunities.

Chair Cook asked about facility capacities and planning for future expansion.

Community Center Manager Muscha said VMCC staff would consider facility capacities in planning how to attract and retain new members.

Community Center Manager Muscha also mentioned a few upcoming projects, including painting work this summer and parking lot maintenance in September.

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

A. July Meeting - Park Tour Wednesday, July 10, 2024, at 5:00 pm

B. Argenta Hills and Overlook Ridge Parks Grand Opening - Thursday, June 27 at Overlook Ridge Park, 6:00-7:30pm

C. South Valley Park Redevelopment Grand Opening - Tuesday, August 27 at South Valley Park, 6:00-7:30pm

D. August Meeting - Wednesday, August 14, 2024 at 7:00 pm

7. CONSENT AGENDA:

A. Approval of Agenda

B. Approval of the Minutes from May 8th, 2024 Meeting

Motion by Commissioner Christensen, second by Commissioner Barker, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Ayes: 9

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT:

There were no public comments.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

There was no unfinished business.

10. REGULAR AGENDA:

A. Park Tour Locations

Parks and Recreation Director Lares presented staff recommendations for the annual park tour:

1. Heritage Village Park (completed project)

2. South Valley Park (completed project)

3. Skyview Park (current project: pickleball courts)

4. Oakwood Park (current project: tennis courts)

5. Veterans Memorial Community Center (proposed 2025 CIP Project: playground structure)
6. Southern Lakes Park (proposed 2025 CIP Project: playground structure)
7. Groveland Park (proposed 2025 CIP Project: regrading/relining ballpark for drainage)

Commissioner Mulcahy asked if there are other park projects slated for 2025.

Parks and Recreation Director Lares answered that VMCC and Southern Lakes are the only two playground structure replacement projects planned for 2025; other parks' playgrounds are included in the Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for maintenance and/or replacement based on condition and age/life cycle.

Commissioner Mulcahy asked about Salem Hills.

Parks and Recreation Director Lares confirmed that work on that park got pushed back to 2026 or 2027, due to the elementary school's new playground in the area.

Commissioner Krech asked about the timeline for seeding in South Valley.

Parks and Recreation Director Lares responded that hydroseeding should be happening in the next couple of days.

Commissioner Krech asked about playground/park work in Heritage Village.

Parks and Recreation Director Lares responded that they have been working with the State of Minnesota to ensure bonding stipulations are met. Planning for the playground and splash pad is complete; the projects will hopefully go to bid this fall for construction starting in 2025.

B. Rock Island Swing Bridge Lighting Project Update

Parks and Recreation Director Lares updated the Commission on the selected option for lighting the Rock Island Swing Bridge (interior color changing lights on the full length of the bridge, and exterior flood lighting on the historic section only.)

He showed images from demonstrations of the exterior and interior lighting on one segment of the bridge. The lights are individually controllable and can be coordinated with music.

Parks and Recreation Director Lares said that lots of people who were at the bridge during the demonstration were excited about the lighting.

He stated that the City is set to consider the plans in late June and open bids in July. There are optional add/alts for lighting the bridge piers and historic archway. Construction is anticipated to start in August 2024, with completion estimated for May 2025.

C. South Valley Archery Range

Parks and Recreation Director Lares updated the Commission on the Phase 1 completion of the South Valley Master Plan and the status of Phases 2 and 3, specifically the progress made on the archery range.

During this past winter, Parks Superintendent Swoboda was able to allocate staff to clear the archery area.

Staff will be working with a designer and getting guidance from legal/insurers on designing the layout and an elevated platform. The plan is to create 6-7 portable targets for City recreational programming in 2024, and then open it up to public use in subsequent years.

The range will be oriented away from walking trails and there will be a large berm for additional safety.

Commissioner Skar said that his daughter participated in a City archery program at Groveland Park. He expressed excitement about having a specially designed space for archery.

Commissioner Stangler asked whether the range would be designed to host competitions. Parks and Recreation Director Lares said he would look into this. He mentioned that there are some specific requirements about the number of lanes and targets.

Commissioner Stangler asked about the potential for revenue generation. Parks and Recreation Director Lares mentioned that it's possible, but those types of bookings must be balanced with ensuring steady public access.

Chair Cook asked about whether the pass system could work similarly to the current system used for disc golf.

Parks and Recreation Director Lares answered that it will be important to be consistent with neighboring cities' systems in order to attract participants.

Chair Cook said that advance registration could function as a safety measure.

Commissioner Stone asked about the layout dimensions for the range.

Parks and Recreation Director Lares said that the designer is still working on the configuration.

Commissioner Krech mentioned the County's archery range with targets throughout the woods.

Parks and Recreation Director Lares said that he had toured that range, and it was impressive.

Parks and Recreation Director Lares added that the current goal is to hire, certify, and train instructors with a focus on youth programming; there have been a handful of applicants so far.

11. ADMINISTRATIVE PRESENTATIONS:

A. Department Happenings

1. Recreation Superintendent Update

Recreation Superintendent Dorshak updated the Commission on the following:

- It is a very busy time for the VMCC, with lots of programming in facilities and fields:
 - 90 kids/day are participating in Kids Rock
 - 195 swimming lessons are being offered this summer, with 725 participants
 - Pickleball youth programming is up and running
 - Tennis and archery lessons will start in July
 - Baseball, T ball, soccer programs are ongoing
 - Inver Groove Music in the Parks will start June 25th (at Oakwood instead of South Valley)
 - In total, 348 programs this summer, with 1888 participants
- Other work includes putting together the Fall brochure and the 2025 budget
- A commercial was recently filmed by the McQuillan Brothers at the VMCC. It will air during the Olympics.

Commissioner Barker said her son was quite excited about participating in pickleball.

2. Parks Superintendent Update

Parks and Recreation Director Lares updated the Commission on the following (on behalf of Parks Superintendent Swoboda):

- Rain has been a challenge; a large tournament had to be canceled due to the condition of the fields
- Seasonal staff hiring is now complete
- One 16-foot mower is down, but staff are doing their best to keep up with mowing
- The Rich Valley soccer field vandalized this past winter is now back in use
- Crews have been doing landscaping work - wood chips, weeding, etc.
- First application of fertilizer planned for this week
- Grading work at Seidls Lake Park project slightly impacted by rain
- Argenta Hills retaining wall repair should be done within 3 weeks - the contractor will also add permanent fencing in the area

Commissioner Mulcahy commented that Salem Hills Elementary has added a really narrow path on the east side of the park where it meets up with the school. She suggested that Parks Superintendent Swoboda take a look.

Parks and Recreation Director Lares said he would pass it on.

12. COMMISSION COMMENTS:

Commissioner Mulcahy said she was looking forward to the park tour in July.

Chair Cook commented that the tours are a great way to explore the City's 32 parks.

Commissioner Krech asked Parks and Recreation Director Lares if new Community Center Manager Muscha has figured out how to eliminate his job yet.

Parks and Recreation Director Lares laughed and took the moment to let the Commission know that final interviews for the new Facility Maintenance Superintendent were underway.

Commissioner Heidenreich gave a shoutout to the Kids Rock employees.

Commissioner Barker wished everyone a happy Father's Day and a happy Pride month.

13. ADJOURN:

Motion by Commissioner Barker, second by Commissioner Stone, to adjourn the meeting at 8:24 p.m.

Ayes: 9

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

Minutes prepared by Recording Secretary Wilfred Clashe



Parks & Recreation Advisory Commission Staff Report

SUBJECT: **Natural Resource Management Plan - South Valley Park**

MEETING DATE: August 14, 2024

ITEM TYPE: Regular Agenda

CONTACT: Brian Swoboda, Parks Superintendent, 651.450.2582

PURPOSE/ACTION REQUESTED

The Park and Recreation Advisory Commission is asked to consider recommending to the City Council the substitution of the Natural Resource Management Plan work, conducted through the Dakota County Conservation Collaboration, from Heritage Village Park to South Valley Park.

BACKGROUND

In 2023, the City Council approved a collaboration with Dakota County through the Conservation Collaboration to develop three Natural Resource Management Plans within city parks. The original parks selected were Seidl's Lake, Harmon/Salem Hills Park, and Heritage Village Park. However, after further review, South Valley Park has emerged as a higher priority due to the recent detection of oriental bittersweet, an invasive plant species.

As a result, staff is proposing to pivot and switch out the Heritage Village Park plan, which has not yet been completed, and prioritize South Valley Park. The Natural Resource Management Plan will provide comprehensive action steps to address the entire park's needs, particularly focusing on controlling the invasive plant, which poses a significant threat to the park's non-invasive trees and plants. If the invasive species is not addressed promptly, it could severely impact the entire park.

Below are some photos of what Oriental Bittersweet looks like.







FISCAL IMPACT

n/a

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the PRAC recommend the City Council to substitute the Natural Resource Management Plan for Heritage Village Park with one for South Valley Park through the Dakota County Conservation Collaboration.

ATTACHMENTS

None