



Inver Grove Heights Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee

Wednesday, November 13, 2024 at 7:00 PM

8150 Barbara Avenue, Inver Grove Heights, MN 55077

AGENDA

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Roll Call**
3. **Presentations**
 - A. Amy Powers, Spartan Prevention, Advocacy, and Resource Coalition (SPARC)
 - B. Anna Ferris, Unity Trail - Dakota County
4. **Announcements**
 - A. Work Session - Wednesday, January 8 at 5:30pm
 - B. Regular Meeting – Wednesday, January 8 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 Agenda
 - B. Approve Minutes from October 16, 2024
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**
9. **Administrative Presentations**
 - A. Department Happenings
 1. Parks and Recreation Update
 2. Recreation Superintendent Update
 3. Parks Update Superintendent Update
10. **Commission Comments**
11. **Adjourn**

November 13, 2024 - Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee Agenda

**Inver Grove Heights
Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission
City Hall Police Conference Room - 8150 Barbara Avenue
Wednesday, October 16, 2024 - 7:00 p.m.**

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Cook called the October 16, 2024 Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL:

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

Absent: Commissioner Willie Krech

Others Present: Recreation Superintendent Julie Dorshak, Parks Superintendent Brian Swoboda, Parks and Recreation Director Adam Lares, Aquatics Coordinator Suzie Seabright-Hofmeister

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Aquatics Coordinator Suzie Seabright-Hofmeister presented some statistics to demonstrate the increase in aquatics programming from 2023 to 2024:

Aquatics Programming Metrics	2023	2024
Swim lesson students served	2,552	3,467
Lessons offered	467	702
Private lessons offered	33	59
Water Safety class instructors	9	11
New lifeguards hired	20	27

She commented that in 2024, the American Red Cross mandated that all lifeguards had to be recertified; this was completed in May, months ahead of the deadline.

She shared other 2024 updates, including:

- Inver Grove Heights achieved 3rd in the state of Minnesota's Lifeguard Competition.
- Aquatics is bringing in three times its budget.
- The McQuillen brothers shot a commercial in the Inver Grove Heights pool facilities.
- Swim lesson offerings for homeschoolers have been popular
- Aquatics took over the AEDs contract from Cintas
- Staff responded as a team to deal with complications from a broken pipe
- There were 252 people waitlisted for swim programs, but staff were able to reach out and offer other program options to all of them
- Aquatics Managers are doing a great job supporting staff and program participants

Chair Cook asked about staffing concerns.

Aquatics Coordinator Seabright-Hofmeister said that the one area staff are lacking is Aquatics Managers, which she attributed to the evening/weekend hours. She commended her staff -- 76 people year-round - for being a great team.

Chair Cook thanked Aquatics Coordinator Seabright-Hofmeister for creating a supportive work environment.

Aquatics Coordinator Seabright-Hofmeister said she is blessed to work with mature, capable, and positive people.

Commissioner Skar asked about dive-in movie events.

Aquatics Coordinator Seabright-Hofmeister said there will be a pirate gem one coming up soon, but she is hoping to also add pre-teen, teen, and adult dive-in movie events in the near future.

B. November Meeting – Wednesday, November 13, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. This will be the last PRAC meeting of the year.

4. CONSENT AGENDA:

A. Approval of Agenda

B. Approval of the Minutes from September 11, 2024 Meeting

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

Ayes: 8

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT:

There were no public comments.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

There was no unfinished business.

7. REGULAR AGENDA:

A. Parks and Veterans Memorial Community Center 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan (2025-2029).

Parks Superintendent Swoboda updated the Commission on the Parks Maintenance aspects of the Capital Improvement Plan, which is a five-year outlook of infrastructure improvement and maintenance projects that serves as the basis for funding decisions. PRAC's role is to review and recommend CIP approval to City Council and ensure compliance with the Comprehensive Plan, which states that given parks' importance to residents' wellbeing, existing facilities should be maintained and improved.

Parks Superintendent Swoboda summarized the Parks projects into six categories:

1. Heritage Village Park Phase 5 construction (inclusive playground, splash pad, parking lot expansion)
2. Parking lot and trail reconstruction (Groveland Park, Salem Hill, Rich Valley)
3. Playground replacement (Southern Lakes, Sleepy Hollow, Ernster Park, Lions Park)
4. Tennis court and outdoor hockey rink reconstruction (Groveland Park, Oakwood)
5. Skate park replacement (Veterans Memorial Community Center)

6. Field renovation (Groveland Park)

Total 5-Year CIP Project Cost: \$5,640,600

Parks Superintendent Swoboda highlighted two major expense items: Heritage Valley and Rich Valley parking lot and trails (due to the age and amount of blacktop there).

Chair Cook asked about the potential for budget efficiencies from combining projects.

Parks Superintendent Swoboda said that it is possible that Rich Valley could be tied in with 2029 street projects to get a better price.

Parks and Recreation Director Adam Lares updated the Commission on the Veterans Memorial Community Center aspects of the Capital Improvement Plan (2025-2029).

He commented that any changes from the CIP will be brought to City Council.

He summarized the VMCC projects into six categories:

1. Aquatics
2. Arena
3. Mechanical (heating/cooling systems)
4. Grove (fitness area)
5. Custodial (supporting operations)
6. Equipment (mostly fitness equipment)

2025 VMCC projects include:

- replacing/trading in fitness equipment
- reconfiguring the Brightside Room as a multipurpose space or playground
- replacing flooring in the fitness area on the main level
- painting team hockey rooms
- adding new volleyball stanchions in the Armory
- replacing benches in the birthday party room and on the pool deck
- replacing a malfunctioning ADA opener
- adding an HVAC unit to cool the Daycare space
- replacing the radiant heat in the West Rink above the spectator bleachers
- repairing the rear Grove stairs
- adding card reader locks to the administrative offices

Chair Cook asked if fitness equipment is rented or owned.

Parks and Recreation Director Lares said that it is owned.

Chair Cook asked about gathering public input on the Brightside Room reconfiguration.

Parks and Recreation Director Lares said that there will be a survey as well as an open house for community engagement on the two options (playground/multipurpose space).

Parks and Recreation Director Lares then highlighted some projects for future years, including obtaining a stockpile of a chemical, R-22, that is necessary to maintain the compressor system for

the ice arena until converting to a new compressor system is possible (\$2.5 million). Funding for that larger project is still being negotiated.

Chair Cook asked about why R-22 was discontinued.

Parks and Recreation Director Lares said that R-22 was discontinued for environmental reasons. He said that any remaining R-22 could be resold at a premium after the compressor conversion is complete, as it's no longer available from vendors.

In 2023, the Council approved \$700,000 for annual CIP items for the VMCC annually (transferred out of the Host Community Fund). In 2026 or 2027, some of this funding will be used to obtain a generator so that the VMCC can be a resource for residents in the event of a natural disaster. Having a generator will also provide a backup for the ice arena systems and pool filtration.

Parks and Recreation Director Lares asked the Parks and Rec Advisory Commission to recommend approval of the Parks-related CIP items to the City Council.

Motion by Commissioner Skar, second by Commissioner Barker, to recommend approval of the Parks-related CIP items to the City Council.

Ayes: 8

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

8. ADMINISTRATIVE PRESENTATIONS:

A. Department Happenings

1. Recreation Superintendent Update

Recreation Superintendent Dorshak updated the Commission on the following:

- 9 new part-time operations staff have been hired to assist with winter programming
- The hockey season will start in early November
- Staff are anticipating typical seasonal increase in attendance for open gym, open swim, fitness, pickleball, memberships, etc.
- The West Rink ice will reopen to the public on October 20th
- Let's Pawty Halloween Dog event -- October 19th, Heritage Village Park
- Ghostly Gathering at the Armory -- October 25th
- Adaptive Bowling League started October 2nd - 22 participants
- Fall programming is wrapping up
- Planning for Holiday in the Heights is underway
- The winter brochure will go out mid-November

Commissioner Mulcahy asked about the Fifth Quarter event.

Parks Superintendent Dorshak said there were 220 participants, and it was a successful event.

Commissioner Skar said that his kids attended and enjoyed it. He added that lots of people tried to sign up at the last minute.

Parks Superintendent Dorshak said that next year, there will be increased communication about the importance of registration ahead of time.

Parks and Recreation Director Lares added that volunteers are welcome at that event.

2. Parks Superintendent Update

Parks Superintendent Swoboda updated the Commission on the following:

- Mulching of fallen leaves continues
- Winterization efforts are underway:
 - Blowing out 14 irrigation systems
 - Winterizing Heritage Village park building restrooms and Rich Valley concessions and soccer buildings
 - Winterizing drinking fountains
 - Storing nets, goals, etc. for winter
- 50 trees have been planted throughout the park system, 30 to replace trees lost to storms, and they are being regularly watered due to the dry weather
- Work continues on the Harmon and Salem Reserve Natural Resource Management Plans - mowing invasive species so that native species can get established
- Picnic areas are being regularly restocked and cleaned
- The community garden has been cleaned out and retilled in preparation for spring
- Trash management continues as usual
- Parks staff have been collaborating with Recreation staff to add picnic tables and straw bales for special events (e.g. Let's Pawty)
- The Rock Island Swing Bridge project is anticipated to start in late fall
- Staff have been working with consultants on Groveland Ballfield restoration project
- Staff have been working with vendors to replace Southern Lakes and Heritage Village park playgrounds and preparing materials for open houses at the end of October

Chair Cook asked about picnic rentals.

Parks Superintendent Swoboda said there are two to four reservations on most weekends.

Commissioner Barker asked if the bathrooms will be open through the winter at South Valley.

Parks Superintendent Swoboda said that they will be.

Chair Cook commended the Superintendents for their work.

3. Parks and Recreation Director Update

Parks and Recreation Director Lares thanked Parks and Recreation department heads and their teams for their hard work and dedication. He updated the Commission on the following:

- The Archery Range project continues towards a recommendation to Council
- 200 people responded to the survey on Southern Lakes and Heritage Village playground replacements - ideas will be conveyed to vendors

- Ribbon-cutting occurred on October 15th for Phase 2 of the Greenway project going from Lebanon Hills Park to Mississippi. There will be a spur to the Rich Valley Athletic Complex, and input will be sought on the green space in the area in the future.

Parks and Recreation Director Lares mentioned the 2025 meeting calendar, including the July parks tour and no meeting in December.

Chair Cook confirmed the 2025 meeting calendar.

9. COMMISSION COMMENTS:

Commissioner Barker wished everyone a Happy Halloween.

Commissioner Stangler said the South Valley Park Grand Opening was a great event.

Commissioner Mulcahy said that she attended a birthday party at South Valley recently, and everyone was impressed by the park amenities.

Commissioner Skar said that there is lots of outreach to young children and seniors, and he would like to see more efforts to reach young adults and parents of older children and address potential barriers.

Chair Cook suggested adding a work session to reach populations that are not being reached more broadly.

Commissioner Skar suggested creating a subcommittee to this end. He also encouraged people to vote.

10. ADJOURN:

Motion by Commissioner Stangler, second by Commissioner Barker, to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Ayes: 8

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

Minutes prepared by Recording Secretary Wilfred Clashe