

**PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION
CITY OF RAMSEY
ANOKA COUNTY
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

The Ramsey Park and Recreation Commission conducted a regular meeting on August 8, 2013 at Riverdale Park, 6860 Riverdale Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Commission Members Present: Chairperson Angela Olsen
 Vice Chair Shane Bennett
 Commissioner Bridgett Barr
 Commissioner Richard Chubb
 Commissioner Andrew Fyten
 Commissioner Thomas Mobry

Commission Members Absent: Commissioner David Minke (excused)

Also Present: Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Mark Riverblood
 Public Works Superintendent Grant Riemer
 Mayor Sarah Strommen

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Olsen called the Park and Recreation Commission meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. CITIZEN INPUT

None.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Commissioner Bennett, seconded by Commissioner Chubb to approve the Park and Recreation Commission meeting agenda as presented.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Olsen, Commissioners Bennett, Chubb, Barr, Fyten, and Mobry. No: None. Absent: Commissioner Minke.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

4.01: Approve Park and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes dated May 9, 2013

Motion by Commissioner Bennett, seconded by Commissioner Barr, to approve the following Park and Recreation Commission Regular Meeting Minutes:

- 1) Park and Recreation Commission Regular Meeting Minutes dated June 13, 2013.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Olsen, Commissioners Bennett, Barr, Chubb, Fyten, and Mobry. No: None. Absent: Commissioner Minke.

5. COMMISSION BUSINESS

5.01: Receive Presentation of City's Strategic Plan

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood reviewed a goal of the new Strategic Plan is timely and effective communications between staff/council/appointed commissioners. As part of that process Mayor Strommen and the Public Works Superintendent Grant Riemer will be present to provide a presentation on the Strategic Plan to the Park Commission. A copy of the letter from Mayor Strommen outlining the process and the Strategic Plan and presentation were provided to the Commissioners.

Mayor Strommen invited the Commission to ask any questions and offer feedback. She provided an explanation of the purpose of the Strategic Plan and the goals.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer provided a review of the Accomplishments/Outcomes and the Strategic Action Plan Visionary Structure, Building Blocks and Strategic Imperatives. Public Works Superintendent Grant Riemer also reviewed the Action Plan Strategic Initiatives. He continued by reviewing the Roles and Responsibilities assigned, Boards and Commissions Roles and Responsibilities, Budget, Measurement and Reporting. He presented the 2013-2015 Balanced Score Card, which will be how the City is judged by the residents.

Mayor Strommen reviewed the Success Factors and thanked the Commission for the opportunity to share the Strategic Plan.

Commissioner Bennett thanked Mayor Strommen for her presentation. He stated he appreciates the business approach and in this case, the clients are the residents of the City of Ramsey.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood thanked Mayor Strommen and Public Works Superintendent Riemer for their presentations. He stated he realizes the amount of work that went into the Strategic Plan.

5.02: Recommend Cash Contribution Rates for Park Dedication and Trail Fees For 2014

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood explained that any time new development occurs within the City of Ramsey, the subdivision or parcel is evaluated for parks and trail needs. If parkland is not needed, the City of Ramsey will accept cash in lieu of physical park dedication. The cash payment is then used for current/future park development. The same evaluation of the physical need versus a cash equivalent is true for both Park Dedication (land or cash) and Trail Fees (trail construction or cash). Dedication is calculated based on the size of a development and the density, as well as residential versus commercial/industrial rates; and is listed within the City's annual Rates and Charges.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood noted the City recognizes that parks, trails and open space are essential to the health, safety and welfare of the residents of the City and persons working in the City, and that the character and quality of the environment as well as recreational opportunities are of major importance – and therefore “park dedication” is critical in the planning and development processes of the City. The City must not only provide these necessary amenities for our citizens today, but also be insightful to the needs of future residents.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood reviewed rates for land dedication have remained fairly static for several decades; however, there have been some minor changes now that greater densities are permitted and there were formulaic changes for land uses that have demonstrable lower “demand” for parks and open space (e.g. memory care centers). Additionally the acreage/fee structure is reviewed by Council annually, for “cost of living” adjustments each year as part of the Rates and Charges analysis; however, the last several years there have been no increases to Park Dedication or Trail Fees. Ramsey’s rates are compared to similar suburban cities in the metropolitan area, as well as our immediate neighbors on an annual basis; however, while this is useful, development fees must respond to a legitimate need associated with the change in land use (increased densities) and thus the next section is what actually informs Park Dedication and Trail Fee rates. Park land and improvements themselves are identified within the Parks Capital Improvement Plan – which is adopted each year by City Council. This plan is a reflection of community need, with the forecast improvements often out-pacing revenue from Park Dedication and Trail Fees.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood reviewed Park Dedication and Trail Fees have been “static” for several years. This reflected depressed land values and little development activity associated with the Great Recession. As these trends are reversing, and new ‘demand’ for parks and trails is at the same time being created by increased development, it is appropriate for the Commission to recommend to City Council the rate structure for 2014. Staff recommends amending the cash Park Dedication rate per residential unit approximately 5 percent from \$2,475 (existing rate) to \$2,600 with no increase for the commercial/industrial subdivision of land. Trail fees are recommended to be increased from \$600 to \$700 per residential dwelling unit, again with no proposed changes to commercial/industrial land uses. Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated a park dedication increase has not been recommended for many years. A metro-wide survey was provided for Commission review. The Park Dedication fees are needed within the City.

Chair Olsen stated she is fine with the fee increases.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated staff is currently looking at all fees.

Commissioner Barr stated the park dedication fees would only apply to residential. She is hoping the community is growing and this increase will benefit it.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated a new development of 160 units increases the demand for park dedication.

Commissioner Bennett asked if for multiple family units, would the dedication be multiplied by the number of units.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated it would. The same holds true for apartment buildings.

Commissioner Barr asked if a different rate is offered for subsidized funding.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated no other rate is offered.

Commissioner Barr stated she is in favor of the increase.

Commissioner Bennett stated he is concerned if this would put Ramsey's development behind other cities.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood indicated the increases of neighboring communities.

Motion by Commissioner Fyten, seconded by Commissioner Barr, to recommend to the City Council a 2014 cash Park Dedication rate per residential unit of \$2,600 with no increase for the commercial/industrial subdivision of land and Trail Fees to be increased to \$700 per residential dwelling unit, with no proposed changes to commercial/industrial uses above the 2013 rates.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Olsen, Commissioners Fyten, Barr, Bennett, Chubb and Mobry. No: None. Absent: Commissioner Minke.

6. COMMISSION/STAFF INPUT

6.01: Update on Elmcrest Park's Community Building

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood reviewed the project continues to move along. He met with Northern Lights Soccer regarding the plans and is hoping to have a recommendation for the Commission at their September meeting to develop their recommendation to the City Council. The profile of the building has been modified. This would be a distinctive building with a "farm" theme to tie into the history of the park.

6.02: Mississippi River Trail

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated bids were opened on Tuesday this week. Council will review the project at their next meeting.

6.03: Armstrong Boulevard Trail

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated this is the only missing segment from Central Park to Alpine Park. A consultant will be assisting to get this done.

Commissioner Barr suggested a trail be placed on Variolite. Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated the developer is required to complete the segment.

6.04: North Common's Playground

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated the playground is in and there was a ribbon cutting earlier this week.

6.05: Volunteer Project at Fox Park

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated the landscape plan went way over the line on the neighbor's property. Nothing is firm right now.

6.06: Happy Days and Park and Recreation Commission Participation

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated Happy Days is September 7th. The Commission's booth space will be outside. Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated he needs to know what the Commission wants to do and what is needed from staff. The hours for booth coverage will be 11am - 7pm.

Commissioner Chubb stated he will bring a tent for the booth.

It was noted that Elmcrest renderings will be provided along with photos from the playground ribbon cutting, Central Park is in the capital improvement plan, and the booth coverage schedule will be developed by Chair Olsen and sent as an email.

6.07: The Draw Event Series

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated last week was the Coburn's customer appreciation picnic. Over 3,100 sandwiches were sold with proceeds going to Ramsey Rotary.

6.08: Park Patron Picnic in September

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood suggested a succinct Commission meeting be held right after the picnic. He noted the menu for the picnic needs to be discussed and September 12 is the date.

Commissioner Barr volunteered to be the Chair for the planning committee for the picnic.

6.09: Northfolk Proposal

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated a previous discussion was held about a park dedication next to Lake Itasca. This will be on the Council's agenda at the second meeting in August. He indicated a grant application will be discussed with information on the time commitment for preparing the application.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Chubb, seconded by Commissioner Bennett, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Olsen, Commissioners Chubb, Bennett, Barr, Fyten, and Mobry. No: None. Absent: Commissioner Minke.

The Park and Recreation Commission meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Riverblood
Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent

Drafted by Debbie Wolfe
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.