

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

The Ramsey Park and Recreation Commission conducted a regular meeting on June 13, 2019, at Elmcrest Park, 16303 Quicksilver Street NW.

Commission Members Present:      Chair Shane Bennett  
   Vice Chair Brandon Sis  
   Commissioner Nathan Barten  
   Commissioner Russell Bayer  
   Commissioner Jennifer Leistico

Commission Members Absent:      Commissioner Trixy Barnes  
   Commissioner Jennifer Shoemaker

Also Present:                              Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Mark Riverblood

**1.      CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Bennett welcomed.

**2.      CITIZEN INPUT**

None.

**3.      APPROVE AGENDA**

Motion by Commissioner Sis, seconded by Commissioner Bayer, to approve the Park and Recreation Commission meeting agenda as presented

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chair Bennett; Commissioners Sis, Bayer, Barten, Leistico. Voting No: None. Absent: Barnes, Shoemaker.

**4.      APPROVE MINUTES**

**4.01:    Approve Park and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes**

Motion by Commissioner Leistico, seconded by Commissioner Sis, to approve the May 9, 2019, Park and Rec Commission meeting minutes as presented.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chair Bennett; Commissioners Leistico, Sis, Barten, Bayer. Voting No: None. Absent: Barnes, Shoemaker.

## **5. COMMISSION BUSINESS**

### **5.01: Recap Listening Session for the Renovation of Ford Brook Park**

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood recalled that the listening session held last month resulted from the CIP including a renovation of Ford Brook Park in approximately 2020. There is a placeholder dollar amount of \$70,000. The project may present itself to a good opportunity for a collaborative approach for funding and construction. He would like to discuss some of the comments made at the listening session, which are included in the report. He noted there were neighbor comments about a desire to help with concrete and possibly assembly. Also suggested was a desire for imaginative or “non-conventional” play. Two images were presented that would lend itself well for imaginative play, and no opposition was expressed. He also concurred with the resident comments that swings are always a popular option.

Chair Bennett noted that clearly the neighborhood has a passion for that park and wants to be engaged. It is therefore important for the Commission to show its commitment to the project and the fact that resident requests are taken seriously. He would love to do something at Night To Unite. He would love some progress to have been made at the event, since he has committed to attending. Perhaps there may even be an opportunity to do some engagement that evening.

Commissioner Sis concurred. He also stated that he has been contemplating whether the park should be geared towards younger children or pre-teens and teens. Imaginative play would be a great option. It would add diversity to the mix around the City.

Commissioner Leistico commented that the residents seemed to express a desire for a lot of traditional elements at the park: swings, slides, and benches for parents. From the creative side, there perhaps was not as much enthusiasm. Perhaps both of those can be combined.

Commissioner Barten added there may be a way to do both traditional and imaginative.

Chair Bennett recalled residents loved the open play space as well. There seemed to be concern about ADA parking and accessibility and possibly taking away from green space. They do not want to lose the simple, classic neighborhood feel already present. In engagement sessions, there can be discussion about what they want. He also recalled the overwhelming concern for the safety of the kids. With that said, modern play equipment is inherently safer than the concrete tube present.

Commissioner Sis asked if there has been follow-up from the City of Nowthen.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood responded that staff has not heard anything at this time.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood continued that staff can develop an RFP. The Night to Unite events are pretty distracting and chaotic. Perhaps a draft RFP can be issued to the people for whom staff has email addresses. At the Night to Unite, a board could be set up and folks can be encouraged to place dots on priorities. He also added that in terms of ADA requirements, staff will want to make sure to identify in the RFP that the play structure can be moved closer to minimize the ADA cost to access it. Imaginative play may provide a connection to those ADA requirements, like a wooden boardwalk, for example.

The Commissioners discussed how best to communicate the price tag of various proposed items at the Night to Unite.

Commissioner Sis asked about usage of State contracts for bidding out play structures.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood responded many or most of the playground vendors have a State contract, so usually 12 – 18% can be saved off catalog items. The RFP can make note of that. Basically, it will be a discount for their list price.

#### **5.02: Auxiliary Audio System for The Draw – a 2019 Capital Improvement Project**

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood provided an overview of the current audio system at The Draw. It was built as a 350-person Amphitheatre, but there are now events where several hundred people are present for an event. Auxiliary speakers are now needed to extend the sound of the events. The problem is that staff has had significant trouble getting vendors with any interest in the project. One vendor proposed a \$100,000 project. Tonight, staff has nothing for the Commission to look at, other than to communicate that it is going to be much more expensive than the originally \$40,000 budgeted for. At a minimum, it may be cables with speakers that have to be set up and taken down on the evening of the event. He noted so many contractors have labor shortages or have all the work they can handle, so prices are high and responsiveness is low. Showing up when appointments are set have been an issue.

### **6. COMMISSION/STAFF INPUT**

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood presented a draft flyer for the Pearson Park dedication that is scheduled for the evening of the Commission's July meeting. Staff is following up closely to get that park done. Like most projects, it will come down to the wire. There will be some amenities like face painting and a few other fun items.

Commissioner Bayer commented that there has been resident feedback about one of the boardwalks that has been under water for the past three previous seasons.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood commented that the contractor was supposed to have worked on those repairs this past week. Hopefully the date of the repairs will be repaired within another week or so.

### **7. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Commissioner Bayer, seconded by Commissioner Sis, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chair Bennett; Commissioners Bayer, Sis, Barten, Leistico. Voting No: None. Absent: Barnes, Shoemaker.

The Park and Recreation Commission meeting adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



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Mark Riverblood  
Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent

Drafted by Allison Burr  
*TimeSaver off Site Secretarial, Inc.*