

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

The Ramsey Park and Recreation Commission conducted a regular meeting on August 12, 2021, at Rivers' Bend Park, 5000 142nd Lane NW, South Shelter, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Commission Members Present: Chair Shane Bennett
 Vice Chair Brandon Sis
 Commissioner Nathan Barten
 Commissioner Justin Loss
 Commissioner Dean Olson
 Commissioner Brian Walker

Commission Members Absent: Commissioner Jennifer Leistico

Also Present: City Council Liaison Ryan Heineman
 Councilmember Debra Musgrove
 Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Mark Riverblood

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Bennett called the Park and Recreation Commission meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

2. CITIZEN INPUT

Debra Musgrove, 15247 Fluorine Street, stated that she follows the Commission minutes and agendas. She referenced the playground replacement policy, noting that there was discussion as to how some parks could be repurposed. She provided suggestions for alternate ideas including a destination sunflower park.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated that he did look online and recommended that the Commission visit the website or park. He agreed that a sunflower field would be valuable to wildlife after the public is done enjoying the sunflowers as well. He commented that one aspect of implementation would be clearing the site to prepare.

Ms. Musgrove stated that frisbee golf is also very popular and is another idea for an active destination park. She noted that two acres would be the minimum size for that type of park. She stated that another idea would be if there is a frisbee park, it could be used for snowshoeing in the winter months.

Chair Bennett thanked Ms. Musgrove for her ideas. He stated that he does like the concept of a sunflower park. He stated that the Commission has discussed the desire for different amenities and destinations within the parks system.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

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

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chair Bennett; Commissioners Sis, Barten, Loss, Olson, and Walker. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioner Leistico.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

4.01: Approve Park and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Loss noted that he was listed as absent but was shown present in a vote and should be reflected as absent.

Motion by Commissioner Loss, seconded by Commissioner Barten, to approve the following Park and Recreation Commission Regular Meeting Minutes with the noted change:

- Park and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes dated July 8, 2021

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chair Bennett; Commissioners Loss, Barten, Olson, Sis, and Walker. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioner Leistico.

5. COMMISSION BUSINESS

5.01: Playground Replacement Policy

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated that there has been a lot of time, energy, and discussion on this topic. He stated that the intent is to develop a policy for City Council consideration that would provide a programmatic plan for playground replacement. He stated that there are key elements in the plan that were discussed at the July meeting which were summarized in the staff report. He referenced the public input and demonstrated need section and reviewed the suggested amended language. He also reviewed language related to alternative landscaping and the ongoing maintenance costs. He noted that the policy may be reviewed after the first playground reviews are done.

Chair Bennett thanked staff for the clarification on the changes that have been made. He referenced the citizen input related to alternatives to play structures and stated that perhaps that could be added in as part of the evaluation process. He commented that the policy looks good and addresses the conversations the Commission had had.

Commissioner Walker commented that he is unsure that all the alternatives need to be within the policy, but that information should be included somewhere. He commented that neighbors should be involved in the discussions on the future of their playground/park and what it should become.

Chair Bennett agreed that community input should be an important part of the process.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood provided additional details on how the process could go related to public engagement and how the alternative ideas could be incorporated.

Chair Bennett stated that the policy is clear that citizen input will be part of the process.

Councilmember Heineman stated that he loves the idea of a frisbee golf park. He stated that the course in Ham Lake draws in hundreds of people per day in the summer. He noted that activity should be considered when thinking about potential locations as that would not be a good fit for a small neighborhood park area.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood presented the potential actions before the Commission, noting that if the Commission is supportive of the policy, he would like to bring that to the Council in September for review.

Motion by Commissioner Sis, seconded by Commissioner Walker, to approve the Interim Playground Replacement Policy.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chair Bennett; Commissioners Sis, Walker, Barten, Loss, and Olson. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioner Leistico.

6. COMMISSION/STAFF INPUT

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated that staff continues to work on recreation program offerings.

Carlyn Erion provided an update on the Bluebird Recovery Program. She stated that all the bluebird houses have been built and were installed around the park. She noted that the old houses were removed and some of the wood and posts were repurposed.

Micky Mekosch stated that about 18 months ago she met with Carlyn to discuss the program and joined her efforts. She provided an update on the program and the activity within the houses after installation. She stated that there are 12 houses installed in the park and another 12 houses are ready for installation at Pearson Park and Elmcrest Park this fall.

The Commission expressed appreciation for the program.

A resident expressed interest in assisting with the program efforts and noted that he would also be interested in wood duck homes.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated that the City commonly funds the construction materials for these types of projects. He noted that volunteers are appreciated for those efforts as well.

Chair Bennett noted that this started as a program of one person and has increased to three members. He noted that perhaps additional marketing could be done of the program to increase participation.

Ms. Musgrove stated that perhaps additional advertisement could be done in the *Ramsey Resident* and noted that perhaps people would want to have a house installed on their own property.

Ms. Erion stated that the bluebird workshop includes details such as the responsibilities that would go along with the homes.

Ms. Mekosch stated that one thing they had trouble with was posts, but they were able to find some at garage sales.

Commissioner Walker stated that he would like to learn more about the maintenance and costs and everything that goes into the parks. He noted that he would find that information helpful to prepare for the Capital Improvement Plan discussions.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood agreed that information would be valuable and would also be helpful information for the residents as to how their tax dollars are used.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Barten, seconded by Commissioner Loss, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chair Bennett; Commissioners Barten, Loss, Olson, Sis, and Walker. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioner Leistico.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Riverblood
Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.