

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

The Ramsey Park and Recreation Commission conducted a regular meeting on October 13, 2022, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Commission Members Present:      Vice Chair Brandon Sis  
   Commissioner Nathan Barten  
   Commissioner Jennifer Leistico  
   Commissioner Justin Loss  
   Commissioner Dean Olson  
   Commissioner Brian Walker (arrived at 7:03 p.m.)

Commission Members Absent:      Chair Shane Bennett

Also Present:                              City Council Liaison Debra Musgrove  
   Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Mark Riverblood

**1.      CALL TO ORDER**

Vice Chair Sis called the Park and Recreation Commission meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**2.      CITIZEN INPUT**

None.

**3.      APPROVE AGENDA**

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

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

**4.      APPROVE MINUTES**

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

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

- Park and Recreation Commission Meeting dated September 8, 2022

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

## **5. COMMISSION BUSINESS**

### **5.01: Recommend 2023 Park Development Fees**

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood stated that each year the Commission makes a recommendation to the City Council related to Park Dedication and Trail Fees. He noted that in 2021 the Commission recommended a modest increase for both Park Dedication and Trail Fees to be implemented in 2022 but because that discussion spanned two months it overlapped the Council discussion and was not implemented. He stated that at this time the Commission is asked to make a recommendation for those fees that would be implemented in 2023.

Commissioner Walker arrived.

Vice Chair Sis asked and received confirmation that these fees apply to new development. He stated that because the previous recommendation was not implemented, the Commission could make that same recommendation from the previous year.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood commented that additional information was included in the packet providing comparison rates from other communities.

Commissioner Walker asked if a development has been approved and then rates are raised, would the new fees apply to the phases of that development that have not yet begun.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood confirmed that most residential subdivisions have a number of phases within. He stated that the fees are solidified in final plat, so the fees would be determined upon the time of final platting.

Commissioner Walker commented that Ramsey cannot make more land to develop, therefore there is only so much land to develop and so much revenue that can be generated through development. He stated that he would support raising the fees even more than recommended for the previous year. He hoped that Councilmember Musgrove could communicate his thoughts to the City Council. He stated that the City must capture the funds it can now in order to support funding for parks.

Commissioner Leistico agreed with the sentiment of Commissioner Walker but expressed concern with recommending a higher amount because that could be rejected by the Council as the previous recommendation was not accepted.

Vice Chair Sis asked for input on the reason the Council did not accept the recommendation for the fees last year.

Councilmember Musgrove commented that she did not recall the discussion. She stated that the Council did raise some fees where it felt appropriate. She referenced the concern related to limited land for development and the need to capture funds now. She stated that the money raised through Park Dedication cannot be used in existing parks and therefore asked where the additional funds would be used.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood commented that the discussion of the Commission last year overlapped the discussion of the Council and therefore it was an issue of timing as the recommendation from the Commission came in the night before the first reading of the fees by the Council. He explained that there needs to be a nexus between the fees and the need. He commented that within the CIP there are millions of dollars of projects, therefore there is a demonstrable need.

Vice Chair Sis stated that he would also recommend an increase beyond what was previously recommended because of the increasing cost of materials to build out park spaces and features. He stated that perhaps the recommendation from last year be doubled, which would be \$4,500 for residential park dedication and \$1,300 for trail fees.

Commissioner Loss commented that he agrees with the Trail Fees but asked if the Park Dedication should be even higher. He asked Councilmember Musgrove for details on the discussion the Council may have.

Councilmember Musgrove commented that City staff will make a presentation with the recommendation of the Commission, a potential alternative, and/or the Council could make a different choice.

Vice Chair Sis stated that the increases proposed as not out of line with inflation and believed that that increase will most likely remain at that level.

Commissioner Walker stated that he would support \$1,500 for a trail fee.

Vice Chair Sis asked if there is a delineation for Trail Fees and whether there is a separate fund for trails versus parks.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood replied that the Trail Fees are deposited into the Park Trust Fund and therefore there is not a distinction. He agreed that there is a lot of need for trail projects as well.

Commissioner Leistico stated that in light of the additional information related to the Council decision last year she would support the additional increase.

Motion by Commissioner Barten, seconded by Commissioner Loss, to recommend to City Council that Park Dedication effective for 2023, be \$4,500 per dwelling unit, and that Trail Fees be \$1,500 per dwelling unit and that the per acre rates for the commercial/industrial subdivision of land remain static, at the existing 2022 rates.

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

### **5.02: Consider Sculptural Carving of Two Dead Oaks at Sunfish Lake Park**

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood stated that at the September meeting there was considerable discussion on this topic and the consensus was that there may be merit to considering sculpting of the two large trees versus removal and disposal. He provided some examples of carvings that the artist has done in order to provide the Commission with a better understanding.

Vice Chair Sis thanked staff for the additional exhibits as it helped to provide the Commission with a better understanding than the drawings.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood stated that staff would like to proceed with issuing an RFP.

Vice Chair Sis commented that this would be a great use of these resources.

Commissioner Walker commented that he likes the new sketches much more than the original sketches. He asked if this would be considered a capital improvement to the park.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood replied that it could be considered as such, but it is a nominal cost and therefore while he may not call it a capital improvement, it would be eligible for Park Trust Funds. He stated that \$6,000 would be funded through the parks operational budget, as that would be similar to the cost for removal of the trees, and the balance would come from the Park Trust Fund.

Commissioner Olson asked the longevity of the sculptures.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood replied that the lifespan of the oak sculptures could last a long time.

Vice Chair Sis asked if there would be opportunity with local civic groups, such as a garden society.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood replied that while that could be an option, it is always difficult to ask for money as each group typically has its own projects to work on.

Councilmember Musgrove asked for input on the color of the wood or stain.

Vice Chair Sis stated that he would be open to the suggestion of the artist.

Commissioner Leistico agreed that would seem to be part of the determination of the artist.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that she would want them to blend with nature rather than stick out. She commented that some of the colored examples might stand out and be better fitting in a sculpture garden versus a park setting.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood commented that suggestion could be weaved into the RFP but would also agree the artist should have some liberty. He noted that the tree could be brown, leaves could be green while the aquatic based tree could have some blue.

Vice Chair Sis agreed with that direction to be included in the RFP.

Consensus of the Commission was to proceed with issuing an RFP for the sculptural carving of the two oaks for this fall or winter of 2022-2023.

Motion by Commissioner Leistico, seconded by Commissioner Olson, to proceed with issuing an RFP for the sculptural carving of the two oaks for this fall or winter of 2022-2023.

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

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

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood stated that a list of recreational programming was included in the Commission packet and highlighted some of those activities.

Vice Chair Sis noted the holiday tree lighting event to take place Tuesday, November 29<sup>th</sup> at City Hall.

## **7. ADJOURNMENT**

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

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

The Park and Recreation Commission meeting adjourned at 7:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



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Mark Riverblood  
Parks & Assistant Public Works Director

Drafted by Amanda Staple  
*TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*