

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

The Ramsey Park and Recreation Commission conducted a regular meeting on March 10, 2022, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Commission Members Present: Chair Shane Bennett
 Commissioner Nathan Barten
 Commissioner Jennifer Leistico
 Commissioner Justin Loss
 Commissioner Dean Olson

Commission Members Absent: Vice Chair Brandon Sis
 Commissioner Brian Walker

Also Present: City Council Liaison 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 6:33 p.m.

2. CITIZEN INPUT

None.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

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

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

4. APPROVE MINUTES

4.01: Approve Park and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes

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

- Park and Recreation Commission Meeting dated February 10, 2022

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

5. COMMISSION BUSINESS

5.01: Nominate Chair and Vice-Chairperson of the Park and Recreation Commission

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated that each year the Commission nominates a Chair and Vice Chair. He noted that Vice Chair Sis was unable to attend tonight but is willing and able to continue serving as Vice Chair if desired by the Commission.

Motion by Commissioner Olson seconded by Commissioner Barten to nominate Shane Bennett as Chair.

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

Motion by Commissioner Barten seconded by Commissioner Loss to nominate Brandon Sis as Vice-Chairperson.

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

5.02: Playground Renovations – Rabbit and Peltzer Parks

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood provided background information on the development of the playground replacement policy and plan as well as the previous discussion related to Rabbit and Pelzer parks. He stated that a detailed budget has been prepared for Rabbit Park. He stated that input received from residents related to Peltzer Park has been provided to the Commission and noted that additional input will most likely be provided by residents tonight as well.

Chair Bennett invited members of the public to provide input.

Ryan Strickland, 15000 Hematite Street, stated that his family has used Peltzer Park for many years and has enjoyed it. He stated that his family would like to see regular playground equipment (swings, slides, ladders, etc.). He stated that it would be nice to have a path to the main road without going into the cul-de-sac. He noted that his kids would like to see a gaga pit in the park. He commented that they home school their children, so they get a lot of use out of the park.

Brian Nagel, 6940 148th Lane, commented that he has three young children that use the park a lot and have seen it deteriorate. He stated that he is happy to see that they are looking to replace equipment and is also happy to see consideration of used equipment. He asked that they consider long-term plans and noted that more shade would be nice whether that is provided by a shade sail or trees. He recognized that costs savings would be gained by purchasing used playground equipment and hoped that additional options could be considered for improvement of the park. He

commented that he received the letter for tonight's meeting two days ago and perhaps more residents would have attended if the letter were received earlier. He commented that the park is well used by the neighborhood and most neighbors would be willing to contribute to labor if that were an option. He noted that there are a lot of families committed to the area that would be willing to participate in terms of labor or other volunteer assistance.

Blake Reimer, 6980 148th Lane NW, commented that there is a lot of broken glass in the peat rock and perhaps a different material could be chosen. He stated that children like to use the park in the evening and therefore lighting would be helpful. He agreed that shade would be a great addition whether that is done through a sail/canopy system or trees. He recognized the cost for a pavilion but agreed that if the City could supply the materials, the neighborhood would provide the labor. He stated that the neighborhood would be grateful for something safe and clean for the kids.

Collin Dalquist, 7030 149th Lane, stated that they love the park and seeing families enjoy the park. He agreed that they have watched the park deteriorate and appreciate that it is going to be repaired. He commented that he works for a construction company and would be willing to leverage that to assist in the renovation/improvement of the park.

Elijah asked if there could be a zipline at the park.

John Fredrickson, 7062 148th Lane, echoed the comments of his neighbors. He stated that his family loves having the park and his kids would love to see a zipline. He agreed that it was unfortunate to receive the letter so close to the meeting which did not allow much time for consideration but was glad to see the park getting attention.

Dan Specht, 7060 147th Avenue NW, stated that it is great to see the neighborhood turnout tonight. He stated that his family chose their home because of the proximity to the park. He stated that his children enjoyed the glider feature. He stated that his family is excited to see the park getting attention for improvement.

Mr. Nagel commented that it would be great to see a picnic table or two near the trees. He noted that the used playground equipment only seems to have two swings and perhaps they could repurpose those or look to add additional swings. He agreed that a zipline would be a great addition.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated that Rabbit Park was the original priority, but the vision was expanded to include Peltzer Park as well and recognized the short window of time provided to residents. He stated that the Commission has spent a fair amount of time reviewing Rabbit Park prior to tonight's meeting. He reviewed the proposed budgets for both Rabbit Park and Peltzer Park. He reviewed some of the resident comments and requests that were received and explained how those were incorporated into the plans for Peltzer Park. He reviewed the proposed budget items for Pelzer Park which had a total of \$49,100. He estimated a cost of \$5,000 for a gaga pit but could be a lesser cost if volunteers were used to install the item. He stated that a gazebo would be rather expensive, estimating about \$35,000 for a small gazebo with a concrete slab. He stated that \$100,000 has been allocated per year to address playground replacement. He noted that the items included in the proposals for Rabbit and Peltzer parks have

a cost of \$100,700 which is achievable and within the budget. He stated that Alpine is the next forecasted improvement and would have a higher cost because it is a community park but noted that could include some of the larger features and is also walkable distance to the Peltzer Park neighborhood.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if there is information available showing the information discussed tonight.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood confirmed that he could have this presentation posted to the website. He anticipated that this would go to the City Council in April and that would allow time for additional resident feedback. He stated that if desired, the Commission could delay action to its April meeting, which would still allow the item to go before the Council in April as well, if it feels that additional input is needed. He noted that ideally, he would like to have the playground replacement done prior to school ending for the summer.

Commissioner Loss asked for additional input on timing of approvals in order to meet that construction timeline.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated that he feels confident that the Council would approve the recommendation for the playground replacement as the cost is very close to the budgeted amount. He stated that he will also speak with contractors to ensure they could get the replacement into that timeline. He stated that the vendor with the refurbished equipment has agreed to hold the equipment for Ramsey.

Commissioner Olson commented that it is very exciting to be able to address the needs of two parks this year rather than just one.

Councilmember Musgrove asked staff for input on the offering of the neighbors to assist with labor and whether there are barriers to that.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood replied that there are always a number of challenges with project management and use of volunteers. He commented that this project would have an opportunity to use volunteers in the spreading of the woodchip material. He stated that most of the other aspects of the park improvement are construction related and noted that staff could speak with the contractor to determine if there were other volunteer opportunities. He noted that tree planting could be another volunteer opportunity.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if staff would attempt to incorporate those volunteer opportunities into the project.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood replied that there seems to be an interest from residents and the Commission and therefore would structure the recommendation from the Commission to include use of volunteers. He stated that if the use of volunteers did not work out, they would have the contractor continue to move forward in order to stay on the timeline for the project.

Chair Bennett agreed that it is nice that the Commission can address two parks this year. He believed that the budgeted funds would meet the majority of the desires expressed by residents tonight. He recognized that there were other features desired and stated that those could perhaps be enhancements in the future.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood confirmed that the gaga pit at North Commons was constructed by a Girl Scout Troop with donations it received.

Motion by Commissioner Leistico seconded by Commissioner Olson to recommend to City Council approval of the proposed playground replacements and associated park rejuvenation at Rabbit and Peltzer Parks in an amount not to exceed \$100,700 from the lawful gambling fund.

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

5.03: Trott Brook Crossing and Community Park Site – Preliminary Development Cost Review

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood noted this was an informational case with many budget details. He suggested that the Commission consider this at its April meeting.

6. COMMISSION/STAFF INPUT

Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood stated that a number of recreation programs were listed in the case and highlighted an upcoming opportunity, an Earth Day Clean-up event.

Chair Bennett recognized the upcoming recreational programming opportunities and noted that residents can find out more information on the City website.

7. ADJOURNMENT

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

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

The Park and Recreation Commission meeting adjourned at 7:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Riverblood
Parks & Assistant Public Works Superintendent

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.