

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

The Ramsey Park and Recreation Commission conducted a regular meeting on September 14, 2023, at The Hollow park, 14642 Snowy Owl Street NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Commission Members Present:      Chair Nathan Barten  
   Vice Chair Brandon Sis  
   Commissioner Todd Arts  
   Commissioner Shane Bennett  
   Commissioner Jennifer Leistico  
   Commissioner Dean Olson

Commission Members Absent:      Commissioner Justin Loss

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

**1.      CALL TO ORDER**

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

**2.      CITIZEN INPUT**

Wendy Walton, Northgate Church, commented that they partnered with the City to hold pop-up play events this summer, for the second year. She commented that the idea is to provide a place where there can be a safe sense of community for parents and children.

Sarah Perkins, Northgate Church commented that she noticed this occurring in other communities and reached out to the City in attempt to partner and it has been going well. She commented that the church appreciates the City and the ability to partner on programing.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood commented that they also have a great location for the event on the lawn at The Draw.

Ms. Perkins confirmed that has been a great location as there is a large shady lawn with a ballfield.

Commissioner Leistico asked the general age range for the programing.

Ms. Walton replied that it varies from parents with young children (toddlers/preschoolers) as well as older children. She noted that they tend to offer a sensory activity along with a sports activity for the older children.

Councilmember Musgrove asked the number of volunteers that assist with the events.

Ms. Perkins estimated about ten volunteers noting both adults and youth.

Ms. Walton commented that they are excited to continue the program next summer as well, and continue to look for new opportunities for programming.

### **3. APPROVE AGENDA**

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

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

### **4. APPROVE MINUTES**

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

Commissioner Sis noted that under call to order, it should state, “Chair ~~Bennett~~ Barten...”

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

- Park and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes date August 10, 2023 as amended

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

### **5. COMMISSION BUSINESS**

#### **5.01: Approve Concept for Restroom for the Neighborhood Park South of Riverdale Drive**

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood commented that late in 2022 the Commission approved the playground plans for this park, but the plan for the restroom was not included and therefore is before the Commission tonight. He stated that the plans proposed show a small, concrete, unisex bathroom that would have running water and lights. He stated that it would be programable to lock at 10 p.m. and open at 6 a.m. He stated that the plans could be approved for same or similar, to provide flexibility should there be a more economical option that is presented through the bidding process. He stated that the original budget for this park included \$75,000 for this restroom.

Commissioner Sis asked if there is a similar alternate that might be available on the State contract.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood stated that he could ask that question but is not aware of a State bid for these restrooms. He commented that he will check on it.

Chair Barten commented that he appreciates staff bringing this forward and it seems pretty straightforward within the staff report.

Motion by Commissioner Sis, seconded by Commissioner Olson, to recommend staff proceed with developing specifications and obtaining bids for a restroom as described in the case.

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

#### **5.02: Recommend the 2024-2033 Parks Capital Improvement Plan**

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood stated that at the August meeting the Commission reviewed the proposed projects within the plan and provided consensus of the order of the projects, along with direction to remove some projects. He stated that one additional project was added since that time, making improvements to the farmstead house in the Trott Brook development so that house could be rented as well as reinforcing the barn structure. He estimated \$95,000 for that project, noting that it would be proposed for 2024 and staff would bring forward those plans soon to ensure that the barn could be stabilized before winter. He commented that the ten-year CIP would move forward to the City Council and be discussed at one or more work sessions this fall before moving to a public hearing where the Council would consider adoption of the citywide CIP. He reiterated that the CIP is a planning document and does not authorize the specific projects.

Chair Barten asked for details on the renting of the home as mentioned.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood provided details on the rental of that home which could net about \$2,500 per month and would secure that property as a person or family would be living in the home.

Councilmember Musgrove commented that there are three pages where the total costs on the top do not equal the costs within the table. She asked if the table cost is accurate or the cost on the top.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood commented that is a worksheet program used by finance that he does not have access to. He stated that he will send this to finance to update the figures appropriately before the City Council reviews this document.

Commissioner Sis referenced the bracing for the barn property and asked if that is expected to be the final bracing or an interim solution.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood replied that a structural engineer was hired to ensure this would be a good plan and that the bracing would provide the stability without impacting the view from the interior. He confirmed that this would be the final plan for bracing.

Motion by Commissioner Sis, seconded by Commissioner Arts, to recommend approval of the 2024-2033 Parks Capital Improvement Plan.

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

### **5.03: Recommend 2024 Park Development Fees**

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood stated that annually the Commission reviews the Park Dedication and Trail Fees to make a recommendation to the City Council. He provided background information on the in-depth discussion related to parks and trail fees in 2020, which were then adopted as recommended in 2022 for implementation in 2023. He stated that staff does not recommend any changes in 2024 for Park Dedication or Trail Fees.

Chair Barten asked if Ramsey falls in the middle in comparison to other communities.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood replied that it would depend on which cities are used as comparison, noting that every city is different in how it builds its park system. He noted that some cities use municipal liquor stores as a funding source for their parks and therefore may have lower park dedication rates. He commented that park dedication also needs to be indexed upon the need, not on what others are doing. He stated that there is over \$30,000,000 identified in improvements within the parks CIP planning document and therefore in theory, the Park Dedication should pay for those new improvements that are planned.

Commissioner Sis asked if staff believes that the current park and trail fees are sufficient to support those plans.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood noted that the Commission was very thoughtful when suggesting the last increase to park dedication and trail fees. He believed that the rates should be reviewed again in 2024 and then make a recommendation for adjustment. He stated that in this development, the developer has stated that they are selling homes faster than they can build them, therefore it could be assumed that the park dedication and trail fees are not an impediment to development. He commented that given the number of residents enjoying the park tonight, it is easy to see that the residents enjoy the park amenities.

Commissioner Leistico commented that she would agree that it would be appropriate to delay another increase as there was just an increase implemented in 2023.

Councilmember Musgrove agreed that it would make sense for the Commission to do another review in 2024 related to the fees. She asked if they could also review whether all the improvements would be realistic in terms of what could be done.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood provided details on the rates of park development for different types of development based on the impact the development would have on the parks system. He noted that developers will always say that fees are too high but continue to sell homes faster than they can build them and also want parks and trails, using those features to advertise their development to new residents.

Chair Barten commented that he is also in favor of keeping the fees as is and then revisiting the fees again in 2024.

Motion by Commissioner Leistico, seconded by Commissioner Sis, to recommend to City Council that Park Dedication and Trail Fees for 2024 remain unchanged.

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

**6. COMMISSION/STAFF INPUT**

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood noted items that will be before the Commission at its October meeting.

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

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

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

The Park and Recreation Commission meeting adjourned at 7:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'JR', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director

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