

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

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

Commission Members Present: Chair Shane Bennett
 Vice Chair Brandon Sis
 Commissioner Nathan Barten
 Commissioner Dean Olson

Commission Members Absent: Commissioner Jennifer Leistico
 Commissioner Justin Loss
 Commissioner Brian Walker

Also Present: City Council Liaison Debra Musgrove
 Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Mark Riverblood
 Assistant City Engineer Joe Feriancek
 Recreation Specialist Marla Martinez-Flynn

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. CITIZEN INPUT

None.

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, and Olson. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Leistico, Loss, and 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 date October 13, 2022

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

5. COMMISSION BUSINESS

5.01: Consider the 2023-2032 Parks Capital Improvement Plan

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood stated that tonight they will focus on the parks projects within the CIP, narrowing the discussion to those proposed for 2023. He explained the purpose of the CIP, noting that many projects are opportunity driven. He reviewed the five-year parks CIP projects and noted that part of the CIP process to weighing projects to determine which projects deliver the best return on investment. He provided details on trail connections, noting that sometimes a development project will require the developer to provide a trail connection which triggers the City to complete adjacent connections. He noted that there are areas in the community which do not have trails or parks in their neighborhoods and therefore connections have been identified that would connect those communities to area parks and amenities. He noted that some projects and/or trail connections carry forward to future years in order to look for the best opportunity to move forward in conjunction with development.

Assistant City Engineer Feriancek provided details on the Central Park parking lot reconstruction project including the project goals, how the project will be timed around the demands of the facility, and the general parking lot design guidelines. He reviewed the preliminary layouts that are being considered noting that staff would like input from the Commission on the different options. He summarized the staff observations as well as input staff would like from the Commission on different elements.

Chair Bennett commented that he likes the concept of angled spots for safety but also acknowledged the increased demand for parking during high traffic events. He stated that perhaps there are alternatives working with PACT that can help to offset that. He stated that he also liked the addition of trees buffering the parking lot to prevent people from parking in the green space while also providing some shade options for patrons in the park. He stated that his biggest concern would be for the stall count, noting that he would not want that limited too far to the point it would create parking issues within the park.

Commissioner Sis commented that he has not been to the park when the lot is completely full but echoed the preference for the angled stalls. He also echoed that the green space would be a good element along with adding shade. He commented that working with PACT would also mitigate the loss of stalls that could occur from the angled concept. He stated that he would prefer to remove the island and keep using directional flow.

Commissioner Olson stated that he also prefers the angled parking and echoes the comments of the other members. He noted that angled stalls also provide easier backing for trucks and larger vehicles and increases visibility when backing out.

Chair Bennett noted that it also forces people to pull into the spot rather than backing in.

Commissioner Barten commented that he angled parking also increases pedestrian safety as they can anticipate the direction traffic will be moving.

Civil Engineer II Feriancek stated that staff will be bringing this forward to the Public Works Committee at its next meeting and then forward to City Council.

Commissioner Sis asked if there is directional signage for the different fields, noting that he has trouble finding their assigned field at the park.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood commented that the City has tried that at Elmcreech, and it did not work well. He noted that typically the association or tournament host provides that diagram on its website or a flyer for the event.

Chair Bennett commented that typically users learn to identify the fields after becoming familiar with the park.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood stated that the addition of the 65 stalls that were added a few years ago has helped significantly. He stated that the proximity of the PACT lot will also be helpful for users of the fields on that side once the City is able to finalize that shared parking agreement. He agreed that the angled stalls assist in avoiding conflicts between drivers and/or drivers and pedestrians. He stated that when the park is short on parking, that tends to be a result of poor programming management, rather than just being a few stalls too short.

Commissioner Sis asked if sewer and water would be extended with the 161st project.

Assistant City Engineer Feriancek replied that they would bring a stub to the east end of Central Park in case there is a future need. He stated that all of the park systems currently function well at this time, but that stub would provide a future option if something were to go wrong.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood commented that the wells and septic currently at the park are working well and therefore would not be replaced with a sewer and water connection at this time.

Chair Bennett noted that this was a good list of CIP projects and appreciated that they continue to look for opportunity driven projects to work congruently with development opportunities for the best value. He stated that he also likes the playground replacement program. He stated that this list includes improvements through multiple different methods and is a well-rounded list of different types of projects across the city.

Motion by Commissioner Sis, seconded by Commissioner Barten, to recommend a 2023-2032 Parks Capital Improvement Plan to the City Council as presented.

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

5.02: 2022-2023 Ice Skating Season – Periodic Warming House Closures Expected

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood commented the labor market in public works continues to be lacking employees noting that they have not been able to fully staff the regular public works positions or seasonal positions. He stated that they currently have two applicants for the warming house attendants and therefore if they cannot get more workers, they would prioritize the Central Park rink. He stated that staff is working on the development of a schedule for warming house staffing, noting that they may prioritize the weekends rather than weekday evenings. He noted that the rink attendants do count the number of people using the warming houses and reviewed the decreasing trends of use. He noted that trend informs them in various ways and supports that perhaps it would not be much of an impact to have the warming houses closed during certain times. He noted that perhaps the rink at Ramsey Elementary is eventually removed if that rink is not utilized rather than continuing to invest in something that is not being well used.

Commissioner Sis asked if warming house operations could be automated to some degree alleviating the pressure on staffing.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood stated that they have used an honor system in the past with mixed results. He noted that not having an attendant lends itself to more mischief teen activity which then does not lend itself towards an inviting situation for younger children.

6. COMMISSION/STAFF INPUT

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood stated the report highlights different upcoming recreational programs. He noted that often the Commission does not hold a December meeting if there are not actionable items and at this time, there are not any items scheduled.

7. ADJOURNMENT

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

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

The Park and Recreation Commission meeting adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Riverblood
Parks & Assistant Public Works Director

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.