

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

The Ramsey Park and Recreation Commission conducted a regular meeting on January 9, 2025, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Commission Members Present: Chair Nathan Barten
 Commissioner Todd Arts
 Commissioner Shane Bennett
 Commissioner Megan Ealain
 Commissioner Jennifer Leistico
 Commissioner Dean Olson

Commission Members Absent: Vice Chair Brandon Sis

Also Present: 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

None.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

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

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

4. APPROVE MINUTES

4.01: Approve Park and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes

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

- Park and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes dated November 14, 2024

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

5. COMMISSION BUSINESS

5.01: Playground Replacement Planning – Central Park

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood presented background information on the playground replacement program. He stated that at the November meeting the Commission discussed potential improvements and provided direction to staff to further narrow the scope. He stated that staff have since worked to develop a proposed plan for Central Park and presented background information on the existing playground as well as the proposed concept for improving the playground. He provided the proposed cost of \$449,000 which would include contingency funds and explained how that proposed cost would be split between the Lawful Gambling Fund and Park Trust Fund.

Commissioner Bennett asked what would happen to the play equipment that is in good condition and whether the diggers would remain at the park or be relocated to another park.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood stated that the playground equipment would be removed and disposed of by the contractor, which would also include the removal of the buckshot. He stated that the City would not reuse the play equipment.

Commissioner Leistico asked for details on the ongoing maintenance that would be required for artificial turf.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood replied that there is a warranty on the material, and it is his understanding that almost no maintenance is needed for years. He explained the cleaning/fluffing that can be completed after a few years.

Chairperson Barten asked how the artificial turf compares to the poured-in-place surfacing.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood replied that the wear and tear is similar as is the fall protection, but the cost of poured-in-place is a bit higher than artificial turf. He believed that the turf would provide a cleaner look.

Commissioner Ealain stated that she likes that the artificial turf would provide more accessibility. She also recognized that the music feature would be accessible but was not noticing any other accessible features within the playground.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood replied that all of the new and modern playgrounds are ADA accessible. He stated that the existing pea gravel is not considered accessible. He stated that many of the components have transfer stations and provided more details on the accessibility of different features proposed for the playground.

Chairperson Barten asked how much of the equipment is the equipment that was discussed in November that had been sprayed the wrong color.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood replied that all of the proposed equipment falls into that category. He explained that because the equipment is already available, it can be installed early in the season and would be open to the public in the Spring.

Commissioner Bennett commented that the concept seems to fit the theme of Central Park with many different components that will meet the needs of large crowds.

Commissioner Olson stated that he likes the finished look of the turf, that it would assist with weed control, and be less maintenance for parks staff. He commented that the playground is heavily used by siblings of those playing in tournaments. He noted that he has received positive feedback on the updated parking lot and plantings that were already completed.

Motion by Commissioner Bennett, seconded by Commissioner Olson, to recommend City Council approve a playground for Central Park at a not-to-exceed cost of \$449,000 with an intended completion before the summer of 2025.

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

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood noted that because of the scenario with the equipment already being available for installation, the City is receiving a discount of \$74,000 on that equipment.

5.02: Consider Donation of a Community Art Plan

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood provided background information on the topic and intention of public art. He reviewed different examples of public art and explained how public art fits within the strategies of the Strategic Plan. He noted that there are placeholders for public art within the Waterfront Park concept. He stated that Sarah Peters would be drafting the plan if the donation is accepted by the City. He explained that public art is not always municipally funded and can also be funded through businesses. He stated that the Ramsey Foundation is offering to donate the public art plan for the community.

Chairperson Barten asked if there would be an opportunity for review from some entity in the City while the plan is being developed.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood replied that he would be the liaison to the Foundation and there would be involvement from this Commission and the City Council. He stated that the process would also include a robust public engagement opportunity during the art fair.

Chairperson Barten commented that this makes sense as having a plan in place could provide the guidance to add public art elements within the parks, using the example of sculptures that could have been added to Sunfish Lake Park in the past.

Commissioner Bennett agreed. He stated that the plan has a cash value of \$8,000 and this is a great opportunity to have someone with experience to develop a plan that can be added to or amended in the future. He agreed that the plan would help to provide guidance when opportunities arrive.

Commissioner Olson stated that he likes the new brass sign at 47 and Bunker Lake Boulevard. He asked if the public art elements would include the City logo to continue with the branding efforts.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood stated that although the inclusion of the logo could be discussed within the plan, it would not be specific as to location and circumstance. He explained that the City's sign plan has specific information about sign size, design, and City logo usage.

Motion by Commissioner Bennett, seconded by Commissioner Arts, to recommend to City Council the acceptance of a community art plan for the City of Ramsey.

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

6. COMMISSION/STAFF INPUT

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood stated that at the next meeting Recreation Coordinator Proulx will provide a presentation on programming opportunities. He stated that the rinks have been flooded again and people have been skating. He stated that Frost Fest is scheduled during the month of February, weather pending, and highlighted upcoming programming opportunities. He encouraged residents to sign up for the recreation newsletter to stay up to date on coming opportunities.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Leistico, seconded by Commissioner Bennett, to adjourn the meeting.

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

The Park and Recreation Commission meeting adjourned at 7:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Mark Riverblood
Parks & Assistant Public Works Director

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.