

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

The Ramsey Park and Recreation Commission conducted a regular meeting on March 13, 2025, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Commission Members Present: Chair Nathan Barten
 Vice Chair Brandon Sis
 Commissioner Megan Ealain
 Commissioner Dean Olson

Commission Members Absent: Commissioner Todd Arts
 Commissioner Shane Bennett
 Commissioner Jennifer Leistico

Also Present: City Council Liaison Kirsten Buscher
 Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Mark Riverblood
 Recreation Coordinator Abby Proulx

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

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

4. APPROVE MINUTES

4.01: Approve Park and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes

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

- Park and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes dated March 13, 2025

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

5. COMMISSION BUSINESS

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

Chair Barten opened the floor for nominations for the position of Chair.

There were no nominations.

Chair Barten asked if Commissioner Ealain would be willing to serve as the Chair.

Commissioner Ealain replied that she would be willing to do so.

Motion by Chair Barten, seconded by Commissioner Olson, to elect Commissioner Ealain as the Chair of the Parks and Recreation Commission.

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

Commissioner Sis asked if Chair Barten would be interested in serving as Vice-Chair.

Chair Barten confirmed that he would be willing to serve in that position.

Motion by Commissioner Sis, seconded by Commissioner Olson, to elect Commissioner Barten as Vice-Chair of the Planning Commission.

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

5.02: River's Bend Park Shelter Replacement

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood provided background information noting the previous direction of the Commission for staff to begin the design for the shelter replacement at River's Bend Park. He provided an image of the southern shelter at the park, noting that the northern shelter has already been rehabilitated. He commented that River's Bend Park is one of the more popular daytime parks with walking, and dog walking, being the most popular activity in the southern half of the park. He noted that dog walkers often bring water and a bowl for their dogs and therefore a handpump has been considered to be added near the shelter for people with dogs, people fishing, and to wash hands. He highlighted the proposed location for the hand pump to be added. He explained that a stone would be added under the hand pump, to collect water for dogs to drink and to also prevent the area from becoming muddy. He reviewed the proposed design of the shelter. He also provided information on the park shelter rentals from the previous year, noting that this type of shelter is popular for children's birthday parties. He reviewed the other

proposed additions including a fireplace with a pizza oven as well as a dino dig feature near the shelter. He reviewed the proposed project cost of \$126,528. He stated that if the Commission agrees, the next step would be to follow the RFP process, with anticipated construction of the project in 2025.

Chair Barten commented that he would support moving forward to RFP.

Commissioner Sis agreed there would be no harm in going out for RFP, noting that if the prices are too high, they could reconsider. He asked if there is any access to power in the southern half of the park that could be run to the shelter.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood replied that there is power in the right-of-way for Bunker Lake Boulevard. He stated that he did not add that suggestion to the project at this time because of the cost. He stated that eventually they could look to add a restroom to the southern half of the park and perhaps running power could be considered at that time.

Chair Barten stated that perhaps they could look at solar lighting or panels atop the shelter that could assist in providing light and power. He agreed that is something they could consider to be added in the future.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood stated that the DNR does have a solar lighting program for parks and trails, noting that he could look into that program.

Commissioner Sis asked if the southern half of the park is still prone to flooding.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood replied that area does flood periodically but the low point is the access point and tunnel. He stated that there is frequently a period of a few days when the south half of the park is closed off but noted that is not during the peak season for rentals.

Chair Barten recognized that southern half of the park would still be open to pedestrian access during times of flooding.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood confirmed that when that area is closed because of flooding, it is only closed to vehicle access.

Commissioner Sis commented that the current shelter has been popular for teens with hammocks and asked if hooks could be considered to add into the plans to accommodate that use.

Chair Barten commented that he would not be opposed to adding that feature, as long as the teens are being respectful.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood replied that he would not want to modify the post width of the shelter because of the structural design. He noted that there are other spots that are popular for hammocking in the park, using trees.

Chair Barten referenced the fireplace design and asked if reflector shields should be added to allow more use during the shoulder seasons.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood agreed that would be included in the design, with workspace on the sides.

Consensus of the Commission was to direct staff to move forward with the RFP for the project.

Commissioner Sis asked if Plants and Things would be a good source to consider asking about the stone fireplace.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood replied that he was only able to find one vendor that offers the fireplace/pizza oven combo.

6. COMMISSION/STAFF INPUT

6.01: Recreation Program Review, Update and Future Forecast

Recreation Coordinator Proulx provided a brief recap of the 2024 year in review for parks and recreation programming. She then provided information on the upcoming spring and summer season programming, activities, and events planned.

Chair Barten thanked Recreation Coordinator Proulx for her excellent work, noting the appeal of the 55+ trips.

City Council Liaison Buscher introduced herself and stated that she is excited to learn more about parks and recreation in Ramsey.


7. ADJOURNMENT

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

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

The Park and Recreation Commission meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Mark Riverblood
Parks & Assistant Public Works Director

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.