

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
LITTLE CANADA, MINNESOTA**

**MARCH 3, 2022**

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof a regular meeting of the City Council of Little Canada, Minnesota was convened on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of March 2022 in the Council Chambers of the City Center located at 515 Little Canada Road in said City.

Chair Dave Miller called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and the following members of the Parks & Recreation Commission were present at roll call:

**PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION:** Hipp, Horwath, Miller, Mui, Schletty, Chu, and Abruzzese.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Parks & Rec/Community Services Director Bryce Shearen and Recreation Coordinator Sierra Hietala.

**MINUTES**

Commissioner Hipp made a motion to approve the January 6, 2022, Parks & Recreation Commission minutes as submitted. Commissioner Chu seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

**PARKS AND RECREATION MISSION STATEMENT**

Commissioner Mui read the parks and recreation mission statement.

**OLD BUSINESS: PIONEER PARK UPDATE**

The Parks & Rec Director stated that the Commission has talked a lot about Pioneer Park and there was a desire to pursue additional funding opportunities in 2022. He provided details on the MN DNR grant the City would like to apply for, noting a deadline of March 31<sup>st</sup> for submission of applications. He stated that staff will ask the Council to approve the submission of the grant application at the March 9 Council meeting.

Chair Miller asked if the grant is focused on the play node and trail areas.

The Parks & Rec Director replied that the grant application would apply to the play node and related section of trail, along with grading and construction.

Commissioner Chu asked for details on the grant application and information that needs to be submitted.

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The Parks & Rec Director reviewed some factors for consideration that will be highlighted in the application including environmental impacts, or lack thereof; vegetation; stormwater; and accessibility.

Commissioner Chu asked if the community input into the design will be mentioned.

The Parks & Rec Director confirmed that staff will be including information on the parks master plan, the Pioneer Park master plan, the RCP process, youth engagement, and the history of the area.

Commissioner Hipp asked if more specific information is requested about the play area.

The Parks & Rec Director noted that the master plan details would be sufficient for the grant application.

Commissioner Hipp asked if the cross-country ski trail would be included or planned for the future.

The Parks & Rec Director replied that element would be considered in future improvements, but the focus is on the play node at this time.

Horwath introduced the following motion:

***RECOMMENDING THAT THE CITY COUNCIL ADOPT AN APPLICANT'S RESOLUTION TO BE SUBMITTED WITH THE MN DNR GRANT APPLICATION FOR PIONEER PARK IMPROVEMENTS.***

The foregoing motion was duly seconded by Mui.  
Ayes (7). Nays (0). Motion passed.

**OLD BUSINESS: THUNDER BAY/WESTWINDS PARK POLLINATOR ENHANCEMENT**

The Parks & Rec Director provided an update on the activity at Thunder Bay/Westwinds Park. He noted that staff continues to work with U.S. Fish and Wildlife on a maintenance plan. He also noted a winter seeding event that was recently completed. He stated that staff submitted and was approved to work with Great River Greening for the pollinator enhancements in this area. He stated that staff is also planning for a community plugging event on Saturday, May 21<sup>st</sup>.

Commissioner Mui asked if there would be funds to utilize sponsored social media advertising for the event.

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The Parks & Rec Director commented that the target is to have 50 volunteers for the event. He stated that staff can try a sponsored advertisement. He stated that volunteers will be asked to register for the event through Great River Greening to ensure there is a job for everyone.

Commissioner Horwath agreed that there should be a line item for recreation and parks programming advertising but was unsure that would be needed for this event as only 50 people are needed.

Commissioner Mui asked if local community boards are used for advertising, such as Caribou Coffee.

The Recreation Coordinator confirmed that she does drop off flyers for bigger events to target a larger audience.

**NEW BUSINESS: PARK DEDICATION FEE – 3055 SPRUCE STREET**

The Parks & Rec Director stated that a few new developments coming into Little Canada, which include park dedication fees. He stated that the property at 3055 Spruce Street has proposed development. He noted that when reviewing development requests, the City has the choice to accept land for park dedication or could accept cash in lieu. He stated that this property sits within an area that has access to park and open space and therefore accepting land would not seem to be the best option and a request for cash would be more appropriate. He reviewed the calculation that is used for commercial development to determine park dedication, noting that the total recommended for park dedication would be \$26,657.68.

Horwath introduced the following motion:

***RECOMMENDING TO THE CITY COUNCIL THAT THE PARCEL LOCATED AT 3055 SPRUCE STREET PID 062922210040 BE CHARGED \$26,657.68 IN PARK DEDICATION FEES, WHICH IS 7% OF THE FAIR MARKET VALUE TO GO TOWARDS THE PARK LAND ACQUISITION FUND.***

Further discussion: Commissioner Mui asked for more details on park dedication.

The Parks & Rec Director explained park dedication, its intent, and how those funds are used.

The foregoing motion was duly seconded by Schletty.  
Ayes (7). Nays (0). Motion passed.

The Parks & Rec Director provided an update on potential development that could provide an opportunity for the City to accept land for park dedication, or easement, to use for trail development.

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**NEW BUSINESS: RONDEAU PARK COMMUNITY BUILD SUBCOMMITTEE**

The Parks & Rec Director provided an update on the progress of the Rondeau Park improvements. He noted that the playground equipment has been ordered and there is a desire for a community build. He stated that it was helpful with the last community build to have a subcommittee with two or three Commission members to help plan for the event. He noted that the target would be to attract 50 to 75 people to participate in the community build. He estimated that the community build would occur in late June or early July.

Commissioners Mui, Schletty, and Hipp volunteered for the subcommittee.

Commissioner Mui commented that he has spoken with some friends that work in graphic design about designing a small symbol for each of the parks, similar to what the National Parks System does.

Commissioner Horwath noted that would be a large undertaking but is a good idea and perhaps something that could be done independently with Commissioner Mui working with staff.

**NEW BUSINESS: LCRA SUBSIDY AND BEHLES SCHOLARSHIP**

The Parks & Rec Director stated that the LCRA subsidizes all youth activities by 25 percent. He stated that for 2021 LCRA provided \$3,046 in subsidies that assisted 157 youth in the community to participate in recreation programming. He stated that LCRA continues to be a fantastic community partner and thanked the organization. He stated that the City also has the Behles Scholarship which had a total of \$5,000 available, noting that \$4,300 is still available. He noted that staff would like to work on marketing the scholarship to ensure residents are aware of the opportunity to increase participation for families that perhaps could not afford recreational programming. He confirmed that the scholarship is available for all youth activities.

**NEW BUSINESS: RECREATION UPDATES**

The Recreation Coordinator stated that spring and summer activity registration is open and provided an update on activities that already have full registration. She stated that snowshoeing for beginners was run last week and had two attendees. She also highlighted upcoming recreational events and welcomed Commission members to volunteer for the events. She reported that staff has already received several shelter reservations for the 2022 season.

Commissioner Chu encouraged staff to keep going with new programming, such as snowshoeing, and hoped they would gain in popularity as more people learn about the opportunity. She asked if there would be another indoor farmers market.

The Recreation Coordinator reported that the next indoor farmers market will be held on April 11<sup>th</sup>.

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**REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS**

Chair Miller stated that he is always impressed with the residents that live near Lake Gervais that assist in snow removal to make a path around the lake.

Commissioner Horwath stated that he appreciates the trails being cleared as he has been out running to prepare for a marathon. He commented that a new crosswalk flasher on Labore Road has also been helpful and assists in getting drivers to slow down.

Commissioner Chu commented that she also enjoyed the addition of the crosswalk flasher near Veterans Memorial Park. She also commented on the new Firefighters Historical Trail that she noticed.

Commissioner Hipp commented on the great trail clearing and noted that she has spent a lot of time in Spooner Park.

Commissioner Schletty stated that he plans to visit Thunder Bay/Westwinds as the weather gets warmer and is hoping to participate in the pollinator plug planting event. He stated that he did visit Rondeau Park and believes there is a lot of potential and is excited to see what it can become.

Commissioner Abruzzese commented that she has not visited the parks recently but is looking forward to the warmer weather and the ability to get back in the parks.

Commissioner Mui noted that he also has not been in the parks recently. He stated that he does have some ideas to promote Asian heritage month locally in the community but was unsure if that would be promoted through the recreation department.

**STAFF UPDATES**

Commissioner Horwath asked for an update on bike racks.

The Parks & Rec Director commented that they did budget for about 15 bike racks and are getting ready to order to install this year in the parks and at City Hall.

**There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Amanda Staple  
*TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*