

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

**JANUARY 3, 2023**

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 January, 2023 in the Council Chambers of the City Center located at 515 Little Canada Road in said City.

Chair Horwath 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:** Abruzzese, DeLong Miller, Horwath, Mui, Schletty, Williams, and Youth Commissioner Churcher.

**ABSENT:** Hipp

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

**MINUTES**

Commissioner Schletty made a motion to approve the December 1, 2022, Parks & Recreation Commission minutes as submitted. Commissioner Mui seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

**WELCOME NEW COMMISSIONERS**

The Parks & Rec Director invited the Mayor-Elect, Tom Fischer to the podium to give a welcome message.

Mayor-Elect Fisher commented that it is great to see a quorum of the Commission and was thankful for the input the Commission continues to give on the parks and trails. He recognized the hard work the Commission does to make the job of the Council easier.

The Parks & Rec Director advised that Commissioner Horwath was appointed as Chair and two new members were also appointed, Commissioner DeLong Miller and Commissioner Williams. He invited the new members to introduce themselves.

Commissioner DeLong Miller and Commissioner Williams introduced themselves.

**ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR AND COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS**

The Parks & Rec Director advised that a Vice Chair is needed.

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Commissioner Schletty volunteered to serve in the position.

Commissioner Abruzzese made a motion to elect Peter Schletty as Vice Chair. Commissioner Mui seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

**PRESENTATIONS: PIONEER PARK STORMWATER REUSE PROJECT**  
**PRESENTATION**

The Parks & Rec Director stated that Barr Engineering and Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District is present to provide a presentation on the Pioneer Park stormwater project.

Jen Koehler, Barr Engineering, stated that in 2021, Barr Engineering completed a county-wide stormwater reuse for irrigation study for Ramsey County in 2021 and a number of high-priority sites were identified. She stated that the County then reached out to property owners to determine which properties would be interested. She stated that in 2021 they met with Little Canada staff to discuss the potential Pioneer Park location and provide details on the stormwater reuse system components. She provided more details on the Pioneer Park location and the site assessment that was completed.

Paige Ahlborg, Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed District (RWMWD), provided additional details on the organization's targeted retrofit program which is a partnership program the District offers. She stated that potential District projects are evaluated through the District's prioritization tool and this project ranked highly as it aligns with many of the Watershed Management Plan goals.

The Parks & Rec Director reviewed how this project aligns with the City's goals, policies, and actions found within the Comprehensive Plan, Park System Master Plan, and Strategic Plan.

Ms. Koehler stated that the RWMWD has authorized Barr Engineering to complete the engineering and design process with an expected design completion of June 2023 noting that there will be multiple check-ins with both City staff and the RWMWD Board and staff. She stated that the project would be funded through the RWMWD targeted retrofit program and would likely be implemented in winter 2023 through summer 2024. She reviewed the work completed to date.

Commissioner Mui referenced the two-year maintenance provided by the program and asked what the responsibility of the City would be after those two years.

The Parks & Rec Director replied that there will be a meeting next week to discuss those details.

Ms. Koehler provided details on the elements of the system and stated that if the system were not operating correctly an alarm would be set off to alert. She stated that having these conversations early on would help them to create a design and select elements that would require minimal maintenance by City staff.

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Chair Horwath commented that this seems to be much of the same equipment used to operate a pool and/or water feature. He did not have much concern with ongoing maintenance.

Student Representative Churcher asked if any of the park would be impacted above ground by this project.

Ms. Koehler replied that the system would be located near the ponds and the equipment would be housed in a small enclosure that may not be very visible to the average park user. She commented that they would be discussing screening and/or the opportunity to incorporate art into the screening. She noted that the equipment enclosure would be small.

Chair Horwath commented that there have been issues with the irrigation of the soccer field in the past and asked if this would be of assistance.

The Parks & Rec Director replied that the soccer field does not drain well and therefore sand has been injected into the soil over the past two years to assist with drainage and direct the water to the existing drain tile. He noted that this system would not impact that field.

Commissioner Abruzzese commented that this would use an existing source of water to provide irrigation to the park, which sounds great.

Commissioner Mui asked if fish or other pond vegetation would be impacted.

Ms. Koehler replied that this is a stormwater pond so she was unsure if there would be fish. She stated that only the top one foot of water would be used for irrigation purposes, therefore other vegetation and/or wildlife would not be impacted. She stated that if the pond falls below the necessary water level, irrigation would not come from the pond during that time.

Mui introduced the following motion:

***RECOMMENDING SUPPORT FOR MOVING FORWARD WITH THE PIONEER PARK STORMWATER REUSE PROJECT ASSESSMENT***

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

**OLD BUSINESS: PARK UPDATES**

The Parks & Rec Director provided an update noting that the City Council approved the Pioneer Park contract. He reviewed other general park updates.

**OLD BUSINESS: PARK LOGOS**

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The Parks & Rec Director stated that the Commission will soon be asked for details on potential park logos. He stated that the goal would be to have a consensus by March in order to start incorporation on signs.

#### **NEW BUSINESS: RECREATION COORDINATOR UPDATE**

The Recreation Coordinator provided a recap of recent community events and highlighted upcoming events and activities. She also provided details on upcoming youth and adult programming opportunities.

#### **NEW BUSINESS: SIDEWALKS AND TRAILS MAP**

The Parks & Rec Director provided the sidewalks and trail map, which helps to identify gaps. He noted that this plan will assist the City in future planning and applying for grant funds for future projects. He stated that staff has noted some gaps and asked that the Commission review the plan as well to identify any gaps and provide that information to staff in the next month.

Chair Horwath noted the Twin Lake area that was called out by staff and asked for more details.

The Parks & Rec Director noted that the roadway will be improved, and sidewalks will be added, therefore the map will be updated as such. He stated that the County recently went through a public engagement process for the abutting Vadnais Boulevard but was a separate project.

Commissioner Abruzzese referenced the area of Rice Street that intersects with County Road C and asked what is changing in that space.

The Parks & Rec Director noted that is an area identified as a gap, noting that if the County were to redo Rice Street, the City could request a sidewalk.

Commissioner Abruzzese agreed that area needs a sidewalk/trail to complete the connections.

Commissioner Mui stated that he would prefer different color contrast to make it more user-friendly. He stated that there is a path east from Thunder Bay Park which connects to Sunset Ridge and perhaps that could be added to the map.

The Parks & Rec Director confirmed that trail is existing and is on the map but could be highlighted better to show the connection.

Chair Horwath noted the floating bridge and asked for details on the ownership.

The Parks & Rec Director replied that is 50/50 ownership between the two cities and it is need of repair and would likely be looking to apply for grant funds to make the necessary repairs. He again asked the Commission to provide input prior to the next meeting or at the next meeting for

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incorporation, with the intent to receive a recommendation from the Commission in March and then bring it forward to the City Council.

### **REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS**

Commissioner Mui stated that he is excited to see the logo project moving forward and asked that the Commission think about different focal points for each park for the discussion at the next meeting.

Commissioner Abruzzese stated that she is seeing more bike racks around the community, noting that it is exciting to see that project coming to fruition.

### **UPDATES**

The Parks & Rec Director noted the LCRA ice fishing contest and Fire Department Booya sale which will both occur on February 11<sup>th</sup>.

**There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:28 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Amanda Staple  
*TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*