

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

OCTOBER 1, 2020

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof a regular meeting of the City Council of Little Canada, Minnesota was convened on the 1st day of October, 2020 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: Horwath, Darling, Miller, Schletty, Chu, and Abruzzese. Absent: Ray

ALSO PRESENT: Parks & Rec/Community Services Manager Bryce Shearen and Recreation Coordinator Claire Hoffman.

In accordance with the requirements of Minn. Stat. Section 13D.021, the City Administrator has determined that an in-person meeting is not practical or prudent because of a health pandemic or an emergency declared under Chapter 12 of the Minnesota Statutes.

Because of the health pandemic and emergency declaration, it has been determined that attendance at the regular meeting location by elected officials and members of the public is not feasible. Therefore, some or all of the Parks & Recreation Commission members may be participating by telephone or other electronic means. This meeting will be recorded in its entirety.

Members of the public may monitor the meeting on the CTV North Suburbs website (live stream) or use the meeting link provided on the city website prior to the meeting.

MINUTES

Commissioner Horwath made a motion to approve the September 3, 2020, Parks & Recreation Commission minutes as submitted. Chair Miller seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS: PIONEER BASKETBALL UPDATE

The Community Services Manager stated that since the August meeting, staff has continued to work on the potential upgrades discussed. He explained that the surface would need to be cut in order to remove the old footings and pour new footings. He stated that they are hoping to complete that action in the cooler weather to minimize the impact on users. He noted that the presentation was also provided to the Little Canada Recreation Association (LCRA) and the LCRA provided a generous donation to get the ball rolling and implement the new enhancements. He stated that staff will continue to work on this plan, implementing the different elements.

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Chair Miller thanked LCRA and staff.

NEW BUSINESS: EXPLORE LITTLE CANADA PROGRAM

The Recreation Coordinator provided details on the new recreation program, Explore Little Canada, noting that although the program has been presented in the past, it will be self-guided this year. She noted that the program is free and offers a passive recreation opportunity to residents.

FARMERS MARKET RECAP

The Recreation Coordinator reported that the Farmers Market ended the previous Monday and advised that it was very well received this year with an average of 240 attendees per week. She noted that Little Canada Parks and Rec hosted a tent at nine of the 13 markets, which she staffed.

Chair Miller asked if the vendors were satisfied with the amount of business and plan to return the following year.

The Recreation Coordinator stated that there was one vendor, a food truck, which only came one week but the other vendors attended every week. She stated that most vendors expressed interest in returning the following year.

Chair Miller expressed appreciation to staff for their work on the event.

The Community Services Manager commended the Recreation Coordinator for being able to pivot and provide stability for this event. He noted that she continues to go above and beyond to make the event successful.

The Commission echoed the appreciation to the Recreation Coordinator.

Commissioner Abruzzese commented that she had positive experiences at the market this year and recommended others to visit the market next year.

Commissioner Chu stated that perhaps some members of the Commission could attend with staff next year to meet some of the residents that visit the market.

The Recreation Coordinator agreed that would be a good idea. She noted that one resident also expressed interest in having members of the Council attend as well.

Commissioner Chu commented that perhaps members of the Council and different Commissions could alternate attending the event in order to reach out to the community.

REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

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Commissioner Abruzzese stated that she has visited Gervais Mill a few times the past month. She stated that it would be nice if there was a place to park bicycles at the parks.

Commissioner Chu stated that she has visited her park multiple times and it appears to be in good shape.

Commissioner Abruzzese commented that the smell from the pond has been bad this year.

Commissioner Chu commented that she does remember noticing that smell, but the park is in good shape.

Commissioner Darling stated that she stops at Rondeau Park frequently and it is always well-kept. She stated that she did notice some trash that has blown into the grass around the edges. She referenced the pond which needs maintenance but was unsure if that was located on City property or residential property.

Commissioner Chu commented that the park is well used and there are always kids at the park. She commented that she believes the sign is still down for the park.

The Community Services Manager advised that the City is looking to possibly update all signage next year if approved in the budget.

Commissioner Horwath stated that he stopped at Veterans Memorial Park and did not notice anything of note. He stated that there was a group of people using the pergola area and the park looks good.

Commissioner Schletty commented that he has made a habit of making a daily walk and has added Pioneer Park to his route. He commented that he has not noticed any issues that the Commission is not already aware of and planning to address. He noted on the north edge of the trail there are some low spots that hold rain after a rain event. He stated that he has noticed the explore signs mentioned earlier by the Recreation Coordinator when walking on different trails.

Commissioner Horwath stated that he lives near Thunder Bay Park and the COVID sign at that park is getting ripped up and should be replaced.

Commissioner Chu commented that she walked the Thunder Bay trail all the way to Maplewood and it was quite lovely. She asked how long the explore signs will be up.

The Recreation Coordinator advised that each park has signs up for one week and then she moves them.

UPDATES

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The Community Services Manager provided an update on the Spooner Park lower shelter, noting that it does not appear the project will be completed in 2020 because of the delay in materials. He noted that once road restrictions are lifted in the spring, this would be one of the first projects to be completed. He stated that the Firefighter Memorial and Trail sign has not yet been completed, noting that it may be installed this weekend.

The Recreation Coordinator reviewed possible upcoming youth activities. She reported that the pickleball season has finished and was successful. She reported that the defensive driving course is upcoming and both classes are full.

The Community Services Manager reviewed the Commission members with terms that are soon expiring. He stated that Commissioner Darling will not be extending her term. He thanked her for her service during her time on the Commission.

Chair Miller and the Commission echoed the comments of thanks to Commissioner Darling.

Commissioner Darling commented that she believes that this would be a good time for a new member to join and provide input to the Commission. She stated that she has enjoyed her time on the Commission, and it was a wonderful way for her to find out about the community.

The Community Services Manager noted that upon reviewing the priorities of the Commission for 2020, all of those priorities will be shifted to 2021 as they were not completed in 2020 due to COVID. He confirmed the consensus of the Commission to make that shift.

Chair Miller commented that while those activities will continue into 2021, the Commission can also focus on other things in 2021 as well. He noted that the big priority items take time and noted that the Commission can have further discussion at the next meetings related to future priorities in order to keep the momentum going.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.