



## **CITY OF MENDOTA HEIGHTS**

### **NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION AND PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

### **JOINT COMMISSION WORK SESSION**

**Wednesday, March 22, 2023 • 6:00 p.m.  
City Hall • 1101 Victoria Curve, Mendota Heights**

**DRAFT** Minutes

In attendance: Chair Swank, Vice Chair Tupper, Commissioners Stein, Fahnhorst, McCaslin, Quick, Student Commissioner Stella Byrnes; Chair Blanks, Vice Chair Muller, Commissioners Schifsky, Toth, Hanson and Student Commissioner Meg Murphy.

Staff in attendance: Parks and Recreation Manager Meredith Lawrence, Natural Resources Coordinator Krista Spreiter, Public Works Director Ryan Ruzek and Assistant City Administrator Kelly Torkelson.

#### **1. Call to Order**

Chair Blanks called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

#### **2. Discussion**

##### **a. Introduction and Review of Commission Work Plans**

Parks and Recreation Manager Lawrence reviewed the Parks and Recreation Commission workplan. Natural Resources Coordinator Spreiter reviewed the Natural Resources Commission workplan.

Commissioners' discussion included natural resources points of interest on the updated trail map, exploring the inclusion of a memorial trail within the city, a donation program to encourage people to use the trails, and opportunities to partner with other local public agencies to promote natural resources projects into other CIP projects.

Chair Blanks asked for an update from staff on whether we were looking at bringing on a full-time recycling/sustainability coordinator.

**b. Park Sign Landscaping**

Coordinator Spreiter reviewed the current park sign landscaping program. Staff have been working to incorporate pollinator friendly landscaping in these projects while still maintaining the function and the aesthetics of the signs.

Commissioners discussed what types of plants are used around the signs and opportunities for education about native plantings.

**c. Park Improvement Project Collaboration**

Parks and Recreation Manager Lawrence reviewed the park improvement projects budgeted for 2023 and presented potential collaboration opportunities between the commissions in relation to these projects.

Commissioners discussed interest in adding electric charging stations at parks. Commissioners discussed the potential of signage with QR codes, which could include an opportunity for residents to give feedback or provide ideas for future park projects, in addition to providing educational opportunities for park users.

**d. Natural Resources Site Tour**

Coordinator Spreiter reviewed that the Natural Resources Commission will be hosting a site tour; many of these sites are in parks and invited the parks commission to join the tour.

**e. Pollinator Awareness Month**

Coordinator Spreiter shared that the City is working to finalize details for a Pollinator Awareness Month in May. Commissioners shared some confusion from last year's "No Mow May" campaign and how there was interest in expanding education around the initiative.

**f. Event Collaboration**

Parks and Recreation Manager Lawrence shared an update on upcoming Parks and Recreation Events and opportunities for the commissioners to participate at the event in community engagement.

**g. Tree Donation Program**

Parks and Recreation Manager Lawrence shared a potential initiative to build a tree donation program and sought feedback from commissioners if there was interest. Coordinator Spreiter shared that we have this as a current informal program. Commissioners expressed interest in a digital memorial page where people could share stories about loved one's who they had donated trees for. Commissioners expressed interest in different tiers of participation; a basic donation, a memorial, and a plaque, as separate investments for donation.

**3. Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn  
Commissioner Quick  
Commissioner Muller  
Motion Passed 11-0