

CITY OF MENDOTA HEIGHTS, DAKOTA COUNTY, MINNESOTA

**PARKS AND RECREATION MEETING MINUTES**

AUGUST 8, 2023

The August meeting of the Mendota Heights Parks and Recreation Commission was held on Tuesday, August 8, 2023, at Mendota Heights City Hall, 1101 Victoria Curve.

**1. Call to Order** – Chair Jaffrey Blanks called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**2. Roll Call** – The following Commissioners were present: Chair Jaffrey Blanks, Commissioners: Stephanie Meyer, Michelle Muller, Jo Schifsky, Dan Sherer and Michael Toth; absent: Commissioner Tica Hanson. Student Representative: Meg Murphy. Staff present: Parks and Recreation Manager Meredith Lawrence, Recreation Program Coordinator Willow Eisfeldt, Parks and Recreation Intern Darby Keech, and Public Works Director Ryan Ruzek.

**3. Pledge of Allegiance**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**4. Approval of Agenda**

*Motion Sherer/second Meyer to approve the agenda*

AYES 6: NAYS 0

**5.a Approval of Minutes from June 13, 2023 Regular Meeting**

*Motion Muller/second Schifsky to approve the minutes of the June 13, 2023 Parks and Recreation Commission Regular Meeting.*

AYES 6: NAYS 0

**5.b Approval of Minutes from July 11, 2023 Work Session**

*Motion Muller/second Toth to approve the minutes of the July 11, 2023 Parks and Recreation Commission Work Session.*

AYES 6: NAYS 0

**6. Public Comment Period (for items not on the agenda)**

None.

**7. Acknowledgement of Reports**

Chair Blanks read the titles of the three updates (Par 3, Recreation, and Park Improvement Updates) and polled the Commissioners for questions.

**7.a Par 3 Update**

Parks and Recreation Manager Meredith Lawrence briefly reviewed the report highlighting updates that are being made to the clubhouse and other golf course projects. She stated that they have received a piece of equipment that was ordered in 2021 but they are still awaiting one additional piece that was also ordered in 2021. She provided information on the turf conditions as well as the number of rounds played. She noted that June had the highest number of rounds the course has ever seen and July had even higher numbers.

Commissioner Muller asked how long the “five-for-five” deal has been offered.

Ms. Lawrence replied that she is unsure as that predates her time with the City.

**7.b Recreation Update**

Recreation Coordinator Willow Eisfeldt reviewed the different activities of the Parks Celebration which will take place this coming weekend. She also provided highlights from Safety Camp, Tour de Rec, and Music in the Park. She noted that fall program registration will open August 17<sup>th</sup> at 8 a.m. and provided a brief overview of some of the programs that will be offered to adults and youth.

Commissioner Meyer asked if the pickleball tournament is pairs.

Ms. Eisfeldt replied that it is teams of two, with one person required to be a Mendota Heights resident. She noted that registration is still being accepted through Wednesday.

### **7.c Parks Improvement Update**

Parks and Recreation Manager Meredith Lawrence provided a highlight of the report and status of the different projects.

Commissioner Toth asked for clarification on the difference between the engineer's estimate and the original bids received for the skate park.

Public Works Director Ryan Ruzek replied that all the bids the City received were within a tolerance of each other and the estimate was low. He stated that when they did some redesign, the bids came in near the engineer's estimate and reviewed the changes that were made to the design to lower the cost.

Commissioner Sherer commented that contractors are very busy, and the high bids were most likely reflective that contractors do not need the work.

Chair Blanks noted that the original bid had a smaller timeline whereas the rebid had a more flexible timeline.

Ms. Lawrence noted that she has spoken with other cities, and they are receiving similar bids for concrete work.

Commissioner Toth asked if the pad was left the original size that was discussed 90 days ago.

Ms. Lawrence replied that they had talked about an 8,000 square foot pad and they were able to increase that to 10,000 square feet.

Commissioner Meyer asked for details on the layout of the features and whether the recommendation of the Commission was accepted by the Council.

Ms. Lawrence replied that staff brought forward the Commission recommendation with a few modifications. She stated that they rotated the design 90 degrees, and the additional pad space will provide more room. She commented that they did not remove any features but are still finalizing the final placement.

Commissioner Meyer commented that she felt the two residents that spoke at the Commission meeting had good input on the design and layout and suggested that they be consulted for the flow of the design.

Ms. Lawrence stated that staff did work with those residents following that meeting to formulate the design that was presented to the Council.

Commissioner Meyer commented that she is excited to see the Wentworth warming house moving forward and asked if that would include bathrooms.

Ms. Lawrence replied that there will not be bathrooms or running water. She commented that this design is similar to the Friendly Hills warming house.

Commissioner Meyer asked if there would be opportunity to add on in the future.

Mr. Ruzek replied that the likelihood of adding on to this structure would be slim to none. He stated that if they decided to add bathrooms, that could be a standalone feature somewhere in the park at a later date.

## **8. New Business**

### **8.a Parks and Recreation Intern Presentation**

Parks and Recreation Manager Meredith Lawrence introduced the summer intern, Darby Keech.

Intern Darby Keech introduced herself and provided background information on her educational experience. She reviewed her summer goals, project list, and different programming and events that she was involved with over the summer. She recapped the things that she learned during her summer internship and the things that she will take away from the experience.

## **9. Unfinished Business**

### **9.a Review QR Code Signage Locations**

Chair Blanks noted that each member of the Commission was assigned the task of choosing a location for the sign within their assigned park.

Parks and Recreation Manager Meredith Lawrence provided a sample of the sign that will be placed in each park. She stated that she used the input from the Commission to mark the proposed locations on the maps. She reviewed the proposed locations for signs as submitted by the Commission members.

Commissioner Toth provided input on his placement locations.

Commissioner Muller asked that a trash bin be placed near the sign location proposed for Hagstrom King.

Ms. Lawrence asked for input on locations for Victoria-Highlands and the Dog Park. The Commission provided suggested locations for those two parks. She commented that staff will begin installing the signs as time allows.

### **9.b Parks and Recreation Strategic Planning Update**

Parks and Recreation Manager Meredith Lawrence provided an update on the progress on the Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan items.

## **10. Staff Announcements**

Parks and Recreation Manager Meredith Lawrence shared the following announcements:

- The budget worksession that will include parks topics will be held on Tuesday, August 15<sup>th</sup> at 3 p.m.

- Parks Celebration events will be held this weekend
- Thanks to the parks and recreation staff as the summer is a busy season
- Other events can be found on the City's website

## **11. Student Representative Update**

Student Representative Murphy commented that many of her friends and family have been using the Par 3 Golf Course and she has noticed more youth at the course. She has enjoyed the Music in the Parks events and has high hopes for the skate park project. The Parks Celebration sounds like a great event for youth and the community.

## **12. Commission Comments and Park Updates**

Commissioner Meyer

- Marie Park is doing great, and everyone loves the pickleball courts
- Valley View Heights is wonderful, and her kids love the new playground
- Thanks to staff for their hard work this summer
- Looking forward to the Park Celebration events

Commissioner Schifsky

- The Parks Celebration events sound great
- Thanks to Summer Intern Darby Keech for her presentation and hard work this summer
- Lots of volleyball played at Ivy Hills
- Wentworth is looking good
- Recently visited Inver Grove Heights to see their pickleball courts and would be eager to have continued discussions on pickleball facilities.

Chair Blanks

- Received great feedback from the businesses about the Music in the Park events at Market Square
- Valley Park is a great park

Commissioner Muller

- Rogers Lake looks empty without the skate park equipment, and she is excited for what is to come
- Always people fishing and enjoying Rogers Lake
- Kensington looks good with well-maintained bathrooms
- Has been enjoying the Par 3 Golf Course

Commissioner Toth

- Mendakota has had a lot of baseball activity this summer and he notices the City employees prepping the park and cleaning after tournaments
- Expressed thanks to the City employees in the Parks Department
- Recently talked with a visitor at Rogers Lake from another community that had great things to say about the park

Commissioner Sherer

- Hagstrom King has a lot of activity on the playground and basketball court
- The baseball fields were dry this year with the drought conditions

- The porta potty at Hagstrom King gets a lot of use from transients that seem to stop just to use the bathroom
- Looking forward to the repairs at Civic Center and perhaps there could be a meeting with user groups in the spring to ensure the investment is well maintained

**13. Adjourn**

*Motion Schifsky/Second Toth to adjourn the meeting at 7:39 PM*

AYES 6: NAYS 0

Minutes drafted by:  
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