

PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES

Thursday, May 12, 2011 – 7:00 PM

NOVI CIVIC CENTER – COUNCIL CHAMBERS

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm with Commissioner Dooley presiding.

Commissioner Dooley introduced the new Director of Parks Recreation and Cultural Services, Jason Mangum.

Director Mangum stated that this is his first week as Director. He has a diverse background in Parks and Recreation. He has worked in the non-profit sector, the corporate recreation sector and for the last ten or twelve years he has worked as a municipal employee for several different municipalities, both urban and rural. He was attracted to the breadth and depth of the Parks and Recreation programs, parkland and the dedication by City leadership and the citizens to making Parks and Recreation a priority in Novi.

ROLL CALL: Dooley (Present), Jewell (Present), Policicchio (Present), Staab (Present), Tecklenburg (Present), Torimoto (Present), Wingfield (Present), Kerbrat (Absent).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

It was moved by Commissioner Staab and seconded by Commissioner Jewell to approve the Agenda as written.

Voice Vote **Unanimous**

CITIZEN COMMENTS: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- A. No April Minutes due to cancellation of meeting.
- B. Approval of March 10, 2010 meeting minutes
A motion was made by Commissioner Jewell and seconded by Commissioner Tecklenburg to approve the Minutes as written.

Voice Vote **Unanimous**

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- A. Walkable Novi – Commissioner Policicchio
Commissioner Policicchio stated there is another resolution to support communities of Walled Lake, Commerce Township and Wixom with the application of a grant to connect the Huron Trail and the West Bloomfield Trail as part of the Master Plan, for the State to have a cross State trail system. We support that. There was a discussion about the non-motorized Master Plan. Several projects have been approved and are going to be undertaken this year.

Commissioner Torimoto stated that this was his first meeting and they did a nice job in terms of making the Master Plan visual.

B. Novi Park Foundation – Commissioners Dooley & Staab

Commissioner Staab stated that there was a meeting this past Tuesday and Director Mangum was present. They also welcomed one new member, Katherine Cardenas. She stepped up and took command of a couple of items. The Golf Outing on August 4th was on the agenda. Save the date cards will be going out next week. They will be posting a part-time position of Executive Director for the Foundation. This person will be working part-time to do more marketing, predominately focusing on fund raising. On July 15th, Superintendent Cowan will be doing the unveiling of the sculpture for which the Foundation has donated funds. It is a Friday night when it will be Movie Night in the park. More people need to be involved.

Commissioner Dooley asked if the part-time position had any expectations of how much money they would want to raise.

Commissioner Staab stated that he is not at liberty to say at this time.

Commissioner Dooley stated that this is a group which gives back to the community and encourages anyone with this skill to step up and apply for the position.

STAFF REPORTS:

A. Administration Division – Director of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services – Jason Mangum

Director Mangum stated that he is in his first week on the job and he has spent most of the week getting to know many of the community members and partners within Parks and Recreation. He has been to the Ice Arena and met the management company. He has met with the School District and their Community Education Department. He has been to the Library and tomorrow he tours Meadowbrook Commons.

His initial goal is to become a student of the department and of the City. He hopes to look at the Strategic Plan which is a well thought out piece of planning. As long as the Commission is still on board with that document, he hopes to look in to the goals and objectives and how we will reach and accomplish those. A very large undertaking is the CAPRA accreditation process. There is an opportunity for each member of the Commission to be involved and to reach out to the community and make some of those accreditation pieces come to fruition.

Commissioner Wingfield asked what some of Director Mangum's background was and his area of expertise.

Director Mangum replied that he came up in the recreation side of Parks and Recreation, originally with an emphasis in teen programming. He had an opportunity to start comprehensive outdoor recreation programming in three different communities. There was everything from rock climbing and repelling to white water rafting down the Grand Canyon and everything in between. He did his Master's Degree at Arizona State in Recreation Studies and his thesis is based on the need for outdoor recreation and the benefits that come through them and the

teen population. Since then he has moved in to some other areas. Most recently he was the Director of Parks and Recreation in Show Low, Arizona. He had park maintenance, park planning, capital improvement projects as well as recreation programming and even a cemetery they had to work with.

Commissioner Torimoto stated that coming from the Walkable Novi meeting, he thinks that the challenge is budget; it is trying to to achieve more with less. He asked Director Mangum if he had any specific ideas. Director Mangum stated that he tries to run a department where it is impossible to create more with less. He thinks we can create different with less. We will look at everything from budget, to operations, to staffing and to thinking outside the box and networking with other communities to continue our level of service and the level of service our citizens have come to expect and do it within the budget constraints we have.

In order to keep the department on the path of continuing to improve and expand our infrastructure as well as the programs, Commissioner Policicchio stated that he would be interested in knowing, in the future, what Director Mangum would be thinking outside the box.

He feels we have a very good staff but feels it is stretched to the max in terms of what they do for the residents of the City. He asked how they, as Commissioners, could be of help to him.

Director Mangum replied there will be a lot that goes into how we analyze our programs. We will take a look at every angle that we can, and look at the best of the best as far as our benchmarks. It is his goal to become the best of the best in every aspect we have an opportunity to use.

Commissioner Teklenburg welcomed Director Mangum and stated that he is the single person moving back to Michigan and he applauds him. Director Mangum thanked him.

- B. Recreation Division – Superintendent of Recreation – Nancy Cowan
- Superintendent Cowan welcomed Director Mangum. She thanked the Commissioners for supporting the team and being advocates for the department especially during the past ten months.
1. Introduction of Emily Stevens – Recreation Supervisor
Superintendent Cowan stated that Emily Stevens is a Recreation Supervisor on our staff. She has over ten years of programming experience. She has a great deal of experience with camps, programming, teens and adults. Some of her responsibilities will be camps, including Camp Lakeshore. She will do some teen programming, including Fire Up Fest which has been very successful. She is starting to make some inroad with some of the parent group and school.
 2. Recreation Happenings
This past weekend was very busy. The Michigan Jaguars hosted their tournament again this year at ITC Community Sports Park. We have heard from the Jaguars that our complex, as usual, has

fabulous turf and is one of the best sites around. We will provide some statistics and are working with the Jaguars on that. It was also Arbor Day in the City. There were several hundred individuals participating this year that planted and did work at Brookfarm Park. Mayor pro-tem Gatt and Councilmember Fischer were there during that time to welcome people and participate. We hosted a softball tournament at Power Park this past weekend. This is our first of eleven at that facility for this summer. Both Choralaires and the Novi Concert Band held concerts this past weekend which were both well received by the public. The new *Engage!* has probably come to your mailboxes. It is out and has all of our summer camp programs in it as well a community guide with other community events. The sculptures at Fuerst Park are supported by the Novi Parks Foundation and we are looking for an install to occur with the new sculptures on Friday the 20th. We have a new partnership with the Art Institute and are looking forward to that. The *Enhance!* publication has just been mailed out. It is our older adult's publication. Matt Wiktorowski plans to be at the next Commission meeting to give an update on field usage and turf. Despite the rain, the turf is holding up pretty well. There has been alot of rescheduling of games by Matt Ostermeyer's team but we are on track to finish the season on time.

3. Postpone Park Maintenance Standards to May

Evie Watt is coordinating with the Commissioners. We would appreciate the information and the feedback from the Commissioners. We are working on some of the comments we have received that were turned in early.

4. Fuerst Park and Tunnel

There is information in your packet about the Fuerst Park Arbor and Tunnel. From a past Mayor's exchange there was an idea of creating a rebar tunnel and arbor for the Fuerst Park garden area. Staff has preliminarily looked at the two structures and provided some information in the packet of some locations. If you do have feedback on those locations there is an option one on the arbor and option two on the tunnel where we are hoping to locate those. Some of the reasoning for those is because there is some irrigation and lighting happening at the park. This will be hopefully completed by an early June timeframe. We have tried to coordinate with the placement of these structures based on proximity to the garden. If there is any feedback Nancy Cowan would be happy to hear it.

Commissioner Torimoto stated that in the past that there was some feedback for adding an active structure to the Fuerst Park. He asked if there is any thinking on where the active structure would be and where it would be relative to any additions we are making to the static structure we are adding.

Superintendent Cowan stated that is a piece of the next agenda item.

5. Request for Proposals – Fuerst Park and Landings Park
Superintendent Cowan stated that the RFPs (Request for Proposal) have gone out for Fuerst Park and the Landings Park. The RFP for phase three of Fuerst Park is to solicit some public input on what a potential phase three and active portion of that park would look like. That is what we are aiming to receive from a consultant, to gather that information from a third party and put it together to develop some plans to look at what a phase three could potentially be.

Commissioner Torimoto asked if in terms of location it would be near the garden.

Superintendent Cowan stated that the active locations are close to the garden. It depends on the topography of the park and what amenities the public, City Council, Board and Commission have feedback on. That is one of the pieces we do not have the expertise to do. We can think of ideas of what we might like there but the engineering and placement aspect is not our forte. That is what the consultant will look at.

Commissioner Staab stated that he is having a hard time comprehending the rebar structure. It looks like it will be three feet in the ground.

Superintendent Cowan replied that the specs on how far they are putting it in would be a DPS piece. It is like an arch.

MATTERS FOR COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION:

Commissioner Staab asked Superintendent Cowan if our CIP includes re-funding the baseball fields, park access and phase one for The Landings.

Superintendent Cowan stated that this is correct.

Commissioner Staab asked if there are any other items.

Superintendent Cowan stated that the layout for 2011/2012 items are the ones that were submitted. The 2012/2013 and other projects are listed as well. As the budget process goes, City Council approves only the current year for funding and chooses from there.

Commissioner Staab asked if all of our items were funded.

Superintendent Cowan replied that she did not think the pathway phase development was not. Landings Park was approved. Power Park access road and fencing repair was approved.

Commissioner Staab then asked Director Mangum if he has done much in the area of Fine Arts and Cultural activities. We have a good sized emphasis on theatre and the art.

Director Mangum replied that he does have some background, not as an administrator, but he was his community's liaison with the Arizona Commission on the Arts which is the statewide art commission. He was able to provide some services for local artists, both performing and visual. He feels the arts are a very important part of quality of life. He encouraged everyone to come to the theatre and see "The Little Princess" production starting on Friday.

Commissioner Wingfield stated that for Adult Softball, in most municipalities has dwindled or they no longer have programs. Novi had 113 teams this past summer and is growing. Our program, and updating are facility four or five years ago, has a lot to do with that. There are several private complexes that are doing fine but many municipalities do not even have a program. He has played in the program for about twenty-five years. Usually you allow returning teams the opportunity to register by a certain date and it was not done that way this year. Several people did come in to register and could not get in the league. However, everyone was accommodated. He requested that returning teams again be allowed the opportunity to register first. Superintendent Cowan stated that we did not provide that deadline for the past couple of years. This was because we have had so many late registrations. We have found that when we do set that deadline many people are past it anyway. We then end up having an open space and some of those returning teams are still not registering. There is a balance between making sure those who have played before have the opportunity to play while still making sure that we market our complex and our facility so we do not loose teams to other communities who can sign up earlier.

CITIZEN COMMENTS: None

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Wingfield welcomed Director Mangum.

Commissioner Staab welcomed Director Mangum and hopes his transition goes smoothly and his family gets here as soon as he can.

Commissioner Torimoto welcomed Director Mangum. He stated that he coaches soccer and with the weather it has been a challenge. Theresa McClure and the rest of the staff did an unbelievable job, and continue to, keeping the league going.

Commissioner Teklenburg welcomed Director Mangum and Emily Stevens. He is happy to go out to the parks and see all the activity after the last appraisal.

Commissioner Jewell welcomed Director Mangum and Emily Stevens.

Commissioner Policicchio welcomed both Director Mangum and Emily Stevens. The City is going through a tough time like many other cities but it is continuing to improve. He thanked Superintendent Cowan for her good job during the transition.

Commissioner Dooley welcomed both Director Mangum and Emily Stevens. He also thanked Superintendent Cowan for the tremendous job she did during the transition. Arbor Day was on May 7th. He would like to acknowledge Wendy DuVall in particular. She is very committed and organized. It was good to see Mayor pro-tem Gatt and Councilmembers Justin Fischer and Wayne Wrobel there working in the Brookfarm Park. The Daisy Scouts, Brownies, Girl Scouts, Cub Scouts and Webloes were all involved.

The hotdog cookout had to be postponed until Saturday, May 21st. The Novi Athletic Booster Club does provide free hotdogs to families and coincides with picture day.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn by Commissioner Jewell and seconded by Commissioner Wingfield.

Voice Vote

Unanimous

The meeting was adjourned by Commissioner Dooley at 7:50 pm

DATE APPROVED: _____

Jay Dooley, Chairperson

Paul Policicchio, Vice Chairperson