

**PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES**

**Thursday, February 16, 2012 – 7:00 PM**

**NOVI CIVIC CENTER – COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm with Commissioner Policicchio presiding.

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

**INTRODUCTION OF NEW RECREATION SUPERINTENDENT**

Director Mangum introduced Scott Pratt as the new Recreation Superintendent. Mr. Pratt comes to us from the City of Oak Park and has been with us for a couple of weeks.

Superintendent Pratt stated he has been in the Parks and Recreation profession for over sixteen years. Half of his experience was in Marshall, Michigan which is by Battle Creek. He had two years of experience overseas and the last eight years have been with the City of Oak Park. He is happy for the opportunity to continue his career with the City of Novi.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

It was moved by Commissioner Jewell and seconded by Commissioner Tecklenburg to approve the agenda as written.

**Voice Vote**

**Unanimous**

**CITIZEN COMMENTS:** None

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

A. Approval of the January 12, 2012 minutes.

It was moved by Commissioner Tecklenburg and seconded by Commissioner Jewell to approve the minutes as written.

**Voice Vote**

**Unanimous**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

A. Walkable Novi - Commissioners Policicchio & Torimoto  
Commissioner Policicchio stated there was not a Walkable Novi Committee meeting this month.

B. Novi Parks Foundation - Commissioners Staab and Tecklenburg  
Commissioner Tecklenburg stated the Novi Parks Foundation met on February 7<sup>th</sup>. Discussion initiated with the hiring of an Executive Director by getting

down to the final candidates and working to coordinate dates to talk to one candidate in particular. There was also discussion on the bylaws and the structure of the bylaws. They agreed that they needed to look at them in line with how the Foundation is operating. They agreed to look at the bylaws after the Executive Director is on board. The Golf Outing is scheduled for August 2<sup>nd</sup>. There was discussion of potential donations. There was also discussion regarding a Treasurer for the Foundation.

Commissioner Staab added there was preliminary discussion on a renewal of a current Naming Rights item. They have attempted to contact the entity but to no avail thus far.

## **STAFF REPORTS:**

### A. Michigan Recreation & Park Association (MRPA) Conference Reports

#### 1. Jason Mangum

Director Mangum stated on February 7<sup>th</sup> through 10<sup>th</sup> several of the staff members had the opportunity to attend the Michigan Recreation and Park Association Conference which was held in Dearborn. They had the opportunity to take in some educational sessions, meet with vendors, network with other professionals and conduct other activities which will benefit the operation of the Novi Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department. A couple of staff members will give a brief report on things that they learned, sessions they attended, and some things we would possibly like to do in the future because of attending this conference. He feels that education and training is vital because of the ever changing trends in recreational behaviors and activities as well as changes in park maintenance and service standards. The theme for the conference was "Creating Michigan's Places". The focus was meant to center around what attracts people to place. When a company or family decides to relocate they are looking for more than low tax rates. They are looking for quality of life, good schools and good parks and programming. There is no such thing as a world class city that does not have world class parks. The theme of the conference dealt with what it takes to have the place attraction that makes people want to come, live and stay in our community. That is especially relevant and applicable considering the state of the economy in the great State of Michigan. On Tuesday he attended the Trail Symposium and had an opportunity to work with an organization called LIAA (Land Information Access Association) out of Traverse City. They are community planners with one of their expertise being trails and how trails affect local communities. As we look to develop our non-motorized Master Plan in the City of Novi, this training was very applicable to some of the things we will be able to implement in the future as we build trails such as the ITC corridor trail. This symposium lasted all day. On Wednesday morning he attended the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant Program which lasted all morning. It was about the grant programs, applying for grants and how to score well on grants. We have a couple of grants from the DNR. It was necessary for him to get to know the Michigan

grant process. He attended a couple of sessions on trends. One was trends in marketing and how to effectively use things like the social media. Another was trends in creative partnerships and how to use them to benefit our citizens. The last day he attended a Director's Summit which was a half day on Friday afternoon. The theme was "Cost of Service Analysis". It was about what it takes to operate and understanding the true cost of what we do so we can manage more effectively and be more fiscally responsible.

2. Scott Pratt

Superintendent Pratt stated he served in a two part role for this conference. He was on the Conference Committee for 2012. They made some major changes to bring a lot of best practices and customer service to the forefront with many of the sessions. The track he took at this conference was best practices. He went to sessions on the work environment and cohesion within the department itself and also customer service. He also attended two sessions on how to evaluate special events and programs on the basis of magnitude and making sure that residents are getting the best from us as professionals while they attend our program. He went to the CAPRA class as well to get us certified. Director Mangum has been talking about getting the department certified. He thought the conference was very beneficial because he came away with many things he could institute now instead of later. MRPA (Michigan Recreation and Park Association) laid out a nice plan and will be assisting local recreation departments.

3. Matt Ostermeyer

Recreation Supervisor Ostermeyer stated this was his first MRPA Conference. There were five hundred and sixty Michigan recreation professionals in attendance. He was able to meet, face to face, some of the vendors he deals with on a weekly basis whom he had never met in person. He attended a seminar on seasonal employee recruitment process since we will be gearing up to start hiring in April. He also attended the CAPRA accreditation seminar. He also attended an appreciation marketing meeting. This was exciting for him because today he attended a meeting to plan an appreciation event for coaches, CERT volunteers and Senior Center volunteers to be held at the Sheraton Hotel in April. He also attended an Innovative Programming Awards Summit and got some ideas as far as utilizing our lake access at Lakeshore Park for programming. One of the programs that won an award was the "Soggy Doggy". He learned about some things that other cities are doing that he would like to institute in Novi. Director Mangum stated at the conference the City of Novi was recognized for innovative programming. They gave out four of these awards this year and Novi won two of them. One of the awards was for the Novi Cricket Cup last August, which Matt Ostermeyer ran, and the other was for the Get Real Camp which was a week long day camp themed around reality TV. The Get Real Camp was a group effort. It was Nancy Cowan's idea. Emily Stevens developed it and Lisa Morgan, one of our part-time people, implemented it.

Commissioner Staab asked for more detail on the "Soggy Doggy" program.

Recreation Supervisor Ostermeyer stated there were contests for the dogs jumping off the pier, water races and a costume contest.

B. Administration Division-Director Jason Mangum

1. Parks/Programs Update – Director Mangum

a. Recreation Supervisor recruitment

Director Mangum stated with the departure of Emily Stevens we have an opening for a Recreation Supervisor. Recreation Supervisors are key in programming and making sure the programs happen. They are experts in their field. We recruited for that position and held interviews this week. We are preparing to make an offer and hope to receive a response from the number one candidate. Hopefully by this time next month we will have a full staff.

b. Landings Phase 2

Director Mangum stated at the last Commission Meeting the Commissioners recommended the design of the park to City Council who have recommended moving forward with construction on the project. In addition, City Council made a motion to fund Phase 2 of that project. With the grant money we have for Phase 1 and now with the Council funding of Phase 2, they will happen at the same time. We feel blessed having the support of our City Council members in developing parks. We feel this park will be a gem in our Parks System.

c. Naming Process

Director Mangum stated it was suggested that we come up with a new name for that park instead of The Landings. Three members of the Commission have been asked to serve on a special Committee to narrow down those names. We have been conducting a public input process. This is the last week to submit suggestions. Only one or two of the Commissioners have put in a suggestion. Suggestions can be submitted by the form we have available or by e-mail at [parknaming@cityofnovi.org](mailto:parknaming@cityofnovi.org). We are hoping to take those suggestions to City Council next month for selection.

d. Field Maintenance – not addressed at this time

e. Village Wood Lake

In 2005 we received a grant for Village Wood Lake Park. It was an acquisition grant for that property. Part of the grant is that we improve it so the park is accessible to visitors. On March 5<sup>th</sup>, here in Council Chambers at 7:00pm, there will be an informational meeting on the improvements we will be making to that property. The improvements will include a small parking area, a loop trail with some amenities, like picnic areas. The improvements will be minor but will make the property more useable. Director Mangum encouraged the Commissioners to attend this meeting if they are able.

f. Cemetery

Director Mangum stated the Novi Cemetery, after the bridge construction on Novi Road, has been in disrepair. The Parks department is taking on the challenge of seeing what it will take to refurbish it.

Commissioner Wingfield asked when construction on the Landings property will start and if both phases will be completed by the summer.

Director Mangum stated they are in the process of developing the construction plans. Construction is anticipated to start on July 1<sup>st</sup>. The grant requirement to complete is the end of May of 2013. The biggest part of Phase 1 is the shoreline. That has to be done first when the weather is nice and we have access to getting in the water. We are hoping to get this done without asking for an extension.

C. Recreation Division – Superintendent of Recreation Scott Pratt

1. Basketball/Soccer/Lacrosse

Superintendent Pratt asked Recreation Supervisor Ostermeyer to go over some of his information.

Recreation Supervisor Ostermeyer stated we are in the registration period for both soccer and lacrosse. We already have two teams for sure in lacrosse. We were hoping to expand to three teams. We are in the middle of soccer registration. Basketball numbers are slightly down from last year. We have had some meetings about having basketball back in the schools next year. Having the games just outside the City has not been ideal but we have made it work. We are hoping to be at the Middle School next year. We have a few new basketball classes and clinics. Over one hundred children have participated in these in the fall and winter already. The differences in numbers have been made up by these classes and clinics. We are adding a short third season of basketball for children who are currently playing and want to continue playing. They will play on week nights at the schools, one night a week and without practices. There has already been a big response to this.

The field layout has already been done at ITC Community Sports Park because of the weather we have had this winter. We are making a few changes in the layout to accommodate for the wear and tear of the fields and try to preserve them as best we can.

We will be utilizing a new communications software this spring with soccer and adult softball. We are going to be using a website called Quick Huddle that is going to be a comprehensive communication tool for us, the coaches and managers, as well as the players and parents. It will take our customer service to the next level. They will get instant e-mails and texts on updates and changes.

Commissioner Wingfield asked what the grade breakdown is for lacrosse.

Recreation Supervisor Ostermeyer confirmed that it was 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade and 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade. He stated with the addition of a girls'



team at the High School level he anticipates offering a girls' team as well.

2. Repair of Soccer Goals

Superintendent Pratt stated we found there are some of our soccer goals in need of major repair. We are looking at ways to repair them instead of replace them because cost wise it is less. We will repair them before the soccer season starts.

3. Daddy Daughter Dance

We had seven hundred and thirty five participants. Superintendent Pratt attended with his two daughters as did Director Mangum with his daughters. As a participant, it was a great event. Sweet and Sassy was there.

4. Dinner Theatre

The Dinner Theatre production will be "See How They Run". The dates for the production are April 20<sup>th</sup> and April 21<sup>st</sup>, both at 6:30pm. Moe's on Ten will be providing the dinner.

Commissioner Staab asked what the cost will be for the Dinner Theatre. Superintendent Pratt stated the tickets are thirty-five dollars each. He also stated that the menu will be lemon chicken, pasta primavera, Michigan cherry salad, bread and a dessert.

Director Mangum stated, as a change, the dinner theatre will be a comedy rather than mystery. It is a British farce. He has seen the play and it is hilarious.

**MATTERS FOR COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION:** None

**CITIZEN COMMENTS:** None

**COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:**

Commissioner Wingfield stated he thought the reports on the conference were excellent. He is looking forward to Spring.

Commissioner Tecklenburg congratulated the department on the two awards received for innovative programming.

Student Representative Kodali asked for the e-mail address for the park naming.

Director Mangum stated the address is [parknaming@cityofnovi.org](mailto:parknaming@cityofnovi.org). All of the suggestions will go to the committee.

Commissioner Wingfield asked about how many suggestions there are so far.

Director Mangum replied he believes there are between forty and sixty.

Commissioner Jewell thanked the department for their hard work and for making the City of Novi outstanding.

Commissioner Staab congratulated the department on the innovative programming awards. Novi has a long history of winning MRPA awards. The Tim Pope Memorial play structure won an award as an outstanding project. There was excellent feedback from the conference. He was glad to hear about the innovative new programming and best practices. We have talked before about getting in tune with outside environments, quality and customer service.

Commissioner Policicchio welcomed Recreation Supervisor Pratt to the team.

The reports indicate that the department is active as usual and moving forward

in all areas. He asked since this has been a mild winter, will this be good or bad for our fields for spring sports as far as additional maintenance which may or may not be needed. Maybe this can be addressed at the next meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

**Voice Vote**

**Unanimous**

The meeting was adjourned by Commissioner Policicchio at 7:37pm.

DATE APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

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Jay Dooley, Chairperson

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Paul Policicchio, Vice Chairperson