

PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES

Thursday, March 21, 2013 – 7:00 PM

NOVI CIVIC CENTER – COUNCIL CHAMBERS

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm with Commissioner Torimoto presiding.

ROLL CALL: Policicchio (Absent-Excused), Ferrell (Present), Jewell (Present), Staab (Absent-Excused), Tecklenburg (Present), Torimoto (Present), Wingfield (Present), Kodali (Present), Singh (Absent).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

It was moved by Commissioner Wingfield 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 24, 2013 minutes. (No February meeting)

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

Voice Vote

Unanimous

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. Walkable Novi - Commissioners Policicchio & Torimoto

Commissioner Torimoto stated he was just at the Walkable Novi meeting today. A major topic was communication of the overall status of the progress in the pathway and sidewalk plan implementation. The completion, to date, for the past two years is thirteen thousand feet of sidewalks and pathways or about two and a half miles that has been achieved so far. He feels the Committee has done an excellent job moving the plan forward. They also went over some grant opportunities from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund which he believes will be discussing here today. They also went over the bicycle parking zoning ordinance amendment. They want to come up with some structure for allowing bicycle parking to be available at the final destinations. A summary bike parking table is presented to make it easy for interpretation. The final item of note was the 2013 Capital Improvement Plan budget update as it applies to sidewalks and pathways. The big items that were covered were related to trying to establish a connection to the M-5/I-275 trail connector from both the north and south side of Meadowbrook Road.

Commissioner Wingfield stated in the newspaper today there was an item about redoing Eight Mile between Beck and Napier. He stated there are no trails or sidewalks along that area. He asked if something is being looked at in the future to be incorporated in to the trail system. Commissioner Torimoto replied that it is being looked at with the City of Northville especially toward Maybury State Park as well as ITC Community Sports Park area. It also involves the Oakland County Commission on how to make it work out. Director Mangum commented that while there are no sidewalks included in that project we are planning for future use. In addition, the Department of Public Services engineering department is working with the County, who is doing the road project, to include expanded shoulders. While it is not necessarily a trail or a sidewalk it does serve a purpose for cyclists by giving them an extra four feet of space to ride.

B. Novi Parks Foundation - Commissioners Staab and Ferrell

Commissioner Ferrell reminded everyone about the August 1st Novi Parks Foundation Golf Outing. They are putting the finishing touches on their Naming Rights pamphlets. She stated that they are losing their Director, Erika Pratt. They are accepting resumes for a new director. They are also working on the ITC proposal which will be submitted soon to ITC.

STAFF REPORTS:

A. Administration Division – Director Jason Mangum

Director Mangum stated he would like to report some training opportunities we have had in the last couple of months. Greg Morris had the opportunity to attend a school at Oglebay Training Center. This is a national training center for Parks and Recreation.

Recreation Supervisor Greg Morris stated in January he attended Oglebay in West Virginia. It was a great opportunity with recreation professionals from many states attending. One of the things he took away from the class had to do with sponsorship programs. There were some innovative ways to improve sponsorships. Some of these have been implemented and he gave a presentation to the staff. The Director of the London Olympic Risk Management was there presenting. He is now the Cricket 2014 Cup Director of Risk Management. There were things from his excellent presentation that can be used. There were also great networking opportunities.

Commissioner Wingfield asked if it was a two year program.

Recreation Supervisor Morris confirmed that it is. This is year one so he gets to go back and complete the program. This is the second year of the school so they are getting a lot of feedback from those doing year two this year. So the school has really improved from year one to year two.

Commissioner Wingfield stated he had attended in 1979 and 1980 and it was very rewarding.

Recreation Supervisor Morris stated it is a great combination of the National Recreation and Parks Association and the International Festival Association to create the school.

Director Mangum asked Recreation Supervisor Morris to talk about his experience at the Michigan Recreation and Park Association Conference. Recreation Supervisor Morris stated he attended the MRPA Conference a month later. He stated that we received the Innovative Programming Award at the Conference for the Parent and Child Golf Outing for this past year. Scott Pratt also won the Recreation Leadership Award for his service to the recreation profession for the past 17 years. The Conference was in Lansing and there were more delegates there than the past because it was centrally located.

1. Michigan Recreation and Park Association Conference Report

Director Mangum stated one of the things we try to do in the department is to give our people the training and opportunities to better themselves and then take their new knowledge and better the department. We took a delegation of five people to Lansing. There were a wide variety of sessions and everyone brought back some great ideas for the department. He thanked the Commissioners who were also able to be there for taking the time. He hopes they will share their experiences.

2. Project Updates

Director Mangum stated he had a chance to go and walk the Pavilion Shore Park site. We have posted some pictures on our Facebook page and you can see some of the progress. Work was being done on the fishing dock even in the cold weather.

Director Mangum stated we are applying for a couple of Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grants this grant cycle. One of these grants is for Phase Three of Pavilion Shore Park which will include a few more amenities such as the pavilion or shelter, some site lighting and additional landscaping. The second grant is for a trail through Wildlife Woods Park which will connect to the portion of the ITC Corridor Trail that is getting ready to be built by Mediloge or Mac Development.

Director Mangum asked the Commissioners if they would be willing to include some letters of support for these grants.

3. Grant Committee

Director Mangum stated we would like to form a Grant Committee because one of the things we find is that there is not a lot of time before we find out what grants have been funded through the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund and the next grant cycle. At the last Council Meeting, City Council created this Committee to help us prioritize the grants in the area of Parks and Recreation whether they be acquisition projects or development projects. This Committee would consist of two Parks and Recreation Commissioners, two City Council members and himself. It is anticipated that it would meet four times a year, probably quarterly, just to help develop ideas and prioritize them so we can start working on and know which grants that we want to apply for. It will make the process easier. At the last City Council meeting they created the Committee and appointed Councilmember Mutch and Mayor pro tem Staudt to serve on that Committee. We will need two Park and Recreation Commissioners to volunteer to also serve on the Committee. That will be item 8 D on today's agenda.

- B. Recreation Division – Superintendent of Recreation Scott Pratt
1. Michigan Recreation and Park Association Conference Report
Superintendent Pratt stated that he, Greg Morris and Shauna Lewallen received certification as CPRP (Certified Park and Recreation Professionals). It is an honor in their profession to have this certification.
Superintendent Pratt agreed with everything Director Mangum and Recreation Supervisor Morris said about the Michigan Conference. It is great to have time to get together and network with fellow professionals, see what they are doing and see how we compare. We are toward the top in what we are doing and are doing a lot of great things. It is a time to showcase what we are doing. Greg Morris' award for the parent and child golf outing with a movie showcases how we run our programs and stay as innovative as possible. Scott stated attended a session about the Master Plan and learned about some of the changes that are coming and things to do to improve it so that it will help when applying for grants.
 2. Theatre Productions
Superintendent Pratt stated the "Wizard of Oz" was just held March 1st through the 3rd and March 8th through the 10th. All six shows were sold out. We sold 1,775 tickets. There were 79 cast members and their ages ranged from 4 to 68. The four-year olds were munchkins.
"The Little Mermaid" is our next production and they are rehearsing for the show now. The cast is set. He suggested if the Commissioners get a chance they should check out the stage because there are some structures put up for the show. That show will be in May.
 3. Youth & Teen Programs
Superintendent Pratt introduced Greg Morris to talk about the Youth and Teen Programs.
Recreation Supervisor Morris stated the Daddy Daughter Dance was in February. What is remarkable about it is that we went from 760 participants to 900 from 2012 to 2013. We themed the Dance after the "Wizard of Oz" with the idea that it would also promote the upcoming show. Some girls dressed as Dorothy. There were characters from the show that some girls were taking pictures with. The Friends of the Novi Civic Theatre were there doing the coat check and promoting the show. Some people even told staff that they came because of the theme.
Recreation Supervisor Morris stated he is working with the Novi Library on the Teen Space. It is an afterschool program where the students from Novi High School and Middle School can come. It is an area in the library where they can be loud. They can talk to friends, play games and interact with other teens. They are still doing their homework but it is a noisier more laid back environment and has worked out well. It is a great partnership with the Library, Novi Schools and Youth Assistance. Each takes a day and supervises the space and it has been very successful.
Recreation Supervisor Morris stated in the packet there is a flyer on the Flashlight Egg Hunt. Even with the cold weather they are going to be out tomorrow night. There are also a lot of activities indoors so the children are only out for about 15 or 20 minutes. The indoor activities include a bounce house, a craft and activity station and refreshments. Our current numbers

are over 140 children already and usually the day of the event we get around 50 more.

Superintendent Pratt stated we are trying to bring more adaptive programs to the City of Novi. On March 15th we worked with Oakland County Parks and had an adaptive St. Patrick's Dance. It wasn't advertised a lot because it was our first event and we weren't sure how it would go. We had 85 participants. It was held in our Banquet Quarter and it was a great time. There was a DJ and St. Patrick's Day decorations. We will be having another event on July 27th which will be a picnic at Lakeshore Park. We hope this helps build the adaptive programs we are going to be running throughout the community. He sees a great advantage for our City and department to run these programs and hopes they continue to be successful and grow.

We had exhibit art in the Atrium but it is currently down for the Egg Hunt. It is a Brain Injury Survivors Art Exhibit. The Cassell and Associates group created the art pieces. The opening for this exhibit is one of the largest we have had. Over 125 people attended. Ten of the art pieces have already been sold. The art exhibit will be back up after the Egg Hunt and he encouraged the Commissioners to see it.

4. Sports

Superintendent Pratt stated 313 children participated in our youth basketball league this season. We are up 17% from 2012. The only thing we are dealing with is space. At the end of the league some players wanted to continue so Shauna Lewallen got together with her staff and extended the season and 122 players signed up for an extended league.

We had 89 players in our youth volleyball league. Volleyball is growing as well and we will continue to offer more volleyball. Shauna has added new sports programs since she has been here and every one of them seems to go well in the community. Even though she is new she has an understanding of the community.

Superintendent Pratt announced that Theresa McClure was honored yesterday as the "Youth Sports Staff Member of the Year" through the MRPA (Michigan Recreation and Parks Association). It is a great honor for one of our part time staff to win an award through MRPA. We also had two coaches honored as "Youth Sports Coach of the Year". They were Mike and Carol Aurilia, who have been coaching for us for a long time. It is great to have recognition for not only our staff but also our volunteers.

Commissioner Wingfield stated that earlier he had heard about the department's Master Plan and that it is needed to apply for grants. He asked how often the Master Plan needs to be resubmitted or updated. Superintendent Pratt replied that it is a 5-year plan and ours ended 2013. We are in the process of getting bids out for an evaluation to be sent out through the City to see what we need to add to the 5-year Master Plan. He and Director Mangum are working on what needs to be added for the Parks. He will be working with staff to make sure we are covering the programmable component of the Plan.

Commissioner Wingfield asked if we are redoing the Master Plan now to submit in the near future so we will be good for the next 5 years.

Superintendent Pratt stated this is correct and the Commission will see the entire process all the way through.

Commissioner Ferrell asked what sports are coming up this spring and how would people go about signing up their kids.

Superintendent Pratt stated our "Engage!" recreation guide will be coming out in mid-April and all of our sports will be in it. They can also go to our website because all of our staff will have the activities running in spring available for registration on April 1st. If you go to the City of Novi website and go to Rec 1, our current registration software, you can register for our programs. If you have difficulty you can call the staff in the office.

Superintendent Pratt stated Adult Softball is now a doubleheader league. We have filled and are at full capacity with that league for both spring and summer. We would be able to take more teams if we had the two back softball fields as Adult Softball fields.

Commissioner Wingfield stated he waited too long in signing up his team and it is too late for spring or summer. He asked if there was a new date for signing up teams for the fall league.

Superintendent Pratt stated that he did not currently have that date but he will get with Shauna Lewallen and make sure the date for fall Adult Softball league is out and in the media.

Commissioner Wingfield stated we could have taken quite a few more teams if we had the space. With the single games we had between 30 and 32 teams and now can only take 16 a night. He agrees with what is being done. He asked if there are plans to get the two back fields eventually suited for adult softball.

Superintendent Pratt stated there are plans submitted and they are in the hands of the people who oversee the Capital Improvement submissions. We have a layout of what we would like to see out there.

Commissioner Torimoto asked how the fields are looking since the last few weeks have been damp.

Superintendent Pratt stated that they are hard or frozen. The good and the bad of the season itself is that we are not going to get early play. Last year due to the weather we had early play. Right now, due to the hard surface and the snow it keeps people off of the fields. Hopefully we will have people on the fields by the end of April. John Thompson and his crew did a lot of prep on the fields last year at the end of the season. With this weather it will keep people off a little longer and the fields can get a little more growth.

5. Event Management School – Greg Morris
(Report given earlier in the meeting)

MATTERS FOR COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION:

- A. Discussion on Potential Park Sites memo – referencing possible future park sites
Director Mangum stated this is something the Commissioners have had since before the last scheduled meeting. This is an opportunity for the Commissioners to provide input, suggestions and ideas. This came as a request from City Council to look or find possible areas for new parks and new park sites. After going through some process, this memo was put together with six potential sites. Not all of these are set in stone but are examples of

types of sites. As an example, number 3 is a Dog Park site. The need for a Dog Park in Novi has been identified. This is a potential site for it. Another example is number 4 which is a Downtown Plaza. This is a potential type of site. We really want to focus on the purpose and why we need parks either in certain areas or certain types of parks. These are parcels but not necessarily "the" parcel. We don't own any of this property. He would like to get the Commissioners' thoughts. He urged the Commissioners to read through it and send him e-mails or ask questions. Attached at the back of that packet are things that are noteworthy. First, is a population density map that the people in GIS have created. It shows where we have the greatest population density. We have to take that into consideration when we look at our park sites. There is a great article from last summer's Urban Land magazine called "The Payoff from Parks". It talks about the investment in parks and what it does for community and economic development. He has been doing some research about the job creation that comes from conservation efforts and efforts in building parks. It is an incredible benefit to the economy. Commissioner Wingfield asked if this is tied in to the new committee that is to be formed.

Director Mangum confirmed this. These are just things he has identified as needs in the community and would be a great place to start.

Commissioner Torimoto stated he likes the variety of parks represented in the report. He was surprised on the Barr Property. It is a pretty unique park and purpose. We just acquired it and are doing planning for it and yet we are looking at potentially expanding it. He asked if there is something that is driving us to double the size at this time.

Director Mangum replied that we are just trying to forecast that southwest area of the City. The area is probably the least developed and where a significant amount of development may happen. We want to look at having enough space for future use. There is a 74 acre park down the road, ITC Community Sports Park, which is for active programming and sports. This would be a nice complement to that park. It is similar to Ella Mae Power Park and Fuerst Park. Ella Mae Power Park is 73 acres and Fuerst Park is 8 acres and they complement each other nicely. That is the thought, that and we want to be looking toward the future and future growth.

Commissioner Torimoto stated there are not enough sports fields and there are already parking constraints at ITC Community Sports Park. He asked if the parking at the Barr property would be shared with ITC or would there be a problem with the distance.

Director Mangum stated they are both on Napier but it would not be feasible to share parking because of the distance. We do need to address some of our parking issues at ITC Community Sports Park.

Commissioner Jewell asked if there has been any thought or discussion on a skateboard or bike park because he has seen those pop up in other communities. There is one in Canton, Westland and Troy.

Director Mangum stated that is a great question and the parks are identified in one of two ways. You either have a user group that is very vocal or it identified in the Community Needs Assessment. The last Community Needs

Assessment that was conducted prior to the previous Master Plan did not have these kinds of parks as a huge priority for this community.

Superintendent Pratt added when we run programs we try to have activities that the community wants. Recreation Supervisor Greg Morris put together a Skate Bus which toured all of the skate parks in the area. We did not get enough interest the first time. We will try it again and see if the program will run. This is how we can tell what the community's interests are.

B. Discussion on and possible approval of Park Definitions and Standards

Director Mangum stated this is part of our efforts to become an accredited Parks and Recreation agency which is one of our goals over the next couple of years. There are only two accredited agencies in the state and we are on track to become the third. One of the things we need is to have the appropriate documentation, policies, procedures and plans. One of those things is our park definitions and maintenance standards. This puts everyone on the same page by defining types of parks and also maintenance and levels of maintenance. This has been out for a few weeks to a month and he hopes the Commissioners have had a chance to see them. If the Commission has seen, likes and agrees to adopt it he would appreciate a motion of approval.

Commissioner Wingfield stated he had read through it earlier and it clearly defines what we have and how we perceive each park. He thinks it is a step in the right direction toward becoming accredited and feels the Commission should support it.

Director Mangum stated one of the things he tried to do in developing this is use common language for this area and put the definition to it.

Commissioner Tecklenburg asked if our classifications are not necessarily a standard.

Director Mangum stated they are specific to us. There is not a specific standard of what you have to call something. We do have definitions and we know what they are and we abide by them.

Commissioner Tecklenburg asked, tied in to the potential park site, how do we measure if we have adequate inventory of parks. Is it based on the community feedback or are there other standards we look at like benchmark communities?

Director Mangum confirmed this. A new program database called Proragis, which stands for parks and recreational operational ratio and GIS. It is a program that Parks and Recreation agencies dump all of their data into. Things like budget, acres, amenities, programs and everything you do can go in. You can benchmark. As an example, we have a very popular soccer program so we may need more soccer fields per capita in Novi than another city. Part of it we try to benchmark and see where we are and part of it is supply and demand. For example, if we had more softball fields or soccer fields or basketball courts we would fill them. We are hindered by our facilities. Our staff does an excellent job of maximizing these facilities. We look at the benchmarking but we also look at the need.

Director Mangum added park access is also a variable. We may have 1,100 acres of park but 600 acres is in one park, Lakeshore Park. And while the park acreage per capita may be high for a city our size, one of our goals is to

have everyone within a one mile distance from a park. We still have areas even with high concentrations of people that aren't within a mile from a park. We need to take a look at the whole picture and make sure people can walk or bike to a park.

Commissioner Wingfield made a motion to approve the Park Definitions and Standards. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Jewell.

Voice Vote

Unanimous

Commissioner Torimoto stated that with these definitions and standards he is going to assume that there are procedures that apply to them with documentation that would be made.

Director Mangum stated that there are as pertains to maintenance.

C. Defense against encroachment

Director Mangum stated another standard for CAPRA accreditation is to have a defense against encroachment procedure. We have developed a standard operating procedure for encroachment. This is what he hopes is a more living/breathing document, that as we go through these procedures to defend against encroachment on park land we do what works so we can amend or change them. These have been looked at and amended by the City Attorney. He wanted to share this with the Commission so they could be aware of our procedure so they could share any suggestions, thoughts, or feedback they may have.

Commissioner Tecklenburg asked if this was pulled together as part of the CAPRA accreditation requirement.

Director Mangum verified this and also stated there have been a couple of instances where we have had encroachment on park land. We need to make sure we go through the proper steps to eliminate encroachment. This defines it, shows our authority statement and goes through, step by step, the actual procedure to eliminate the encroachment.

Commissioner Tecklenburg stated when he looked at it he wondered if there was a need based on something that had occurred.

Director Mangum stated there are currently several instances of encroachment on our park land. When you don't have procedures in place it is hard to go about solving the problem. This takes care of both putting us in compliance for accreditation and putting in place a procedure to use. As the weather warms up and people get ready for spring cleaning and trimming, this will give us the opportunity to make sure they are keeping it on their side of the fence so to speak.

Commissioner Torimoto asked since this will be standard operating procedure for Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services, how do you communicate this to the public.

Director Mangum stated it is City ordinance so it is not something that we will advertise but will share the procedure with people as the need arises. We hope most of the time the encroachment will be lack of knowledge or understanding. It is rarely a malicious occurrence. We have a lot of natural areas in our parks and maybe the borders are not defined or delineated. That is a next step for us to define the areas through signage or other means.

Commissioner Torimoto asked if this is something that needed a motion for approval.

Director Mangum stated it does not because it has been approved through the City Attorney's office and because it is not a policy it does not need a vote. It is something he wanted the Commissioners to be aware of and possibly provide feedback.

D. Appointment of PRCS Commissioner to PRCS Grant Advisory Committee

Director Mangum stated this would be something that would meet a few times a year just to identify projects and priorities.

Commissioners Wingfield and Jewell volunteered to serve on the PRCS Grant Advisory Committee.

Director Mangum stated he would send out information to them.

A motion was made by Commissioner Tecklenburg to approve the appointment of Commissioners Wingfield and Jewell to the PRCS Grant Advisory Committee and was seconded by Commissioner Ferrell.

Voice Vote

Unanimous

Director Mangum thanked all of the Commissioners for their service.

Commissioner Torimoto asked if Director Mangum was looking at a couple of other potential committees.

Director Mangum confirmed this. He stated at the next City Council Meeting we will be looking for the creation of two new committees. One is the Cultural Advisory Board which will take into account not only art and the arts but also cultural events and cultural outreach. The other is the Older Adult Services Advisory Board. Both will be advisory committees. People in the community will apply and then be appointed by the Director. They will make quarterly reports to the Commission and to City Council. We decided the members of those committees will not include Commissioners because they are volunteering enough. If it is something a Commissioner is interested in we would love to have them on the committee. These are pending City Council approval.

Director Mangum stated in the Commission Packet there are programs from the MRPA Awards Banquet because he wanted to illustrate the member of our staff who won the Recreation Leadership Award, Scott Pratt. It is a big honor because they only give out one of these a year, occasionally two. The Recreation Leadership Award is given to someone who has provided a tremendous amount of service not only to our association but to the profession.

CITIZEN COMMENTS: None

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Tecklenburg congratulated Scott Pratt on his award. He enjoyed the meeting and appreciates some of the definitions and procedures. It is a step forward in helping to define and clarify some of the assets that we do have in the community. He looks forward to seeing the spring and summer activities.

Commissioner Jewell congratulated Scott Pratt and stated he has done an outstanding job and we are glad to have him here in Novi. He also stated the information given by Director Mangum this evening was outstanding. Parks and Recreation has taken a new step forward with new energy and renewed focus. Commissioner Wingfield thanked Director Mangum for the opportunity to attend the MRPA Conference. He and Commissioner Staab attended. He attended two sessions. One was on advocacy, individual and special interest groups and how we deal with them in the community and how we open our eyes to them. It was a philosophy and theory type of session but he enjoyed it. The second session was two and a half hours by Stu Alderman on the Grosse Pointe Neighborhood Recreation Center. He congratulated Scott Pratt on his award. Commissioner Ferrell stated being fairly new to Novi she is astounded at the number of programs offered. She thanked the department for what they are doing and congratulated Scott Pratt on his award. Student Representative Kodali stated the acres of park land in Novi is fascinating and is good.

Commissioner Torimoto stated he attended the Daddy Daughter Dance and did notice the stage set up for the "Wizard of Oz". He took his daughter and family to see the show and it was interesting to see the differences between the movie and the show, which was excellent. He thanked the department for putting on these events as well as many others. Greg Morris was working very hard and did a fantastic job at the Daddy Daughter Dance and yet took time to say "hello" to him and his daughter. The coach's meeting for soccer was last week. It is good to see many of the same coaches coming back and also new coaches with the program expanding. He congratulated Scott Pratt and also Theresa McClure. He stated he didn't realize that Theresa was part time with the number of hours and dedication she shows. She makes it fun. He thanked them for what they do.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Voice Vote

Unanimous

The meeting was adjourned by Commissioner Torimoto at 8:08pm.

DATE APPROVED: _____

Paul Policicchio, Chairperson

Harry Torimoto, Vice Chairperson