

PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES

Thursday, January 24, 2013 – 7:00 PM

NOVI CIVIC CENTER – COUNCIL CHAMBERS

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

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

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 November 15, 2012 minutes. (No December meeting)
It was moved by Commissioner Jewell 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 the Walkable Novi Committee Meeting was held on January 15th at 6pm. They did not have a quorum. There were discussions. There is an ongoing discussion regarding the neighborhood connectors at Beck and Ten Mile Road. Eventually these should lead to the Civic Center and the Library. There has been some discussion by the citizens about the northeast neighborhood connector between Cider Mill Road and Emerald Forest. At this time we will not publicize the connector route through signage, as was the original proposal, and focus more on the southeast connector at Ten Mile and Beck to see how that connector route goes. The second item was Director Mangum talking about some of the grant opportunities they are looking at like the Michigan Metro Resources Trail Fund. This would be another source of revenue for the walkable routes and connections through the City. There is some talk on target connections using this grant.
The third item was a proposed bicycle parking zone ordinance. We can have all of these trails interconnecting the City but if the end destination does not

have appropriate parking it will not be as attractive. The proposal was presented by the planner and is benchmarked by other communities.

B. Novi Parks Foundation - Commissioners Staab and Ferrell

Commissioner Staab stated the last Parks Foundation meeting was the longest with many items to be discussed. The meeting was held at the Novi Ice Arena after a tour of that facility. They talked about the Barr Property and the Golf Outing. The Golf Outing will be the first Thursday in August which is August 1st. They also talked about their development of strategy of a proposal for ITC Community Sports Park. It was a very eventful meeting.

STAFF REPORTS:

A. Administration Division – Director Jason Mangum

1. Update Pavilion Shore Park

Director Mangum stated we are currently working on Pavilion Shore Park even with the cold weather. We have encountered some surprises. Considering everything that property has been in the past, they have encountered things like a giant septic tank and foundations. Work continues to move forward and we are anticipating a completion date of late summer. We are looking forward to bringing that park in to full rotation with our complement of parks. We are also looking forward to future phases and future amenities we can add.

2. Barr Property

Director Mangum stated when the Commission last met we were still in negotiations for the purchase of this property. He is pleased to announce that the City closed on the property on December 26th. We will now begin the next phase of programming that property and providing events there. In our initial plan we will give public tours throughout the summer at the site. Our intention is not to make it open to the public at this time for spontaneous visits due to the fact the Barrs are still living there and we want to be sensitive to their needs. People will be able to sign up for tours on specific days and we will go there as groups to study the art and learn about Mr. Barr's life and his work. In addition we will be looking to make some improvements to the property. Immediately, we are working on a roof project. There is a demonstration studio, which is onsite, we will have use of immediately. We will be adding restrooms which are ADA accessible.

B. Recreation Division – Superintendent of Recreation Scott Pratt

1. Theatre Productions

Director Mangum stated there are two upcoming theatre events. The first one is "The Wizard of Oz". The cast for that is set and working hard. We have changed the paradigm for our theatre. We are trying to make it more a community theatre. This would include people who have little or no theatre experience to those who have considerable experience working together creating a production. We are making it a teaching opportunity and a chance for people to become passionate about the theatre. We have a very large cast for "the Wizard of Oz" of over 80 people. The set design and costume design is happening right now and when you have that many people there is a lot of work to do. This production takes place

the first two weekends in March. We have lowered our ticket prices to make it family friendly. The participation prices have also been lowered so that it is more accessible to those who might just want to try it.

2. Recreation Software Update

Director Mangum stated if you register for our recreation programs you may have noticed, starting in the beginning of December, our recreation software has changed. We are now using a system called Rec 1. It is an all online system and has made it easy to register for a class online. It is like many online shopping sites. You fill out a profile and pick your own user name and password and do not have to wait for staff to verify an account or assign a PIN. There are no more codes. You just pick your classes. The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Director Mangum asked if any of the Commissioners has had an opportunity to use the registration site.

Commissioner Torimoto stated he signed up for an event. The site is much more intuitive and as you refine the search it provides more information quickly. It is a good change.

Director Mangum stated that the change is there are no codes like registering for college classes. With this program you can type in key words and it brings up classes or you can browse by category.

3. Youth & Teen Programs

Director Mangum stated Youth and Teen is our newest division. Greg Morris is our Youth and Teen coordinator. At the annual Michigan State Parks and Recreation Conference Greg will be recognized for an innovative programming award. Usually they give out one or two of those a year. He will be recognized for his Parent Child Golf Outing and Movie on the Driving Range which happened last September. He has also started some new programs. One of them is a Capoeira program. Capoeira is a Brazilian dance/martial arts program. It is not a fighting martial arts. It is those types of moves done to music and rhythm and is choreographed. It is a fantastic visual experience. Because it is such a new and unknown program, Greg has gone out of his way to promote creatively through demonstrations at the schools and at our youth basketball clinics. Because of all of this hard work the class is filling and there will be enough participation for it to go this spring. With some of the days off from school coming up, Greg is working on promoting some Mystery Trips for Teens. Teen programming is a very challenging area and he is working on trying to get teens engaged during the time off. The first trip will be in February. Neither the teens nor the parents know the destination.

4. Sports

Director Mangum stated that our youth sports programs are extremely popular. This is the first year we have offered fall volleyball. For fall youth sports we were up around ninety-seven percent in participation. This is incredible. For winter sports we have increased numbers in volleyball and basketball and are up around twenty percent from last year. We attribute the increase to quality programs. Shauna Lewallen and Theresa McClure do a great job with youth sports. They recently had their free clinics for both basketball and volleyball.

MATTERS FOR COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION:

- A. Discussion on Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Novi Community School District and City of Novi relating to development of property at 11 Mile and Beck.

Director Mangum stated that the school district owns property on the corner of Beck and Eleven Mile Roads, commonly known as the Bosco Property. This property was purchased and has primarily sat vacant for a number of years. This is an opportunity for us to have a discussion to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Novi Community School District and the City of Novi for the development of that land for park use. This is just a draft MOU. He wanted to give the Commission a chance to look at it and give feedback. City Council will look at this and representatives from the school have seen it. It is putting the proper protocol in place before we spend any kind of money in doing a study or seeing what types of potential uses there could be. There was a study done for Signature Park in 2008. This is the same location so there has been some work as far as a study done.

Director Mangum stated the MOU outlines the need in the community. It demonstrates that the School System and the City have worked together in the past for similar projects. We are demonstrating that we have done this before and that it has worked well. We hope this will be of mutual benefit and hope to jointly develop and program these fields over time. Currently, it is a flat grass multipurpose field. The MOU outlines that both parties will have access to the property and it will be used as a multipurpose field and that there will be no big facilities there. There will be related amenities such as parking and restrooms or storage. Nothing will be done without joint consideration.

Commissioner Wingfield stated that when they proposed the new High School be built there it was the School District's property and we were going to put our park there in 2007/2008 when the economy was terrible and it did not pass. It was our initiative to put something there and not the schools'. By reading this, it says the schools own it but they are going to let us do with it what we want that will benefit the community. He asked if it is more our job than theirs to come up with something.

Director Mangum replied that we will be working jointly. He has met with the Athletic Director, Brian Gordon, as well as the Community Education Director, Bob Steeh, and they talked about the potential and future needs and uses by the School. This is basically allowing us to do a study and puts everyone on the same page. Nothing would be done without a formal agreement. We would be the ones initiating but we would do it with the needs of the School District in mind and working together.

Commissioner Wingfield asked if the park would be structured or more passive.

Director Mangum stated currently, what we have outlined is that we would do multipurpose recreation fields that could be multiple sports and the related structures such as restrooms. There will be nothing like a gym as was proposed for Signature Park. One of the thoughts is that with some of the new sports being offered at the High School, this would give us space to offer

the recreation program which corresponds to these and be a feeder program to the High School. An example of this is the new Field Hockey program at the High School. For a majority of the girls who are playing, when they try out for the team, it is the first time they have ever done it and this puts our athletic teams at a disadvantage because they have not had a chance to learn the sport. Lacrosse is another sport like this. We are hoping these fields will have a home for some of these sports. And also possibly provide fields for JV baseball.

Commissioner Wingfield stated both he and Commissioner Jewell are aware of this because there is a beautiful baseball field at the High School but there are also Freshman and JV teams. It is the same for boys and girls lacrosse with only one football field. He stated this could be a key site for practices for those sports.

Director Mangum confirmed this is the goal. We realize that community pride is often tied to High Schools and we want to contribute to that pride and help these students be successful.

Commissioner Torimoto asked if there was funding in the Capital Improvement plan for this.

Director Mangum stated there is a small amount in the budget year to start the study and this is what we need to do to get this started. He does not want to spend money on something that may not be possible.

Commissioner Tecklenburg asked if there was a possibility that the field could be use this year.

Director Mangum stated there is not that possibility. It may be next summer if everything goes smoothly.

Commissioner Policicchio stated the School District will retain ownership of the land and the City will be underwriting all of the development and improvements. He asked if it is possible after a period of time that the School District could say they had changed their mind after the City has spent a large amount of money.

Director Mangum stated that is a great point and is one of the reasons we are doing this MOU. We would not spend any money without an agreement in place. That agreement would be worked out through the City Attorney's office. Right now there are no plans to develop that property as a school. If it ever came to that in the future we would have years of notice so it will protect our investment.

Commissioner Policicchio stated the City and School District are doing a good job in showing the community they are working together to use resources and money to the benefit of everyone. It would be like we are the farm teams for the High School sports.

Director Mangum replied he really feels it is providing a service and we have to work together.

- B. Discussion and possible action on positive recommendation to City Council regarding the purchase of the sculpture entitled "Fate of Empires" to be installed at Pavilion Shore Park using Novi Park Foundation naming rights funds.

Director Mangum stated Commissioner Staab was at the Parks Foundation meeting where a motion was made to fund a piece of public art for Pavilion

Shore Park. It is a piece of art which is currently at the Barr Property. Since the funds were raised through the Naming Rights, City Council needs to give their approval to spend the money and it has to be used on a capital improvement item. The Foundation has identified this as a capital item and he agrees. Prior to going to City Council with a recommendation to approve this purchase (this is for both items B and C on the agenda) we would like to discuss this recommendation.

Director Mangum stated he would be happy to describe the sculpture. It is five pillars and represents the rise and fall of civilization. All of the pillars are eight feet tall. The first pillar is basically a frame of a pillar or scaffolding. The second one shows it built up some and filled in. The third one is at its pinnacle. The fourth one shows some decay. The fifth one is in disrepair. We think it is a fantastic opportunity for this piece of art being at Pavilion Shore Park, considering the park's rich history and everything it has been.

Commissioner Tecklenburg asked what the sculpture was made of.

Director Mangum replied it is painted steel.

Commissioner Jewel asked what the sculpture cost.

Director Mangum stated the Park Foundation gets a twenty percent discount on what the sculpture would sell for. The cost is thirty-six thousand dollars with the discount.

Commissioner Staab stated former Mayor Landry is on the Parks Foundation now and at the last meeting had a model of the sculpture. Commissioner Staab thinks it would be very appealing at Pavilion Shore Park for the reasons Director Mangum gave about its rich history. It will also advertise our involvement with the Barr Property.

- C. Discussion and possible action on positive recommendation to City Council for the Foundation to utilize naming rights funds as seed money for the sculpture entitled "Roman Ruin" to be engineered and installed in city parkland.

Commissioner Wingfield made a motion that the Commission move forward with making a positive recommendation to City Council regarding using Novi Park Foundation Naming Rights funds for the purchase of the sculpture "Fate of the Empires" and as seed money for the sculpture "Roman Ruins". The motion was seconded by Commissioner Jewell.

Voice Vote

Unanimous

CITIZEN COMMENTS: None

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Student Representative Singh had no comment.

Student Representative Kodali asked what was currently on the property at Eleven Mile and Beck Roads.

Director Mangum replied it is vacant currently. The land with the house and barn are not part of that property.

Commissioner Jewell thanked Director Mangum and Scott Pratt for the outstanding job they have done. He has heard nothing but good things about the new registration process and the sports programs. He stated the Novi Appreciation night was well done and thanked everyone for that.

Commissioner Torimoto stated it is a very exciting time especially with Pavilion Shore Park, the Barr Property and programming that is starting. Next month is the Daddy Daughter Dance and he needs to get his "Wizard of Oz" costume ready. It is exciting to hear about the increase in participation and he thanked everyone for the work they did.

Commissioner Staab stated he reinforced the comments that have been made. It is a very active time for the arts, not only the performing arts but the actual art we are involved with especially with the Barr Property. That is going to be a real hallmark and will set us apart from many other departments in Michigan and the country. We have some good things going in the Parks Foundation with the Golf Outing coming up and with the re-solicitation and new marketing materials we are working on with the Naming Rights as the economy continues to rebound. He stated the Older Adult Services are now all here at the Civic Center. He talked to Rachel Zagaroli last week and there is more participation of the older adults.

Commissioner Wingfield stated the increase in participation of youth sports is phenomenal. He asked if it is because we are adding more sports programs or is it with the addition of two seasons or the combination of both.

Director Mangum replied it is combination of both. Last year we had two seasons of basketball and one season of volleyball in the winter. We only added one season of volleyball but we still had increases in basketball over last year in both fall and winter. This is the first time we have had over three hundred kids in our basketball program. This is for several reasons. It is a well-run program but we also have dedicated volunteer coaches who are passionate about what they are doing and we could not run our program without them. It is also referees who take time to mentor kids and make a positive experience for everyone involved.

Commissioner Wingfield stated the structure for Adult Softball has changed to a doubleheader league and there will now be three seasons instead of two. Registration started January 2nd instead of middle or late February with returning teams coming first and now it is first come first served and is about three weeks in to that. He asked how that is working out.

Director Mangum stated it is working out well. The returning teams do get priority. They can register for either spring or summer or both but we want to make sure everyone has a chance to play. When you do doubleheaders you take fewer teams per league but there are multiple leagues to play in. This was done based on feedback from a survey. A lot of people want to play softball but many do not want to commit to a sixteen week league. There are others who want to play as much as they can.

Commissioner Tecklenburg stated it is a great start to a new year to hear so many positives.

Commissioner Policchio asked Director Mangum if he has had his first anniversary of being here yet.

Director Mangum replied that yesterday was Scott Pratt's one year anniversary so he is approaching two years. Commissioner Policicchio stated the reason he asked is because when Director Mangum started he hit the ground running and from his leadership the department has been looking for better ways to do things and for more things to do for the public. He commended Director Mangum and the team. Director Mangum thanked Commissioner Policicchio and stated we have a great Commission and he enjoys the meetings and interactions by e-mail and in person. Having a Commission who is dedicated and cares about what the department does is huge.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Voice Vote

Unanimous

The meeting was adjourned by Commissioner Policicchio at 7:54pm.

DATE APPROVED: _____

Paul Policicchio, Chairperson

Harry Torimoto, Vice Chairperson