

PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES COMMISSION

Thursday, April 16th, 2026 – 7 P.M.

Novi Civic Center – Council Chambers

The meeting was called to order at 7:00p.m. with Commissioner Joseph presiding.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioners: Joseph (present), Bagley (absent/excused), Dooley (absent/excused), Gopalakrishnan (present), Riggins (present), Staab (present), Torimoto (present)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Line item 7C Program and Services update with Commissioner Bagley will be moved to May. Line item 9B will be moved since Deputy Director Ringle was unable to attend the meeting. Commissioner Gopalakrishnan mentioned the Mobility Committee will not have a report because he was out of the county during the last meeting. There was not a meeting last month.

Commissioner Staab motioned for approval of agenda and second by Commissioner Riggins.

Voice Vote

Unanimous

CITIZEN COMMENTS:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

It was moved that the minutes for the March 19th meeting be approved by Commissioner Riggins and second by Commissioner Gopalakrishnan.

Voice Vote

Unanimous

PRESENTATIONS

A.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. Novi Parks Foundation – Commissioners Joseph, Riggins, Staab & Torimoto
Commissioner Riggins said the tickets for Pour on the Shore are now available through Eventbrite. Commissioner Torimoto added that the music format will feature a DJ. The Foundation has some fantastic people with a social media strategy that will be used to engage the community. Commissioner Staab reminded everyone the date is July 24th from 6:30-10:00 at Pavilion Shore Park.

Commissioner Staab, Director Muck, and the Parks Foundation Executive Director Sheel Desai met this week with representatives from ITC to start planning the future of ITC Community Sports Park.

B. Active Mobility Committee – Commissioners Dooley & Gopalakrishnan
No report

C. Programs and Services Update – Commissioner Bagley – Tabled until May

MATTERS FOR COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION:

A. Chamber of Commerce Community Impact Day Projects

Director Muck told the Commissioners that the Novi Chamber of Commerce has joined the Michigan Chamber of Commerce and chambers across Michigan for Community Impact Day, May 13th. It will be held from 1:00-4:00. It is a unified effort to make both a local and statewide economic impact that strengthens communities and helps build a better Michigan. This is the first year for Novi.

The Novi Chambers inaugural Leadership NOVI class is spearheading the movement showing how tomorrow's leaders are ready to make a difference. They are connecting churches, schools, nonprofits and community organizations with teams of volunteers eager to roll up their sleeves and get to work. The parks are significantly involved, and we are going to benefit from several projects. ITC Community Sports Park will have thirty ITC employees cleaning park signs, picking up litter, weeding, mulching and planting. Similar work will be done at Villa Barr plus replacing pavers on the obelisk. Deputy Director Ringle, Landscape Architect Rick Meader, and Recreation Supervisor Jenneva Kayser will lead the work at Villa Barr, including bringing a beautiful garden design to life, planting shrubs and plants.

Pet waste will be addressed on the ITC Trail by the Foundation. Signs reminding the public to pick up after their pets will be installed. Volunteers are going to assist with digging, planting, watering, mulching and weeding at Fuerst Park. Our Beautification Committee will be doing a grounds cleanup. Picking up trash with special attention to the gardens, the monarch waystation and adding native plants.

The Novi Rotary Club will be taking care of Rotary Park with garden beds, planting bushes, and removing debris from the river area. Those are four of the potential thirty projects around the city advertised. Anyone still wishing to volunteer for these or other projects should go to Novichamber.com. There will be a gathering at Lakeshore Park at 4:30 for all the volunteers to celebrate and express thanks.

Additional comments and questions were discussed. The projects were decided because they are areas of need with a combination of the community and staff knowing what needs to be done.

STAFF REPORTS

A. Administration Division – Director Jeff Muck

1. Park Project & Initiative Updates

The weather has delayed projects. Director Muck said, “this has been one of the worst springs I can remember in years for wet weather”. The Villa Barr pathway project, work on the Bosco ITC Trail Connector and most importantly the soccer and baseball field maintenance has been affected. Mowing, aeration and the completion of normal spring tasks has been delayed. Notices to ask people to stay off the fields have been posted because April showers brings mud. People need to stay off because it creates real damage that can last the rest of the season.

The demolition of the Shawood Lake building has occurred but the area still needs to be restored. Director Muck had a positive interaction with a resident who appreciates the building being removed and loves her new view. She was pleased with the commissioner's recommendation on the future use of island because she was concerned about migratory birds.

The upcoming Capital Improvement Milage has been moved to the November ballot. Materials will be shared when they become available which is in the next month. The message will be that this is a renewal.

At the March 23rd City Council meeting the Novi Ice Arena was discussed. We were directed to solicit bids for sale of the property with potential deed restrictions on any potential resale, or use of the property and building. The dog park should be excluded in the sale. Concerns were expressed about maintaining the building as an ice arena or recreation facility with any resale. There was strong interest from City Council to receive

an offer from Suburban Arena Management, who has run the facility for twenty years. This has generated media attention. WXYZ did a piece on it as well as the Novi Note and Novi News. The social media comments strongly favor Suburban and not another entity taking it over.

Director Muck provided a clarification as to why the CIP milage was moved back. Oakland County Schools has a ballot proposal in August for a new milage, and they want more people to weigh in with a November vote. The bees at Bosco Fields were explained. There was discussion on the budget and general funds impact on PRCS. In addition, talk about restricting access and providing more aggressive messaging about field use when they are closed for the weather took place.

B. Recreation Division – Deputy Director Tracie Ringle – Removed from Agenda

C. Older Adult Division – OAS Manager Kit Keiser

1. Programs and Services

OAS Manager Keiser began her report with updates from the Travel Fair that was held on the 8th of this month. Four of the five travel partners were present to share information about upcoming trips. May 5th Premier World Discovery will be hosting a talk at the Civic Center to provide in-depth information about domestic and international extended trips. They guide many longer international trips all over the globe.

The Mackinac Island Grand Experience only has five rooms available. The trip is in mid-October.

There is a euchre tournament tomorrow evening that is sold out with sixty-four people attending. Novi Birders and Happy Trails have started back up this spring. Novi Birders is led by volunteers from Wild Birds Unlimited. The group meets every other Monday at 9:00am. It rotates between local Novi parks, Kennington, Island Lake and a few other locations. Happy Trails, the social walking group, meets on the second Thursday of each month to explore and walk different trails.

Next week is Earth and Arbor Day week. There are several programs scheduled throughout the week. Monday there is bird watching at Lakeshore Park. On Tuesday Keith Salowich, the city forester, will host an educational talk at the Civic Center. Proper tree planting, pruning and tree maintenance practices will be discussed. Wednesday April 22nd there will be a park clean up at Pavilion Shore. Activities will conclude April 25th with the Arbor Day Celebration and garlic mustard pull. The Arbor Day Celebration allows residents to pick up seedlings and engage with local organizations to learn sustainability and conservation. This year's participating organizations include the Beautification Commission, Novi's Environmental Sustainability Committee, Oakland County CISMA, Oakland County Parks, Huron River Watershed Council, and the Novi Public Library.

In May, the Farmington Hills Stargazers will be at ITC Community Sports Park from 9:00pm -11:00pm with their telescopes. Residents and nonresidents are invited to view the night sky though their equipment.

The AARP Tax Aide Program just wrapped up. Volunteers provided tax help on Wednesdays. This year 508 appointments took place. 2027 scheduling begins the first week in January. OAS Manager Keiser thanked the volunteers for their dedication and time providing tis service.

The Oakland County Veterans Resource Fair took place recently. 400 veterans attended the event, each received a \$100 Meijer gift card.

On April 22nd there will be a presentation called "When Memory Loss is More than Normal Aging".

There is one month until the Memorial Day Parade. Currently there are thirteen organizations registered. OAS Manager Keiser invited the commissioners to attend the Furest Field of Honor on Wednesday May 20th from 5:30-7:00. The event will be in honor

of those who made the ultimate sacrifice and include live music, a special dinner for veterans, and free hot dogs for the public. The event will conclude with a ceremony featuring remarks from Mayor Fischer, a presentation of colors, a wreath laying, rifle salute and the playing of Taps by VFW Post 1519.

OAS Manager Kit Keiser concluded her report with information about the upcoming CAPRA reaccreditation site visit which is May 11th and 12th. The whole department has been busy all year with this process. The review team is made up of three parks professionals from around the country. They will spend time getting to know the team and the Novi community. In response to Commissioner Joseph's questions OAS Manager Keiser explained the accreditation process in more detail.

Only three other agencies in the state have this certification with a few others working towards accreditation. The process will be restructured after this year. A rubric will be used to remove subjectivity.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Riggins

It was a really smooth and quick meeting.

Good luck with the CAPRA visit. I am sure it will go well and you will be reaccredited. Get your tickets for the new and improved Pour on the Shore July 24th on Eventbrite.

Commissioner Torimoto

It's spring and it's wet. I always love this time when we transition from being inside and then start to engage going out to the parks. Community Impact Day is a really fantastic chance for engagement.

Commissioner Staab

It is good to be back. I had a good trip to India to visit with my mom. Good luck with CAPRA reaccreditation. Being on this commission for about a year I know how good we are and whichever volunteer comes we will pass with flying colors.

I am looking forward to the Memorial Day Parade next month. Very good updates and it's good to be back.

Commissioner Staab

Thanks for the information on CAPRA reaccreditation. The accreditation period is May 11th and 12th and the next day is Community Impact Day. It will be a busy week and month. Memorial Day will have a lot of activities too. The commissioners are ready to assist. I look forward to the activities in May and throughout the beginning of the summer. I want to reinforce that Pour on the Shore tickets are on Eventbrite currently at a reduced price of \$35 for past participants purchased before July 1st.

Commissioner Joseph

Thank you for sharing the citizen comments about Shawood Lake. It is appreciated to get feedback on the things that we talk about. Hopefully there will be a dry spell to get fields ready plus I would like to cut my lawn as well because it currently looks like a rain forest.

I am interested to hear how the community impact projects go. Hopefully we can keep it up throughout the year not just in the spring expecting the city staff to handle it for the rest of the year.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Staab and seconded by Commissioner Gopalakrishnan.

Voice Vote

Unanimous

The meeting was adjourned by Chairman Joseph at 7:36p.m.

DATE APPROVED: _____

Joseph, Chairperson

Dooley, Vice Chairperson