

and prioritize any grant opportunities, discuss potential funding sources, review grants, discuss potential projects and make recommendations to City Council. There was a productive discussion at that meeting regarding Acquisition Grants, Development Grants, trails and other funding sources. We look forward to providing information on which grants we will be applying for in 2015.

STAFF REPORTS:

A. Administration Division – Director Jeff Muck

1. Novi Ice Arena Report – Kris Barnes, General Manager

Director Muck stated at last month's Commission meeting we discussed the Novi Ice Arena and some of the successes, as a City, we have seen with the Ice Arena and the benefits it has brought to the citizens and the area as a whole. There were some questions by the Commissioners we thought would be best answered by Kris Barnes, the General Manager of the Ice Arena.

General Manager Barnes stated there are several major user groups of the Ice Arena. The Novi Youth Hockey Association rents ice time for house teams and travel teams with players varying in age from four to eighteen. The Skating Club of Novi is our resident figure skating group. Suburban manages and operates the Learn to Skate Program which is the introductory program where most of the future skaters start. There are ice dancing teams, some as high as Olympic level, that train year round at the facility. They run an adult hockey league. They have two High School teams, Novi and Northville. Each of those schools has corresponding JV teams. They run recreational skating activities which would be drop in public skating. They also have parties in conjunction with skating. They host multiple national and international tournaments and figure skating competitions throughout the year.

There have been some significant accomplishments and completed projects over the past couple of years. The partnership with Parks and Facility Operations has been key in getting some of this done. The lower level flooring has been completely replaced and was completed in July. They constructed a new locker room for the ice dancing customers. They remodeled the main floor café. They replaced some non-working bleacher heating. They remodeled the conference room and main hallway so teams can use that for game and film review and to hold meetings. They are in the process of replacing hot water and heating boilers to become more energy efficient. They continue to replace and update their rental skates. They replaced old and outdated office furniture mostly with refurbished office furniture which Brandon McCullough in Facilities was able to locate and procure. They upgraded the sound system in the Red Rink which is their primary rink for open skating. They added new speakers and some additional equipment in the main office to provide better sound. They installed new security and surveillance cameras and recording system to be in line with other city facilities. Wireless internet and new routers were installed to provide better coverage of wireless. They purchased new computers and monitors for their office and point of sale staff to stay up to date with technology and better serve the customer.

Their goal is to maximize usage of the facility, which is a year round facility, and to maintain the best appearance and operation of the facility.

Commissioner Bauss asked what the impact on our facility is with the recent announcement of Compuware and the Whalers going to Flint and USA Hockey

coming in from Ann Arbor.

General Manager Barnes stated this will be one of the few USA Hockey owned facilities in the country much less five miles from Novi. He sees it helping draw popularity in hockey. In the last ten years there has been a pretty steep decline in youth hockey participation. Having USA Hockey in our own backyard he thinks will help expand exposure.

Commissioner Torimoto stated over the last ten years, he started in the Learn to Skate Program and then joined the adult Hockey League. He and his daughter attended the Holiday Skate. He has seen some of the improvements and thinks it is working really well. He noticed in the skate rental they ran out of a certain size every day which is unfortunate because the line goes out the door since the program is so popular. He suggested they may want to look at that.

General Manager Barnes stated they have roughly 250 pairs of rental skates. Two thirds are figure skates and the other third are hockey skates. In any one given size they may have fifteen pair. Sizes range from youth size eight to adult size thirteen. They have looked in to expanding their rental skates but in the meantime there is better communication within the staff to know when skate sizes are running very low or are out so that they can let people in line know what sizes they are out of. Commissioner Staab state the facility has come a long way since its construction. He asked how long Suburban has been involved.

General Manager Barnes replied he thinks it has been since 2000 or 2001.

Commissioner Jewell thanked General Manager Barnes and stated they do an outstanding job. He stated that his kids played hockey and he was there a couple of weeks ago and it has been great to see how the facility has grown and changed.

2. Spring 2015 Projects

Director Muck stated we will be addressing park signage. Some of the signage needs are main signs, park rules signs and internal signs. As an example, at ITC Community Sports Park there are outdated signs that reference Parks, Recreation and Forestry. We need to update some of the notification signs and make them consistent throughout the park system.

We have budgeted for some new benches at Lakeshore Park. We will also install a bike rack next to the beach because we have noticed that is a collection place of bikes for kids going swimming. We will also be installing additional benches and tables at Pavilion Shore Park.

We will be building a new playground at Power Park. Through the generosity of the Parks Foundation contributing to that, it will be the first inclusive design playground within the park system. Groundbreaking for that will be this spring and Commissioners will be invited when we "ribbon cut" that.

We have been working with our Department of Public Services on checking off some of the things that were identified in the Capital Need Assessment especially as it relates to our concession stands, pavilions and restrooms. These are things like painting, ADA accessible grab bars within the restrooms and minor maintenance items. We have been working on these even during the winter.

Commissioner Bauss stated next to Pavilion Shore Park is lake access. He asked if any of the property next to that is City owned.

Director Muck replied he believed that some of it is. Endwell is a road end and that is why it is left like it is.

Commissioner Bauss asked if there is an opportunity to help facilitate the park with a public area where people could get a canoe, kayak or windsurfer, something small on a rack system that could be rented so they could leave their small craft there.

Director Muck stated that is something we could look in to.

3. February Commission Meeting – date February 26, 2015

Director Muck reminded everyone that the date for next month's Commission Meeting has been changed to February 26, 2015.

B. Recreation Division – Deputy Director Tracie Ringle

1. Township Hall winter closure

Deputy Director Ringle stated the Township Hall winter closure was discussed at the December meeting. She stated she wants to make everyone aware of our winter weather and closure policies. When the Novi Community School District closes before 4:00 p.m. our Novi Parks and Recreation programs held in their buildings are cancelled. For after school programs decisions are made according to road conditions at the time and the school's decision to keep buildings open or not. Programs held at City locations are determined by the Parks and Recreation staff and the instructor. When schools are closed our Older Adults Transportation program closes. We do make some emergency transportation calls on those days.

Commissioner Pratt asked if this also applies to the Ice Arena.

General Manager Barnes replied they will make that call if needed or will coordinate with Parks but they do not follow the School District.

2. Programs & Facilities

Deputy Director Ringle stated there was a Commissioner led initiative for outdoor winter programming and they are just underway. Typical of first year programming, we are finding some challenges as far as participant interest so we are marketing aggressively to make those programs more known throughout the community. We are right on the cusp with our Chili Chilly Softball Showdown and will extend the deadline. We just started taking registrations for Camp Arctic Adventure which will be at the Novi Ice Arena and is during the Mid-Winter Break on February 17th. We were unable to run a photography class despite our marketing efforts to past photography and art class students. We will continue to promote the snowshoeing class but it will be strictly at Maybury State Park and they have preregistration required. Our Cultural Arts division is doing a "Snap a Snowman" contest through social media and we got our first photo this week and will continue to promote this.

Commissioner Torimoto stated his daughter started the "Learn to Skate" after going to the Holiday Skate. She also wanted to try the indoor soccer training and the coaches are very good.

3. Theatre Update

Deputy Director Ringle stated the Commissioners had received a memo regarding where we are with theatre following the separation from the production company in November. Since that time we have been investigating avenues for theatre programming. Currently there is a request for proposal out looking for production companies that might want to work with us. It is a niche market and we have not had anyone submit a formal bid to us. That has led us to look at other theatre based programming options. The positive is we have made a lot of great leads on

instructors that bring different opportunities to us. We are registering now for a beginning acting program where the final evening is a show for parents.

Commissioner Staab asked if anything is being done in the interim.

Deputy Director Ringle stated that is what we are doing. The Beginning Acting class was not initially on our agenda for that programming. We are bringing in supplemental programs. In our next "Engage!" guide, which will come out in mid-April, we will have a clear direction where we are moving forward with theatre and be able to offer not only summer camps but the broader base of programming that falls under theatre.

Commissioner Bauss asked if the normal approach is a production company or are there other ways like college and university theatre departments who have students who are looking for work experience.

Deputy Director Ringle stated this would be possible and that we are looking at many different ways to run the program. She listed some of the possibilities that have been explored and considered.

C. Older Adults – Older Adult Services Manager Karen Kapchonick

1. Meadowbrook Commons

Manager Kapchonick stated it has been quiet at Meadowbrook Commons with everyone enjoying their holidays. They have been exploring programs and activities for the next few months.

2. Programs & Services

Manager Kapchonick stated in the packet the Commissioners received an information update on the Advisory Board to see how they are progressing and what direction they want to take in 2015. Starting on Monday, the "Enhance" newsletter will be out with information on programs. It goes out to individuals who are 55 and older who are registered voters. It goes out to around eleven thousand households.

3. Transportation

Manager Kapchonick stated in November and December transportation numbers have been low but this is due to the holiday breaks. We are still servicing many individuals and the need is still there. We have seen an increase in 2014 in servicing those with disabilities. We have about 2,983 individuals with disabilities. We will see an increase in January and February of those who do have cars but prefer to have our services so they are not driving on the roads in bad weather. Manager Kapchonick stated last month there had been a question about Fox Run using our services. Fox Run does have their own service but we do have eighty to ninety individuals who do utilize our service.

MATTERS FOR COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION: None

CITIZEN COMMENTS: None

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Pratt gave kudos for all of the improvements to the Novi Ice Arena and noted that it is always clean and well managed. He wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Commissioner Staab wished everyone a Happy New Year. He appreciated General Manager Barnes giving the update on the Ice Arena and the work that is done at the Novi Ice Arena.

Commissioner Torimoto thanked General Manager Barnes for his update. He reminded everyone of the upcoming Daddy Daughter Dance. He thanked everyone for their hard work.

Commissioner Bauss wished everyone a Happy New Year. He thanked General Manager Barnes for attending, for the update and for the work he does. He thanked everyone for their hard work.

Commissioner Jewell thanked General Manager Barnes for coming and his presentation of all of the great things that are happening at the Novi Ice Arena. He wished everyone a Happy New Year and knows 2015 is going to be a great year. He thanked everyone.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Voice Vote

Unanimous

The meeting was adjourned by Commissioner Jewell at 7:40 p.m.

DATE APPROVED: _____

Jerry Jewell, Chairperson

Charles Staab, Vice Chairperson