

MINUTES
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING
FEBRUARY 14, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tom Anderson, Kristine Bommersbach, Tim Faver, Gwena Fiskevold Gould, Tonya Prim, and Bethany Wesley

MEMBERS ABSENT: Don Heinonen

COUNCIL & BOARD REPRESENTATIVE:

CITY STAFF & OTHERS: Joe Czapiewski, Brady Laudon, Marcia Larson, Nate Mathews and Lolly Randall

CALL TO ORDER:

Bethany Wesley called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA:

Motion by Faver, seconded by Prim, to add request to install claw machine at the Tourist Information Center. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF JANUARY 10, 2023 MEETING MINUTES:

Motion by Fiskevold Gould, seconded by Faver, to approve the January 10, 2023 Meeting Minutes as written. Motion carried.

CLAW MACHINE INSTALL AT THE TOURIST INFORMATION CENTER (TIC)

Marcia explained that Brady Laudon of Visit Bemidji came to her with the idea of putting a claw machine at the TIC to generate revenue to help with expenses at the TIC. Marcia shared the TIC 2023 budget with the Commissioners and discussed that advertising is not really a possibility at the TIC due to lack of space and other issues, creating a need to look for other revenue sources.

Brady gave the background of how he and his brother got involved in the claw machines and the prizes that go inside of it. They purchased a claw machine that they could be placed at the TIC. It is a \$1.00 to \$5.00 machine but they are looking into making it POS capable. Brady and his brother would take care of the maintenance of the machine and filling it with the prizes. They plan to make the prizes a Bemidji and/or Minnesota themed. There is definitely room in the TIC for the machine. Mathews mentioned wanting to look into the legal aspect of it and if there are policies covering this type of endeavor. There currently is a vending contract that the Park's Department has with the vending machines that are in parks and buildings. Brady proposed a 20%/80% contract with 20% of gross profits going to the City to help with costs at the TIC. Discussed having a trial time with starting in the summer and re-evaluate it after several months.

Motion by Anderson, seconded by Bommersbach, for the City to proceed with a one year contract with a 80/20 split, to be reviewed at the end of the one year. Motion carried.

COMMISSION TO ELECT (BY NOMINATIONS)

Nomination by Anderson, seconded by Fiskevold Gould, to nominate Bethany Wesley, as the Chair for 2023. Motion carried.

Nomination by Faver, seconded by Anderson, to nominate Gwena Fiskevold Gould, as Vice-Chair for 2023. Motion carried.

STRATEGIC PLAN REVIEW/DISCUSSION

JFC Strategies reviewed the draft proposal of the strategic system plan with the Commissioners. The graphics have not yet been updated but their graphic designer will be completing this once all of the text is completed. This is a rough draft that will change based on feedback from the Commissioners, those changes will be implemented and Commissioners will have another look at it before taking it to the City Council. JFC is still working on the Recreation & Programming and Maintenance & Operation pieces and will have it to Commissioners a week before the March meeting. Commissioners want to see a complete plan, including the graphics, before it goes to the City Council for approval.

COMMISSIONER UPDATES

Wesley brought her concern about the process and public parts of how the City Council is handling the situation with the City Manager. Asked if any of the Commissioners would be interested in coming out in support of Nate Mathews and against what the Council has done in the public arena. Bommersbach feels it is too political and the Commission should stay focused on Parks & Recreation.

DIRECTOR'S UPDATES

Department Heads are going to the City Council at their February 27th meeting with a list of items for them to allocate the ARP funds to. Some of the items are parks and streets projects.

Hired a fulltime recreation leader and started this week. There are several positions posted for summer staff and tic help. Going to be trying a new way of hiring staff.

Skate rentals are very busy at the City Park warming house. Concessions are also going good.

There is a lot of interest in the South Shore Marina slips and to date six have been rented for the season.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Fiskevold Gould, seconded by Prim, to adjourn the meeting at 6:30 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Lolly Randall
Administrative Assistant