

**MINUTES**  
**PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING**  
**FEBRUARY 9, 2021**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Tom Anderson, Wendy Kvale, Tonya Prim, and Bethany Wesley

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Tim Faver, Gwenia Fiskevold Gould, and Don Heinonen

**COUNCIL & BOARD REPRESENTATIVE:**

**CITY STAFF & OTHERS:** Marcia Larson and Lolly Randall

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair Kvale called the meeting to order at 4:34 p.m.

**AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA:**

No amendments were made.

**APPROVAL OF JANUARY 12, 2021 MEETING MINUTES:**

**Motion by Wesley, seconded by Prim, to approve the January 12, 2021 Meeting Minutes as written. Motion carried.**

**COMMISSION TO ELECT (BY NOMINATIONS)**

**Nomination by Wesley, seconded by Anderson, to nominate Tonya Prim as the Chair for 2021. Motion carried**

**Nomination by Anderson, seconded by Prim, to nominate Bethany Wesley as Vice-Chair for 2021.**

**ALGOMA PARK**

When the city acquired Algoma Park, \$30,000 was spent on minor improvements in the park that included moving an existing playground from the waterfront area to Algoma Park.

Discussion was held regarding the survey that was sent to residents within a 500 foot area of Algoma Park. This mailing included the nearby trailer park. There was about a 20% response from the mailed surveys. Reviewed specific responses of the survey with the Commissioners and discussed the difference between corner stone parks and neighborhood parks and the decisions that are put into what amenities go into each park. Kimley-Horn provide an updated park concept based on the input received from the survey. Discussed the Outdoor Recreation Grant, the least amount that can be applied for is \$20,000 and the max is \$250,000.

Next step is to create the budget for the park to determine the dollar amount to apply for in this grant. Discussed that the playground, shade structures, and restrooms are high priority. The

parking lot and basketball court would likely be done at the same time. Kimley-Horn will put together a cost estimate for each item so the Commission can select the items that would make sense to put in the grant application. Discussed other potential financial resources. Once the selection of amenities and the budget is created, the project will go to the City Council for approval before applying for the grant. This will insure the city is committed to the financial match that is required for the grant.

Discussed improving the lighting in the park for safety reasons. Marcia Larson will look into the street lighting and look at some options such as solar power to increase the lighting in the area. Discussed the security cameras that were placed at Paul Bunyan Park and City Park, they are good tools to monitor activity in the park and they could be deterring some of the vandalism to the parks.

## **NORTH COUNTRY PARK**

Natural Playground Project – the Committee continues to work on fundraising for the next phases of this project. The proposal for Learning Landscapes was approved in early 2020. Not all of the services were included in the contract because the goal was to complete the design so it could get sent out for quotes. The cost for the additional services is \$4,597.00 that is included in the budget for the Phase I Natural Playground Project of \$80,000. The additional services include construction administration. Marcia Larson recommended to move forward with this amendment. Reviewed phase 1 concept which is scheduled to be completed this summer.

### **Motion by Kvale, seconded by Wesley, to approve the amendment for \$4,497.00 from Learning Landscapes.**

Prim recognized that Anderson lost connection and was trying to reconnect.

### **Motion carried.**

## **TOURIST INFORMATION CENTER**

Marcia Larson explained that Visit Bemidji has a lease agreement with the city for office space in the Tourist Information Center (TIC). The city has discussed the idea of renting kayaks, canoes, and paddleboats out of the TIC. Marcia Larson would like to form a Committee to discuss the future plans for the summer use of the TIC. She recommended some of the Commissioners along with herself, Jamie Anderson, and Josh Peterson of Visit Bemidji as committee members.

Prim and Wesley volunteered to be on the Committee. Discussed that Visit Bemidji could do the marketing for the rentals. Discussed the pros of handling rentals in-house rather than hire an outside business and this could potentially be a revenue resource for the Parks & Recreation Department. Commissioners Prim and Wesley will be notified when the first meeting is scheduled.

Discussion was held regarding the Recreation Department using the TIC or the Carnegie Building. BSU is not interested in expanding to a new site from the OPC in Diamond Point Park.

## **DIRECTOR'S UPDATES**

Sponsorships are going well with several commitments and many new sponsors this year.

Staffing – Jared Stull, Park Superintendent, resigned and his last day is February 26<sup>th</sup>. There are 30 applications for the position to be rated and interviews will be set up.

Griffin Chase is the new intern that started last week. He is a student at Bemidji State University studying sports management and is on the basketball team so he will work more hours once the season is over. He is helping Jamie Anderson with recreation programming. He is researching pickle ball leagues and how the city can set up a league. Griffin will be here until the end of May.

Summer positions will be posted in a month to hire for the summer programs. Marcia Larson and Jamie Anderson met with Beltrami County Health Department to discuss how to safely do activities and summer camps. A summer camp plan has been put together and Beltrami County Health will review the final plan. Kids in Motion Camps will most likely move to City Park partly because it is a less busy park than Diamond Point Park and will be easier to set up different camps. The focus for camps this year will be on the elementary age group. Discussed holding theatre camp again but most of the planning is dependent upon COVID-19.

Shamrock Shuffle is back on the calendar for this year and it will be a mixture of in person and virtual race.

There is a City Council work session on February 22<sup>nd</sup> regarding the Neilson Reise arena.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion by Wesley, seconded by Kvale, to adjourn the meeting at 6:00 p.m. Motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted,

Lolly Randall  
Administrative Assistant