

MINUTES
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING
APRIL 12, 2022

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

MEMBERS ABSENT:

COUNCIL & BOARD REPRESENTATIVE: Dan Jourdain

CITY STAFF & OTHERS: Marcia Larson, Aaron Weeks, Lolly Randall, and Nate Mathews

CALL TO ORDER:

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

AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA:

None were made

APPROVAL OF MARCH 8, 2022 MEETING MINUTES:

Motion by Prim, seconded by Heinonen, to approve the March 8, 2022 Meeting Minutes as written. Motion carried.

NEILSON REISE – FEASIBILITY STUDY PROPOSALS

Director Larson explained that as a result of several requests by outside entities to use the Neilson Reise Arena as an indoor facility, it was decided that a Feasibility Study of the facility was necessary. Two proposals were received, one from the 292 Design Group for the amount of \$12,500.00 and one from Widseth with a not to exceed amount of \$45,000.00. The feasibility study would provide direction to the city as to what can be done with the facility, either repurpose it or demolish it with the costs for each option. The timeline to complete the study is six to eight weeks. The study will not determine the use of the building but give costs and explanation regarding general rehab or demo it. Currently the building does not meet ADA standards so it is not appropriate to open it for public use.

Director Larson reported that staff met with the Curling Club and were informed that their plant is down and needs to be replaced, it is not repairable. They wanted to have discussions with the city regarding the plans for the Neilson Reise facility and discuss their lease and potential funding from the city for the purchase of a new plant. Their lease is included in the packet. Once the feasibility study is complete it will be important to communicate the city's plans for the building with the Curling Club and this could be handled in a work session with the City Council.

Discussed allowing the Curling Club to remain a tenant and repurposing the arena side. Discussed the complexion of the building and what type of remodel would prompt the building code.

Discussed the difference in the pricing between the 292 Design Group and Widseth which could be because of how familiar the 292 Design Group is with the Neilson Reise Arena as they have worked with the city on the facility in the recent past and already have all of the plans of the arena. Discussed the phrase “not an in depth” study and the meaning that it will not give detail designs of potential repurposing of the facility.

Motion by Heinonen, seconded by Faver, to recommend to the City Council to approve the proposal from the 292 Design Group and not to exceed the \$12,000.00 quote. Motion Carried.

FACILITIES UPDATE – TOURIST INFORMATION CENTER/CARNEGIE

Transition to the Carnegie will start the first week of May with Jamie Anderson, Recreation Coordinator moving to the lower level. Amber Reisetter, Park Programming & Special Events Assistant, will have an office at the Tourist Information Center. The remodel project is out for quotes and are due April 26th and hopefully the remodel will start in May. Director Larson will move to the Carnegie at the end of summer when staff has time to move her office.

Real Solar Proposal – Director Larson was directed by the City Council to get a cost proposal to install solar panels at the Tourist Information Center. Real Solar submitted a proposal for design and installation of the solar panels in the amount of \$70,958.39. There are rebates available from Ottetail Power in the amount 35,479.00. They anticipate the city would see a cost saving over a 15-year time period. which includes rebates received from Ottetail Electric.

Discussed the potential issues with putting solar panels on such a high profile location as Paul Bunyan Park and there are concerns with the maintenance, snow load, and possible reflection of solar panels. General consensus of the Commissioners was they liked the forward thinking energy wise but felt such a project should be done at a less visible location, not a city park building and see how it goes. They also did not like the process of how this project was presented to them after an apparent decision was made to place solar panels on a park building without seeking input from the Parks & Recreation Commission prior. Commissioners agreed there are more important park projects to be accomplished.

The city is looking at installing a solar panel network at the new water plant. Discussed having Real Solar give another design for a different city building.

PARKS AND RECREATION STRATEGIC PLAN

Director Larson gave a summary update on the responses from the survey. There is an under representation of certain groups such as the Native American population so the survey will remain active. Going to keep pushing the survey and try to get the under-represented groups to complete the surveys. Overall there has been a good response, hard copies of the surveys were delivered, ads were placed with the QR code to scan to take the survey and there was input on every city park. There were over 250 comments regarding Cameron Park. The survey will be extended until April 26th. Joe Czapiewski will comprise all the findings and would like to hold another Strategic Planning meeting with the Commissioners at the May meeting.

Due to scheduling conflicts, the May meeting will be moved to Thursday, May 26th at 4:45 p.m. at the Public Works Facility

COMMISSIONER UPDATES

Commissioner Wesley reported that work continues on the monitors at the Tourist Information Center.

DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

The 23rd street trail project was approved by the City Council and tree removal was done and it will go out for bids soon.

MRPA gave the city an award for the natural playground at North Country Park. There is \$36,000 that could be used towards the second phase, the cost is \$60,000 to \$75,000.

The grant has been submitted for the Cameron park project and selections should be made this summer.

Kids in Motion summer camps filled up within 45 minutes but there is a staff shortage so more camps cannot be open.

Met with Brian Grund regarding Paul and Babe and the plaza. An RFP was sent the out to raise Babe and received only one proposal from Jensen. Jensen will be here next week to address a crack on Paul's arm and will meet with Director Larson and Brian Grund.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Heinonen, seconded by Fiskevold Gould, to adjourn the meeting at 6:00 p.m.
Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Lolly Randall
Administrative Assistant