



# PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes of August 8, 2018

City Hall – Council Chambers  
411 W 1<sup>st</sup> St



## I. Call Meeting to Order

Vice President Crosby called the meeting to order at 5:15 pm.

## II. Roll Call

Present: Amanda Crosby, Tjaard Breeuwer, Dennis Isernhagen, Kristin Bergerson, John Schmidt, Dudley Edmondson, Jill Joyce

Not present: Erik Torch, Dean Vogtman, Britt Rohrbaugh, Em Westerlund (City Council Liaison), David Kirby (ISD 709 School Board Liaison), Frank Jewell (St. Louis County Board Liaison)

## III. Approval of July 11<sup>th</sup> Minutes

Commissioner Brewer motioned for approval of the July 11<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes; second by Commissioner Isernhagen. Unanimously approved.

## IV. Presentations

### V. Commission Committees

- A. Administrative (E-board) – meeting date: Thursday, August 23<sup>rd</sup> at noon at the Parks Office  
Chair – Erik Torch – Amanda Crosby, Tjaard Breeuwer [William Roche]
- B. Golf Committee – meeting date: August 9 at noon at the Parks office, Chair – Erik Torch,  
Dennis Isernhagen

Crosby: Requested Will to give an update with the Golf Committee Meeting.

Roche: Indicated there was no update with the Golf Committee at this time. Stated the golf consultant, JJ Keegan, is reviewing information that was gathered during his visit at the golf courses.

## VI. Commissioner & Liaison Reports

### IX. New Business

- A. Commission Process for Informing City Council of Split Decisions (Informational) – William Roche, Parks and Recreation Manager

Crosby: Requested Schmidt to give an update on the Communication Protocol between City Council and the Parks Commission.

Schmidt: Stated this was in conjunction with Edmondson and Roche. Mentioned the documents that were received via email, indicated the draft protocol was a reflection on what was discussed during the committee meeting. Indicated this will become an Action Item during the September



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Meeting. Opened the floor for questions.

Edmondson: Encouraged the Parks Commission to carefully review the document. Indicated the process will allow the Commission to reflect on their decision and communicate with Council.

Schmidt: Indicated this would allow for a process if there is a disagreement with City Council.

Roche: Stated that the document does not include preconditions. Advised the Parks Commission to use this tool wisely to communicate with City Council. Indicated there doesn't need to be a split vote in order to use the document. Indicated the Commission should be used sparingly.

Schmidt: Questioned if the document has been reviewed by City Administration.

Roche: Indicated City Administration has reviewed the document, mentioned Administration supports the document, but is requesting review by the Attorney's Office. Stated there is no indication that the document would not receive support. Mentioned the review by the Attorney's Office will be based on legality for all Committees and Commissions.

Edmondson: Questioned if City Council has seen the draft.

Roche: Indicated the Council has not yet seen the document.

Crosby: Questioned if Em Westerlund, City Council Liaison would be involved.

Roche: Stated the City Council Liaison would be involved. Encouraged the Parks Commission to review and to continue asking questions related to the document. Indicated this draft could be applied for different scenarios. Thanked Schmidt, Edmondson, Torch, and City Councilor Sipress for taking the time to meet and discuss the draft protocol.

Crosby: Opened the floor for questions.

Schmidt: Highlighted the importance of asking the proper questions far in advance. Indicated the importance of asking the hard questions right away before it becomes too late.

Edmondson: Indicated disagreements by Parks Commissioner's hold more weight than the people in the audience. Highlighted the importance of representing the people.

### B. Lake Superior College Property Sale (Informational) – William Roche, Parks and Recreation Manager

Roche: Displayed map. Stated this not the first time the school district has approached the City for this piece of property. Indicated he has been working with the disc golf community, mentioned they are aware of the request. Shared the City has requested the developers to partially or fully restore the disc golf course that is currently in place. Indicated the excitement received from the disc golf community. Stated there will be a test course at Enger for the disc golf for two weeks this



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fall. Indicated there will be a survey distributed to the golf and disc golf communities to see if there is compatibility. Indicated the land would accommodate student housing and an improved disc golf course. Indicated this is not park property, but opened the floor for questions from a recreation standpoint.

Joyce: Questioned if there would be a concern with the course being close to Miller Creek.

Roche: Indicated the developer is responsible to obtain any permits and comply with regulations by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

Joyce: Indicated the importance of being aware of the stream during the development.

Isernhagen: Stated he is happy to hear that the disc golf community is looking into a course at Enger. Indicated disc golf is growing nationally. Requested to have a representative from the disc golf community present during a Parks Commission Meeting on what the group is currently working on.

### X. Old Business

#### A. Hartley Duluth Natural Areas Program (Action Item) – Diane Desotelle, Natural Resources Coordinator

Desotelle: Stated the excitement to hear comments from the Parks Commission. Indicated comments made will be sent to the Planning Commission, with their meeting occurring on September 11<sup>th</sup>.

Crosby: Opened the floor for questions from the Parks Commissioners.

Isernhagen: Highlighted the Hartley nomination narrative, indicated it was written well.

Breeuwer; Questioned if the City is moving forward with applying the same methodology throughout all DNAP nominations.

Desotelle: Indicated we are using the same process throughout, including the next nomination for the St. Louis River Corridor. Indicated there could be amendments as needed to best fit the needs for the City, but generally things will stay the same.

Breeuwer: Questioned if the management plan will take 1 year. Questioned if the management plan will come to the Parks Commission for approval.

Desotelle: Confirmed the management plan will take 1 year, and will go before the Parks Commission. Indicated the potential of having easements on nominations.

Schmidt: Thanked Desotelle for the work put into the Hartley nomination. Questioned who will be responsible for the management plan.



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Desotelle: Stated she is currently working on applying for funds. Stated there will be a public process involved with developing a management plan for Hartley. Indicated she will be working with the Hartley Nature Center.

Bergerson: Shared her love for Hartley. Questioned if there would be any effects with the current trails.

Desotelle: Stated the goal will be continuing to manage the trails under the Mini Master Plan of 2014. Indicated the trails put into place would not be altered. Highlighted the importance of managing invasive species.

Crosby: Indicated that nothing would be changed with the 2014 Master Plan. Opened the floor for questions from the public.

### **Motion/Second:**

Schmidt: Motioned to have the Parks Commission support the application for the Hartley nomination to pursue the Duluth Natural Areas Program.

Isernhagen to approve the nomination of Hartley under the Duluth Natural Areas Program.  
Unanimously approved.

Crosby: Stated the Secure the Future handout was beautiful.

## **XI. Division Report**

Roche: Opened the floor for questions.

Isernhagen: Indicated he was pleased to see kayak racks placed in the Chambers Grove. Questioned if there was an access point for kayaks at Chambers Grove.

Roche: Indicated there have not been kayak racks installed at Chambers Grove.

Isernhagen: Questioned if the access is ADA accessible.

Roche: Indicated the current state is not ADA accessible. Stated the goal is to make many access points ADA accessible.

Isernhagen: Encouraged the City to look into making all river access points ADA accessible.

Roche: Thanked Isernhagen.

Isernhagen: Questioned where the funding was coming from for the Riverside Park renovations.

Roche: Indicated he would get back to him.

Schmidt: Indicated he received another email regarding off leash dogs. Reflected on the bathroom



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concern on Park Point that was brought up during the Annual Meeting. Recommended we have porta potties near the bridge. Mentioned a Park Point resident has reached out requesting signage that indicates dogs must be leashed. Stated he would be willing to assist with addressing the stated concerns.

Roche: Indicated we are trying to create a liaison between the Parks Commission and our partners to increase capacity related to dog concerns that have been brought to our attention. Indicated it is complicated, some individuals want more signage, and others don't. Indicated the card that has been created will be handed out by the Park Rangers. Stated GIS is currently working to create maps that would identify areas for runoff in waterways. Stated the maps would identify potential ecological issues with dog parks. Agreed with Schmidt that a task force should be created in order to address wide scope concerns from both sides of the spectrum.

Schmidt: Stated you can't go anywhere in the City without running into a dog owner. Mentioned the high interest of people who invest in their pets. Questioned if Parks and Recreation positions would be talked about during this meeting.

Roche: Thanked Schmidt for the questions. Mentioned the 6<sup>th</sup> biffy was set on fire during the National Night Out event, stated there is potential to scale back in some areas due to this concern. Indicated Parks and Recreation is actively discussing with Park Maintenance to find a balance with meeting the need.

Schmidt: Indicated the USACE could be a good resource regarding the bathroom concern near the bridge. Requested a hiring process update for the Parks and Recreation positions.

Roche: Stated an offer was made for the Assistant Manager position to Alicia Watts. Stated Alicia comes with great experience and shared the excitement to have her on the team. Indicated the need to do a position review for the Trails Coordinator. Stated there is hesitancy to hire someone during the busy summer and the need to ensure the Trails Coordinator will be properly trained and receive the attention needed in order to succeed. Stated the Natural Resources Coordinator will soon be undergoing the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of interviews. Stated an offer has been made for the City Forester position, but the candidate has not accepted or rejected the position yet. Stated the Administrative Clerical Specialist will soon undergo the Education and Experience review.

Schmidt: Questioned why the mound of sand is placed next to the marina. Stated the giant mound of sand looks like it was dredged.

Roche: Stated he is not aware of this pile of sand. Indicated he will look into this.

Edmondson: Questioned where the off leash dog parks are.

Roche: Stated the four off leash dog parks including Observation, Keene Creek, Jean Duluth, and Gary New Duluth.

Edmondson: Questioned if Amity Creek Trail and the backside of Hawk Ridge are designated off



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leash dog trails.

Roche: Confirmed they are not.

Edmondson: Stated he has been bitten and knocked down by dogs in the past. Indicated Park Point has a major off leash dog problem. Questioned what the City's responsibility was for maintaining the Clayton Jackson McGhie Memorial. Stated he has seen editorials related to the lack of maintenance toward the memorial.

Roche: Stated he would have to reach out to Facilities Management to find the maintenance plan for the memorial.

Edmondson: Thanked Will for looking into this concern.

Crosby: Opened the floor for public comment.

### **XII. Public Comment**

Mike Casey (public) representing Friends of West Duluth Parks and Trails: Stated he been working with the City Clerk to find an ordinance or resolution for off leash dogs. Indicated there are four trails that have been talked about, but were not implemented. Stated much of the funding for Riverside Park comes from the half and half tourism tax. Highlighted the updates at Irving Park. Stated there are ATV issues on the Western Waterfront Trail, indicated he would like to see the Park Rangers patrol further west in Duluth. Appreciated the time spent towards developing a process for Parks Commissioners to communicate with City Council. Referred to previous problems he has had with off leash dogs, and expressed the need to address these concerns.

Denette Lynch (public): Stated she has seen estimates that half of the City are dog owners. Indicated signage is importance, but can also provide limited value. Expressed gratitude towards the City to work on the dog concerns. Stated the awareness of knowing that Master Plans are not a final outcome, but would like to be given a reason why something isn't implemented from a Master Plan. Stated she wants to make sure damage to trails isn't just pegged to dogs, it is other users too. Indicated dog parks can accommodate a variety of landscapes. Mentioned the City has not utilized is the Duluth Dog Park Facebook page for communication. Questioned where the budget came for the Natural Resources Coordinator and the City Forester. Stated she hopes this will not take away from Park Maintenance operations.

### **XIII. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 6:30 pm. Moved by Commissioner Breeuwer. Second by Commissioner Joyce.

### **XIV. Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be Wednesday September 12, 2018 at City Hall – Council Chambers.