



PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes of March 11, 2020
City Hall – Council Chambers



I. Call Meeting to Order

President Crosby called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Present: Amanda Crosby, Tjaard Breeuwer, David Demmer, Jill Joyce, Jenny Peterson, Britt Rohrbaugh, Noah Kramer, Dudley Edmondson, Erik Torch, and City Council Liaison – Arik Forsman.

Not Present: David Kirby (ISD 709 School Board Liaison), and Frank Jewell (St. Louis County Board Liaison).

III. Approval of February 12 Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Torch motioned for approval of the February 12 meeting minutes; second by Commissioner Joyce. Unanimously approved.

IV. Presentations

A and B. Keep Duluth Clean (Informational) – Cheryl Skafte, Park Maintenance Operations Coordinator and reLEAF Duluth Program (Informational) – Cheryl Skafte, Park Maintenance Operations Coordinator

Commissioner Questions

Joyce requested clarity of the issues. Skafte indicated this would refer to illegal dumping, indicated the City is trying to encourage culture change.

Demmer questioned how the species of trees are selected. Skafte indicated the City Forester specifically looks at species of trees that will be adaptable to the climate change and disease resistant. Skafte shared he will forward the question to Clark.

Edmondson questioned if there is any efforts with the City and WLSSD to have promotions on where to bring items at a designated location for it will be taken to the landfill. Skafte shared a meeting occurred with the WLSSD waste haulers and it can be complicated due to the City not owning the waste company – where citizens are required to have a private hauler. Mentioned further investigations will need to occur. Mentioned some neighborhoods, like Riverside, have cleanups with waste drop off, but capacity has exceeded for this event.

C. Open Meeting Law (Informational) – Joan Christensen, City Attorney

V. Commissioner Committees

VI. Commissioner & Liaison Reports

VII. New Business



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A. E-Board Membership (Action Requested) – President Crosby

Breeuwer motioned for Demmer to take the Secretary seat. Second by Edmondson. Unanimously approved.

B. Public Golf Committee Seats (Informational) – President Crosby

Crosby shared that the Parks and Recreation Commissioners serving on the Public Golf Committee is Demmer, Kramer, and Peterson. Crosby also shared the public members include Dan Baumgartner, Jim Sadness, Steve Kinney, Tammy Sundbom, Thomas Griggs, and Troy Barnette.

VIII. Old Business

A. Chester Trails Update (Action Requested) – Matt Andrews, Trails Coordinator

Commissioner Questions

Joyce questioned what has changed from the last proposal. Andrews indicated the City is no longer recommending the additional trail building to Chester.

Crosby questioned if the pedestrian trails are packed by the users. Andrews confirmed. Crosby questioned if there is an opportunity to use the Snow Dogs trail packer if fundraising were to occur. Andrews indicated there could be if a user group would like to be involved.

Rohrbaugh questioned the right of way of a biker and a hiker. Andrews indicated bikes yield to pedestrians because they are on a mechanically assisted machine. Stated the trail is currently not used for winter biking because it isn't groomed for this use.

Commissioner Comments

Kramer stated for reasons and risk management, he will approve the City's recommendation.

Jenny Peterson shared she had the opportunity to walk the shared use trail last week, mentioned she was surprised with how narrow the trail is, and because of the topography, there is a large safety concern. Indicated it is not a lot to ask skiers to have the trail for three months. Mentioned she will be voting in favor.

Rohrbaugh shared it is a complicated decision, it is more than just safety, it is the culture. Mentioned Chester Park is different than Hartley and Lester. Requested walkers to leash the dogs and skiers to be mindful that the trail will be shared use. Indicated many are users of the park because of the easy access. Requested more grooming to occur at the ski trail. Rohrbaugh mentioned she will be voting against the City's recommendation.

Torch mentioned folks were opposed to adding more trails in the park. Shared the process has



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taken six years, and it has clearly shown that it is not working. Stated the uses are not compatible. Stated that the majority of the trails are for walking within Chester. Highlighted that skiers should not have to fear collisions from dogs and walkers. Indicated he will be voting in favor of the City's recommendation.

Breeuwer shared that the Chester trails are not just for expert skiers, indicated he takes his children on the trails. Shared the potential loss of the opportunity to enjoy the ski trails at Chester is sad. Mentioned he supports the City's recommendation.

Demmer indicated the most disappointing he has heard is that if the recommendation passes, trail users will still walk on the trails. Indicated he supports the City's recommendation. Indicated safety is a major concern. Shared the plan doesn't not address enforcement enough. Stated the experiment has been drawn out, and that the majority of trail users practice good trail etiquette.

Joyce mentioned she originally voted against the plan, and will be changing this tonight due to the concern for safety and the need to conclude the experiment.

Edmondson stated he originally he voted against the plan because he didn't want to have the City waste the money on a new trail. Mentioned the hikers are using the ski trails because they are groomed. Reflected that the ski season is so short, and that he support the City's recommendation. Mentioned there is many unused trails and we need to find a way to utilize those trails.

Crosby indicated there is not a better recreational use than the other. Mentioned she was part of the 2014 process, and we are long overdo. Indicated she supports the City's recommendation for trail use at Chester Park.

Torch motioned to support the City's recommended trail use at Chester Park. Second by Kramer.

Yea - 8

Nay – 1, Rohrbaugh

Motion carries.

XIII. Division Report

Public Comment

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 7:31 pm.

XIV. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Wednesday, April 15 at the Morgan Park Community Center at 5 p.m.