

**MEETING OF THE
VADNAIS HEIGHTS
PARKS, RECREATION, AND TRAILS COMMISSION
Monday, January 23, 2017**

OPEN MEETING

Chairperson Jensen called the regular meeting of the City of Vadnais Heights Parks, Recreation, and Trails Commission to order at 6:30 pm.

ROLL CALL

William Johnson	Present
Beth Jensen, Chair	Present
Sue DeGardner	Present
Pat Cruikshank	Absent (excused)
Melissa Doumbia	Present
Kent Hokens	Present
Gerald Baldrige	Absent (excused)
Lisa O'Connell, First Alternate	Present
Janelle Frechette, Second Alternate	Present
Terry Nyblom, Council Liaison	Present
Mark Graham, Staff Liaison/ Secretary	Present

APPROVE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 17, 2016 MEETING

No changes noted. Motion made by Johnson and seconded by DeGardner to approve minutes from last meeting on October 17, 2016. The motion passed unanimously.

REVIEW OF COMMISSION ORGANIZATION AND RULES

Graham reviewed the provisions of City Code Chapter 213 (Park, Recreation and Trails Commission) and Chapter 227 (Rules for City Advisory Commissions) with the group. Graham knows that many have been members for some time and appreciates the continued willingness to serve on the Commission. However, there are also some new members since this discussion in 2016. Graham reminded all that the Commission is an advisory group to the City Council. No gifts can be accepted and any potential conflicts of interest should be discussed with Graham or the City Council liaison. Commission meetings will be held quarterly throughout 2017 in January, April, July and October. The dates for the 2017 meetings after today are April 17, July 17 and October 16.

NOMINATION FOR VICE-CHAIRPERSON

The Chair and Vice Chair of the Commission need to be full time members. After a very brief discussion, Doumbia was nominated to be the 2017 Vice-Chairperson. The motion passed unanimously. Graham will continue to prepare minutes for the Commission meetings.

STIPEND CONSIDERATION

All agreed that the stipends of \$20 for the Chairperson and \$15 for all other members would remain the same as in the past and included in Chapter 213.

DISCUSSION ABOUT 2017 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM (C.I.P.)

The current park dedication fund balance is approximately \$180,000. The 2017 C.I.P. lists replacement of the Lily Pond Park play structure as next on the list. This is based on the playground conditions report prepared in early 2016 by City staff. Lily Pond Park has the oldest structure. The existing deficiencies were discussed. Graham recommended that staff proceed to get three options from Minnesota Wisconsin Playground to meet the proposed \$60,000 budget. All agreed. Graham will then solicit input from nearby residents and ask for input. The Commission will then discuss the options at the April meeting. O'Connell asked if the work would include drainage improvements. Graham replied that we may be able to build up the area a little, but the entire park is low and can't be changed. O'Connell said there is an active email list for neighborhood residents, so Graham will provide information to her for distribution at the right time too.

UPDATE ON 2016 TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS

Graham reported that street and parking lot/trail maintenance funds were used in Fall 2016 to overlay the pedestrian trails around all of Community Park and the playground at Lily Pond Park. It was discussed and agreed by all that park dedication funds should not be used for maintenance work on trails.

UPCOMING 2017 PARK EVENTS

The following Parks and other notable events and dates have been set. Commissioners are encouraged to attend any and all of these events.

April 8- Easter Egg Hunt at Community Park

April 22-City Clean Up Day/Refuse Pick Up at Community Park

June 20- Music Concert and County Sheriff Trailer Hot Dogs/Ice Cream at Berwood Park

July 18- Taste of Vadnais Heights in business area near Mad Jacks

August 17-20 – Heritage Days at Community Park

October 31- Halloween Party at the Commons

December 1- PJ's with Santa at the Commons

OTHER ITEMS

Graham provided update on a variety of items.

Greg Urban was selected from pool of nine candidates to fill vacant City Council position slot for two year term. All nine candidates were interviewed by the full Council on January 17.

Graham attended a meeting for all Park directors last week for cities in Ramsey County. The purpose of the meeting is to share ideas and trends for all to learn from and consider. Trends include steady decline of outdoor hockey rinks, fewer softball teams in leagues and significant tree loss due to Emerald Ash Borer. Ramsey County Parks Director Jon Oyanagi indicated a willingness to attend any city's park commission meeting if requested.

An open house for potential improvements in the Rice Street corridor over I-694 will be held on Tuesday, February 21 at the Vadnais Heights Commons from 4-7 pm. Representatives from Ramsey County will provide information on the potential replacement and widening of the bridge over I-694. Plan options showing roundabouts and traffic signals will be discussed. Nyblom added that it is possible that some businesses may need to be razed to make room for improvements. It is also likely that existing businesses will lose their driveways directly onto Rice Street. Other communities affected include Shoreview and Little Canada. Graham encouraged everyone to attend.

The 2017 City street improvements project was discussed at a public hearing during the January 18 Council meeting. The streets being considered for improvement include: Oakhurst Avenue from Clearbrook Lane to the north cul-de-sac, Bramblewood Avenue from Highway 96 to Greenhaven Drive, Willow Grove Lane from Bramblewood Avenue to Greenhaven Drive, and Heritage Court West from Evergreen Drive to the west cul-de-sac. Presuming favorable bids are received and a contract is awarded, work would occur this Summer.

Brigid Nault is preparing Spring/Summer Recreation schedule for the next City newsletter. Nyblom mentioned that a monthly senior picnic has been added, at least for the winter months, the Lutheran Church along Centerville Road.

New LED street lights have been installed along County Road E and within the City Center Business district. Work will be completed in Spring.

Mayor Fletcher is interested in having an ice castle in 2018 in conjunction with the Super Bowl. He is seeking to put together a business planning committee.

Interest continues with construction of market rate apartments on the Garceau Hardware site. A presentation was recently made by a developer to the City Council at a workshop.

A Midwest region senior softball tournament is planned at Community Park between June 7-11. The tournament will also use fields in Maplewood and North St. Paul. There will not be any conflicts with rental use at the Commons.

SET NEXT QUARTERLY MEETING DATE FOR APRIL 17, 2017

The next quarterly meeting for the Commission will be held on Monday, April 17, 2017 starting at 6:30 pm.

ADJOURN MEETING

Hearing no further business, motion to adjourn made by Hokens and seconded by Frechette to adjourn at 7:45 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Minutes respectfully prepared by Mark Graham, City Engineer