

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
LITTLE CANADA, MINNESOTA**

JANUARY 7, 2021

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof a regular meeting of the City Council of Little Canada, Minnesota was convened on the 7th day of January, 2021 in the Council Chambers of the City Center located at 515 Little Canada Road in said City.

Chair Dave Miller called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m. and the following members of the Parks & Recreation Commission were present at roll call:

PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION: Hipp, Horwath, Miller, Ray, Schletty, Chu, and Abruzzese.

ALSO PRESENT: Parks & Rec/Community Services Manager Bryce Shearen and Recreation Coordinator Claire Hoffman.

In accordance with the requirements of Minn. Stat. Section 13D.021, the City Administrator has determined that an in-person meeting is not practical or prudent because of a health pandemic or an emergency declared under Chapter 12 of the Minnesota Statutes.

Because of the health pandemic and emergency declaration, it has been determined that attendance at the regular meeting location by elected officials and members of the public is not feasible. Therefore, some or all of the Parks & Recreation Commission members may be participating by telephone or other electronic means. This meeting will be recorded in its entirety.

Members of the public may monitor the meeting on the CTV North Suburbs website (live stream) or use the meeting link provided on the city website prior to the meeting.

MINUTES

Commissioner Horwath made a motion to approve the December 3, 2020 Parks & Recreation Commission minutes as submitted. Commissioner Ray seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

WELCOME NEW COMMISSIONER

The Community Services Manager introduced the newest member of the Commission, Shawn Hipp. Each Commissioners introduced themselves.

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR AND COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS

The Community Services Manager stated that information was included in the packet which listed the members and their terms. He noted that both Chair Miller and Commissioner Abruzzese were selected to serve another term. He stated that Chair Miller was also selected to continue as Chair. He noted that a Vice-Chair would need to be selected.

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Schletty introduced the following motion:

***NOMINATING AND APPOINTING RON HORWATH AS VICE-CHAIR OF THE
PLANNING COMMISSION***

The foregoing motion was duly seconded by Chu.
Ayes (6). Nays (0). Abstain (1) (Horwath) Motion passed.

The Community Services Manager stated that the City Code was included in the packet, specific to this Commission. He noted that this has not been updated since 2013 and welcomed any questions or comments.

Commissioner Chu commented that she does have a lot of questions and agreed to send those questions in writing to staff so that information can be shared with the group.

Commissioner Hipp stated that her questions were mostly centered around how the duties and responsibilities have been completed and shared in the past.

Chair Miller commented on the typical procedure that the group follows.

Commissioner Chu stated that when reviewing the list, she is unsure how much the group has done towards certain items listed.

The Community Services Manager commented that the group worked a lot on the Parks Master Plan which became a part of the Comprehensive Plan. He commented that he does not believe the Commission has ever had to serve as the City Tree Board, therefore that item is included more as a formality.

OLD BUSINESS: PIONEER PARK PLANNING UPDATE

The Community Services Manager provided an update noting that the next step would be to hold a joint workshop with the City Council to share the input received and ensure that both groups are on the same page moving forward. He anticipated that this could occur in early February and will follow up to check the availability of the Commissioners.

Chair Miller commented that there were great presentations from the RCP students and suggested that perhaps not just the big items be the focus, as some of the smaller items may be able to be accomplished easier as this moves forward.

Commissioner Hipp confirmed that she was able to watch the most recent presentation. She asked how long the RCP students would be involved.

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The Community Services Manager replied that the contract with that group has concluded and explained that the group was brought on to assist with engagement.

Commissioner Hipp commented that she lives nearby the park and reached out to some of the property owners in the area. She commented that the younger homeowners in the area stated that they tend not to use the park and the other residents in the area tend to use the park for walking and wanted to ensure that the amenities that would be added would not disturb the serenity of the park.

NEW BUSINESS: 2021 PARK ASSIGNMENTS

The Community Services Manager stated that the Commission provides park assignments each year, which provides the opportunity for members to visit certain parks and determine if there are things that could be done to make the parks better. He stated that if maintenance issues are noticed, Commissioners should alert staff so that those issues could be immediately addressed. He noted that the assignments for 2021 were included in the packet.

Chair Miller asked that the park assignments be included in the packet each month as a reminder to the Commission members.

REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Abruzzese had nothing to report.

Commissioner Chu had nothing to report.

Commissioner Hipp commented that she visited the park today and noticed a lot of wildlife signs. She asked if there would be a way to put an additional walking trail to further explore the area. She commented that the park was well maintained.

Commissioner Horwath stated that at the last few meetings he mentioned that he wanted the trail connections cleaned and has noticed that City staff has been doing that. He thanked City staff for providing safe access to the trails. He commented that he started a fat tire track at Pearl Park, where he works, and noted that it would be nice to have something like that in Little Canada, perhaps at Spooner.

Chair Miller had nothing to report.

The Community Services Manager commented that staff does not complete much maintenance in the winter at Veterans Memorial Park because of the pavers and possible damage that could occur.

Commissioner Schletty had nothing to report.

Commissioner Ray had nothing to report.

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Commissioner Chu stated that she has been visiting parks outside of Little Canada in order to gain additional ideas and was impressed with Tamarack Nature Center. She likes the natural features that have been incorporated into that park, encouraging creativity.

Commissioner Horwath commented that he has also been to that park and liked the sign encouraging parents to let their children climb on the features. He stated that it is also fun to snowshoe at that park.

UPDATES

The Community Services Manager reported that the Bike Rack Subcommittee has met and has another meeting scheduled.

Commissioner Abruzzese stated that the group met preliminarily and will continue to review what could be done to provide parking, enhance the look and feel and include the Little Canada branding. She stated that the group will bring forward a proposal to the group once prepared.

Commissioner Schletty commented that making the community more bicycle-friendly is a big goal of the Commission and this will be a good first step.

The Recreation Coordinator highlighted the upcoming youth skating lessons, noting that both sessions are filled with a waiting list. She stated that winter hats have been donated by the LCRA, so each participant in the skating lessons will receive their own hat. She highlighted the upcoming available adult activities/classes.

The Community Services Manager reported that the Little Canada Fire Department will be selling booya this year through a drive-up event. He noted that the LCRA will not be holding its annual ice fishing tournament due to the pandemic.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.