

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

NOVEMBER 4, 2021

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof a regular meeting of the City Council of Little Canada, Minnesota was convened on the 4th day of November, 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 6:30 p.m. and the following members of the Parks & Recreation Commission were present at roll call:

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

ABSENT: Abruzzese.

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

MINUTES

Commissioner Horwath made a motion to approve the October 7, 2021, Parks & Recreation Commission minutes as submitted. Commissioner Schletty seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

PARKS AND RECREATION MISSION STATEMENT

Commissioner Ray read the Parks and Recreation mission statement.

OLD BUSINESS

The Community Services Manager commented that Commissioner Abruzzese had her baby.

NEW BUSINESS: YOUTH COMMISSIONER

The Community Services Manager stated that an ordinance amendment would be needed to Chapter 25-01 to add a youth Commission member as previously discussed. He reviewed the proposed standards for the position and related ordinance changes that would be necessary.

Chair Miller asked if the term would run from August 1st through July 31st.

The Community Services Manager replied that they would propose a term that would run from September to July to align with the school year.

Horwath introduced the following motion:

***RECOMMENDING THE ADOPTION OF AN AMENDMENT TO CHAPTER 25-01,
PARKS AND RECREATION.***

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The foregoing motion was duly seconded by Ray.
Ayes (6). Nays (0). Motion passed.

The Community Services Manager noted that the Planning Commission will consider this at its next meeting and the City Council will hold a public hearing on December 1st. He noted that the position could be added as soon as January, with a modified term.

Commissioner Chu asked how the young person would be onboarded to the Commission and how the Commission could help to spread the word.

NEW BUSINESS: FALL PROGRAMMING

The Recreation Coordinator provided an overview of the fall programming including youth activities, adult programming, and Explore Little Canada.

Chair Miller stated that he enjoyed the signs at Thunder Bay Park.

Commissioner Hipp asked the number of participants in the master gardener course.

The Recreation Coordinator provided details on the number of participants.

NEW BUSINESS: FARMERS MARKET RECAP

The Recreation Coordinator stated that she enjoyed being at the market each week with an average attendance of 235 visitors. She noted that they will begin a new fall Farmers Market and provided details. She noted that she would like to make the market SNAP and EBT eligible next year. She also provided details on a program she would like to use to engage young children at the market.

NEW BUSINESS: WINTER PROGRAMMING

The Recreation Coordinator stated that winter registration is open and highlighted the different programs. She stated that staff is working to develop a snowshoe rental program for the winter season. She recognized that Commissioner Hipp would be willing to assist with an event. She provided details on the Cookies with Santa event for this year.

Chair Miller commented that donations for Toys for Tots and winter coats could be done at City Hall.

The Community Services Manager commented that the live reindeer for the Cookies with Santa event would not be possible without a generous donation from the LCRA.

Commissioner Chu commented that perhaps there could be a sign or something acknowledging that donation at the event. She also volunteered to assist with the event.

NEW BUSINESS: PARKS AND RECREATION CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

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The Community Services Manager stated that the ten-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) was included in the packet and includes the projects the group plans to work on during the next ten years. He reviewed the top priorities of the Commission for 2021, noting that two of the projects were completed and the third was awarded grant funds and would begin construction in 2022. He highlighted the projects shown for 2022.

Commissioner Horwath noted that the Thunder Bay trail connections are not planned for another two years. He stated that in years past that has been rated higher priority but noted that he would be okay with 2024 and recognized that there are other factors needed such as right-of-way needs for the trail connection and cost-sharing with Maplewood for the boardwalk.

The Community Services Manager noted that the project has been identified and can be adjusted if the other factors come together sooner than 2024. He stated that the City will attempt to apply for grant funds for the boardwalk project as well.

Commissioner Chu mentioned adding trash and recycling bins.

The Community Services Manager noted that receptacles will be updated at a few parks and perhaps this would be the time to update others as well.

REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Hipp provided an update on the parks she has visited since the last meeting that was in good condition. She commented on a park that would be a good fit for goats to assist with vegetation management. She commented that the fence is down at Pioneer Park.

Commissioner Chu commented that she walked from Gervais Mill Park to Spooner, visiting different parks along the way, and it was very nice. She reported that everything looked good.

Chair Miller commented that he saw a ten-point buck come through his neighbor's yard. He asked if the deer have been a problem in any areas.

The Community Services Manager reported that the City Council decided not to do a hunt this year because of the lower numbers.

Commissioner Ray commented that a large deer was snacking on his pumpkins in front of his home on Halloween.

Commissioner Horwath commented that he had a pumpkin patch in his yard and the pumpkins were eaten by animals. He commented that he continually uses the trail from Thunder Bay to Labore Road. He noted that the police have been doing enforcement on Labore Road, which he appreciates.

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Commissioner Schletty commented that he has noticed the new trash receptacles at Spooner near the playground.

UPDATES

The Community Services Manager provided an update on Rondeau Park, noting that the purchase of playground equipment is slated for the December 1st City Council meeting. He provided details on the planned public input. He stated that the project is planned to be bid over the winter and construction planned for 2022.

Commissioner Chu commented that the park is well used, and the improvements will be appreciated.

The Community Services Manager noted that the City website advertises for Commission members as there will most likely be an open seat this next year. He stated that applications are due November 19th.

The Commission discussed different opportunities for partnerships.

The Community Services Manager commented that the County is leading a project for Vadnais Boulevard which will add trail from Rice Street to County Road E. He recognized that Little Canada is only a small portion of the project but noted that public input is being received at this time.

Commissioner Horwath stated that the Recreation Coordinator has been doing a great job, commenting on the Facebook presence, professionalism, and new programming ideas. He stated that he is impressed and wanted to put that on the record.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.