

City of North St. Paul
April 19, 2022
Approved City Council Workshop Meeting Minutes

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Furlong called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. The meeting was conducted at City Hall in the Council Chambers, and also via Zoom.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Council Member Thorsen
Council Member Petersen
Council Member Wong
Council Member Cole
Mayor Furlong

Staff: City Manager John Stark (via zoom), Public Works Director Ron Ritchie,
Communications Consultant Kari Erpenbach, Administrative Assistant Jill Officer

III. ADOPT AGENDA

On motion by Council Member Petersen, seconded by Council Member Wong, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to approve the agenda as presented.

IV. TOPIC(S)

A. 2022 Park Improvement Plan Presentation

Lloyd Grachek, Parks and Recreation Chair stated the Park Improvement Plan establishes the general overview of our park system and the vision of improvements to align with the 2040 City Comprehensive plan. The plan provides greater detail identifying and prioritizing capital improvements, providing monetary estimates for the work and timelines. The goals for the Park Improvement Plan is to adequately maintain what we have while making meaningful contributions to strengthen the sense of community.

Mr. Grachek reviewed short term projects which include: park signage, Hause Park Improvements, continued work on Polar Park and the planning phase for Northwood Park, Casey Lake Park and a downtown park location (specifically a water park) and McKnight Park area tennis courts and parking. Mid-term projects focus on executing plans that were previously developed in the short term, such as Northwood (pavilion improvements and hockey rink), downtown, McKnight and Casey Parks.

Council Member Thorsen inquired as to why the Urban Ecology Center that is included in Park Improvement Plan and the North St. Paul Environment Learning Center is not included as part of the park system. According to Ramsey County map, it is owned by North St. Paul. Mr. Grachek stated it is not currently listed as one of our parks but will look into this and bring back at a later date for clarification. Council Member Cole stated it is not a park – it is city owned property, but not deemed as a park.

The Park Commission looks forward to making improvements with Council approval to the City with the parks, understanding that there will be a need for funding and maintenance costs. The Parks Commission also feels it's important to progressively move forward.

City Manager Stark stated the Park Improvement Plan will be brought to the City Council meeting on May 3rd for approval.

Council Member Cole thanked the Park and Recreation Commission and staff for their time and dedication to complete this Plan. The goal is to review the Park Improvement Plan on an annual basis.

Mayor Furlong inquired if activities will continue as years prior? Mr. Grachek stated that Star Watch, Fire and Ice, Music in the Park and other events are back for 2022.

B. Community Center Discussion

City Manager Stark gave background information on the Community Center. The building has not been maintained as it should have been and there are quite a few items that could have had their lives prolonged with maintenance that are now in need of total replacement. Some of the repair include, facility roof, tuck pointing the brick, repair EIFS (fake stucco), window/flashings, interior repairs, gym rooftop HVAC and common -area boilers. Immediate attention items include the roof and the HVAC for the gym area.

Council Member Thorsen provided additional details on background information of the Community Center. Mr. Thorsen stated the contract with Ramsey County on the Library lease needs to be clarified on the start date and needs to be honored for the length of the lease. He stated there is also a current tenant who has made multiple proposals to purchase the building.

Ron Ritchie, Public Works Superintendent commented that materials to replace the roof and heating units are out 9 months out if ordered today. One of the furnaces is currently running on half-life and stated something needs to be figured out soon with ordering timeline and winter weather right around the corner. It's a pressing situation that we need a solution to.

Council Member Cole stated he cannot go ahead with any decisions until we have a better understanding on what the commitment is to the Library. Council Member Thorsen agreed.

R.T. Luczak gave an update that he is still in the building process and willing to continue the lease at the Community Center.

Mayor Furlong noted that this will continue to be an ongoing discussion process.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, on motion by Council Member Petersen, seconded by Council Member Thorsen, with all present voting aye (4-0), Mayor Furlong adjourned the workshop meeting at 6:29 p.m.

/s/ Terrence J. Furlong, Mayor

Attest:

/s/ John Stark, City Manager/ Clerk