



City of North St. Paul
Parks & Recreation Commission
Meeting Minutes

November 16, 2022

6:30 PM

The November 16, 2022 Parks & Rec Commission meeting was held in the Sandberg Room of North St. Paul City Hall, 2400 Margaret Street, North St. Paul MN 55109

I. Call to Order

Chair Lloyd Grachek called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Lloyd Grachek, Chair - present

Laura Greenlee-Karp, Vice Chair - present

Larry Amsden - present

Heather Haas - absent

Ingrid Koller - present

Sue Springborn - present

Nancy Thorsen - present

Sarah Zahradka - present

Arthur Alvarez, Jr - absent

Council Liaison: Tim Cole - present

Staff: Jill Officer – present

III. Adopt Agenda

On motion to adopt the agenda by Commissioner Zahradka, seconded by Commissioner Thorsen, with all present voting aye (7-0), motion carried to adopt the agenda.

IV. Approval of Minutes

- A. On motion to approve the October 26, 2022 meeting minutes by Commissioner Koller, seconded by Commissioner Springborn, with all present voting aye (7-0), motion carried to approve the minutes.
- B. On motion to approve the September 28, 2022 meeting minutes by Vice Chair Greenlee-Karp, seconded by Commissioner Zahradka, with all present voting aye (7-0), motion carried to approve the minutes.

V. Meeting Open to Public

Ben Jarmon spoke in favor of the community garden and suggested a planning committee for this project. He also noted watershed, tools and maintenance could be potential issues.

Xuel Xiong, also spoke in favor of the community garden and added some of the produce grown would be donated to the food shelf.

Chair Grachek questioned how the plan might evolve. Commissioner Koller suggested looking at other cities' gardens to gain information and ideas. Vice Chair Greenlee-Karp inquired about location and potential problems. Chair Grachek inquired if this has been mentioned to the Planning Commission. Council Liaison Cole suggested discussing this with other Commissions to get feedback and stated the plan is in the very early stages. The Parks and Rec Commission discussed locations, plot size, and possible solutions to questions that have been raised.

VI. Public Hearings

No public hearings scheduled.

VII. Commission Business, Action Items & Recommendations

A. Community Garden – Country Club Space

Vice Chair Greenlee-Karp expressed her concern with the maintenance side of this project and stated it would likely need to be maintained 2-3 times a week. The Parks and Rec Commission discussed partnering with other area groups, neighboring resident awareness, priority of spots, renewal plots, charging for a plot, and plot size.

Council Liaison Cole suggested putting together a subcommittee to look at other cities and get information from them and decide what questions should or can be asked. He also noted once a location is decided a public hearing can take place. Commissioner Koller inquired about grants to help offset cost.

B. Next Projects – Begin Planning, Beginning Concepts

Chair Grachek opened up the discussion on prioritizing projects for 2023. The Commission discussed many options and ideas. Ms. Officer noted park and rotary signs are completed and ordered for next spring. The Hause Park project will be presented at the next City Council meeting. She noted the McKnight field is coming out of the general fund not the Parks fund.

After a robust discussion surrounding the priority list, the Parks and Rec Commission concluded Casey Lake and Northwood Park are the top two priorities for 2023. They also agreed that the McKnight and downtown park projects will continue to be worked on in the background and likely not prioritized until 2024. It was also determined to hire WSB to assist with initial drafts, cost estimates and plans for upcoming projects. Council Liaison Cole suggested the Parks and Rec Commission orchestrate a cross Commission subcommittee to gain support from other Commissions on these various projects. Commissioner Zahradka offered to attend the next Planning Commission meeting and bring these ideas to them. Ms. Officer offered to reach out to WSB for more information. Other options for parks ideas were a dog park, futsal area, splash pads, and a sports complex, Vice Chair Greenlee-Karp suggested waiting to form subcommittees until the Parks and Rec Commission hears back from WSB.

Council Liaison Cole recommended reorganizing priorities and repurposing land for the Casey Lake playground. Commissioner Zahradka expressed her desire to have Casey Lake at the top of the priority list. Ideas and options surrounding Casey Lake were discussed among the Parks and Rec Commission. It was agreed that they would reach out to Public Works first to get recommendations for equipment companies, to discuss maintenance, and then receive estimates from those companies according to the Parks and Rec budget.

Ms. Officer suggested to prioritize what has been discussed tonight so that City Council can look at it and put everyone on the same page. After more discussion from the Parks and Rec Commission, the prioritized list is as follows:

- Casey Lake Park/Playground (2023 priority)
- Northwood Park (2023 priority)
- Downtown Park (work to be done in the background but long-term priority)
- McKnight (long term priority)X

Vice Chair Greenlee-Karp stated putting Casey Lake and Northwood Park as the top two priorities would benefit both sides of North St. Paul. Council Liaison Cole also noted putting quick and easy projects at the top of the priority list often gets them completed sooner. Vice Chair Greenlee-Karp stated the next meeting will consider breaking up the two big projects into smaller more manageable tasks.

C. December Meeting

Chair Grachek stated the next meeting will be Dec. 21, 2022 and include discussion of Casey Lake and Northwood Park.

VIII. Old Business

Commissioner Thorsen noted Star Watch will be September 26th at 7:30 p.m. due to the hours of daylight and that Ms. Officer will retain the building for this event.

IX. Reports from Staff

There were no reports from staff.

X. Reports from Commissioners & Park Liaisons

Commissioner Koller left the meeting.

Council Liaison Cole noted during the City Council meeting, questions were raised regarding the fee amount for various parks and ball fields. There was discussion around non-profit versus profit and non-resident versus resident priority for North St. Paul spaces. The Parks and Rec Commission agreed to charge a flat \$75 fee for each field. A motion was not necessary and Council Liaison Cole stated he will bring this information back to City Council. He questioned the Parks and Rec Commission regarding the rental of the Hause Park pavilion and open-air shelters. Parks and Rec Commission concluded it will remain together as one cost. They will not split the day into two slots. Fees will remain as an all-day fee.



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Council Liaison Cole inquired about interest for next year's Parks and Rec Commission. Chair Grachek and Commissioner Amsden stated he will not be back. There was a robust discussion about the attendance policy. Chair Grachek stated he will talk to Commission members and set up a meeting with Ms. Officer to discuss this further.

XI. Adjournment

On motion by Commissioner Zahradka, seconded by Chair Grachek, with all present voting aye (7-0), motion carried to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM

Next Park and Recreation Meeting is scheduled for December 21, 2022 at 6:30pm at City Hall in the Sandberg Room; 2400 Margaret St, North St Paul, MN 55109