



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

May 24, 2023

6:30 PM

The May 24, 2023 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 6:30pm

II. Roll Call

Lloyd Grachek, Chair - present

Laura Greenlee-Karp, Vice Chair - present

Ingrid Koller - present

Sue Springborn - present

Sarah Zahradka - present

Arthur Alvarez, Jr – present

Joe Fraham - absent

Council Liaison: Cassidy Schweer

Staff: Jill Officer – present

III. Adopt Agenda

On motion to adopt the agenda by Commissioner Zahradka, seconded by Commissioner Koller, with all present voting aye (6-0), motion carried to adopt the agenda.

IV. Approval of Minutes

A. On motion to approve the April 26, 2023 meeting minutes by Commissioner Greenlee-Karp, seconded by Commissioner Koller, with all present voting aye (6-0), motion carried to approve the minutes.

V. Meeting Open to Public - None

VI. Public Hearings

A. No public hearing scheduled OR name of person and very brief description

VII. Commission Business, Action Items & Recommendations

A. Small Library in City Park

Christy Spears, who spoke at the last meeting regarding a proposed mini library box for the community, was there to answer any questions the Commission had. After discussion among the Parks and Recreation Commission, it was determined Public Works would choose the location and install it within Tower Park. Commissioner Koller inquired about inappropriate books being placed there. Ms. Spears noted she has family that lives close by and will monitor it weekly. Council Liaison Schweer suggested a commemorative plaque be installed also.

On motion to recommend to City Council the installation of the little library at Tower Park using a location chosen by the Public Works Department by Vice Chair Greenlee-Karp, seconded by Commissioner Alvarez, with all present voting aye (6-0), the motion carried.

B. 2024 Budget Discussion – Project, Estimated Budget, Justification

Parks and Recreation staff Jill Officer presented this item and discussed budgetary items looking ahead to 2024.

The Parks and Recreation Commission had a robust discussion on prioritized projects, community events held by Parks and Rec, and budgetary concerns. It was determined that Hause Park is a top priority for 2024. Council Liaison Schweer also noted the Commission can review and reevaluate how the prioritized plan is going. Vice Chair Greenlee-Karp also suggested waiting to make this list until after the community engagement survey has been received. Ms. Officer did note this meeting is not the final list and can be discussed in more detail at a later date if needed.

The Commission also discussed various park projects including Polar Park, Downtown Park, park signage and possible temporary dog park locations. Chair Grachek suggested communication with Community Development Director Brandy Howe on some of the items discussed. Council Liaison Schweer encouraged the Commission to use the current park plan as a guide for which projects are a top priority.

The Commission all agreed that McKnight Park is also a top priority for 2024. There was discussion surrounding the revitalization of McKnight Park and ways it could be utilized. The Commission will have a better idea of what residents want once the community engagement survey is complete. Commissioners Alvarez and Koller suggested community outreach to allow residents to become more engaged.

Commissioner Zahradka also suggested looking at Northwood Park, Casey Lake Park and the Environmental Learning Center as options for 2025. Chair Grachek suggested putting Northwood Park on the list for 2024 due to the length of time it would take to get started and receive supplies.

After discussion from the Parks and Recreation Commission, the top three priorities for 2024 are as follows:

- McKnight Park
- Hause Park
- Northwood Park

Council Liaison Schweer recommended presenting this information at a City Council workshop.

Commissioner Alvarez inquired about meeting at McKnight Park as a way to observe document renovations that need to be done. There was discussion surrounding a quorum if the entire Commission met at the park. Ms. Officer stated they will check

with City Attorney Mattick to get further clarification. The date chosen was Wednesday, June 7th at 6:30 p.m.

The Commission also looked at the yearly current event list. They all agreed to keep Fire and Ice and Movies on Main but with additional events occurring at the same time. The Commission discussed ideas such as combining the Fire and Ice event with a Polar Plunge type event, spring park clean-up with a medallion hunt within the City parks, Music in the Park, Autumn Art Festival, and Star Watch. An increased budget will be necessary for some of these events. These events would also include a food truck and possible collaboration with the Arts and Culture Commission. Events that were taken off the list included the Spring Egg Hunt, 5K run, Prairie Days and Summer Splash.

There was discussion surrounding the use of internships as ways to encourage participation and leadership. Chair Grachek suggested looking into internships now for the 2024 event year.

VIII. Old Business

A. Star Watch

This will be held on September 20th at Casey Lake Park. Chair Grachek noted Commissioner Fraham along with past Commissioner Nancy Thorsen would be willing to help

IX. Reports from Staff

A. Mural at Silver Lake – ACC Coming to June Meeting

Vice Chair Greenlee-Karp discussed the location and style of the mural and noted the resident facing side will simply be repainted. The Arts and Culture Commission will be at the June meeting to answer any questions. The Arts and Culture Commission will preapprove a design.

B. Email Distribution on Website – [parkrentals@ northstpaul.org](mailto:parkrentals@northstpaul.org)

Resident emails would go to Ms. Officer and then be forwarded as needed. Council Liaison Schweer recapped a previous discussion with City Council regarding forwarded messages only on an as needed basis and suggested taking with Kari Erpenbach for technical support. Commissioner Koller stated this is a good way for residents to voice their concerns and provide ideas to the Parks and Recreation Commission.

C. Email Review for those Absent

Ms. Officer requested Parks and Recreation Commission members check emails weekly on Mondays.

X. Reports from Commissioners & Park Liaisons

A. Community Garden

Vice Chair Greenlee-Karp inquired about a large open space on 17th for a garden. Liaison Schweer stated that the site is being considered for a possible new development and would not be available.



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

Commissioner Koller noted the new lighting at Silver Lake Park and expressed her concern with the invasive trees and plants that are growing near the shore. Council Liaison Schweer stated she will look into this.

Chair Grachek discussed a code enforcement issue regarding a fallen tree.

XI. Adjournment

On motion by Commissioner Koller, seconded by Commissioner Greenlee-Karp, with all present voting aye (9-0), motion carried to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 7:33 PM

Next Park and Recreation Meeting is scheduled for June 28, 2023 at City Hall in the Sandberg Room;
2400 Margaret St, North St Paul, MN 55109