



**Park and Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
April 23, 2025
6:30 PM**

North St. Paul City Hall – Council Chambers
2400 Margaret Street

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Greenlee-Karp called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM.

II. ROLL CALL

COMMISSION

Laura Greenlee-Karp, Chair
Sarah Zahradka, Vice-Chair
David Andren, Commissioner
Lloyd Grachek, Commissioner
Ben Hansen, Commissioner, excused
Ingrid Koller, Commissioner
Rachel Lucas, Commissioner

STAFF/LIAISONS

Cassidy Schweer, City Council Liaison, excused
Sara Lang, Staff Liaison

III. ADOPT AGENDA

Chair Greenlee-Karp called for a motion to adopt the April 23, 2025 meeting agenda.
M/Andren, S/Grachek
Motion carried 6-0.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. Approval of Minutes from March 26, 2025 PRC Meeting

Chair Greenlee-Karp called for a motion to approve the March 26, 2025 meeting minutes.
M/Koller, S/Andren
Motion carried 6-0.

V. MEETING OPEN TO PUBLIC

No members of the public were in attendance.

VI. COMMISSION BUSINESS, ACTION ITEMS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. Budget Update with Dan Winek, Finance Director



The City of North St. Paul Finance Director, Dan Winek, was present to discuss the current state of both the Park Fund and the Park Dedication Fund. A PowerPoint was created for this discussion and was included in the packet. Included was a brief overview of the types of funds, including operating funds that come from the General Fund and Building Maintenance Fund and capital funds, including the Park Dedication Fund and the Park Fund. The difference in the capital funds was described as a Park Dedication Fund which is used exclusively for the “acquisition and development or improvement of parks, recreational facilities, playgrounds, trails, wetlands or open space based on the approved park system plan” while the Park Fund is used for improvements to existing parks and equipment within the system.

Balance sheets and revenue and expense reports for each fund were provided, as of March 31st, 2025. Items in the current CIP (Capital Improvement Plan) relating to the Park Fund were also provided. Nothing was identified or approved for the 2025 calendar year based on the CIP developed in 2024. A tax levy is currently implemented for the future items in the CIP related to parks of 0.60%. Finance Director Winek also reviewed the 2026 CIP planning process and the next steps for the Parks and Recreation Commission. These steps include completing a CIP template for each project including maps, designs, estimates and other information for both 2025 and the future CIP of 2026-2035. The Commission has been asked to assign a project sponsor to each project to meet with staff and to present to Council when appropriate. The recommendation by staff specifically related to the parks that were identified in the HGA plan is to break the projects up into phases.

Commissioner Andren asked how the City Council felt about the HGA project and their thoughts on moving forward. Finance Director Winek noted that the Council agreed with the report from a conceptual standpoint but there was no funding approval. To move forward, the Commission will need to fill out the CIP template for the projects and can note a phased approach.

Vice-Chair Zahradka asked about the parking lot at McKnight fields and if that comes out of the Park Fund. Finance Director Winek noted that he will take a look at it but believes that expenditure should come out of the street maintenance fund.

Commissioner Andren asked about the current projects listed on the CIP and if those need to be resubmitted if there are no changes. Finance Director Winek stated that if the Commission still approves of the amount and timeline, nothing is needed. If something is adjusted, then it would need to be noted with justification.

Commissioner Koller asked about the Casey Lake pavilion and who made the financial projections for that project. Staff Liaison Lang noted that it was in collaboration with Public Works.

B. Recap and Goals

Chair Greenlee-Karp presented a rough proposal for ideas for upcoming park additions and renovations that was created by the Chair and Vice-Chair and included in the packet. These proposals included a small playground renovation of Polar Park and additions to the Urban Ecology Center, Casey Lake Park and other smaller parks.

For Polar Park, \$90,000 is budgeted for 2026 for playground updates. The idea is that the playground can work for all ages and can go along with the swings already at the park. Commissioner Andren noted that he would like to see something for a bit older kids. The Commission feels that 2026 is still an appropriate completion timeline for the project.

Chair Greenlee-Karp noted that Casey Lake has a line item for Casey Lake Field 3 to be removed and turned into greenspace. The Commission would like to propose that both fields 3 and 4 be removed and



turned into green space to allow for other sports. The Commission is still interested in moving forward with this and the active playground currently in the CIP. Commissioner Lucas noted that volleyball is currently popular at the park and could be added to this plan.

Chair Greenlee-Karp noted adding resting structures and play equipment to the Urban Ecology Center. The current CIP had it listed for 2029 however the Commission is interested in moving that up to 2025. The idea is to have items that blend into the natural area. Staff Liaison Lang will confirm who owns the land in that area.

Small playground add-ons for 2025 were discussed for Hause Park, Northwood, Tower Park and Colby Hills Park. Gaga ball pits were suggested for Hause Park, Tower Park and Northwood Park. The Commission suggested adding a climbing feature to Colby Hills Park.

The Commission will come back to the next meeting with CIP templates filled out to discuss and formally submit to staff.

C. Park Passport Discussion

Commissioner Lucas presented a plan for the potential Park Passport program for participants to visit each park in the City, take a selfie and after all are completed, come to City Hall for a prize. The goal of the program is to incentivize residents to visit all of North St. Paul's parks. The proposed process is to visit the parks, take a selfie with the park sign, and then come into City Hall or email the photos to claim a prize. The suggested promotion for the program is physical ads and social media and the website. The Commission would like Commissioner Lucas to bring back a one-page sheet with program details to the next meeting as they really like the plan.

D. Commissioner Discussion

Chair Greenlee-Karp has asked the Commissioners to use this time to bring up discussing points, other than updates on the parks they are liaisons for in the City.

Chair Greenlee-Karp had nothing to discuss.

Vice-Chair Zahradka had nothing to discuss.

Commissioner Andren noted that a resident of North St. Paul contacted him to mention that this summer season is going to see an influx of ticks and if you have a tick on you, to send it to the University of Minnesota. The DNR is asking that the paths are trimmed 3 feet back to help prevent the ticks from attaching to humans and animals. Staff Liaison Lang noted that she will ask the Communications Director to post something on the website and social media about the risks and will talk to Public Works.

Commissioner Grachek had nothing to discuss.

Commissioner Koller had nothing to discuss.

Commissioner Lucas had nothing to discuss.

VII. REPORTS FROM STAFF



Staff Liaison Lang noted that costs were identified for both a buck slip and full-size page insert into the utility bills and that one noting events for 2025 will be in one of the next mailings. It was noted that a windscreen will be placed at Hause Park in the pickleball court fencing, to reduce wind and sound. Public Works is hoping to have that installed sooner rather than later. The Park and Open Space Master Plan was formally approved at the April 15th, 2025, City Council meeting.

VIII. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS & PARK LIAISONS

Chair Greenlee-Karp had no updates.

Vice-Chair Zahradka had no updates.

Commissioner Andren noted that at Southwood there are two benches that need to be replaced, and wood brush that needs to be picked up.

Commissioner Grachek had no updates.

Commissioner Koller had no updates.

Commissioner Lucas had no updates.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Greenlee-Karp asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:28 PM.

M/Grachek, S/Zahradka

Motion carried 6-0.

The next regularly scheduled Park and Recreation Commission Meeting will be on May 28, 2025.