

**CITY OF ISANTI
PARKS, RECREATION, AND CULTURE BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
October 24, 2017
City Council Chambers**

1. Meeting Opening.

A. Call to Order.

Garvey called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

B. Pledge of Allegiance.

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Roll Call.

Members Present: Jennifer Garvey, Jeff Johnson, James Witte, and Mayor Wimmer

Members Absent: Aaron Zdon

Staff Present: Katie Everett, Community Events and Parks Coordinator

D. Agenda Modifications.

Garvey asked if there were any agenda modifications. There were none.

Motion by Wimmer, second by Witte to approve the October 24, 2017 Parks, Recreation, and Culture Board Agenda. Motion was unanimously approved.

2. Approval of Minutes from September 26, 2017 Parks, Recreation and Culture Board Meeting.

Motion by Wimmer. Second by Witte. Vote was unanimously approved.

3. Bike/Walk Trail Sign Redesign

Everett explained that we have ordered the small clean up after your dog signs; she wasn't sure if Public Works had gotten a chance to put them up yet. She ordered three, one would be placed right at that corner and the others possibly at the entrances to Bluebird Park because we see a lot of dogs in and out of there. Public Works has been very busy doing fall shut down things. Johnson said he just drove by and they aren't up yet. Everett explained they will get to them soon.

Everett directed their attention to the color attachment of the sign draft. She explained that without adding lots of colors and making this a very expensive sign, she added in some of the types of things you would go through on the trail. The icons can be anything, so if something else would make more sense to the board those can be changed out, or if there is something on the trail we should be highlighting that isn't on the sign we can add those kinds of things too. Using different kinds of patterns with the blue, green, and white outlines kind of helps out. She noticed that the print out came through wrong; the parking lots have a hash pattern in them and Bluebird Park has stripes. Johnson asked if the road was where Mayor Wimmer said it should be; he confirmed that it is. Everett asked if there were other things they hoped to have on there. Garvey stated that the only other thing they talked about was having mile markers, and they don't necessarily need to be numbered 1 and 2, but just the mile marker type of thing so people have another distance. Garvey stated that otherwise she likes the additions that are included. Witte asked if there was an icon for cleaning up after pets, and if this icon was just stating that it's more of a pet-friendly park. Everett explained that this icon is leashing pets and there's an icon for everything. What we talked about last time were the little signs we ordered that say dog waste spreads disease, those will go up separately and will hopefully draw more attention to that issue. Johnson showed Witte the secondary sign from last meeting.

Everett stated that she had just taken the side-by-side up the trail yesterday, and it looks like we must have a bunch of coyotes around based on the feces on the trail. Mayor Wimmer stated that there was recently a story in Garvey's neighborhood that someone thought their dog was fighting with another dog and someone else told them there were coyotes in the area. Wimmer stated we have a lot of nature here. Johnson stated he watched a deer walk right down Main Street this week, and that's why he lives in Isanti.

Everett stated that if there were no other comments on the sign, she would add mile markers and bring it back in November and then get it ordered by the end of the year.

4. Isanti Rocks Program

Everett stated that there already has been a development on this. In August, we had a family come in that had been on vacation and they saw another city that did a rock program. The board may have seen these in other communities; people literally just paint pebbles. They put whatever they want on them and then they hide them. Wimmer stated that this would be done in an appropriate way. Everett stated that when people find them, they're encouraged to post a picture to a designated Facebook page and then rehide them. If the kids really love the rocks, they can keep them too. Probably on the Facebook page then would be an appropriate place to post the rules and objectives of the program. We wouldn't want people hiding them on private property, or big rocks in the middle of grass; and keeping them to community-appropriate kinds of things painted on them. Everett explained that she just got an email from this family today, and she is interested in seeing this happen and will help with getting rocks painted, but she is a little worried about the administration of a public Facebook page. However, yesterday Everett got a call from someone at the school district who works with the Moving Forward program, which is for special needs students who have graduated but they aren't in careers yet, so they're in that 18-21 age group. It sounds like they have a lot of artists in the group right now, and so she was independently wondering if they could do something like this. She is looking to do this district-wide. She has already talked to County Parks and Cambridge about doing it in their parks too. She is totally willing to do the Facebook page and get that out there. She is hoping that they could launch it to raise attention for their program, but then open it up for the whole community to participate in that.

Everett stated that there are kind of two things at play here. She said that our biggest concern is will we allow that in our parks and public spaces; and then, who will be monitoring that. Wimmer added, will it then be a third party who's doing it. If the City was going to do it as a Park and Rec program type thing, it would be headed up by Everett and all of that kind of stuff. When we met with that individual, it did seem like she was kind of in the mindset of, "Hey, this is cool," but wanting to hand it off to somebody. It was nice to get that kind of an idea, but we have lots of things going on. The way Wimmer would look at it, and Council would need to discuss it as well, if a third party wants to do something like this – great. They would need to be told it needs to be in these certain areas, it can't be on private property, that kind of thing. The best thing for them to do would be to get local businesses involved and do some hiding there as well. Either we're going to let them do their thing and let them go (which would be Wimmer's preference), or we head it up because we're going to have a lot of other strictures of how we're going to handle that. It's neat to hear that the person from the school district program is looking to do with it – he says let them run with it.

Everett asked if there are specific things that the board would like to pass on as the rules, or things we should make sure we're in front of. Wimmer stated that the thing with hiding rocks is that you want to put them with other rocks; that sounds kind of obvious, but we don't have a whole lot of places that are City property that have that, and the few places we do like at Legacy with those big rocks, we don't want them doing it there because they're not supposed to be on there in the first place. Partnering with the clinic would be great because they have all of the rock; any of the places with landscaping around might be a good place to go. Just thinking City property especially, there just isn't a lot that is that way. Garvey stated that she would direct that back to City staff as to where they think, and they are more the experts on

the liability types of issues because they'll be out mowing and maintain things. They understand where rocks should be and where rocks should not be. Everett asked if the board thought it would be okay if someone wanted to hide a rock in a hollow log or something out at Legacy; they are not in landscaping, but they're still hiding them. Wimmer said they can, but we can't have people in certain areas there. On the top at Legacy is where we have the Native American artifacts, so we're aren't supposed to have anyone walking through there. Everett clarified that it could be along right on trails; Wimmer agreed, or right by the trails. That might be kind of boring, but it gets them to go to the park. Everett stated that even so, if there are only a couple back there people will still be looking for a while to find them. Wimmer stated that as long as they understand where they can and can't go. Even at River Bluff park, we want to try to get people to stay on the trails there too.

Witte asked if this would be a year-round activity. Everett explained that it would. The person from the school district was looking this fall to get the permissions to do it, then over the winter work on painting rocks, and then do a big launch kind of thing in the spring. It wouldn't be something that every winter they go out and collect them or anything. Johnson asked if we're going to end up with random rocks laying all over the place. Wimmer explained that the way something like this is successful is if people know about it. They'll have to think about how they want to notify the public that they're doing it; which again, the best way to do that is to get one of the papers to cover it as a cool human interest story, but then again you only get about 10-15% of people that will see it. It'll be one of those things that year after year will grow. You get people to see it and they'll post it somewhere asking people what this is about. A program like this probably doesn't really get there until the third year in. Wimmer stated that he's seen dozens of things in this kind of realm, and people usual peter out after the first year because it's a disappointing first year. They see it someplace after it's been going on a decade or two, and then they think it should happen that way right away again. It's kind of like when we did the community garden; Wimmer told Council that in three years we'll get full. It takes a while for people to get these things into their psyche. As long as they understand that and there are realistic expectations.

Everett stated that she wasn't sure how feasible it was, but the proposal of the plan that we got did talk about having somewhere on the rock somehow explaining what is going on. That would depend on what rock it is; you could maybe put post on Facebook or something on it so maybe that triggers something. You don't have a whole lot of space to communicate with people. Wimmer stated he has seen one community in Washington that had more of a slate-like thing and they had sticker that adhered to that. It wasn't a rock surface though; he didn't know how that would work. The rocks are not that big.

Everett stated that she was on board with letting someone else take this and run with it; and if it helps the Moving Forward program too, that is great. The person from the school district seems like she has it put together and is ready to go with it. Wimmer stated it's kind of like movie nights – it depends on the group that is coming. The more successful nights are because the organization that's running the snacks communicates it out to everybody. It'll be up to this group to make it successful. Witte added that another thing to consider is how many rocks they're thinking; 10, 15, 20, starting out with 5. Everett stated she thinks it depends on how excited the community gets about it; if the program has all winter paint rocks it might be a lot. They're also going to go district wide, so they'll probably start with a whole bunch of rocks and then distribute them around the county. Wimmer stated that it really needs to be hundreds for it to matter. Putting 5 or 10 out, even just in Isanti, that's not very much to get people into it. Everett explained that the person from the school district said she has a 5-gallon bucket of rocks coming.

Everett asked if there is anything from this that needs to go to Council. Wimmer stated that I think what we would do is about a month before they're ready to start and they know it's going to be a thing to get a hold of us, and then we as a Park Board will discuss it. Maybe even have her come in and tell us how they're going to do it and we can have a conversation with her. The Park Board would then make a recommendation to Council, and that's another way for her to get free press. She could also come to the

Council and give a presentation and that would be a way to get in the paper for sure. Garvey agreed that having her come in would be a really good thing.

5. Parks Updates

Everett explained that the first movie night was very successful. We had 54 people come. The Girl Scouts were volunteering. Everett did a quick crowd survey before she started the movie; she thought about one third of the people there were with the Girl Scouts and almost everyone else heard about it on Facebook. She did a \$15 Facebook ad, and that seemed to have really reached some people. She will plan to continue that. Many people who came to this one had never been to movie nights before, so hopefully they will continue to come back. We currently do not have a volunteer group for November. Johnson asked how many volunteers are needed. Everett stated that we typically asked for 3 adult volunteers, and then however many kids want to come are welcome to clean up popcorn afterwards. She stated that the Ambassadors just signed up for April, which is Beauty and the Beast. Heavenly Sunshine is coming back, and the New Hope family group is coming too. There are still a couple left to fill. The Girl Scouts will be getting \$60-some for coming, so that was a good start.

Everett explained that she sent the board an email with pictures, and it shows that Academy Park is complete. The engineers as of today, have checked everything off. Our zoning is good for everything they've put up. She talked with the City Attorney today, and it looks like the process to have the title switched over is longer than she hoped. We will get that done as fast as we can, but we now have to go back and work with a guy who is in D.C. to get all of the title papers and things. We'll do that as quickly as we can. Everett said we would like to do a grand opening event, at this point she is thinking it might be better done in the spring and maybe make it a little bigger deal, but we'll see how fast we can get everything through. We have signs coming for out there, but it looks like it's going to be at least two weeks before we can get all of the closing documents done. Wimmer asked who was involved with the paperwork and what the hang-up was. Everett said there isn't a hang up so far, she just didn't know before that this paperwork had to be done. Everett said she didn't want to do the grand opening and tell people they can start using it before we have all of that officially done. Johnson asked if she had seen it yet; she said that she has. Wimmer stated he has as well. Johnson said he just drove by it today and it looks really good. Everett agreed that it does. She added that there had been one place on the trail that looked like it wasn't going to drain very well, so she asked the engineers about it and now the trail has been redone there. Everything looks really good; we'll be getting the Academy Park sign and the sign that explains the hours out there.

Everett explained that summer events are already on her mind. We'll be getting the dates set. We're working on the community center calendar for next year and all of that kind of stuff is starting to happen as other events in town are getting planned. It's always good to get those out as soon as we can. For the most part, things will be kind of the same weekends as this year. We will officially set all of those soon.

Everett said that another question for the board that didn't make the memo was what we would like to do with ice this winter. She explained that we took down the rink boards after last year. We have the place for the pleasure rink. It sounds like last year was a challenge getting any good ice in there. The Public Services Director asked her to ask the Board for direction on ice this year. Wimmer asked what that means. Johnson asked if we even have an ice arena here. Wimmer explained that we have a pleasure rink, which we have a liner, and then that is just pleasure skating where you're not supposed to play hockey. He explained that what we took down last year were the boards for the ice arena, and the ice for that is always a lot more challenging because you get the reflection off the boards. We have had a couple of more mild winters. Long term, at some point, if there is going to be a hockey rink again would be in the grassy area over by the changing room. In our discussions before we talked about if it's possible to move the pleasure rink there. He asked Everett if there is a natural bowl where it's at now. Everett said that there is not. She explained that this is a two part thing. In moving the pleasure rink, we determined that there are no lights back there and winter is always dark. So, until we can get some money for lights, does

it make any sense to put it there? She explained that we don't have money for lights right now. Where it currently is, there is not a natural bowl. Public Works does a little bit of berming with some snow at this point. If we do want to keep it there, and can get permission to do some more dramatic berming, that would help get some ice in there. Wimmer stated that the other part was that it was supposed to be ice in winter and sand volleyball in summer; that was the original plan we've just never done the volleyball. The original plans also said that the open area across from the pine trees was supposed to be a little league baseball field. Obviously, things change. But it's supposed to be a dual-use spot; and this was before Wimmer was here, they were trying to make it a multi-seasonal, multi-use space in that park as possible. Everett explained that another consideration with moving it is that the closest hydrant is next to where the current pleasure rink is, so if we move it over we'll have to get water to that somehow. She thought the engineer said something like \$10,000 to get another hydrant over there. Wimmer stated that he doesn't skate, but what he's always heard is that the changing room is so far away. Everett says that it makes sense, and since we have it, it would be nice if it was usable. However, at this point, will anyone use a rink only during the day during the winter? Garvey stated that it would only be weekends because the kids are in school, and the holiday break is the only time they would utilize it. Wimmer asked if it was about two to two-and-a-half months of decent ice weather. Garvey stated that it's usually mid-December to President's Day. Most other cities are done President's Day. Wimmer stated that if the question is if we are going to have a pleasure rink, we will have one. If that's the only place it can be, that's the only place it can be. Garvey stated that the thing she would like to look at - and it maybe wouldn't be this fall, but if it's going to be more where we're not going to have a volleyball court there and that area is going to be used more just for pleasure rink - is for the parks during the summer/spring to move that dirt around and to make more of a natural berm since that's the only thing that's going to be there. It would be easier then for them to create ice. Wimmer stated that even in our discussion about the hockey rink is how much space to we have dedicated to this. One of the things we liked about doing the wood board and putting it up each year is that it can get used the rest of the year. If we have something that is two to three months, then we have eight to nine months that it should be getting used for something else. That's why the berming and that kind of thing, it cuts back on the year round use. He thinks the reason that they planned for sand, is maybe that's something that could be molded better. If it's sand there, can you do something with the sand where you berm that up, and then you put your liner in and you do your rink that way. Garvey stated that sand isn't going to be the best, but she didn't realize we had a liner. Everett stated that she didn't know we had a liner either. Wimmer stated that we do, we bought one. Garvey explained that any other outdoor facility in any other city is just dirt. So she is saying that even just a small amount of dirt where you don't have a natural berm will help keep that water in. Sand, to her, will be more absorbent of the water, but once it's frozen it should be okay. If there's a liner, then that solves that issue already. Everett asked what the board thought about for this winter - can we bring in something to do a temporary berm or no? Wimmer asked what "something in" means. Garvey asked if we had a rink last year. Everett said we did, and it was really hard to get ice in it. Wimmer says we have one every year, and that has nothing to do with a berm it has to do with temperature. Everett says that it does because there's not a bowl there. They had to somehow get the water to stay in place until it froze and it took a long time. Wimmer said he didn't agree with that. Garvey asked why it was just last year, that should be a recurring problem. Everett stated that she thought it has been a recurring problem. Wimmer stated that he's never been told we have this kind of problem so we obviously have a communication issue someplace. His understanding is that they put down a layer, it freezes, put down a layer, it freezes, put down a layer, it freezes. It is labor intensive thing, but if you have a bowl, I don't know how that changes a lot. The biggest thing we run into is that it's not cold enough to make ice, or the crazy thing that it gets so cold where you really can't make good ice either. He said this is the first he's heard that we've had really any issues with the pleasure rink. Everett stated that she is not the one that floods it, but she was told that the water was draining out one side of it and that makes it very hard to make a pleasure rink. Garvey said that what she understands a lot of departments will do is to create that berm with snow. So you have to wait for snow, but then you're still at Mother Nature's beckon call. Johnson asked when they usually start ice build up. Everett stated, when it gets cold. Garvey added, usually mid-December. If you can get ice by mid-December, you're doing really, really good. Usually right around Christmas is when most municipal

and outdoor ice is able to be skateable. Johnson said he's not a skater, but he has family members who are and he thinks he could draw them out with an ice rink. He will get noseys come December and see how they're doing. Wimmer stated that last year was pretty warm until the last week of December or so. Cambridge has refrigerator rinks which are awesome, crazy expensive, but they're awesome. Then you're kind of guaranteed about three months. Garvey agreed that they were anticipated from November to March, but she hasn't heard when they're going to start.

Johnson said he was curious how the Farmers Market did now that it's all done and said. Everett said that it was very good. She met with the vendors and the end of the market and all of the returners from last year saw increases. One of them told her he had a 300% increase over last year; another is doing as well here as in Elk River. We had lots of customers who had never come to the market and didn't know we had one before. It was definitely a good move. She hasn't heard from any vendors that aren't coming back next year. Overall a very good season.

8. Adjournment

Motion by Wimmer, second by Johnson to adjourn the October 24, 2017 meeting of the Parks, Recreation, and Culture Board. Motion was approved.

The meeting adjourned at 6:37 p.m.

Dated at Isanti, Minnesota this 24th day of October, 2017.

Respectfully submitted,



Katie Everett
Community Events and Parks Coordinator