

**CITY OF ISANTI
PARKS, RECREATION, AND CULTURE BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
October 25, 2016
Isanti City Hall and River Bluff Preserve**

1. Meeting Opening.

A. Call to Order.

Zdon 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, Mayor Wimmer, James Witte, and Aaron Zdon

Staff Present: Katie Everett, Community Events and Parks Coordinator

D. Agenda Modifications.

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

Motion by Wimmer, second by Witte to approve the October 25, 2016 Parks, Recreation, and Culture Board Agenda. Motion was unanimously approved.

2. Approval of Minutes from September 27, 2016 Parks, Recreation and Culture Board Meeting.

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

3. Tour of River Bluff Preserve

The group drove to River Bluff Preserve and walked the trails.

Wimmer explained on the walk out that the project to get vehicle traffic at Legacy Park stopped near the sign can continue. The bank was becoming uncooperative, but in further reviewing the easements that have been set for the property, the city has the permission it needs to move forward already. The temporary easement will stand until development begins on those parcels.

Mayor Wimmer and Everett explained how the trails were laid out and that the trails from the park connect through Martin's Landing up to the Isanti Middle School. Wimmer explained that Dan Golner from the MN DNR would like to see some signage at the bottom of the stairs that lead down to the river to indicate that it is a DNR approved project. Everett explained that she has contacted Golner about specifics for that signage and was told that he needs to meet with some people first and will get back to us when they have discussed it. At the bridge, Wimmer explained that there was some confusion with Golner about the bridge that we are using, but he and Everett believe that it will be allowed to stay. Everett explained that our goal is to get some longer ramps next year to help people get to the dock without having to go through so much mud. There was discussion about how well-used the bridge has been. Everett and Wimmer explained that the bridge has been used regularly since it was installed; Zdon and Witte stated that they have both seen kids heading that way with fishing poles on a regular basis as well. Garvey asked what the gates at the ends were there for; Everett explained that they are meant to keep ATVs off but are still wide enough for ADA accessibility. Wimmer also pointed out some areas along the trails north of the bridge where the ATVs have caused erosion issues; the city has installed bollards along

the trails to keep ATVs out which should help to stabilize these areas. Since those bollards have gone in, the ATV traffic seems to have declined greatly. The group walked back to the community garden via the switchback trail. Wimmer stated that Golner (DNR) also wanted more grass along this trail, but that has been a challenge with continued flooding this year. The upper portion of the switchback does have some grass starting to grow in.

4. Community Garden – Review and Updates for 2017

Everett stated that she would let the members read the memo for the majority of the updates to save some time, but there were a few points to bring up. The registration for this year was open to everyone from February 9 to June 1; however, there are many gardeners who would like to return next year to their same plots. In brainstorming with other staff, Everett recommended that there be three windows: February 6 to 10 for returning gardeners to reserve the same plots, February 13 to 17 for returning gardeners to reserve new plots, and February 18-June 1 open to everyone. Garvey questioned that if this system was in place, one person could potentially hold the same plot for several years. Wimmer explained that the goal is for people to be able to build the soil in consecutive years and to be able to feel some investment in their plots. The group discussed the schedule; Wimmer made a motion, Witte seconded to approve the recommended registration schedule for 2017.

Everett also asked the group to discuss what, if anything, should happen if someone does abandon their plots early in the year. Wimmer stated that the only way to collect any monetary fee would be to send someone through the civil court system or to assess their taxes, both of which would end up having much more money tied up in them. Everett asked if those things would be worth it and the group agreed that they would not. Garvey stated that those cases will likely be rare, as well. Everett stated that next year we will have our own tiller so that kind of maintenance will be easier. Garvey stated that she thought the best option would be to state clearly in the application language that people are responsible for their plots through a certain date. That said, things do come up in people's lives, so we should also state that if for some reason someone is no longer able to maintain their plot, they should let us know. In addition, as a consequence to someone who does not abide by these rules, an option is to not allow them to reserve a plot the next year. Everett stated that she thought that was a great idea, and asked if it would be for just the next year that they couldn't reserve a plot; Garvey stated that she would recommend that the language state the next year and then it could be reviewed if that became necessary. The group agreed that this would be a good plan moving ahead.

5. Tot Lot Renaming Contest

Everett stated that the city received three applications within the contest timeline and an email after the window closed. Garvey stated that she thought the late email entries should not be considered. Zdon agreed. Everett stated that the options then were "Hidden Adventure Park," "Isanti Hills Neighborhood Park," and "Viking Park." Zdon stated that he had preference from the options already. Wimmer asked him which one he liked best; Zdon stated that he liked Isanti Hills Neighborhood Park because that is the name of the development. The group agreed that they liked that option as well. Garvey made a motion and Witte seconded to recommend that the Isanti Tot Lot park be renamed the Isanti Hills Neighborhood Park. Garvey asked if we have any other parks that are named "neighborhood" parks. Wimmer stated that no, we don't. Zdon stated that he thought adding neighborhood into the name might help to create a sense of ownership for the people living there and help them connect to it. Garvey asked if there were delineations for what a neighborhood park could be. Everett stated that our comp. plan does define neighborhood parks, but thought that Tot Lot would fit within that definition. Wimmer stated that it would and that a neighborhood park is one that is accessible to residents without having to cross a major road. The group agreed that the benefit of calling it a neighborhood park was enough to keep it included in the name.

6. Parks Updates

Everett stated that the first movie night was a success, there were about 30 people there and the volunteer group came from St. Scholastica Academy. There are now six of the seven dates full for volunteer groups, and November is the only one open. Everett explained that St. Scholastica was the first group to get their application in and said they would cover additional nights if they didn't fill so Everett told them that if she didn't fill November by the end of this week, she would let them know so they could do that night too. The members said that was a good idea.

Everett stated that the Bike Isanti County Committee meeting is scheduled for November 2 and she has gone through the existing comp plan that they will need. Everett explained that she would like the group to talk about how the plan should be updated. Wimmer stated that it depends on what they wanted to update; if they just wanted to redo what was there or totally rewrite it. He also explained that the City comp plan will be redone in the next couple of years and it might make sense for the parks one to be done at the same time so they work together and mirror each other. The group agreed that this would make sense. Everett asked that if for now she could just make notes on the current plan to give to the county with updates of existing parks and projects in the works. Wimmer said yes.

Wimmer also stated that in the process of the county initiative for a master plan, there have been some ideas of rolling the Cambridge-Isanti Bike/Walk Trail committee into the Bike Isanti County. He said he would push back against this because of how much the cities have invested in the trail and the current system for maintaining the trail is working great. He would not want the trail to be handed over to the county. If there are additions to the trail that are developed and maintained by the county, that would be different.

Everett stated that the city has also been working with the Arts and Science Academy on the park that will be going in over there, and the last update she received was that the school was going to submit plans without a gym, but the rest of the agreements that were being developed would be the same. Wimmer stated that the school has been thinking about adding on a high school or a middle school/high school combination building to the north. This might be why they don't want to add the gym to the building they have. He is not sure how far they are in that process, but there would be a lot of planning that would be required on behalf of the school for plans, beyond just the school itself, that would need city approval. The discussion is ongoing.

Everett explained that the Bluebird climber equipment should be shipped this week. Mike from St. Croix has offered to come up personally to make sure it gets installed and has been great to work with in this process. Zdon asked if the company also did skate park equipment. Everett stated that she did not know, but it's possible. Zdon stated that he would look them up online. Zdon asked if the skate equipment was still going to be taken down this year, and Everett stated that she had not been informed of that plan changing but Public Works has been very busy with other projects. Zdon stated that it's good that it's still up now because we've still had great weather and it's still being used.

7. Adjournment

Motion by Witte, second by Wimmer to adjourn the October 25, 2016 meeting of the Parks, Recreation, and Culture Board. Motion was approved.

The meeting adjourned at 7:04 p.m.

Dated at Isanti, Minnesota this 25th day of October, 2016.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Katie Everett".

Katie Everett
Community Events and Parks Coordinator