

**CITY OF ISANTI
PARKS, RECREATION, AND CULTURE BOARD MEETING MINUTES
October 26, 2021**

Call to Order: Aaron Zdon called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call: Members Present: Aaron Zdon, Zachary Gahm, Dan HinnenKamp, Tressa Hunting, and Mayor Jeff Johnson

Staff Present: Alyssa Olson, Parks, Recreation & Events Coordinator

Agenda/Modifications: None; Motion by Gahm, second by HinnenKamp

3. Meeting Minutes: Motion by HinnenKamp; second by Johnson to approve meeting Minutes from September 28, 2021. Motion passed 5-0.

4. Little Free Library / Sports Library: Ms. Olson shared plans for adding a Little Free Sports Library to one of the parks in 2022 and requested the Board's insights on which park. The Board recommended either Bluebird Park or Mattson Park. Olson also shared that a local Eagle Scout is interested in adding a Little Free Library to one or more of our parks as part of his final service project. The Board recommended Bluebird Park, Mattson Park or Eagle Park for the standard library. Mr. Zdon noted that any unit placed should be anchored and/or placed on a concrete slab to secure the item for wind or vandalism. Olson will provide the recommendations to the Eagle Scout and report back to the Board with an update on timeline and location(s) associated with the project.

4. Department Updates: Olson shared an update on Curious Creatures and an intent to begin finding more toddler-friendly activities as most of the attendees this fall appear to be 2-3 year olds.

The holiday lighting event in December 2022 will be concept #2 from the event concept packet, which a ticketed walk-through experience. Olson is working on building out the event plan and sponsor opportunities. She requested the Board think about names for the event. Gahm wondered if the name is being over-considered, to which Olson noted that choosing a flashy name may give the appearance that the event is more than just a community festival and, thus, draw in more sponsors and attendees from outside of the County.

Eagle Park plan is to add some bushes and landscaping, and add a few more seating areas in the Spring while we wait for more information on the railroad park idea.

Bluebird Amphitheater has been named by the City Council and the build is nearly complete with doors and trim arriving earlier that day. The donation from the Lions Club is pending their decision on whether or not they want to provide a seating area. The ribbon cutting ceremony went well and the band sounded great with the amphitheater's acoustics.

Council has opted to have three of the Street Dances remain at Main Street in 2022 and one will move over to Bluebird Park. It may take on a different form in order to shift mentality on the event itself and to create a bigger show at the park. Olson is looking at the September 2022 dance moving over to Bluebird and being amplified with a carnival or expanded event. HinnenKamp asked if the events would still be called a 'street dance' if moved to the park and Olson noted that will be part of the Council's discussion next year on if they should take a new shape. It was also noted that the Street Dances do not necessarily have a long history in the city, but they are beloved and known as is.

Olson is working to update the Adopt-A-Park Policy to allow residents to request an addition or modification to an adopted park. The request was made by two local residents to utilize an area of Mattson Park that borders their properties as a flower garden. The application and agreement would designate the process for request approval and maintenance.

Olson shared that Northern Elements All Stars have selected to host the November and December movie nights. They will retain the profits from concession sales for both of those events. Olson is working on adding crafts and activities for the Santa event ahead of the December movie night. She is also working on the Candy Cane Flashlight Hunt on December 12.

5. Open Discussion: Johnson mentioned security camera plans for Bluebird Park. Olson is working on getting quotes for adding cameras to the amphitheater, as well as at the warming house at the BMX Arena. Johnson requested thoughts on adding cameras throughout the park to have a visual on the full area. The

Board was in agreement that we will need additional security as we continue adding to Bluebird and it would make some sense to cover the full park for liability. Olson will be reviewing quotes and options and moving to Council with potential options, as needed.

Johnson also mentioned he was approached by the Redbirds about the City painting the backside of the fence around Sportsman's Field, which is visible to Bluebird Park. It was noted that the City owns that property, but the Redbirds lease the field and maintain their own revenue, in addition to maintaining the field. Olson mentioned arts grants that are available that could be sought out for painting a mural on the back of the fence to make it more appealing and add some art to the park. Gahm mentioned using the County corrections services to paint the fence for us, using paint supplied by the City. Johnson will share the Sherriff's contact information with Olson so she can get insight into that process. Hunting mentioned that both of these options could fall under Arts & Culture and be applicable for a number of different grant programs.

Hunting circled back to discussions from the September Board meeting about inclusivity in City events. As part of those initiatives, Hunting found a handful of grants and organizations that can help and finance future events and programs that can assist in creating a more culturally diverse community. Olson summarized that we should consider looking to 2022 and beyond through a multi-cultural lens that will help us ensure our events and programs are appealing to the full community. Hunting also recommended including groups like United Nations from the local high school or Play Inc. and other community organizations that do build culturally diverse programs. Olson noted that it could look like turning Celebrate Isanti into a vendor fair that includes and showcases cultural groups from the region and truly celebrates all of the diversity in the area. Gahm mentioned using a similar event layout to the holiday lights event for future beer or food festivals. HinnenKamp noted the Farmers Market potentially moving to Bluebird as well. Olson noted that visibility is difficult at Bluebird due to its topography and the current plan is still to look at the new liquor store. Johnson mentioned bringing back a tree lighting ceremony with the new holiday event as something to consider with future planning.

Zdon confirmed that we will not have a December meeting, so the November meeting will be the final meeting of the year.

Adjournment: Motion by Johnson, second by HinnenKamp to adjourn the October 26, 2021 meeting of the Parks, Recreation, and Culture Board. Motion passed 5-0, meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Alyssa Olson

Parks, Recreation & Events Coordinator