

**CITY OF ISANTI  
PARKS, RECREATION, AND CULTURE BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
November 23, 2021**

**Call to Order:** Aaron Zdon called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

**Roll Call:** Members Present: Aaron Zdon, Zachary Gahm, Dan Hinnenkamp

Absent: Tressa Hunting, Mayor Jeff Johnson

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

**Agenda/Modifications:** Mr. Gahm requested that printed copies of the agenda be provided at each meeting.

**2. Meeting Minutes:** Motion by Hinnenkamp; second by Gahm to approve meeting Minutes from October 26, 2021. Motion passed 3-0.

**3. Eagle Park Railroad Project:** Mr. Hinnenkamp provided an update on the potential railroad project at Eagle Park. He connected with BNSF and they are interested in discussing the project for 2023. The Isanti County Historical Society is also interested in working on the project. Both have the potential to offer financial contributions. Board discussed setting up the meeting with BNSF after the New Year to present a visual of what we would like to see in the space.

**4. Department Updates:** Ms. Olson shared an update on Curious Creatures and proposed a change in time and age range for the 2022 program, moving the age up to 3-5 year olds to get the most out of programming efforts. Board was in agreement with these changes.

Movie Night was a success with 60 attendees. The Northern Elements All Stars hosted concessions and Olson had to purchase more during the showing to keep up with demand. There was an issue with the speakers so sound was a little low, but Olson purchased a new cord to fix the issue for the December event. Plans for the December Santa event and the Candy Cane Flashlight Hunt have also been finalized. Olson will be working on the landscape plan for the bandshell and seating options with the Lions Club. The Council approved pricing for the rental and Olson will be working to get that application available after the New Year.

Cameras were placed at the bandshell and the BMX Arena. They fit into the bandshell budget and more can be added outside of this project scope as new features are added to Bluebird Park.

Sledding Hill lighting is up and ready for winter activities once snow is available. Public Works will begin making snow in December, once temperatures drop to below freezing.

Council approved an update to the Adopt-A-Park policy allowing adopters to recommend and maintain new features in the parks. The couple that originally requested the flower garden addition will be notified of the update and offered the opportunity to adopt Mattson Park for 2022 in order to add their garden.

Farmer's Market will be moving in 2022 now that the original plot has been sold. Olson is working to make sure the lot near the liquor store will be able to hold the vendors and traffic, otherwise there will need to be a Plan B for a new location. The guidelines will need to be updated to accommodate the new space.

Olson is working with Matt Sylvester on revamping the Community Garden, tilling the full space and recreating the plots. The school will be asked if they would like to continue having access to the space and if not, it will be turned into raised and elevated beds.

**5. Open Discussion:** Hinnenkamp provided an update on carnival opportunities. He is connecting with multiple vendors, but they have a convention in January and won't likely commit to anything ahead of that meeting. In the meantime, we can work on logistics and land needs to see if a carnival is feasible at Bluebird Park. Hinnenkamp noted the rodeo grounds would be the best space; we would need to connect with the IFRA on using the land for this use. Hinnenkamp also noted the opportunity to get a monetary kickback from the carnival to help build revenue. Olson noted we would need to get the production approved by Council before moving forward, but would like more information on logistical needs as soon as able so we can start to look at viability. A carnival option would need to be a multi-day event with multiple days of entertainment attached to the ride component to make it valuable for all vendors. Gahm mentioned working with the Redbirds to host a game in their field during the weekend; rodeo could do the same; all options to increase traffic. Olson noted that we don't want to go too big upfront and that we'd want to differentiate from the County Fair.

Gahm requested an update on working with the corrections office on painting the Redbirds fence. Olson mentioned that if we took responsibility for the painting, the City would then take over ownership for the upkeep of it, which we don't generally want to provide. Zdon noted he didn't think the fence looked like it was in poor condition or necessary to get it painted right now.

Gahm asked what is on the plan for additional 2022 events in Bluebird Park. Olson mentioned having 2-3 new events in mind including cultural arts programming. Dates will need to remain open for rentals in order to obtain benefits from that program. Gahm mentioned again hosting a beer and food festival as a way to showcase that space. Olson mentioned that is not likely to occur in 2022 as bandwidth and budgets are mostly at capacity for the next year. Olson also shared that new park features, such as the restroom unit and splash pad, are planned to be approved next year for future construction and those will take significant effort to coordinate as well.

Olson noted the lighting event will take significant energy throughout the year so additional items will need to be minimal effort to not take away from other programs. Naming is still in discussion and a number of components will need to be thought out in the next couple months to get the event ready for production.

**Adjournment:** Motion by Hinnenkamp, second by Gahm to adjourn the November 23, 2021 meeting of the Parks, Recreation, and Culture Board. Motion passed 3-0, meeting adjourned at 6:53 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Alyssa Olson

Parks, Recreation & Events Coordinator