

**CITY OF ISANTI
PARKS, RECREATION, AND CULTURE BOARD MEETING MINUTES
March 22, 2022**

Call to Order: Mr. Gahm called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

Roll Call: Members Present: Zachary Gahm, Dan Hinnenkamp, Vaughn Ihrke, and Mayor Jeff Johnson
Staff Present: Alyssa Olson, Parks, Recreation & Events Coordinator and Stephanie Hillsheim, Community Development Director

Agenda/Modifications: None.

2. Meeting Minutes: Motion by Hinnenkamp; second by Ihrke to approve meeting Minutes from February 22, 2022. Motion passed 3-0.

3. Park Visit Checklist: Ms. Olson explained the process of Park Board inspections of each Isanti park and what Board members should be looking for and make note of on their checklists during their visit. Park visits were assigned to each member and should be completed ahead of the April Board meeting on April 26, 2022. Parks were assigned as follows: Mr. Gahm: Academy Park, Legacy Park; Mr. Ihrke: Riverside Park, Whisper Ridge Park; Mr. Hinnenkamp: Isanti Hills Neighborhood Park, River Bluff Preserve, Unity Park; Mr. Johnson: Bluebird Park, Mattson Park, Rum River Meadows Park.

4. Department Updates: Ms. Olson provided updates on department activities. The DNR Outdoor Recreation Grant will be submitted this month and will include a request for funding for the splash pad, restrooms, pollinator gardens and fitness stations throughout Bluebird Park. The request is for \$300,000 in grant funding to support this project. Ms. Olson explained that adding the fitness stations and pollinator gardens would help enhance the project for a highly competitive grant. Ms. Olson announced we were granted funding for the EMT Marketing Grant. We received the remainder of the funds available, which amounted to \$4,010, just short of the \$5,000 requested. That money will be managed by North 65 Chamber of Commerce as the receiving organization and will be used to support marketing efforts for the Isanti Family Farmers Market and Illuminate Isanti. Community Garden ground plots have sold out with a few raised beds and elevated beds remaining. If unsold, Ms. Olson noted those new plots don't need to be built this year, if not necessary. Vendor applications for summer events are coming in quickly. Street Dances are essentially full with just 1-2 more spots available. Fireworks in the Park and Splish Splash Summer Bash have received a few applications as well. Farmers Market has received 4 confirmed applications, with a few prospects coming in still. Ms. Olson has been working to compile list of new prospects to fill remaining spots at the Market and to include some fresh products. Mr. Hinnenkamp asked about the 2nd market that has been proposed for Fridays and noted there had been a disgruntled conversation on a Facebook community page. Ms. Olson stated that a request had been made by a former vendor to create a Friday market. The vendor was given the process and paperwork to apply for a Special Event Permit for the dates they are interested in running their market and will be working with Ms. Hillsheim to complete that application. Ms. Olson further noted the vendor applications received are on par with previous years and is a good sign given they have only been available for a month so far.

Bird House Project has been announced and had 8 registrants right away. Ms. Olson explained the process of getting the community involved and how they will be able to pick up the projects and how to return the decorated houses for use in the park. Mr. Gahm asked for more information about the project, which was discussed and approved prior to the new Board members being inducted onto the Board. Ms. Olson explained the goal was to find a functional project that would double as a colorful art feature for River Bluff Preserve. She noted the goal was to complete the spring project with bird houses, then continue in the fall with bat houses. The Board expressed excitement for the project and wanting to get their families involved. Registrations close on April 8th.

Ms. Olson shared that three parks have been adopted for the 2022 season: Bluebird Park, Rum River Meadows and Mattson Park. Staff will also be looking to add permanent signage to the parks with temporary name plates to recognize these adopters and promote the program. The Earth Day Clean-Up event has been announced for April 22nd. Ms. Olson did expand the hours so groups can participate at a time that works for them throughout the day and not just during the event from 5:30-7:00pm.

Positions for Parks, Recreation and Culture department have been posted for a summer intern, and EDA intern and for the Parks, Recreation and Events Coordinator. A Board seat also still remains open for the PRC Board.

Ms. Olson also shared that the final Movie Night on March 18 was successful with 28 attendees and the highest concession sales of the season.

5. Open Discussion: Mr. Hinnenkamp provided an update on a contact note received from Mr. Johnson for a BNSF employee. Ms. Olson noted that she had been in contact with their Economic Development lead and he had subsequently connected staff with the appropriate contact to discuss the project.

Mr. Gahm asked if providing flyers to the primary school helped with Movie Night attendance and Ms. Olson confirmed she believes they made a great difference and should be continued. The process was easy as the school took care of separating for each class and it was a simple way to get them in the hands of the direct audience and their parents for the event.

Mr. Hinnenkamp casually mentioned he knows of a polka group that is interested in the process to be booked for an event at the Amphitheater. Ms. Olson noted that the City is not currently looking for additional entertainment, but the Amphitheater is available for rent so if they work with a group that would be interested in booking them, they could easily rent the Amphitheater for the event. Ms. Olson noted she has spoken with a few nonprofits about renting the space for their events, but hasn't received any applications yet. Once events start appearing there and the space is landscaped, Ms. Olson believes there will likely be more interest.

Adjournment: Motion by Johnson, second by Hinnenkamp to adjourn the March 22, 2022 meeting of the Parks, Recreation, and Culture Board. Motion passed 4-0, meeting adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted
Alyssa Olson
Parks, Recreation & Events Coordinator