

CITY OF ISANTI

PARKS, RECREATION, AND CULTURE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

April 27, 2021

Call to Order: Aaron Zdon called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Roll Call: Members Present: James Witte, Aaron Zdon and Council Member Jimmy Gordon, Staff Present: Alyssa Olson, Parks, Recreation & Events Coordinator and Matt Sylvester, Public Services Director

Agenda/Modifications: Zdon asked that February Minutes be added to the agenda. Sylvester added it to the Agenda with motion by Witte; second by Gordon.

2. Meeting Minutes: Motion by Witte; second by Gordon to approve meeting Minutes from March 23, 2021. Motion passed 3-0.

3. Park Visit Summary: Zdon gave update on Legacy Park with notes of minor knife marks, but overall everything is nicely maintained. Recommended adding a dog waste station, to replace trail maps and set a note for future discussion on allowing bikes on the path. Whisper Ridge is in bad shape with large cracks in court surface. Recommended filling cracks and restriping, and discussing possibility for turning the court into a pickle ball court per resident requests and previous discussions. Mentioned it does get a lot of use, just needs to be better maintained. Zdon also noted that previous discussions suggested the future park at South Passage be turned into pickle ball courts. Olson to look at previous minutes on pickle ball discussion to assess viability. Academy Park in great condition with no visible safety issue. Recommended moving the portable so it is ADA accessible and connected to the trail instead of at the curb; then looking into connecting the trail to the cul de sac. Witte gave update on Rum River Meadows with notes of light graffiti and mulch throw; a lot of trash was onsite – Sylvester noted that Public Works had slowed down pick up to prepare for Earth Day Clean-Up but the crew would be picking back up on that maintenance this week. River Bluff Preserve had debris on trail – Sylvester noted that was likely due to the river water levels and would send crew through once the water level is down. Witte recommended expanding rock layer around Community Garden instead of stopping partially through. Isanti Hills Neighborhood Park was in okay condition as a park with presumed minimal use with some knife marks and wearing equipment. Mattson Park had light graffiti and limited trash as Earth Day Clean-up crew had cleaned the park that week. Gordon gave update on VFW park and noted it was in good shape, but the gate is chained up and looks like the park is closed although it isn't. Sylvester mentioned the gate could be opened consistently to minimize that perception. Gordon noted the bleachers at Unity Park need replacing – Olson noted new bleachers were recently purchased and will be replaced in the coming weeks. Witte noted the field contains a few bumps that could be dangerous for players. Bluebird Park is in great shape, but there remains to be a garbage issue at the skate park. Sylvester noted it's a consistent problem with the park users not using the receptacles and the Public Works crew knows to check that area frequently during their clean up. Noted the grass is starting to grow on the sledding hill and will hopefully cover in the next few weeks as it gets summer. Discussion was had on the hopscotch stencil with no confirmation if we own one or borrowed from Academy Park; Olson and Sylvester will look into to confirm. Riverside Park is well maintained, but the equipment appears to be dirty consistently. Zdon mentioned it may be because of the tree cover and may just need pressure washing. Mulch needs replacing under swings, but is otherwise well maintained.

Olson requested the Board's opinions on turning underused parks into green space or transitional park spaces. Witte noted the volleyball court doesn't appear to be used and could be moved to replace with more active recreation. Gordon would like to see us move towards replacing some parks with green space, but there's no rush to do so as long as they are being used and maintenance of equipment is not a burden. Zdon noted it doesn't make sense to spend resources to tear a park out while money is being spent to upkeep the area. Olson asked if there are any thoughts about transitioning elements of those parks as equipment needs replacing, but not all at the same time. Zdon mentioned liking the natural parks like Winona where dirt is used with slides and log structures built into the space, but noted they are likely expensive. Olson pondered if adding more recreation for adults would be useful, i.e. adding fitness structures or equipment that could be used by older residents. Witte noted it would be helpful to poll the community through a survey on how much they use the park and what they would like to see there. Olson will look into surveying options and put together a draft for the May Board meeting.

4. Department Updates

Olson shared updates from March events: Movie Night had 6 people attend and noted that the program should be reviewed as Fall programs are considered; April Curious Creatures had 10 kids attend that all seemed to enjoy the program and wish to return; Earth Day Clean-up had lighter support than previous years, but Olson noted is likely due to COVID impacting businesses that would have supported previously. Community Garden is full and will open on May 6; Farmers' Market vendors are filling space as well with each week having approx.. 12 vendors and more applying each day; Kids Day planning is ongoing and fireworks have been booked for Thursday night. Olson is working with North 65 Chamber to ensure proper cross-promotion and support of the event. Olson shared the approval to move forward with the Performance Center in Bluebird Park, pending Council final approval at end of May. Zdon requested to see the blueprint for the Performance Center and site plan, which will Olson will provide at the May meeting. Olson prompted the Board to send any ideas for events, parks, programs, etc. her way to research as needed for future potential.

Adjournment: Motion by Witte, second by Gordon to adjourn the April 27, 2021 meeting of the Parks, Recreation, and Culture Board. Motion passed 3-0, meeting adjourned at 6:43 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Alyssa Olson

Parks, Recreation & Events Coordinator