

**CITY OF ISANTI
PARKS, RECREATION, AND CULTURE BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
May 22, 2018
City Council Chambers**

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, Jeff Johnson, James Witte, and Aaron Zdon

Members Absent: Mayor Wimmer

Staff Present: Katie Everett, Parks, Recreation, and Culture Manager

D. Agenda Modifications.

Zdon asked if there were any agenda modifications; there were none. Motion by Johnson, second by Garvey to approve the agenda for the May 22, 2018 Parks, Recreation, and Culture Board Meeting.

2. Approval of Minutes from April 24, 2018 Parks, Recreation, and Culture Board Meeting

Motion by Witte; second by Garvey. Minutes were unanimously approved.

3. City of Isanti Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning

Ryan Kernosky (Community Development Director) explained that the City is beginning to look at the 2030 Comprehensive Plan update, and typically transportation is a big part of it. It is really important within that section of the Comp Plan that we consider non-motorized based transportation. As a 30,000 feet view of the plan coming forward, among other things, he has identified a need for a Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan; and that is also piggybacking from department staff and Development and Operations Committee interest to pursue Bike Friendly status. In order to obtain that, it's really important to have a Bike and Pedestrian Plan. As a result, we'll use this Board as a sounding board for the plan update. Kernosky explained that there are two maps included in the agenda packet; one is the existing facility map which includes sidewalks and shared use paths, and the other is titled Future Bike Routes. He asked the Board members to look at the maps for any holes in access to sidewalks or multi-modal paths and consider future routes that take into consideration the City's assets which include our parks, concentration of employment centers like the industrial park, and other well developed neighborhoods. Kernosky asked the members to bring their ideas back, and explained that it will be a multi-month project. Everett asked if Kernosky thought it would be helpful to have their ideas in advance of the next meeting to be included in the June packet. Kernosky explained that he planned to take the information the members give and put it into the mapping system to create a map that reflects what they have identified, and will allow staff to also provide input. Everett explained that if the members provide their information early the week of June 11, there should be enough time to get it included in the packet. Kernosky explained that beyond future bike routes, the plan will include some best practices in bike planning, in infrastructure design and implementation. We'll set out some goals, which might include when the City does street upgrades in areas we identify, that we go after installing sidewalk. As a result of that, we have to pay for it somehow, like we did on Palomino, whether it's assessing property owners or tapping into transportation alternative grants as a possibility. Having this document adopted by the City Council, hopefully this Fall, will justify getting those finances for Federal and State grants. Witte asked if the members could be sent a color copy because it's hard to identify differences for the future map. Kernosky said that he include an aerial photo

with the map, we just don't have a color printer for 11x17, so we can email it out. Zdon explained that the Board had talked in prior years about where we're missing sidewalks, and they've slowly started to fill in. Everett asked Kernosky if there is a requirement for developers to include some sort of trail in new development. Kernosky stated that we do require sidewalk installation, but trail development is not required in ordinance. The west and south end of all roads have to have sidewalks built to standards. Johnson asked if there is anything along the river; Kernosky said there isn't and there is a number of reasons for that. Mainly because the DNR doesn't let us do a lot for trail development in that area. There is a scenic easement that was put in place in the early 90s. When we put in the path down at River Bluff Preserve, the DNR pushed back quite a bit with what we could and could not do with that path. Everett explained that a lot of the Rum River is privately owned as well. There is not a lot of public land along any of the Rum River, so any time you try to do anything along the Rum it is a fight all the way. Zdon asked if we need any motions; Everett stated we do not.

4. Fir Street Parcel Discussion

Everett explained that these parcels are in the southwest corner of the City off of Whiskey. There are two parcels that the City has through Tax Forfeiture. Everett believed that the developer gave us those lots rather than giving us money for the Park Dedication Fund, or something to that effect. The City was able to hold those lots by an application that said we were going to "create a neighborhood park of open space and/or recreational amenities which may include a basketball court, tennis court, or volleyball court." That application was 2015 and it indicated that we intended to something with it in 3 years. Everett explained that nothing will happen in 2018, but she looked back at the minutes and it sounds like Park Board had heard about this and the minutes were left at "in 2016 we need to have a discussion" and it hasn't happened. As a Park Board, we now know that these lots exist and we need to have some sort of discussion about what kinds of things to put there, then Everett can do some research to see what's feasible and that kind of thing. She explained that it's not a ton of space; it's two residential lots. For a frame of reference, playground area at Rum River Meadows is about two residential lots. Johnson thought it would be big enough for a basketball court; he has friends who live in that neighborhood and they're begging for some park and rec thing to go in those lots. Everett added that a playground there will not happen; with the playground infrastructure we have to support right now that just doesn't make sense. Zdon added that Rum River Meadows is across Whiskey, but it's close. Everett agreed and added that it might not be an easy walk for some to cross there. The board members agreed that a playground is not a good option here. Witte added that he does not think a volleyball court is a good option either, just based on the usage of the one at Rum River Meadows. Johnson added that we have the tennis court right at Mattson; Everett added we have one at Academy now too. Johnson asked if we have a basketball court anywhere. Everett stated that we have one at Mattson and one at Bluebird, and Whisper Ridge. Garvey asked when the last time the City really built a park from scratch – at Legacy there was a certain thing we could do there, and the garden and things like that – but has there ever been a community survey asking what they wanted to see in their park. Everett thought that something like that may have happened with Bluebird; there was definitely community involvement with the skate park. She is not sure with the others. She would guess that they were just part of a development and a playground was put in. Zdon added that some were community builds, but not necessarily community input for what was put in. Everett added that there has been more community input with naming parks in the past. Zdon added that the Board had picked layouts and things in the past. Garvey said that this one will really be a neighborhood park, and wondered if the City can do a demographic of ages of residents to get a sense of the population surrounding the park. Everett explained that the City just sent out a survey to new residents up through April 2016; those surveys included things like: "Why did you move here?," "What direction do you go to go to work?," those kinds of things. She couldn't remember offhand if it had number of adults and children in the household included. They did one of those to a smaller sampling last year as well. We could maybe get a general idea. Everett explained that it's also super simple to pull all of the mailing information for people in that area and we can survey them directly as well, if that's something we want to do. Everett explained that what they're talking about is something a lot of cities do; they host some sort of public meeting too and send invites especially to those people to let them know we'll be

talking about those lots. Johnson said that is a great idea; he thinks we should send invites to those people and have them come to a meeting and we hear from them. Garvey stated that at the last city she worked with, they did that for about ten years. Everett added that with any of those meetings; if you get 20 people in the room, you get 20 answers. It may be helpful for the Board to come up with a few options and let them choose from those. Garvey agreed that it's best to put out some idea of what we can and cannot do. Everett explained this process is not a hurry, so it could even be like an October meeting. Zdon asked when it has to be budgeted for 2019. Everett explained that budgeting is starting now, and with what she has seen for the budget so far, she would guess that this will also not be a 2019 budget item, but depending on what it is maybe it could be. Zdon said it could maybe just be some simple green space and outdoor workout equipment, which he knows isn't super cheap, but it's simple. Maybe as a phase 1. Garvey said that it would be good to come back and revisit it in the fall with at least a recap and some kind of plan. Everett asked if there are options she should look into in the meantime; she'll look into a basketball court and exercise equipment. The Board can make their scope bigger and she can narrow it in. Garvey thought an overhang with picnic tables and some casual seating; Johnson added a grill or two. Everett explained that most of the neighborhood parks are playgrounds, so there isn't a whole lot of precedent for this situation to say what needs to happen in this situation. So we're at the point where it's good to be creative. Garvey said that it would be nice to also see pictures of what the lots look like, what the neighbors have surrounding it. Everett looked at a street view of the lots, and it looks like there are houses on either side and the two lots behind are vacant. Garvey asked if the houses that are there know that those lots are to be used by the City as a park. Everett said that she doesn't know who they are or what they know about them at this point. Everett said that there is a street light in the middle of the lots right now, but otherwise it's just open and we mow it for now. She stated that we should offer maybe three options. For the Board's timeline, if by July we have a discussion about options, that would give time for a public meeting in October.

5. Park Visit Summary

Everett reviewed the list that was compiled after the April park tours. She stated that some of the items have already been addressed by Public Works. She did look into adjusting the Mattson slide, and it won't be possible because of the way it was installed. She broke down the list into short-term and long-term projects. She reviewed the list with the Board. Everett asked if there were any other items that needed to be added to the list; the Board members did not have anything. Everett added that refurbishing Bluebird Park is being budgeted for 2019; that will include taking the playground apart, then they'll sandblast the metal posts and re-powder coat them, and put it back together. The plastic pieces kind of are what they are, you can't do a lot with them. A lot of those parts have broken and are newer anyway, so the plan for those is just to replace them as needed rather than replacing everything at once. We will also evaluate continuing that process with some other parks too; the Board mentioned that Riverside is pretty faded. Since all of our parks are about the same age, we just can't do it all at once. Just repainting at Bluebird park is about \$25,000. The dog park is also scheduled to be budgeted for 2019 as well.

6. Painting Plow Blades Update

Everett explained that at the last meeting, Mayor Wimmer explained that this project would be happening. She included pictures of the ones that had been started in the packet. There was also an article in the County Star with a big photo of the IMS/MNC project. The plan is to pick them up at the end of the year and cover them or store them inside so they don't fade over the summer and we'll display them at Celebrate Isanti. After that they'll be put back on the plows and Public Works will use them again. Probably, the paint will come off, and then Public Works will sand them down and we'll maybe do it again next year. Everett stated that the future of the program might include some sort of theme, or maybe judging and prizes and that sort of thing to be determined.

7. Parks Updates

Everett explained that the Farmer's Market starts this Friday, May 25. She believes there are five or six vendors for the first week and then they start rolling in from there as more produce and things become available. There is a decent number of new farms signed up this year, so we should have a good selection of produce available. There are also a number of vendors doing things like crafts and handmade things as well. A lot of people have been finding the market rather than us having to do so much searching, which is a really sign. Once people start seeing the market, we'll also get people who are interested in joining. We currently have 16 stall spaces, so in the middle weeks we have maybe one or two open right now. If we get more, without changing too much, we can probably get 18 in there. From that point, we'll probably have to do something different with how we set up; probably the easiest option will be to have the vendors park somewhere else and reconfigure how the booths are set up. The Liquor Store has also set up samplings for most Fridays during the season as well to take advantage of that. We'll also continue with kids' activities that help people stick around the market and encourage them to visit everyone. We are still looking for musicians; it would be really nice to have someone reliable. Witte asked if we're looking for anything in particular. Everett stated that we just need something that's general audience, family friendly, acoustic. It's pretty casual, and it will be more background music than a show. Some people might come and listen to a song or two. Garvey asked if Everett has advertised for this. She said that she has put it on her personal Facebook page and got some response, but can also put it out on the market page. She has also sent it to her contacts with the schools for music and theater groups too. Everett stated that there is a Pollinator Workshop scheduled for June 9th at River Bluff. We'll do mason bee homes; you basically take bamboo shoots and bundle them together, then wild bees that are solitary will build little nests in the bamboo shoots.

Everett added that Passport to Parks is scheduled for this summer again. There will be a kick off event on June 21st as a start to the event. From that event through August 3rd, people will be able to fill out the passports and turn them in here to City Hall for a giveaway kind of prize, and then be entered into the Grand Prize. That will take place at the beginning of the Street Dance at Celebrate Isanti. Those will be available here at City Hall and for download from the website.

The street dances are off to a great start. The first one is June 23rd. Climb Theater is going to be a top level sponsor this year as well. It's really good to get local community support for those events. The first Street Dance is Maiden Dixie; we haven't had them for a Street Dance before, but they have done other local events and have a good following here. We do have a couple of new food trucks this year as well. The Community Garden is up and running. Everett estimated that about half of the plots have already been planted. All of the ground plots are reserved. The tables are still available to be reserved until June 1st; Everett expects that we'll probably just take them down. Everett explained that she just heard earlier today that School For All Seasons will not be planting this year; they did not get the support from student families that they needed to volunteer in the summer. They're hoping that they can find some people for next year and get it going again. She is still thinking about options for what to do with that space. The Senior Diners really liked watermelon last year, so she may just plant a bunch of that. The Public Health contact has left her job there, but is continuing the program through Master Gardeners. They received a grant for that program, so the funding source and main person hasn't changed, it's just not officially a Public Health program. They sent a flyer for their program, and they're promoting it as a parent/child or grandparent/grandchild program to come out and learn on six or seven dates where they have classes over the summer.

Everett stated that on Friday last week, she received the registration link for the Celebrate Isanti 5K run/walk and bike ride. It is posted on the event calendar on the website and the Facebook event. The first 50 in the bike ride and the first 50 in the run/walk will get a free goodie bag. Anderson Race Management will time the race this year.

Everett added that the Mattson tennis courts are being resurfaced this week. They were hoping to have them finished this week, but it's looking like thunderstorms, so she'll keep the board posted if that changes. The courts will be blue and green when they're done.

6. Adjournment

Motion by Johnson, second by Witte to adjourn the May 22, 2018 meeting of the Parks, Recreation, and Culture Board. Motion was approved.

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Dated at Isanti, Minnesota this 22nd day of May, 2018.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Katie Everett
Parks, Recreation, and Culture Manager