

**CITY OF ISANTI  
PARKS, RECREATION, AND CULTURE BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES  
May 24, 2016  
City Council Chambers**

**1. Meeting Opening.**

**A. Call to Order.**

Garvey 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:** Jamie Bergwick, Jennifer Garvey, and Mayor Wimmer

**Members Absent:** Aaron Zdon (Gave Prior Notice)

**Staff Present:** Katie Everett, Community Events and Parks Coordinator

**D. Agenda Modifications.**

Garvey asked if there were any agenda modifications. There were none.

Motion by Wimmer, second by Bergwick to approve the May 24<sup>th</sup> 2016 Parks, Recreation, and Culture Board Agenda. Motion was unanimously approved.

**2. Approval of Minutes from April 26, 2016 Parks, Recreation and Culture Board Meeting.**

Motion by Wimmer. Second by Berwick. Vote was unanimously approved.

**3. Parks Tour Follow Up**

Everett stated that safety concerns were addressed the following day by Public Works.

Public Works knows about the grills at Tot Lot and VFW Park and will move them as they find time.

Rum River Meadows was cleaned up the next day, the picnic has been moved back to the grass but has been moved again. Bergwick commented that they are constantly being moved.

Everett stated that we have verbal approval to stop traffic at the end of the pavement at Legacy Park but are still waiting to get written approval before we can move on installing gates. The police have been in the park doing good things. Wimmer explained that there have been a couple of arrests, a vehicle has been impounded, numerous other arrests for minors drinking, smoking, and using drugs. He was sad to see the vandalism that has taken place to the tables and trees in the park. Garvey has noticed a big improvement already.

Everett explained the Bluebird climbing equipment is down now and the new part has been ordered. The company we order through will be putting it back together. Wimmer explained that Council appropriated funds to pay for the repair so it did not take up all of the park budget. Garvey asked if other companies were approached and Everett said yes, but they all referred us back to the original company for liability reasons. The company did agree to make sure the part works before we pay for it. Garvey asked if we have gotten calls about it yet, and Everett said that she wasn't aware of any so far but anticipates them coming in with school picnics and other summer use starting up.

Everett explained that the Redbirds agreement is settled. It has been signed and they will be providing insurance and paying for lights.

Everett stated that she did find examples of other stencils for Bluebird Park. Fast Line offers a similar stencil for less than Fit and Fun Playscapes. Garvey asked to discuss the stencils. She preferred the Fit and Fun option, although it was the most expensive. Bergwick stated that the animal prints are fun for the little kids, but the Fit and Fun one will get more use. Garvey stated that it's more geared toward activity, Bergwick stated that it can also be used in a variety of locations. Garvey made a motion to purchase the Fit and Fun Nature Activity Circuit if funds allow; Bergwick seconded. It was approved unanimously.

Everett discussed the 2015 City Park Facts report by the Trust for Public Land in response to a discussion on the tour about best practices that cities should follow for their park systems. The report compares big cities on how much money they've invested in their parks and where they put their parks, but then they adjust them back so the cities are comparable to each other. It looks like there is a service that can be contracted to come out and rate your city. Even without paying for that, we can use the report to get an idea for how we're doing. Garvey stated that it is good information as a baseline.

#### **4. Rename Tot Lot**

Everett explained that "Tot Lot" isn't very descriptive for what the park offers and a new name might help it get used more. Garvey asked if all previous parks had been named through a contest; Wimmer explained that they have been named in many different ways. Garvey stated that she looked at the streets around the park for a name, but we don't want to name it Dogwood in order to make sure it isn't confused for a dog park. Everett asked if we could direct a naming contest to somewhere in particular instead of just an open to the public contest. Wimmer stated that it has been done before and wasn't very successful. There is a policy in place for naming parks, and he would like to see the public involved. Garvey asked if it could go into the Fall Isantian to advertise the contest and then by January 1 have something solidified. Wimmer explained the last time something like that had been done was for the Parks logo, and components from three different ideas were combined for the final product. Wimmer stated that it can also be advertised at the Farmer's Market. We will need to figure out if there will be a prize or not – Garvey stated that she doesn't think a prize is necessary beyond Council recognition and picture opportunity. Wimmer stated that it will tie in nicely with the history project of getting plaques at each of the parks stating their histories.

Wimmer made a motion to recommend that Council authorize a public naming contest for Isanti Tot Lot. Garvey seconded. Unanimously approved. Everett will ensure that it complies with the policy.

#### **5. Parks Updates**

Everett explained that there are lots of things happening now that summer is starting. The Grand Opening event was on Saturday; it was a fun event. We didn't see a lot of new people at the event to register for more plots, but everyone who was there had a great time. The master gardeners were there answering questions for people. Wimmer stated that the earlier meeting with all of the gardeners went really well and the garden is coming together very nicely. Everett stated that the unrented plots are marked so people can see them and decide which ones they want.

Busy Bees is coming up. There is not any one signed up at this point. Sunrise Apiaries will come out to show the different ways bees use the chambers in their hives. Participants will also make mason bee homes. Mason bees are solitary bees who like to find nooks and crannies, so we'll make a bundle of bamboo where they will come to live. Bergwick stated that Fleet Farm sells bee houses; Everett stated that it's the same idea, but you can make them yourself. The program is at 1:00 at the garden and

registration is required so we can get materials and because we have someone else coming to teach they'll know if we have any participants. Nature Detectives is the same morning – June 4 at 9:00.

Street Dances are coming up – we have banners and posters in hand for all three events. A banner will go up next week. Newspaper ads will be run as well, around June 1<sup>st</sup> an ad will be run with all three and then a week before each event we'll put one in for each specific dance. The events are also on Facebook. If people interact with the events they will get reminders on the events as well.

Farmer's Market starts on Friday. The market is averaging about 11 vendors with who is signed up so far. Our bags are in, and they will be handed out for free throughout the season. The sponsorship on the bags is updated this year. The program is called Cultivate Wellness and includes the community garden and farmers market since they fit well, they're all the same mission of getting people healthy food and active lifestyle themes. People were really excited to see the new sponsorship program.

The community garden is open for planting and people have started. It looks great. A lot of people who have three plots already, which is the max for this year, want more. They are waiting until June 1<sup>st</sup> when registration closes and then will come back to get more. Everett checked just before the meeting and there are 38 plots reserved now. Public works will cover the unused plots with straw. Everett is planning to plant baby pumpkins in the section set aside for future use. She will do this as soon as she can, weather permitting. School For All Seasons is also scheduled to go out and start planting this week in the garden; the Minnesota Center is going to be going out this week to start planning what their prairie experiment will look like.

The other construction work at River Bluff is going really well. Everett spoke with Jason from Bolton and Menk and it looks like the projects are on schedule to be done on time, if not sooner. The stairs look awesome, and there's just a little erosion control left to be done on the switchback trail. Wimmer stated that the railing will need to go on the stairs, but it looks great so far and they've done a really good job. He shared that there is one family who lived in the area for 5 or 6 years who didn't know what was back in that area and have now been able to see it and that has been really cool. Everett shared that the bridge is being used every day – people are fishing off of it, sitting on it, etc. and Public Works has installed the gates so no one can drive anything on it. Garvey asked if there are signs directing people back through the park. Wimmer explained that we are working on getting maps made; Everett explained that it is easy to follow the trails back at this point. Everett asked if we wanted to take a Park Board trip to the park; Wimmer stated that once the Park Board is full again we should do it.

## **6. BMX position - Council Appointment**

Wimmer explained Mr. Zdon is technically the current appointee to the Rum River BMX Board, but has apparently not been able to fulfill this, and there have been a lot of interesting situations recently with the association; and in meeting with the track operator had stated that at this point we need to make it a council appointment to make sure we're getting that communication. There has been a complete breakdown of communication of what's supposed to be happening and not, he [the track operator] and the mayor agreed that it would be a great thing to do. Wimmer will make that appointment probably by the second council meeting in June. He also notified the Park, Rec and Culture Board that we have had to send a certified letter, Rum River BMX has not provided their financials from this year nor last year. Garvey asked if they were automatically supposed to do that. Wimmer explained that May 1<sup>st</sup> was the date picked by the association during the negotiation of the contract. At this point we unfortunately have to enforce the contract, Wimmer had been in contact with the track operator several times and dates when the financials were promised have now passed. He explained that the real world consequence is that the city is having a bond meeting for new work being done on the sanitary sewer system. We need to be able to prove that the group using the facility will be able to pay for the existing bond; at this point we can't do that. Wimmer hopes that he will be able to explain this, but it could cost us thousands or tens of thousands

in interest payments. The letter was sent out last Friday, and we hope to get a response quickly. They have provided these financials in the past when the building was being constructed, and it shouldn't be something that they don't already have to do for the IRS. Bergwick asked if we were recommending that they have someone on our board; Wimmer clarified that we are going to have someone on their board as part of the contract. He stated that Mr. Zdon had been serving kind of a dual role for a number of years because he was on their board, but when this appointment was made Mr. Zdon was not sure he would have enough time to fulfill the role. Wimmer was not sure if Zdon had been able to attend the meetings, but we have not had the communication.

## **7. Adjournment**

Motion by Bergwick, second by Wimmer to adjourn the May 24, 2016 meeting of the Parks, Recreation, and Culture Board. Motion was approved.

The meeting adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

Dated at Isanti, Minnesota this 24<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2016.

Respectfully submitted,

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Katie Everett  
Community Events and Parks Coordinator