

**CITY OF ISANTI  
PARKS, RECREATION, AND CULTURE BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
July 27,2021**

**Call to Order:** James Witte called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

**Roll Call:** Members Present: James Witte, Zachary Gahm, Dan HinnenKamp and Council Member Jimmy Gordon

Staff Present: Alyssa Olson, Parks, Recreation & Events Coordinator, Maizy Burk, Parks, Recreation & Culture Intern

**Agenda/Modifications:** None

**2. Oath of Office:** New member Dan HinnenKamp pronounced the Oath of Office and was officially welcomed to the Board.

**3. Meeting Minutes:** Motion by HinnenKamp; second by Gordon to approve meeting Minutes from June 22, 2021. Motion passed 4-0.

**4. Neighborhood Park Survey:** Olson shared results from the neighborhood park surveys. 30% of nearby residents returned surveys with feedback. Residents near Isanti Hills have younger children that use the park weekly to monthly. Main playground features used are the slide, swingset and jungle gym, as well as park benches and shelter. The bouncing characters and dirt diggers are least often used. Respondents identified adding sports equipment, recreational elements and fitness equipment or Early Childhood Learning features as enhancements that would increase park use. Respondents identified rowdy teenagers, playground features that aren't appropriate for toddlers, outdated equipment and accessibility issues as deterrents to park use.

Residents near Rum River Meadows Park have children under 3 or over 11, missing core ages in elementary school. Most respondents use the park either daily or weekly. Swingset and slide are the most used features, along with park benches and open recreational space. Volleyball net does get some use, but minimal. Most respondents identified adding sports equipment, recreational elements and natural elements to the park would increase use. Rowdy teenagers, absence of shade and absence of activities for both young kids and teenagers/adults as deterrents to park use. This neighborhood also noted that they gather often and could benefit from a communal space at the park.

Gahm asked about costs and logistics of adding shade structures and of requesting more patrolling from Isanti PD of these parks at night. Olson will look into options and connect with Chief Muyres on safety recommendations.

**5. Department Updates:** Olson shared updates from July events, which have been well-attended.

Medallion was found after 1 day at Legacy Park. The boys that won took home \$430 in prizes. Will work to create harder clues and a more difficult hiding space next year.

Fireworks had about 1000 people in attendance. Gap in time after the parade likely deterred audience from sticking around.

Splish Splash Summer Bash went well. Kids enjoyed the pop bottle rockets, face painting, Kids Dance and the inflatables. ICF presentation was unnecessary and will be eliminated in future years, just keeping DJ entertainment on stage. Food vendors were limited due to a last-minute vendor drop out. Olson will work to incorporate more vendors in the future. Attendance was similar to last year, with possible slight increase, but they stayed onsite longer with more activities. Gahm asked about adding more activities next year and Olson noted she has requested budget for this event in 2022. If approved, that will help to add more inflatables, face painters and activities to the event. Olson will also look for a face painter that focuses on smaller designs that take less time to complete and can get more kids through.

Street Dance had lighter attendance, but still around 2,000 attendees. Food vendors seemed light because there was more room, but had same 8 vendors as the first month. August and September will have 11-12 vendors onsite, which should help with lines and options for guests. Gahm asked how the vendors do and Olson noted most sold out of product in June and many sold out of individual items in July.

Passport to Parks is currently running with first 50 winners getting a prize. All correct answers will be added to the grand prize, which will be drawn at the August Street Dance. The prize is a Family Fun Pack that includes passes from area attractions.

Farmers' Market is still going well with 18-21 vendors each week. Due to this season's weather issues, only one vendor has been able to provide a variety of produce, but the other products onsite have provided shoppers with unique items to try. Traffic has picked up and is reasonably consistent week after week. Gahm asked if the vendors are now satisfied with the attendance. Olson noted that the complaints have stopped, so if there are issues, they are not being relayed to staff. Weather continues to play a role in attendance so hopefully attendance will pick up as we get towards the Fall.

Performance Center is moving forward and just waiting on shipping date. The field lights will be installed in the next couple weeks.

Olson shared that the Archery Range has been requested to move forward to Council. The Council decided on the Dog Park location and Olson will be gathering more concrete costs and logistics for installing the range in the Spring so that budget will be used in 2022.

In the July COW meeting, Council member Lundeen requested Olson research options to add a carnival to City events in 2022. The thought was to add the carnival to one of the Street Dances, presumably the Fall date as an endcap. Gahm asked where that would be and Olson noted that a location would depend on if the Street Dances remain on Main Street or if they move to Bluebird Park. Olson will be looking into those logistics and costs, with the help of HinnenKamp, who has ample experience in the area. Gordon and Witte mentioned not wanting the Street Dances to move to Bluebird. Gahm mentioned the Street Dances being geared towards adults and a carnival being for kids. Olson noted that the Street Dances have a rather large youth attendance and that moving these events could reduce the amount of damage caused during the events. It is also easier to contain bad activities in an open space where there aren't alleyways to hide in. HinnenKamp mentioned the carnival being its own event and that it wouldn't compete with any other area events. HinnenKamp also noted that a carnival would want to run for longer than one day to be beneficial. Olson requested insight about the importance of having the Street Dances in the street and if the community cares where it takes place. She also noted the businesses don't get engaged, which was the initial intention. Witte noted it may be posing a greater risk to these businesses if the dances are causing damage to their properties. Gordon noted the atmosphere of being in the street is appealing and didn't know if another street would be an option. Gahm mentioned we may need to give it a try and see how it goes in the park, to use the performance center. Olson noted maybe slowly migrating in order to test the appeal.

The Council also requested that Olson develop a plan for the holiday lights event. Olson has pulled together a proposal for that event that will be shared at the August COW meeting.

**Adjournment:** Motion by Gahm, second by HinnenKamp to adjourn the July 27, 2021 meeting of the Parks, Recreation, and Culture Board. Motion passed 4-0, meeting adjourned at 6:36 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Alyssa Olson

Parks, Recreation & Events Coordinator