

**CITY OF ISANTI
PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURE BOARD MEETING MINUTES
June 23, 2020**

Call to Order: Jenny Garvey – PRC Manager called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call: Members Present: James Witte, Aaron Zdon, Council Member Jimmy Gordon and Brian Thum
Staff Present: Jenny Garvey - Parks, Recreation and Culture Manager; Matt Sylvester- Public Services Director

Agenda/Modifications: Witte asked about River Bluff Preserve item and Garvey added that they will review this within the department updates. None added, motion by Witte, second by Gordon to approve the agenda for June 23, 2020. Motion passed 4-0.

2. Meeting Minutes: Motion by Witte; second by Thum to approve meeting Minutes from February 25, 2020. Motion passed 4-0.

3. Park Visits: Garvey reviewed that in 2018, the PRC Board determined that instead of doing a whole group tour during a meeting, it would be more effective for members to each visit a couple of parks ahead of the meeting to provide a more detailed review of the parks. The 2019 Park Assignments were: Aaron Zdon – Academy Park and Whisper Ridge; James Witte – Rum River Meadows, River Bluff Preserve and Isanti Hills Neighborhood Park; Jenny Garvey – Bluebird Park, Unity Park, and Riverside Park; and Jeff Johnson – Mattson Park, Legacy Park and VFW Park. Zdon said that he agreed this was a more efficient way to review the parks as the tour took a much longer time. Witte agreed this was a good way to review the parks. Gordon will take Bluebird, Unity and Riverside Parks and Thum will take Mattson, Legacy and VFW parks. The board members have the park ambassador check list and will bring these back to the July meeting.

4. Department Updates: Garvey reviewed the department updates. Staff cancelled the March Curious Creatures program and movie night, due to COVID-19 health pandemic that is occurring around the country and state. For June 9 we had Water Mania and for July 7 our theme is Cowboys and Cowgirls which was to coincide with the Rodeo. Council decided to move the Fireworks from Thursday July 9 to Saturday July 11 due to the cancellation of the Rodeo and Jubilee Days. The COW discussed the path/walkway that the PRC board had addressed extending or re-routing at the March 17, 2020 meeting and has decided to not pursue this, as the park layout and amenities within the park could change. Staff is continuing to plan for the Pop bottle rocket class, and free tennis lessons that will be in July. Currently we have 5 registered for the youth classes. Kids day is set for Friday July 10 at Bluebird park, with an inflatable water slide, kids dance and the Police and Fire chiefs will give brief safety talks. The medallion hunt will start with clues being released on Monday July 6. Council first postponed the June street dance until September, but decided to add a new band to the June 20 date, Bad Jack with the quick changes that were adjusted from the guidelines that have been in place. The other Street Dance Bands are Sept 12: The Farmer's Daughters, July 18: Brother Ferris and August 8: Brat Pack Radio. The Famer's market opened May 29 and will run through September 25, we will not have a market on July 3 with the holiday. Its open Friday's from 2-6pm. This year we have 18 vendors and each week brings a different variety to choose from. The layout is a bit different this year with having to provide social distancing within the market. The community garden opened on Thursday May 7 and all plots have been reserved, 75 in total; 67 ground plots, 7 raised beds and one elevated bed. Staff is in the process of planting sunflowers in the pollinator area and creating a walkway/maze through it. The northeast corner continues to remain open for future plots. The council has been discussing the upcoming budget and CIP. Within the CIP are items related to the future of parks. In particular, Whisper Ridge, VFW and Isanti Hills Neighborhood Park. These parks have been discussed in the past, almost annually, when we review the park tour items. As of now, the Council has not funded any future replacements for these parks. This is being presented for information for the Park Board to be aware of and to review at future meetings the ideas that the Park Board would have for new items. Sylvester added that within these parks are playground equipment that we can no longer get replacement parts for. Zdon added that he agreed we struggle with replacing parts and that he recalled this being an issue with these parks in the past. Witte asked if River Bluff Preserve had been addressed yet, as he had been in touch with staff with tree's that had fallen. Matt Sylvester reviewed that the PW crew was able to clean up some trees at the dock within River

Bluff preserve, after clarifying from the Mn DNR that this was possible. Tree's had fallen and were interfering with fishing. The river level is quite low right now.

Mayor Johnson had some questions or clarifications to the CIP/budget item that was discussed. Johnson added that the council has been discussing the CIP/budget items and that he wanted to make sure that the PRC board knew that the council is looking at these three parks (Whisper Ridge, VFW and Isanti Hills Neighborhood(IHN)). Council is reviewing moving funds from the equipment replacement to funding a bigger project for Bluebird and to have this park as the main park within Isanti. Thum added that he didn't want to see VFW park go away as kids are using it now and there are lots of kids in that area. Johnson added council was not looking at eliminating any park but that they are asking the board to look into new ideas and wanted to make sure this board was in the loop with this plan or budgeting area. Sylvester reiterated that these parks have the equipment that staff can no longer get replacement parts for and the board is being asked to look into new ideas for replacement, such as open space or other amenities. Zdon didn't want to see any parks eliminated within the city and asked if it was within the plan to have one in every neighborhood. Johnson added that it wasn't an ordinance and that council wasn't looking to eliminate a park and that within our city we have 14 parks. Mayor Johnson added the discussions at council have been to see if the VFW would want to take back or take on VFW park and an idea to have them take down the surrounding fence around that park. Mayor Johnson asked Councilmember Gordon if he had anything to add. Gordon added that he didn't agree with having the one main park idea and adding an amphitheater or other amenities to the park and the funding getting shifted to that, he would like to see more of a cost savings to the citizens. Witte added that he has used IHN park, and didn't want to see any park get eliminated. The idea is for the PRC board to review items that could be added instead of replacing the playground equipment. Zdon brought up a natural park in Waseca that he had visited. The mayor added that he wanted to make sure the PRC board had a voice and council will review this and provide direction to the board and staff for future meetings to discuss this more. Zdon reviewed that the council and staff will provide more information at a future meeting for the PRC board to review.

Adjournment: Motion by Witte, second by Thum to adjourn the June 23, 2020 meeting of the Parks, Recreation and Culture Board. Motion passed 4-0, meeting adjourned at 6:32 p.m.



Respectfully Submitted
Jenny Garvey
Parks, Recreation and Culture Manager