



PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

March 2, 2022

Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 5:32 p.m.

Roll Call

Present: Hannah Mico, Max Gibbs, Chris Doleshal, Kim VanDriel, Kelli Jo Peltier

Others: David Marquardt, Michelle Slykhouse (Grand Rapids Parks Department), Hunter Hubers

Approval of Agenda

Motion made by Kim VanDriel, supported by Max Gibbs, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

Motion made by Kim VanDriel, supported by Max Gibbs, to approve the January 10, 2022 minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Comments from Public

Hunter is interested in being on the board and attending to observe.

Agenda Item(s)

Chair/vice chair election

Chris and Kelli Jo are nominated for chair. Vote 3 to 2 in Kelli Jo's favor. Motion made by Hannah Mico, supported by Max Gibbs, for Kelli Jo to be elected the chair. Motion carried.

Max nominated for vice chair. Motion made by Chris Doleshal, supported by Hannah Mico, for Max Gibbs to be elected the vice chair. Motion carried.

Michigan Department of Natural Resources grants

David stated the department is seeking board approval to submit three grant applications to the state this year, due on April 1.

The first project is Plaster Creek trail extension, David explained the work proposed and budget. Hannah asked whether any match funds are required. David stated there is a requirement and the city will match with park millage dollars. Chris stated the cost seems high for such a short length of trail. David explained it includes tree clearing, crosswalk upgrades and the largest expense of the project is the re-paving of the road access. Kim stated she supports the project and wants to bring attention to the fact that this will result in more staff time to empty/clear trash and snow removal. Hannah asked what material would be used for paving. David stated any new trails are minimum 10-foot width with concrete.

Motion made by Kim VanDriel, supported by Hannah Mico, to support the project. Motion carried.

The second project is 32nd Street. David explained the work proposed and budget. Max asked if restrooms would be included. David stated there are no restrooms proposed at this time. Max asked if there will be a lot of clearing done at the site. David stated there will be some invasives that need to be removed and some other clearing done. Chris asked about parking. David stated staff from the Parks Department is working with Planning Department to figure out if something could be feasible there.

Motion made by Kim VanDriel, supported by Max Gibbs, to support the project. Kim asked about the park signage and whether that will be installed at these sites. David stated the intention is to install the new signs at each park where there is a development project. Motion carried.

The third project is at Belknap Park for access to and from the Pickleball courts, and building some new plaza seating to accommodate tournaments that take place there. Kim stated the project is exciting as Pickleball continues to grow and brings a lot of people to the city. Max asked if more Pickleball courts would be added. David stated six new courts are proposed to be added. Kelli Jo asked what the status of bike polo at Highland Park is. Kim stated bike polo is temporarily being moved to 555 Monroe, next to the skate park, until Highland Park is ready.

Motion made by Kim VanDriel, supported by Max Gibbs, to support the project. Motion carried.

Budget

David stated the Parks Department presented its proposed budget to the city manager's office a couple weeks ago. Highlights of the budget request include additional staff – one Building Maintenance Mechanic, one Groundskeeper, and one Recreation Technical Supervisor. The Recreation Technical Supervisor would oversee the Gear Library at Roosevelt Park. An increase of supplemental staff hourly wages was also proposed. Electric golf carts and improvements to the clubhouse are proposed for Indian Trials Golf Course. No request for changes to the cemetery fund. One concern about the cemetery fund is that the mowing contract is up for bid next year and chances are this cost will be much higher than the current. The second concern is the perpetual care fund and that it will not cover what needs to be done long term at the cemeteries.

David stated the Parks Department submitted projects for funding from the city's Capital Improvement Fund. One request is riverfront park improvements at \$500K each year for five years. The second is the Otsego drain basin – a 4-acre parcel.

Max asked about workforce development for park cleanup and whether that program can be expanded. David stated it is a possibility.

Board membership

David stated this is a follow-up to the board member concerns posed at the last meeting. David explained the number of seats on this board are determined by City Commission policy. It is possible to change that policy to add more seats. However, an increase of number of board seats would not necessarily make it easier to get quorum.

Kim stated that information covers some of the concern however it is the diversity of the board that is most concerning.

Hannah stated conversation with the Mayor is going on about the requirements of board applications and that it could be difficult for people to get through the process in order to be considered for an appointment.

Chris asked what the timeline is for someone to get on a board. Michelle explained the application, vetting and appointment process.

Agenda items for April 13

- Parks department/park stewards program
- Cleanliness of the parks (large items)
- Budget/department 101

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 6:51 p.m.