



PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes April 19, 2023
Duluth City Hall, Council Chambers



I. Call Meeting to Order

President Crosby called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Present: Amanda Crosby, David Demmer, Kala Pedersen, Tjaard Breeuwer, Terrance Lovejoy, Hailey Sigafus, Dave Cizmas

Not Present: Sarah Beehler, Noah Hobbs – City Council Liaison, Annie Harala – St. Louis County Commissioner, Kelly Durick Eder – ISD 709 School Board Liaison

III. Approval of the March 8 Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Breeuwer motioned to approve the March 8 meeting minutes. Commissioner Cizmas second. Unanimously approved. Motion carries.

IV. Presentations

A. Duluth Girls Fastpitch (Informational) Gerry Sjerven

Commissioner Lovejoy questioned if the program goes up to Silver Bay. Sjerven stated that teams are based on age groups. Stated that home games are at Basswood, and the older ages travel around the Arrowhead region, while the younger ages stay mostly in Duluth.

Commissioner Demmer questioned if having only two fields is a hindering factor for growth. Sjerven stated that no one is turned away. Stated that number of fields do not hamper the number of participants, but it may hamper practice time per team. Stated that it is a recreational league, so everyone is able to play. Stated that having more fields would give more options.

Commissioner Demmer questioned if there are specific fields in the west end that they have looked at for practice sites. Sjerven stated that the conversations are just beginning and they are trying to identify where the breakdown is in getting youth more involved from West Duluth. Stated that a variety of outreach has been tried and will be looking to build on that. Stated that neighborhood parents are more invested in a neighborhood field, which will bring more growth.

Commissioner Demmer questioned how they are funded. Sjerven stated that they are beginning to do more with grants and sponsorships with local businesses to fund equipment and facility rentals. Stated that they are doing well with funding. Stated that their fundraising will be focused on field improvements.

Commissioner Demmer questioned if the teams are competitive against other teams. Sjerven stated that the ages start younger, so the older group is more competitive. Stated focus is on recreation.

Commissioner Sigafus questioned where to send people to find more information. Sjerven stated there is a website and social media. Stated that for inclusivity the name will be changing to Duluth Fastpitch.

B. Volunteer Recognition - Mary Tennis, Presented by City Staff

C. Lakewalk Interpretive Plan (For Future Action) Cliff Knettel, Senior Parks Planner and Sam Geer, Urban Ecosystems

Commissioner Lovejoy questioned if this plan impacts parking access to the Lakewalk. Knettel stated that



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this plan intentionally addresses access and connectivity to the Lakewalk. Stated that there are additional parking areas that are less known and will be highlighted in this plan. Stated that the Lakewalk is used for commuting, and wayfinding and better access will help to improve the Lakewalk as a transportation corridor.

Pedersen questioned if clearing a view of the lake at Canal Park and Gichi-ode' Akiing Park will include removing trees. Geer stated that it depends on other planning in those specific parks and areas. Stated that a visitor does not have a clear view of the sky and water, and those things will draw people to the waterfront if they are visible. Stated that clearing obstructions is a worthwhile objective, but is context dependent on other work in the parks.

Pedersen questioned if vandalism is an issue across the park system and specifically on the Lakewalk. Knettel stated that yes, vandalism sometime occurs. Stated that one of the things that has been incorporated into the design is to make the elements as vandal proof as possible. Gave examples including covering signs with graffiti-resistant coating and durable coverings for panels to make them more vandalism resistant. Stated that we do not want to have to keep replacing signs.

Commissioner Demmer questioned if there will be any interpretation on geology or natural resources. Geer stated that in collaboration with Friends of the Lakewalk, it was mentioned that there are additional signs all the way up to Brighton Beach. Stated that new signage will be incorporated in the ledges area, and there will be an interpretive sign about the geology there. Stated that in the harbor there will be a sign on the geology of the estuary. Stated that there are no signs on geology planned for the downtown area.

Commissioner Demmer questioned how artists will be identified to contribute the art pieces. Manager Peterson stated that the art components are a collaboration with the Duluth Public Arts Commission, going through that body. Stated that the DPAC operates only through an RFP basis. Stated that both installation of the art pieces and maintenance have to be navigated. Stated that each element will have nuances in the funding sources, etc. but will all go through DPAC.

Commissioner Demmer questioned if there will be lighting improvements as a part of this plan. Knettel stated that lighting and other safety measures fall more within the Lakewalk Resiliency Plan. Stated that there are plans to replace existing lighting. Stated that in the resiliency plan, other considerations were made for safety as well.

Commissioner Cizmas questioned if there was considerations made for the winter season. Knettel stated that for example, the signs will be placed in a way that is accessible and also allows for snow removal.

D. 2022 Parks and Recreation Annual Report

Commissioner Demmer questioned who the award is from for the Essential Spaces plan. Manager Peterson stated that it is from the Minnesota Recreation and Park Association.

V. Commissioner Committees

Administrative (E-Board) meeting date: Thursday, May 4 at noon, Parks Conference Room
Amanda Crosby, David Demmer, Kala Pedersen [Jessica Peterson, Bridget Erickson]

VI. Commissioner & Liaison Reports

VII. New Business



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VIII. Old Business

IX. Division Report

X. Public Comment

XI. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 6:31 pm.

XII. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Wednesday, May 10 at 5:00 p.m., Council Chambers.