



PARKS and RECREATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes of November 5, 2014

Central Hillside Center
12 E 4th St



1. Call to Order

Commissioner Hall called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

2. Roll Call

PRESENT: Commissioners Braun, Crosby, Dodge, Hall, Holak, Schraepfer, Torch, Viken, Welles

NOT PRESENT: Commissioners Albright, Schmidt

3. Approval of Minutes

Motion made and seconded to approve the October 8 meeting minutes.

4. Presentations

A. Equestrian Trails – Jim Filby Williams, Director of Public Administration

Resolution 14-0557R (authored by 5th District Councilor Jay Fosle) has been tabled by the City Council for input from the Parks Commission: Resolution requesting the City Administration designate and re-open the Magney-Snively Trails and the 1.5 miles of Amity Trail for horseback riding and the preservation of historic multi use on Mission Creek Trail. Mr. Filby Williams proposed to discuss each trail individually, starting with the Amity Trail at this meeting.

Mr. Filby Williams indicated that the Amity Equestrian Trail was re-signed to prohibit horse riding after the June 2012 flood due to trail sustainability issues. Some stormwater mitigation work was completed in 2013. Although the trail is on an old road bed that is hardened for equestrian use, several areas need to be addressed before sustainable equestrian use would be possible. The City will complete the work needed to return the Amity Trail to sustainable standards as soon as is feasible. The trail will be re-opened now for equestrian use and the "no horses" signs will be removed.

Councilor Larson is proposing another resolution for the Council to consider: 14-0570R - Resolution requesting that the City Administration make necessary repairs to a 1.5 mile section of the Amity Creek Trail and designate the trail for use by horses.

Several community members spoke in favor of reopening all of the trails as soon as possible. Some comments were:

- there has not historically been a conflict between users such as horses and bikers or hikers
- other funding opportunities are available for equestrian trails
- 170 volunteers worked on the DWP before the 2012 flood
- DAHTA has been working with a trail consultant to determine possible future trail alignments
- people purchased homes near Magney-Snively specifically for access to the equestrian trails
- there is no damage or erosion on the Magney-Snively Trail; the closures were for no reason
- equestrian trails users support the business community
- don't reinvent the wheel – start with what we have
- there are studies that support equestrian use of trails
- sustainability and regular trail maintenance is important to equestrians

Commissioner Hall suggested that Mr. Filby Williams and other City staff work with equestrian trail users to develop a strategy for re-opening the Magney- Snively Trail and present at the

December 10 Parks Commission meeting. Mr. Filby Williams commented that he is already working with Councilors Larson, Sipress, and Julsrud. This is a complex issue and needs to be considered thoughtfully and diligently. City staff will work toward a December 10 deadline, but cannot promise that a plan can be developed that quickly. There are earlier plans approved for this area: the Duluth Natural Area Plan and the 2005 Council-approved Magney-Snively Management Plan. To move forward, what needs to be considered is the when, where, and how.

Commissioner Welles made a motion to support Resolution 14-0570, a resolution to reopen the Amity Creek Trail to equestrian use. Commissioner Holak seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Commissioner Braun made a motion to have a timeline for the progress on the Magney-Snively Trail presented at the December 10 Parks Commission meeting. Commissioner Schraepfer seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

- B. Parks Fund Neighborhood Grant Awards – Commissioner Braun, member of the Grant Selection Committee, presented the list of applications, a brief summary of each one, and the recommendations from the Grant Selection Committee (see attached chart).

Commissioner Braun made a motion of support for the funds to be awarded as recommended, with remaining money to be held for the spring 2015 grants. Commissioner Torch seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

- C. Chester Park Mini Master Plan – Kathy Bergen, Manager, Parks and Recreation, and Paula Reed, Community Relations Officer, showed a PowerPoint presentation that focused on the negotiated solutions to unresolved issues and other changes/corrections obtained from public and Commission input. These items have been incorporated into the final Plan.

Commissioner Hall made a motion that the Parks and Recreation Commission approves the Chester Park Mini-Master Plan, as set forth in the October 22, 2014 Draft Plan, as amended by the Parks Division presentation at the Commission's November 5, 2014 meeting, and recommends the Mini-Master Plan's submission to the City Council for its consideration and approval. Commissioner Welles seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

5. New Business

Tennis Courts - Ms. Bergen spoke about the inventory of tennis courts that is being worked on and the upcoming Wade/Wheeler Mini Master Plan that will impact tennis courts at that location.

It was suggested that the Parks and Facilities Committee take on the project of working with City staff and the community to develop a plan for improvements to tennis courts citywide. This committee will meet before the December 10 Parks Commission meeting and report at that meeting.

6. Division Manager's Report

Ms. Bergen shared that requests to play at the Chester Creek Concert series have started to come in. The City staff person that previously handled the process retired and a new process needs to be identified. It was suggested that a task force, led by the Recreation Programming Committee, be formed to develop an application process; review applications that are received; and determine the list of entertainers for the 2015 concerts. Others interested in the concerts can

be asked to join the task force, such as a representative from the Chester Bowl Improvement Club. The Recreation Programming Committee will set up a meeting in December to start this process.

Commissioner Crosby asked about the status of the ADA assessment of playgrounds. Dale Sellner, Park Maintenance Supervisor, responded that the assessment is almost completed and the first playground to implement this will be at the Central Hillside Park.

A request was made for an update on the status of the Duluth Traverse Trail. It was suggested that a representative from COGGS give a presentation at the February Parks Commission meeting. By that time, the City will know if they received the Legacy Trail Grant that would provide the funds to complete the Duluth Traverse.

Councilor Braun thanked the staff and volunteers that work at the Heritage skating events.

7. Adjournment

8. Next meeting

The next meeting will be held 5 pm, Wednesday, December 10, at Central Hillside Center.

MOTION(S)

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- Commissioner Braun made a motion to have a timeline for the progress on the Magney-Snively Trail presented at the December 10 Parks Commission meeting. Commissioner Schraepfer seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
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