



## I. Call Meeting to Order

Vice President Crosby called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

## II. Roll Call

Present: Amanda Crosby, Tjaard Breeuwer, Dennis Isernhagen, John Schmidt, Jill Joyce, Britt Rohrbaugh, Dudley Edmondson, Dean Vogtman, Kristin Bergerson.

Not present: Erik Torch (President), David Kirby (ISD 709 School Board Liaison), Frank Jewell (St. Louis County Board Liaison), Em Westerlund (City Council Liaison).

## III. Approval of November 14<sup>th</sup> Minutes

Commissioner Breeuwer motioned for approval of the November 14<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes; second by Commissioner Joyce. Unanimously approved.

## IV. Presentations

### A. Meet the New Trails Coordinator (Informational) – Lisa Luukkala, Interim Assistant Manager

Crosby: Invited Lisa Luukkala and Matt Andrews to the floor.

Luukkala: Stated the 2019 year was off to a great start with new staff in the Parks and Recreation Division. Indicated it is a pleasure to introduce the new Trails Coordinator, Matt Andrews. Stated his first day was on Monday. Indicated he brings over 10 years of bike and trail access and advocacy work. Highlighted he was the previous director for Minnesota Off Road Cyclists. Shared he managed and coordinated with over 100 volunteers while working on over 100 miles of trails. Shared he has worked with several non-profit organizations, including COGGS. Requested the Parks Commission to share any events that they see would be a benefit for Matt to become accustomed to Duluth.

Andrews: Shared his passions for both road and trail bicycling. Highlighted his interests being paddling, fly-fishing, cross country skiing, and horses. Indicated he is excited to get started and begin working with the City's partner organizations. Thanked the Parks Commission for having him. Opened the floor for questions from the Parks Commissioners.

Crosby: Welcomed Matt and stated she looked forward to getting to know him better,

### B. Commercial Use Permit (Informational) – Kraig Decker, Parks Permit Coordinator

Decker: Shared this is project that he has been working on since he has started his position. Read the first slide.

Decker: Shared he has been working on the program since he started working for the City of Duluth.



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Mentioned that he has done extensive research on who is doing business within our parks. Shared that the opportunity was there for businesses to part-take in meetings to craft something into a final product. Shared this permit would be used for fitness classes, guiding, and boot camps.

Decker: Shared the goal is to try to find balance with the businesses because they are marketing us. Indicated this new permit will not take away park access for users.

Decker: Stated commercial operators will apply online and provide a certificate of insurance, and provide a payment.

Decker: Highlighted this program began January 1st of this year. Indicated we have one commercial use operator who has already gone through the process. Shared he has sent an email to potential commercial operators to make the program known. Mentioned there are several year round operators. Stated there are prompts that would indicate which amenities will be closed during the season.

Decker: Reflected on the two different pricing options, including a monthly or yearly fee. Indicated it is cheaper if users choose the annual route. Stated that the monthly rate is great for those who will need a permit for just a couple of months.

Decker: Opened the floor for questions.

Edmondson: Questioned what was in place before this new permit. Questioned the purpose of this new permit.

Decker: Indicated that many have tried to capitalize on our parks, stated this is cool because they advocate for Parks and Recreation. Indicated many versions of this packet were created. Stated a lot of thought was put into this to be the most accommodating. Stated this has been City Code for over 30 years.

Breeuwer: Questioned if there is any distinction for nonprofit groups.

Decker: Indicated this would represent for both nonprofit and profit groups.

Breeuwer: Questioned if there was any consideration of the water access points.

Decker: Indicated that water access points have been considered because park property would still be utilized.

Breeuwer; Questioned if water accesses were park property.

Decker: Stated that to his knowledge that this was correct. Indicated you cannot do commercial operations on closed areas.

Breeuwer: Questioned if the Commercial Use Permit would be on all City property.



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Decker: Confirmed it would.

Breeuwer: Questioned how youth camps would be affected.

Decker: Stated is more targeted towards fitness. Mentioned youth organizations are already within a separate user agreement.

Schmidt: Questioned how a facility within a park would be affected by the commercial use permit.

Decker: Stated that collaboration has happened with both Chester Bowl and Hartley Nature Center, indicated they were both receptive. Shared that this is already happening within their parks and has not posed an issue.

Schmidt: Questioned if the rental funds would go back to their respective park organization.

Jim Filby Williams: Stated that fee collection would come from their own rental space and that the commercial use profits would go to the Parks Fund.

Schmidt: Questioned if this the same as Chester Bowl.

Jim Filby Williams: Indicated this would be the same throughout the City.

Decker: Agreed with Jim Filby Williams. Indicated it is the same as other permits, where funds would go to the Parks Fund.

Schmidt: Questioned if this concept would be included for the Lakewalk and the Master Planning process.

Decker: Stated as this progresses an evaluation will be performed to see if it is an appropriate use for the space as well as receiving community feedback.

Schmidt: Questioned how the effectiveness of the new permit would be judged.

Decker: Questioned if this was referred to the Lakewalk or the permit in general.

Schmidt: Indicated he was asking for both.

Luukkala: Stated in 2016 a commercial use feasibility study was performed, which will be used in the Mini Master Plan process.

Edmondson: Questioned how this would affect the bike rental business in Canal Park.

Schmidt: Questioned if there is a criteria for evaluating the groups for potential user conflicts.



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Jim Filby Williams: Indicated there is an informal conceptual test. Stated commercial use provides benefits to our community. Stated the commercial use study was performed on the Lakewalk, indicating that bikes were disliked by many and fearful for others. Indicated he agrees that a formal process should be created.

Schmidt: Thanked Jim Filby Williams.

Vogtman: Thanked Decker. Questioned how many permits were issued last year.

Decker: Indicated that no commercial user permits were issued last year. Stated collaboration was done with user groups to establish the program. Mentioned this would be the first year of the program.

Vogtman: Questioned the interest for resident use and nonresident use.

Decker: Indicated his guess would be the majority would be residents.

Joyce: Questioned what kind of teeth does the permit have for enforcement. Questioned how we plan to meter the amount of volume of each user group.

Decker: Stated enforcement has been difficult with other permits. Indicated the enhanced Park Ranger Program has helped. Shared the new permit design that permittees will be required to carry where Parks Rangers can check for their permit. Indicated this will be a combinations of Police, Park Rangers, and keeping our eyes and ears of the users to be able to inform users of the commercial use permit.

Decker: Indicated the volume of groups are defined in the packet. Questioned Joyce if she was seeking clarification on the amount of people allowed to be on the permit, as well as the amount of permits issued.

Joyce: Confirmed she would like the answer for both.

Decker: Indicated that the majority of the operators have indicated that groups have been 10-15 people per group. Stated that management decided to not limit the amount of approved operators, as this is a trail period to gather information. Stated conversations will need to be made with Park Maintenance for any concerns they may have. Highlighted the difference between a Special Operations permit and Commercial Operations permit. Indicated that Special Operations permits have capped capacity.

Crosby: Thanked Decker for his work and for reaching out to potential users. Indicated it would be nice to have him back to give an update. Questioned if this new permit would advertised.

Decker: Stated it is currently on our website. Indicated he would like to get this out on our social media pages. Mentioned the operators work very well together.



Crosby: Indicated she looks forward to hearing how this new permit goes.

Schmidt: Shared his gratitude for all of the hard work Decker puts in both at work and volunteering. Indicated he has been impressed with the quality of the staff. Thanked Lucy for sharing her dad with the Parks and Recreation team.

C. Kayak/Canoe Rack Program (Informational) – Lisa Luokkala, Interim Assistant Manager

Luokkala: Stated she was excited to announce a new amenity that will be available this summer in three of our locations, the rack rental program. Mentioned Councilor Hobbs brought forward this idea. Indicated the City of Superior has recently installed a similar program along the St. Louis River water access sites. Shared that Councilor Hobbs connected with the Local Iron Workers Union 512, with Brian Nelson, the Apprentice Program Coordinator, to provide in kind labor to build the racks.

Luokkala: Shared what the rack rental program would entail. Indicated it will be a fee-based service for individuals to rent a slot to store their watercraft for the season. Indicated the user is responsible for securing their own boat. Shared this program allows people to access the water without having to haul their boats to and from home. Mentioned it reduces the barriers for those who don't have access to haul their watercraft to a launch site.

Luokkala: Indicated that this is not a new concept. Stated this program is also available in Plymouth, Bloomington, Chanhassen, Lakeville, and Prior Lake. Stated this is a use at your own risk amenity, indicated this is similar to using your bike on a public bike rack.

Luokkala: Displayed an example rack created by the local Iron Workers Union. Stated the three different locations being Park Point, Chambers Grove, and Brighton Beach. Mentioned that once Spirit Landing is established there will likely be a similar rack installed.

Luokkala: Indicated feedback will be gathered from the users on their thoughts of the program. Stated an evaluation will be performed through our Rec1 software.

Decker: Stated the registration opens on May 1<sup>st</sup>. Reflected on the three different sites being Park Point, Brighton Beach, and Chambers Grove. Indicated this will be a first come first serve basis and there are 6 spots available. Indicated the pricing for residents being \$100, and for non-residents \$175.

Decker: Shared that he manages the reservation software, CivicRec. Highlighted that being this program is operated online, that users have 24/7 access to review the program. Displayed what the layout of the webpage would look like for users making a reservation. Reflected on the Terms and Conditions, indicated this prompt would be read before finalizing the reservation. Stated they would have to click a button to confirm they agree to the terms and have obtained a permit from the Department of Natural Resources. Shared the coordination with Park Maintenance to get a gauge of what they are seeing with the program.

Decker: Opened the floor for questions for the Commissioners



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Joyce: Questioned if more racks would be available if the program is successful. Questioned what the plan would be if the program is not successful.

Luukkala: Indicated that anyone who registers with Rec1 will be given the ability to take a survey. Shared collaboration with Park Maintenance will occur to gather information. Indicated the small amount allows us to try the program and closely look into potential concerns. Indicated when a new program is launched, that it can take longer than a year to gain a full analysis. Stated there is opportunities for us to make adjustments if needed. There will be internal work with Park Maintenance and Parks and Recreation.

Schmidt: Thanked Luukkala and Decker for the work put into getting the program up and running. Questioned the term residency.

Decker: Confirmed it means a Duluth resident.

Schmidt: Questioned if this could be used for commercial use or just private use.

Decker: Indicated this conversation has happened. Shared that we do have commercial operators who provide paddling service. Indicated he thought this could be an opportunity, however, it has not been confirmed.

Luukkala: Stated this program is geared towards private users. Indicated this would be brought up during agreement discussions. Shared that as time goes on and if there is a commercial need that conversations could be had.

Schmidt: Questioned if this was defined in the Terms and Conditions.

Luukkala: Indicated this is not finalized, as the form is not live. Stated adjustments can be made before making the page live.

Schmidt: Indicated his preference would be to serve individuals and families. Questioned if this program would be an addition to the plan for Spirit Landing, or if this concept has already been involved.

Luukkala: Thanked Commissioner Schmidt for the question. Indicated this would be part of the plan, as boat storage being a need on the site but quantity has not been defined.

Schmidt: Stated there is a need for Universal Access. Mentioned this opportunity could have the potential for universal access, if there is a way to adapt. Encouraged the City to look into this.

Luukkala: Thanked Commissioner Schmidt. Indicated the surface type around the racks would be concrete. Stated the intent is to create a stable surface for accessibility. Shared she would look into accessible designed racks for Spirit Landing.

Schmidt; Stated if this will be our signature place for universal access, that this should be researched.



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Thanked Luokkala.

Luokkala: Thanked Schmidt.

Breeuwer: Stated this is a great opportunity for those who cannot transport a boat. Suggested having a check box for those who need the lower rack.

Decker: Indicated he would.

Joyce: Questioned if there could be a priority for those who would need accommodations.

Decker: Stated he could set it up to start with top down, giving the opportunity for those who need the lower rack.

Isernhagen: Encouraged the City to communicate with those who need rack accommodations. Stated this would be good PR and help to create the design.

Edmondson: Questioned the Iron Workers would continue to provide racks if the program is successful.

Luokkala: Thanked Commissioner Isernhagen. Indicated the Iron Workers provided the labor, and the City supplied the materials. Stated Park Maintenance will be installing and maintaining the racks. Shared the apprentice program has been a valuable asset to the community.

Vogtman: Agreed with Commissioner Schmidt on regards to commercial use. Shared that he has seen high use on the river, thinking this program will catch on quickly.

Crosby: Thanked the Parks Commission for talking about universal design. Questioned where the revenue will go from the rack program.

Jim Filby Williams: Indicated the funds would remain in the Parks Fund.

D. Legacy Grant Award for DWP/DT and Hartley Park/Nature Center (Informational) – Lisa Luokkala, Interim Assistant Manager

Luokkala: Shared that the Greater Minnesota Regional Park and Trail Commission has recommended the approval of two grant applications submitted by the City of Duluth. Indicated that one application was to complete the western half of the Duluth Traverse and make critical connections. Shared that close to 900K will be allocated for Sargent Creek restoration and rock scaling. Stated the City received notification for receiving funds for Hartley Park and Nature Center to increase opportunities and access to the amenities. Highlighted that the City was approved for the full request being just shy of \$1.3 million dollars. Indicated this will include building and site improvement plans including a 5,000 square foot addition to the building wayfinding and signage, as well as pedestrian access. Shared her gratitude with the Legacy Committee. Encouraged everyone to reach our local legislation delegation to thank on the behalf of the City of Duluth and show support for the funding



package. Indicated that they will not take place immediately. Stated it would be brought to the legislation later this month and the paper work would begin.

Joyce: Questioned if any of the funds would be allocated towards maintenance.

Luukkala: Stated the designation was approved for only improvements. Indicated that these are not how these funding mechanisms work. Shared that a review of the asset management plan will be reviewed for both locations.

Schmidt: Congratulated Luukkala. Questioned the parking and pedestrian access point improvements at Hartley.

Jim Filby Williams: Indicated this would be for parking as people park along the side of the road when the lot is over flowed. Stated most funds would go to Hartley nature signage projects, for people to find their way home.

Schmidt: Questioned if the location of the parking improvements.

Luukkala: Indicated that it would be the improvement of the shoulder of the road.

Schmidt: Questioned if there are any changes to the DWP.

Luukkala: Indicated his reference was for the Duluth Traverse Mini Master Plan.

Luukkala: Indicated Jim Shoberg would provide the best answer.

Jim Filby Williams: Indicated we are closely and usually extensive supplementary public process for the DWP, almost all of the money is from Spirit will be allocated to Becks Road. Indicated the completion of the DWP from the single track from Green Street to the Zoo. Stated refinements are being made to the snowmobile route in that area. Indicated the \$900k for the DWP and with a small amount towards the single track.

Schmidt: Questioned if it will impact the zoo property.

Jim Filby Williams: Stated Parks Staff secured a \$300k grant for the Lincoln Park Restoration Project. Mentioned \$120k would go towards storm water infrastructure at Piedmont.

## V. Commission Committees

- A. Administrative (E-board) – meeting date: Monday, November 26<sup>th</sup> at noon at the Parks Office  
Chair – Erik Torch – Amanda Crosby, Tjaard Breeuwer [Alicia Watts, Lisa Luukkala, Jim Filby Williams]
- B. Golf Committee – meeting date: January 10 at noon at the Parks office, Chair – Erik Torch, Dennis Isernhagen





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## VI. Commissioner & Liaison Reports

### IX. New Business

#### A. Parks Commission Officer Elections

Crosby: Stated Commissioner Breeuwer being nominated to stay in his role as Secretary. Indicated Commissioner Joyce nominated as the Vice President and Commissioner Crosby being nominated as president.

Action Item: Schmidt motioned to move. Second by Isernhagen. Call the motion to Vote. Unanimously approved.

### X. Old Business

Jim Filby Williams: Stated the golf study will deliver of draft report for the advisory committee to review and revise. Indicated this has been slow with the emergency cold weather shelter for homelessness. Indicated a presentation of the draft will be given tomorrow. Stated two weeks will be given to the Golf Committee to give feedback. Opened the floor for questions. No questions.

Jim Filby Williams: Stated the manager hiring process is to re-interview the two final candidates. Indicated the hope to offer a position a month from now.

Schmidt: Questioned if there was any word back from the Mayor in regard to the communication for the Parks Commission to City Council.

Jim Filby Williams: Indicated the City Attorney is not comfortable with the conceptual plan, nor is the Mayor. Stated further discussion needs to be made. Mentioned we are close to report back to the commission. Indicated Schmidt and Edmondson have worked hard to prepare this document.

Schmidt: Questioned if there were any needed tweaks to the document.

Edmondson: Stated we need to streamline the document to make it as one individual voice – making it not personal option and as a commission.

Crosby: Stated the document was well reflected by not singling out individual members.

### XI. Division Report

### XII. Public Comment

Dennis Hoelscher (public): Stated he was a professional in public safety. Reflected when a young girl and her father tragically lost their lives on Minnesota Point, just a couple hundred feet from the Beach House. Reflected on the weather that was present and the water temperature. Indicated the Beach



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House is the only place where lifeguards are stationed, but they will not work when waves are higher than 3 feet. Stated the City claims the entire beach to be City property as well as being a park. Mentioned that none of the lifeguards are trained to be “Surf” lifeguards. Indicated there is a specialized training that exists. Indicated the numbers come from working with the YMCA being thousands of swimmers per day. Questioned if it is reasonable to be on duty for more than 5 hours a day and to be further trained. Indicated nothing was said by City Council and Mayor Larson.

Crosby: Thanked Dennis Hoelscher for coming in and sharing the information.

Schmidt: Requested clarification on approaching the YMCA.

Dennis Hoelscher (public): Indicated he had approached the YMCA to find out what training is given to lifeguards. Indicated there are three levels of life guarding. Indicated search and rescue is for over required for 3 feet of waves.

Schmidt: Indicated that it would be appropriate to have this within the contract with the YMCA.

Watts: Indicated meetings are occurring to further asses this concern.

Dennis Hoelscher (public): Indicated their contract ends in 2019, which is three documents. Stated the YMCA runs the rentals – and they support the lifeguard program. Indicated this is not how you should run a business. Stated it should be a fully funded annual issue and that Parks should fund this program. Indicated the YMCA cannot afford the further training for lifeguards. Indicated these discussions have been made, and has slipped through the cracks. Stated this needs attention for water safety.

Jim Filby Williams: Indicated the City is aware of this issue. Stated there is budgetary constraints and there are any needs that are unsatisfactorily addressed. Indicated conversations with the YMCA will be held with Parks and Recreation Assistant Manager, Alicia Watts. Indicated there are two things that we need to do – Park Point is one of our top tourist attractions and deep seeded discomfort with the elected officials for having a tax for city owned assets.

Schmidt: Indicated if there is a drowning – funds are being drawn from Public Safety. Stated we may need to figure out how to get more people to the end and provide more resources there.

Jim Filby Williams: Indicated this might be one of those areas where the Parks Commission can gather a collective view on what should be a priority.

Breeuwer: Questioned if he could email points of his presentation to the Parks Commission.

Dennis Hoelscher (public): Stated he would send the document to the Parks Commission, Mayor Larson, and the City Council. Reflected on all the grants that were received, questioned why can't we get a grant for safety. Stated he has previously volunteered to work on the trails. Stated this is about safety along with life and death.



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Crosby: Thanked Dennis Hoelscher (public).

Tom Burnes (public): Stated universal access is very difficult to assess; don't assume the lower rung is what handicapped needs. Thanked Isernhagen for bringing up the issue. Stated this needs to have someone in a wheel chair or we are wasting our time.

Luukkala: Stated the Spirit Landing Tech Advisory Team has a person who lives life in a wheel chair, a child who serves on the committee. Indicated we have been engaged the disability community.

Crosby: Indicated everyone is different and there is a lot to consider.

### **XIII. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 6:39 pm. Moved by Commissioner Breeuwer.

### **XIV. Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be Wednesday February 13, 2019 at City Hall – Council Chamber