



PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes of November 13, 2019



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, Jill Joyce, Erik Torch, Dennis Isernhagen, Jenny Peterson, Tjaard Breeuwer, Dudley Edmondson, David Demmer, Britt Rohrbaugh, Noah Kramer.

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

III. Approval of October 9 Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Joyce motioned for approval of the October 9 meeting minutes; second by Commissioner Torch. Unanimously approved.

IV. Presentations

V. Commissioner Committees

VI. Commissioner & Liaison Reports

VII. New Business

The Parks and Recreation Commission welcomed its newest Commissioner, Noah Kramer, who holds the Recreation Professional seat.

VIII. Old Business

- A. Western Waterfront Trail Master Plan (Action Requested) – Lisa Luokkala, Stewardship Assistant Manager

Luokkala shared the new name of the trail being Waabizheshikana, which was confirmed by The Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa. Shared stakeholders and commissioners weighed in to provide edits to the new plan. Ricki Defoe shared the process of how naming takes place and the significance of the new name. Shared that a ceremony takes place with the passing of tobacco and food. Indicated gifts and songs also take place during the naming process. Mentioned The Fond du Lac Band was grateful to work with the City of Duluth on the naming process.

Commissioner Comments

Torch questioned what the update was with US Steel. Jim Filby Williams indicated progress is being



PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes of November 13, 2019

City Hall – Council Chambers



made, where it is being defined to meet agreement on the restoration plan. Shared he is hoping details can be ironed out in the next couple of months, with project completion in 2022.

Torch made a motion to approve the Waabizheshikana, The Marten Trail Master Plan. Second by Isernhagen.

Demmer questioned if the Commission should approve the plan without the Economic Impact Study.

Luokkala indicated that the owner of LS&MR was not involved with the process, and was given the plan when it was completed. Shared the City felt this does not reflect on the City's workings. Jim Filby Williams indicated the plan is simply for the creation of the trail.

Demmer indicated the study helped guide his decision to have both rail and trail and the document is important with the decision.

Unanimously approved.

B. Golf Update (Informational) – Jessica Peterson, Parks and Recreation Manager

Jessica Peterson shared the purpose is to preserve Duluth public golf by protecting greenspace, providing housing, and a three year agreement to operate 45 holes between the two courses. Shared the City Council voted and adopted the zoning changes for both course areas. Indicated there is an opportunity to provide work spaces as well. Reflected on the RFP process, mentioned the point of contact is the Planning Division with proposals collected until November 25. Mentioned that selling park property will need a simple majority vote between the Parks and Recreation Commission and the City Council. Reflected on the golf RFI, which was posted on the website. Indicated the agreement was set in place before the City Advisory Committee process. Shared developing the Golf Advisory Board will take place in 2020.

Commissioner Questions

Edmondson questioned if the only way to save Duluth Golf to sell parkland. Jessica Peterson referred to the document put together by the Citizen Advisory Committee, which states that selling the land will be needed to meet necessary capital investment. Edmondson questioned if the City is still opposed to having a Master Plan for the golf courses. Jessica Peterson indicated pursuing a Master Plan would be difficult with the uncertainty with where all the funds will be derived from. Kramer questioned if there has been a cost benefit analysis for having a third party to operate the golf courses. Jim Filby Williams indicated that in 2008 or 2009 there was a shift from City of Duluth employees from managing the courses over to contractor operate and that this study was performed but would need to look back to confirm the exact numbers. Demmer questioned what the capital improvements would be needed. Jessica Peterson indicated significant infrastructure improvements include the clubhouse and the irrigation system. Demmer indicated he does not understand why there would not be a Master Plan. Jim Filby Williams shared the plans have been approved in great detail. Stated the importance of selling parkland in order to have capital



PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes of November 13, 2019

City Hall – Council Chambers



improvements, in addition the Parks and Recreation Division has lost 10 employees – taking much time to complete a plan. Isernhagen shared he did not feel that enough time was spent to look at other recreational options to preserve golf. Stated he sees the need to have a Master Plan. Jim Filby Williams indicated that a motion would be advisory to City Council, which would be required to weigh in on the matter. Stated hundreds of hours into producing a well grounded Findings Report, which included recommendations for the golf courses. Indicated staff have heavily invested in this document – where the report defines the roadmap. Mentioned staff time will be diverted from Lincoln Park and Memorial Park improvements. Stated that having a year round operations is going to require more capital investment. Isernhagen mentioned the community never had the opportunity to weigh in. Joyce questioned if multi-use was include in the RFI and RFP process. Jim Filby Williams confirmed this has been included. Jennifer Peterson indicated a strategic plan would define a further plan rather than just a cost analysis. Edmondson stated having a plan b should happen instead of selling the land. Jim Filby Williams indicated the clubhouse at Enger will be needing \$20-30k just to operate for next year.

XIII. Division Report

Public Comment

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 7:05 pm.

XIV. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Wednesday, December 11, 2019 in City Hall Council Chambers.