



PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes March 8, 2023

Duluth City Hall, Council Chambers



I. Call Meeting to Order

President Crosby called the meeting to order at 4:57 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Present: Amanda Crosby, David Demmer, Natalie Chin, Tjaard Breeuwer, Sarah Beehler, Noah Hobbs – City Council Liaison

Not Present: Britt Rohrbaugh, Kala Pedersen, Annie Harala – St. Louis County Commissioner, Kelly Durick Eder – ISD 709 School Board Liaison

III. Approval of the January 11 and February 8 Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Demmer motioned to approve the January 11 and February 8 meeting minutes. Commissioner Beehler second. Unanimously approved. Motion carries.

IV. Presentations

A. Senior Programming Update (Informational) Abby Proulx, Recreation Specialist

Commissioner Demmer questioned why Evergreen has so many more participants compared to other Community Centers. Proulx stated that anecdotally, it is the most central location and has a bus station nearby and library attached. Stated that prior to Covid shutdowns, Evergreen still had most participants. Covid had harder impact on farther east or farther west locations of Portman and Morgan Park.

Commissioner Demmer questioned how many people use DTA to get to program locations. Proulx stated that she would have to look into it. Stated that another option used is Stride, which also provides transportation. Stated that Evergreen is the one that people use public transit to get to the most.

Commissioner Demmer questioned if the condition of community centers may get in the way of some programming. Proulx stated that the conditions have been adequate for program needs. Stated that having an open space for people to meet is what the main need is. Stated that in the past, kitchens have been used for meal service but that has not returned due to lower numbers.

Commissioner Beehler questioned how attendance and participation is tracked. Proulx stated that tracking is different because registration is not through the online system for a lot of programs and activity clubs. Stated that she relies on volunteers to track attendance. Stated that some programs do have pre-registration through the online system. Stated that she combines those two types of tracking to get the final numbers.

B. Strategic Public Lands Re-alignment Project (Informational) Kate Kubiak, Natural Resources Coordinator

Commissioner Demmer questioned whether Downer Park will be primarily used for recreation or if there are any natural area preservation plans for that area. Director Filby Williams stated that there is not an intention to designate it as a natural area, but it is our intent to manage this as a nature-based park in a way that maintains the natural value there with no significant development envisioned.

Commissioner Demmer questioned if the City and the County have agreed to property values. Kubiak stated that about 75% are free conveyed. The rest are a percentage of the estimated market value of 5-20%. Stated the County has been good to work with, and they see the value of the City taking ownership



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of these parcels.

Commissioner Demmer questioned what the park designation timeline will mean for the Commission. Director Filby Williams stated that the designations for park land will run through the PRC before going to Council. Stated that the natural area designation will run through NRC before going to Council. Stated that it is not required that we designate these lands as parks or natural areas, but this is the most definitive way to demonstrate that we are using the lands in the way we said we would according per statute.

V. Commissioner Committees

Administrative (E-Board) meeting date: Thursday, April 13 at noon, Parks Conference Room
Amanda Crosby, David Demmer, Kala Pedersen [Jessica Peterson, Bridget Erickson]

VI. Commissioner & Liaison Reports

VII. New Business

VIII. Old Business

IX. Division Report

X. Public Comment

XI. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 5:43 pm.

XII. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Wednesday, April 19 at 5:00 p.m., Council Chambers.