



PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes November 13, 2024

Duluth City Hall, Council Chambers



I. Call Meeting to Order

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

II. Roll Call

Present: David Demmer, Kala Pedersen, Beth Olson, Josie Laporte, Dave Cizmas, Brooke Marinan

Not Present: Sarah Beehler, Terrance Lovejoy, Hailey Sigafus, Ashley Grimm – St. Louis County Commissioner, Stephanie Williams – School Board Liaison, Azrin Awal – City Council Liaison

III. Approval of the September 11 Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Olson motioned to approve the September 11 meeting minutes. Commissioner Cizmas second. Unanimously approved. Motion carries.

IV. Presentations

A. Duluth Amateur Hockey Association – Icebreakers (Informational) Bob Nygaard and Ashley Hirt

Demmer questioned where players went after COVID with the participant numbers not reaching the level they were before COVID. Hirt stated that some players went to Hermantown, aged out, went to boys hockey.

Demmer questioned if they are involved in the planning process for indoor athletic facilities. Hirt stated that she is on the AVRI indoor task force. Nygaard stated that one option that would benefit hockey is an outdoor pavilion. Stated that this type of facility can be used year-round for multiple uses. Peterson stated that both indoor and outdoor options are a part of the Athletic Venues Reinvestment Initiative planning process.

B. Programming Recap 2024 (Informational) Parks Recreation Specialists

Marinan questioned if there is a central location for finding information on programs through Parks and Recreation. Werle stated that seasonal program brochures come out three times a year. Stated that there is also information on the website and social media.

C. ATV Route Study (Informational) Cliff Knettel, Parks Assistant Manager

Demmer questioned what the process will look like for the study and review of the study findings. Knettel stated that once funding is secured, the study will be about a year-long process beginning next summer or fall. Stated that public engagement will be a part of the process. Stated that when there is a study draft, it will be brought back to the Parks and Recreation Commission for review and approval. Manager Peterson stated that current City ordinance prohibits the use of ATVs within City limits. Stated that a City ordinance change will need to be studied and evaluated as well before bringing this to Council. Stated that consultations with the police and fire and other City departments have already begun.

Olson questioned if there will be considerations for parking, trailheads, noise, and use limits as part of the study. Knettel stated that all those important topics will be considered as a part of this study.

Laporte questioned what goes into an environmental study. Knettel stated that there are different levels of review. Stated that in this case, impacts will be reviewed from noise, vehicle emissions, lights, storm runoff, wetland impacts, and so on. Stated that recommendations will come out of the review to address and



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minimize impacts.

- D. Cross City Trail Update (Informational) James Gittemeier, Senior Transportation Planner and Cliff Knettel, Parks Assistant Manager

Demmer questioned what the complication is between 59th and Raleigh. Knettel stated that the grant funds for this segment included a requirement for a permanent easement. Stated that some of this segment is on Minnesota Power land, and they would not grant a permanent easement. Stated that an alternative route is currently in place until this route can be completed. Stated that the funding was used instead for the Raleigh to Redruth segment.

Olson questioned where the snow will go when the street reconstruction is finished. Gittemeier stated that the width of the street will be reduced, so there will be less snow to move. Stated that there are boulevard sections that can store snow between the trail and street. Stated that the bikeways can also be used for temporary snow storage. Stated that the design makes it easier for maintenance crews to get in these areas and clear out the snow.

Pedersen questioned if street parking will be reduced in the craft district. Gittemeier stated that an extensive parking study was conducted. Stated that in the areas with most heavily used parking, the amount of street parking will remain the same. Stated that areas with less parking use will have reduced parking spaces in the reconstruction.

Laporte questioned if there will be a crosswalk added in the 27th-22nd Ave section, and if a stop sign will be added along with that crosswalk. Gittemeier stated that there will be a stop sign added at 24th Ave West.

V. **Commissioner Committees**

Administrative (E-Board) meeting date: Thursday, December 5 at noon, Parks Conference Room - David Demmer, Kala Pedersen, Josie LaPorte [Jessica Peterson, Bridget Erickson]

VI. **Commissioner & Liaison Reports**

Demmer reported on the Lester Park Golf Course working group meetings.

VII. **New Business**

VIII. **Old Business**

IX. **Division Report**

Manager Peterson highlighted the completion of Brighton Beach Park, capital budget presentations to Council on November 25, and upcoming Parks Commission schedule for 2025.

X. **Public Comment**

XI. **Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 7:17 pm.

XII. **Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be Wednesday, December 11 at 5:00 p.m., Conference Room 330.