



CITY OF MENDOTA HEIGHTS

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

December 10, 2024 at 6:30 PM

Mendota Heights City Hall, 1101 Victoria Curve, Mendota Heights

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

- a. Introduction of Student Representative

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Approval of the Agenda

The Commission, upon majority vote of its members, may make additions or deletions to the agenda. These items may be submitted after the agenda preparation deadline.

5. Approval of Minutes

- a. Approve Minutes from the October 8, 2024 Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting

6. Public Comment - for items not on the agenda

Public comments provide an opportunity to address the Commission on items which are not on the meeting agenda. All are welcome to speak. Individuals should address their comments to the Commission as a whole, not individual members. Speakers are requested to come to the podium and must state their name and address. Comments are limited to five (5) minutes. No action will be taken; however, the Chair and Commissioners may ask clarifying questions as needed or request staff to follow up.

7. Acknowledgement of Reports

Items on the Acknowledgement of Reports are approved by one motion of the Commission.

- a. Par 3 Update
- b. Park Improvement Project Update
- c. Recreation Update
- d. Park System Master Plan Update
- e. Parks and Recreation Strategic Planning Update

8. New Business

- a. Approval of 2025 Meeting Schedule
- b. 2025 Fee Schedule Recommendation
- c. Ivy Hills Playground Subcommittee

9. Old Business

10. Staff Announcements

11. Student Representative Update

12. Commissioner Comments and Park Updates

13. Adjourn

**Next Meeting
January 14, 2025 at 6:30pm**

Information is available in alternative formats or with the use of auxiliary aids to individuals with disabilities upon request by calling city hall at 651-452-1850 or by emailing cityhall@mendotaheightsmn.gov.



Parks and Recreation Commission

Meeting Date: December 10, 2024

Agenda Item: Introduction of Student Representative

Item Type: Action Item

Department: Parks and Recreation

Contact: Meredith Lawrence, Parks and Recreation/Assistant Public Works Director

Action Request:
Informational Only.

Background:

The Student Representative to City Commissions serves in an advisory capacity and is a communication link for ideas, observations, concerns, satisfactions and questions to the Commission. The Student Representative is a non-voting member of the Commission and the position is open to Mendota Heights residents attending high school (grades 9-12) --public, private, or online/home school students are eligible. Preference is given to students in grades 10 or 11 (during the 2024-2025 school year).

On November 6 the City Council approved the appointment of Evangeline Fuentes to the role of Parks and Recreation Commission Student Representative. Evangeline's term will go through this school year, ending May 31, 2025. The opportunity for reappointment will be reviewed in the Spring, prior to the end of the term.

Evangeline is a junior at Two Rivers High School and has been an active volunteer at City events. In her application, she said, "I am very interested in my community as well as various city jobs. I have been employed at the City of Eagan since March 2023 and have grown to love the environment of parks and rec. A future career path I would love to consider would be that of a City Administrator. Additionally, I have been raised in this city and I know a lot about it, as well as what I would like to see as change!"

Staff are excited to welcome Evangeline to the Commission and look forward to collaborating with her to ensure our youth population is engaged to ensure their voices are heard in our

community.

Fiscal and Resource Impact:

None.

Attachments:

None

Item Relation to Commission Guiding Principles:

Effective Two-Way Communication with an Informed Community

A Leading Community with Invested Partners

Active Recreation Facilities for All

A Safe Connected and Walkable/Bikable Community

Vibrant and Diverse Community Programming

Greater Connection to the Natural Environment

Sustainable Source of Funding for Parks and Recreation

CITY OF MENDOTA HEIGHTS, DAKOTA COUNTY, MINNESOTA

DRAFT PARKS AND RECREATION MEETING MINUTES

October 8, 2024

The October meeting of the Mendota Heights Parks and Recreation Commission was held on Tuesday, October 8, 2024, at Mendota Heights City Hall, 1101 Victoria Curve.

1. Call to Order – Chair Jaffrey Blanks called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. Roll Call – The following Commissioners were present: Chair Jaffrey Blanks, Commissioners: Stephanie Meyer, Michelle Muller, Jennifer Weichert, Dan Sherer, and Michael Toth; absent: Commissioner Jo Schifsky. Staff present: Parks and Recreation Director Meredith Lawrence, Recreation Program Coordinator Willow Eisfeldt, and Public Works Director Ryan Ruzek.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

4. Approval of Agenda

Motion Muller/second Meyer, to approve the agenda.

AYES 6: NAYS 0

5.a Approval of Minutes from August 14, 2024, Regular Meeting

Motion Meyer/second Muller to approve the minutes of the August 14, 2024, Parks and Recreation Commission Regular Meeting.

AYES 6: NAYS 0

6. Citizen Comment Period (for items not on the agenda)

Gary Fischbach, 2150 Fox Place, stated that he likes the City services and has been proud to live here. He stated that he likes the park system maintained and to see the kids playing ball at Mendakota. He commented that the recent survey did not provide any options for people to object, as this seems like a massive expansion of government and would be an increase in taxes, which is concerning. He commented that the value of commercial properties is decreasing, as will the taxes from that commercial base while larger legislative decisions from the state and federal level will continue to increase taxes.

Commissioner Muller commented that the Master Plan process is a method to gauge what the residents want and identify needs in the parks system.

Mr. Fischbach commented that homes listed for sale in Mendota Heights sell within a couple of weeks because people want to come here as is.

Parks and Recreation Director Meredith Lawrence noted that there is an item on the agenda tonight related to the budget.

7. Acknowledgement of Reports

Chair Blanks read the titles of the three updates (Par 3, Park Improvement, Recreation, Park System Master Plan, and Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan Updates) and polled the Commissioners for questions.

Parks and Recreation Director Meredith Lawrence introduced and welcomed the newest member of the Commission, Jennifer Weichert.

7.a Par 3 Update

Parks and Recreation Director Meredith Lawrence briefly reviewed the August financial report. She commented that it has been a great season and highlighted some maintenance activities. She noted that typically the course is closed at the end of October or early November, weather dependent. She stated that two items were proposed for the 2025 budget for the golf course, a recreation facilities coordinator position and online tee reservation software.

Commissioner Sherer asked and received confirmation that the golf course staff would need and receive training for the updated system if that is implemented. He noted that he has referred retired friends and neighbors to work at the clubhouse and was unsure if that new system would be difficult for some people to learn.

Ms. Lawrence explained that is why training would be provided and was confident the staff would be able to use the new system, if implemented.

Commissioner Weichert asked the amount of time Ms. Lawrence spends on the Par 3.

Ms. Lawrence replied that currently 18 percent of her salary is coded to the course. She stated that during the season at least 15 hours of her week is spent on golf course activities.

Commissioner Muller noted that the recreation facilities coordinator would also be at the course with the employees as well to provide ongoing training.

Ms. Lawrence explained that currently she is the only employee fully trained in for the golf course for maintenance and financial elements and if there are issues on nights or weekends, that falls to her. Having an additional employee who is up to date on the golf course operations provides a deeper bench within the City.

Commissioner Weichert asked the percentage of revenue increase that would be anticipated with the new software/employee.

Ms. Lawrence stated that she has heard that other golf courses have increased revenue by 10 to 20 percent with the implementation of an online tee system in the first year. She noted that the new employee could also work some shifts at the club house, especially at the beginning and end of the season, which would decrease the staffing costs. She stated that she would also like to roll out more extensive programming at the course, which would increase revenue. She noted that 60 percent of the position cost would be funded through the golf course.

Commissioner Sherer asked why public works would not be trained on the irrigation system at the golf course.

Ms. Lawrence explained that public works only currently provides spraying capabilities at the course and all golf course maintenance is done by seasonal employees, which are under her supervision.

7.b Parks Improvement Update

Parks and Recreation Director Meredith Lawrence reviewed the park improvement projects that have been completed in 2024 as well as progress on the items that remain. She stated that three items have been included in the preliminary budget for 2025 by the City Council in discussion thus far and provided a brief overview noting that there will be a larger budget discussion later on the agenda. She provided a brief overview on the special parks fund and how that can be used within the park system, as well as park dedication. She explained that the park system master plan includes financial information on how park projects and maintenance could be funded with the knowledge that park dedication would not be that source.

Commissioner Muller asked the reasoning of the Council in delaying park projects, with the knowledge that there may not be funding in the future.

Ms. Lawrence explained that there are a lot of budget requests, not just parks and recreation, and therefore the Council must make the hard decisions on which items are approved. She noted that she would provide more information on the budget requests during that agenda item. She encouraged members of the Commission to attend a budget worksession as department heads must explain why their requests are needed and if they could be delayed.

Commissioner Weichert stated that neighborhood demographics are important when considering improvements for the parks. She stated that a fence that was put in for a baseball field in a neighborhood with mainly young children, noting that the fence is never hit by baseball, but it does limit the use of that space by other sports. She commented that the investment in baseball seems to push out other sports. She stated that she would also like to see dedicated pickleball courts. She commented that Mendota Heights has an aging population and also has young children. She stated that she would like to see more investment in the needs of the senior population and young families without singularly focusing on baseball. She believed that some of the tennis courts and basketball courts could be converted to different uses.

Commissioner Muller commented that they are not singularly focused on baseball and work hard to provide equity. She stated that pickleball is often discussed and courts were just added at Wentworth.

Commissioner Weichert commented that the Wentworth courts are on a hockey rink and cannot be used in the winter.

Commissioner Meyer stated that she and Commissioner Sherer joined the Commission at the same time and pickleball has been a topic of conversation for many years. She stated that they have tried to utilize the hockey rinks. She stated that they have received input that people do like the tennis courts as well, so they have preserved some of those courts as well. She stated that the master plan is using the demographics of the community as well in order to better plan and determine the needs of the park system. She commented that the basketball courts are heavily used, specifically by teens.

Commissioner Weichert stated that it would be very easy to dual stripe a tennis court so that it could be used for pickleball and tennis.

Commissioner Muller commented that has been discussed for Valley and asked staff for more information on why they decided to keep that as tennis.

Ms. Lawrence stated that the master plan will include demographics, although perhaps not to the level of neighborhood demographics. She stated that the plan will also compare the City's park system to national levels. She recognized that Mendota Heights does have more baseball facilities than the average city of this size, but that does not mean they will be getting rid of those. She stated that grant funds have been received for tennis court projects and therefore she would need to look into the grant requirements to see if the additional striping could be done. She stated that they did look at refurbishing the Valley courts into pickleball courts, but that did not move forward. She stated that could be discussed but recognized the funding the is the biggest barrier. She stated that one of the barriers to some grant funding is that the City does not have a master plan, so she is hoping that once that plan is completed, the City could pursue additional funding opportunities.

Chair Blanks commented that the Commission is mindful in how they make requests to the Council and providing equity in the parks system. He recognized that there are a lot of baseball fields, but there are also a lot of baseball players in Mendota Heights.

Commissioner Muller stated that four of the Commission members have soccer players at home and recently received a letter from the association explaining why they choose to use the ISD 197 fields over the City fields.

Commissioner Sherer agreed recalling the time the association made the transition from the neighborhood park fields to the school district fields. He welcomed Commissioner Weichert to the Commission and noted that the Commission has discussed the items that she brought forward multiple times, in depth. He stated that there was a lot of development in the 1980s and 1990s which funded the park system, and that development has slowed as the community has become fully built, which leads to discussion of how the park system will be funded in the future.

Chair Blanks commented that the budget is a huge constraint on what can be done as well as space constraints. He explained that they also focus on equity, providing recreational opportunities for residents of all ages.

7.c Recreation Update

Recreation Coordinator Willow Eisfeldt highlighted recent recreational programing and events as well as upcoming opportunities.

Commissioner Muller congratulated staff on the high attendance for Barktober.

Ms. Lawrence also commended Ms. Eisfeldt for the high attendance at Tour de Rec. She stated that three years ago they would be happy to have five kids show up and last week there were 70 kids. She noted that it is also a free recreational opportunity that does not require registration.

Chair Blanks echoed those comments and noted that he has received comments from families showing their appreciation for the free recreational events.

Commissioner Muller also commented that Tour de Rec is nicely done.

Ms. Lawrence encouraged the Commission to come out for Trick or Teeing, as there are typically around 750 kids at that event.

Commissioner Muller commented that the community is starting to catch on to the routine in the monthly events and the annual events.

Commissioner Weichert asked how the programs are promoted and communicated to residents.

Ms. Eisfeldt commented that they use social media, the City website and calendar, the Friday News, News from the Nine, flyers and sandwich boards, and notifications from partners.

Ms. Lawrence stated that staff also works with the Communications Coordinator to provide department information in the Heights Highlights. She stated that they continue to look at ways to provide a diverse reach to residents.

7.d Park System Master Plan Update

Parks and Recreation Director Meredith Lawrence provided background on the need for the master plan for the park system. She provided additional details on the phase two survey which was completed to gain input from residents on whether there was an appetite to pay more for higher quality and additional park amenities. She stated that the next step will be to have a joint worksession on November 12th with the City Council and Park Commission where the consultant will present the findings of the phase two survey. She provided additional information on those that have been included in the public engagement process, including focus groups.

7.e Parks and Recreation Strategic Planning Update

Parks and Recreation Director Meredith Lawrence reviewed the progress on the Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan.

Commissioner Muller asked the number of responses for the phase one survey versus the phase two.

Ms. Lawrence was unsure, estimating about 500 responses for phase one. She stated that there were more responses for the phase two survey and recognized that they brought the funding piece forward earlier than most cities do. She stated that her goal in bringing that funding piece forward was to gauge the appetite of the community, as if there is no appetite for additional funding, that would take the process in a different direction.

8. New Business

8.a Park Bench Donation Recommendation

Parks and Recreation Director Meredith Lawrence presented a request for a park bench donation for Wentworth Park. She stated that staff walked the site with the residents and believe that this would be a great location for a bench, identifying the proposed location 20 feet from the pond. She noted that Wentworth does not have many benches and therefore this would be a great addition. She reviewed the language proposed for the plaque. She stated that staff made it clear that the concrete pad would not be poured until the spring and therefore the bench would also not be installed until the spring.

Motion Meyer/second Weichert to recommend approval of the park bench donation at Wentworth Park by Bill and Joan Gacki.

AYES 6: NAYS 0

9. Old Business

9.a FY2025 Budget Update

Parks and Recreation Director Meredith Lawrence provided background information on the budget process. She stated that the City Council reviewed the seven projects recommended by the Commission and three of those projects were included in the preliminary budget. She stated that staff will meet again with the Council on October 15th to continue to discuss budget priorities, noting that the proposed recreation facilities coordinator position will be discussed in further detail at that meeting. She stated that a worksheet was included in the packet showing the department requests and whether the items were approved or denied. She noted that even the items that were approved in the preliminary budget could be denied in the final budget.

Commissioner Meyer asked if the hesitation for the additional staff person is related to the balance of the job, or whether there was a reason provided. She recognized that recreation staffing is already maxed out and she did not want them to become burnt out and leave.

Ms. Lawrence stated that she did not want to speak for the Council. She stated that Ms. Eisfeldt has been a great addition that she would like to preserve. She recognized that when you hire an employee it is an ongoing expense. She believed that the Council understands that the golf course has changed, noting that when she began in 2017 there were 5,000 rounds during the season, and they are now at 20,000 rounds per season. She stated that they have been transparent with the Council that if staffing is not increased, they will have to cut some things. She did not believe the golf course is yet at its capacity and that rounds can continue to be increased.

Commissioner Meyer asked if it would be possible that the Council could accept the position as a part-time position and whether that would even be acceptable.

Ms. Lawrence stated that the Council has many different options. She stated that her concern with a part-time employee would be that it would be a revolving position with a lot of training required. She stated that this position is easier on the taxes as 60 percent of that would be funded by the golf course rather than taxpayers.

Commissioner Muller asked if there has been a decrease in attendance for any programs over the past two years.

Ms. Eisfeldt stated that for all the programming she has seen an increase with the exception of golf programming. She stated that she does not have the knowledge or expertise in golf and cannot be there to supervise those doing the golf programming and therefore she believes people are going other places for golf programming.

Commissioner Weichert asked if staff has reached out to the high school golf teams, as many students require volunteer hours and could perhaps assist with lessons.

Ms. Eisfeldt stated that she does reach out to the schools and colleges with the seasonal job offerings and asking if those athletes would be interested, but there is typically not a response. She stated that the only issue with volunteers is that they need consistent staffing Monday through Thursday.

Commissioner Weichert suggested reaching out to senior golfers that may be interested.

Chair Blanks commented that there is not staffing to oversee that.

Ms. Lawrence stated that the clubhouse staff is primarily seniors, and they are not currently interested in teaching. She stated that the golf course is a community amenity, and they do use it for different events, but believed that the number of annual rounds could be increased.

Commissioner Weichert asked if mahjong could be another offering for seniors in addition to cribbage.

Ms. Lawrence commented that the goal would be to expand recreational programs for seniors and teens, along with nature-based programming—should the new position be approved.

10. Staff Announcements

Parks and Recreation Director Meredith Lawrence shared the following announcements:

- Student Representative Meg Murphy's term ended in June and there is a vacant Student Representative position open that is currently being advertised
- Staff is beginning to prepare for winter skating and warming houses and the City is beginning to look for staff for warming houses, skating instructors, and flooders
- Volunteers for Trick or Tearing should contact Ms. Eisfeldt
- Thanks to the parks staff and seasonal Par 3 staff that made this season a great one
- Other events can be found on the City's website

11. Student Representative Update

None.

12. Commission Comments and Park Updates

Commissioner Sherer

- Commented that there does seem to be a void in the parks north of 62 for soccer. He suggested perhaps a soccer goal at Wentworth or Ivy Hills for kids to practice.
- Civic Center got a lot of use this summer with three teams using it and commented that the updates were much appreciated
- Provided additional details on the growth of the baseball and softball programs
- The nets on the batting cages at Civic Center could be replaced
- Hagstrom King continues to be heavily used between the playground and basketball court

Commissioner Toth

- Commented on how clean the Mendota Heights parks are compared to parks in other communities
- Recognized the changes to the park model today compared to the 1980s and encouraged residents to participate in the engagement for the parks master plan

Commissioner Muller

- Her sister recently moved near Kensington and provided positive comments on the park and trail system
- Inquired as to where the outhouse at the skate park was

Ms. Lawrence commented that the outhouse was removed last year because of vandalism, and they tried it again this year but there was again vandalism. She stated that there is still an outhouse near the playground.

Chair Blanks

- It was a great run for Music in the Park at Market Square, which had great attendance and was appreciated by the businesses
- Encouraged residents to visit Valley Park

Commissioner Weichert

- Has visited 12 of the parks since she was offered the Commission seat and was amazed at how clean the parks are
- Has not noticed users at the parks she was assigned
- Found it ironic that the people she spoke with at Rogers Lake Park were not Mendota Heights residents
- Skate Park users reported loose nuts and bolts
- She lives near Victoria Highlands Park which is well-kept with a lot of baseball games. Expressed concern with dead and downed trees and with the safety of the pond
- Plays pickleball every morning at Marie Park and rarely sees people playing tennis
- Would like to see pickleball courts that could be used year-round

Commissioner Meyer

- Marie Park continues to be well used as does Mendakota Park
- Thanked staff for all the work they do and the wonderful events that are hosted

13. Adjourn

Motion Weichert/Second Muller to adjourn the meeting at 8:28 PM

AYES 6: NAYS 0

Minutes drafted by:
Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.



Parks and Recreation Commission

Meeting Date: December 10, 2024

Agenda Item: Par 3 Update

Item Type: Monthly Report

Department: Parks and Recreation

Contact: Meredith Lawrence, Parks and Recreation/Assistant Public Works Director

Background:

Season Statistics

The 2024 golf course year at the Mendota Heights Par 3 was one for the record books. The golf course had a total of 20,089 rounds of golf, which is the most rounds the Par 3 has seen. Included in the packet is the Year in Review compared to previous seasons.

Close Date

The golf course closed for the 2024 season on November 3. Staff is grateful and proud of the incredible clubhouse and maintenance staff who continually go over and above to provide the best playing experience to our residents and customers.

October Financial Report

A financial report will be available for review at the Commissioner's seat at the meeting.

2025 Preparation

Staff is in the process of preparing for the 2025 golf season. The City Council approved a new FTE for 2025--Recreation Facilities Coordinator, who will be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Par 3, in addition to providing Recreation assistance to the Department. This position will be posted on December 18 and the individual is budgeted to begin in February, 2025. Staff is busy transforming an existing storage area into an office for the new employee.

Currently, staff is busy preparing for the launch of the City's new Online Tee Time/POS Software to launch in the Spring of 2025. The Council approved a contract with ForeUP to provide the ability for customers to book tee times online, in addition to a more robust Point of Sale (POS) system. Staff are excited about the future potential and opportunities provided by the new technology at the golf course.

Staff will post the seasonal positions for the golf course in January, in order to ensure the hiring process and paperwork process is complete prior to a March training timeline.

Standby Generator

In the past three years the golf course has had more than a dozen incidents when the clubhouse has lost power due to a power outage. The golf course property has overhead powerlines, which are more susceptible to power outages than underground lines. In the winter when there is an outage, staff are called in to turn on temporary heaters to ensure the pipes on the exterior walls do not freeze. In the last three years, this has been a change in operations due to the clubhouse being used for recreation programs in the off-season and not being winterized. During the warm months when there is an outage, the course is not able to accept credit card payments. On busy days, this can result in a substantial amount of lost revenue for the course, as a large majority of payments are made via credit card.

As the course moves to an online tee time system in 2025, it will be more important than ever that staff has access to the online tee sheets to successfully provide continuation of services if there is a power outage. A backup generator has been included in past Capital Improvement Plans but has been deferred due to more pressing needs like mowers, HVAC replacement and facility safety upgrades. With the Par 3 showing an estimated \$63,500 operating surplus at the end of September, staff felt it was the right time to move forward with the installation of a standby generator at the clubhouse prior to the 2025 season. This item was approved by the City Council on December 3.

Attachments:

1. Par 3 Year in Review-Rounds

Item Relation to Commission Guiding Principles:

Vibrant and Diverse Community Programming
Active Recreation Facilities for All

Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
March	0	0	0	748	0	0	261
April	0	576	327	1678	896	1181	1923
May	1710	1521	3138	2285	2797	2923	2664
June	1674	1542	2881	2305	2839	3365	3395
July	1744	1784	2470	2673	3213	3753	3093
August	1681	1888	2568	2306	3042	3052	3089
September	861	785	1962	1758	1798	2043	2095
October	246	76	937	1157	1077	1168	1428
November	20	0	0	257	207	0	65
Additional (Schools)	0	152	0	451	377	478	263
Total	7936	8324	14283	15618	16246	17963	18276

League Rounds

Womens League	983	978
Junior League	566	550
Senior League	58	84
Total	1607	1612

Senior Golf Pass	190	201
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GRAND TOTAL	19760	20089
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Parks and Recreation Commission

Meeting Date: December 10, 2024

Agenda Item: Park Improvement Project Update

Item Type: Monthly Report

Department: Parks and Recreation

Contact: Meredith Lawrence, Parks and Recreation/Assistant Public Works Director

Background:

2024 Project Updates

The following projects have been completed in 2024:

- Marie Park Hockey Rink Acrylic Surfacing for Pickleball
- Mendakota Park Fiber Installation--Cameras, Door Access
- Marie Park Dugout Addition/Baseline Fencing
- Wentworth Park Pickleball Installation
- Marie Park Ball Field Resurfacing
- Wentworth Tennis Courts

2025 Budget Requests

Staff included the following requests as part of the 2025 budget consideration:

1. Wentworth Park Basketball Court Expansion (NOT included in Preliminary)
2. Ivy Hills Playground Replacement (Included in Preliminary)
3. Wentworth Hockey Board Replacement (NOT included in Preliminary)
4. Valley Park Picnic Shelter Refurbishment (NOT included in Preliminary)
5. Hagstrom King Park Connection Point (Included in Preliminary)
6. Basketball Hoop Replacement/Relining (NOT included in Preliminary)
7. Friendly Hills Tennis Court Resurfacing (Included in Preliminary)

As part of the Parks Maintenance budget, an infield renovation project for Valley Park is included for 2025.

Staff begin work on the Ivy Hills Playground Replacement, Hagstrom King Park Connection

Point and Friendly Hills Tennis Court Resurfacing project for completion in 2025.

Special Parks Fund Balance

Currently, the Special Parks Fund is showing an estimated balance of approximately \$185,000 available as of December 1, 2024. Current policy states the Special Parks Fund should have a balance of at least \$200,000. The Council will need to determine next steps in regards to spending the Special Parks Fund.

Attachments:

None

Item Relation to Commission Guiding Principles:

Active Recreation Facilities for All



Parks and Recreation Commission

Meeting Date: December 10, 2024

Agenda Item: Recreation Update

Item Type: Monthly Report

Department: Parks and Recreation

Contact: Willow Eisfeldt, Recreation
Program Coordinator

Background:

Warming Houses and Ice Rinks

2024-2025 Warming House Attendants will be trained on December 16 with the Warming Houses and Ice Rinks opening shortly after this training date (weather permitting). In 2023-2024, Mendota Heights' was able to have the Warming Houses open for seven days, staff are hoping for a longer ice skating season this year. Warming house hours this year will remain: Monday-Friday 4:00-9:00 PM, Saturday 10:00 AM-9:00 PM, and Sundays 12:00-6:00 PM. Warming House hours on school days off will be 12:00-9:00 PM.

Frozen Fun Fest

The first Legacy Event of the year, Frozen Fun Fest, will feature an Ice Block Party Friday, February 7th from 5:00-8:00 PM. Activities at this event will include: Blade with the Blue (ice skating with police officers), snow shoeing, hot chocolate and bon fires, and live music. An official schedule and line-up of entertainment and food trucks will be announced within the month on the City's social media and website. Saturday, February 8th will feature the annual Frozen Fun Fest Puzzle Competition in the morning and early afternoon. Lastly, ice fishing lessons will be available at Rogers Lake Park from 2:00-4:00 PM with Fishing For All. This event will be open to all, no registration required.

Summer 2025 Programming

Summer 2025 programming registration will open on Tuesday, February 25, 2025. With the addition of a Parks and Recreation full-time staff, additional program opportunities are being looked into to expand the Mendota Heights Parks and Recreation offerings. Program offerings will include increased partnered programs between Parks and Recreation and the Police Department, increased offerings for Mendota Heights' CDA communities, increased active adult programming, and continued teen programming. Staff is working to also implement programming at the Rogers Lake Skatepark to feature an improved Mendota

Heights' amenity.

Attachments:

None

Item Relation to Commission Guiding Principles:

Vibrant and Diverse Community Programming



Parks and Recreation Commission

Meeting Date: December 10, 2024

Agenda Item: Park System Master Plan Update

Item Type: Monthly Report

Department: Parks and Recreation

Contact: Meredith Lawrence, Parks and Recreation/Assistant Public Works Director

Background:

A joint work session of the City Council and the Parks and Recreation Commission took place on November 12 at 6:00pm. The consultant presented their findings from Phase 1 and Phase 2 of engagement, in addition to their programming analysis, benchmark study, financial sustainability report, and equity analysis. Commissioners and Councilors discussed the findings, and agreed to direct the Consultant to continue preparing the final document with their recommendations for the next 15 years.

Staff continues to meet bi-weekly with the consultant team and will continue to do so until the completion of the project. In addition, staff is working to develop a more detailed Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) document that aligns with the Park System Master Plan. This will take staff a few months to develop, including working closely with the City's Assistant City Engineer to make some updates since the last thorough staff walk through three years ago.

The consultant will have the 95% plan to staff to review in mid-February, in which the staff project team will review in conjunction with the consultant. We will then provide the Commission and Council the draft plan to review in late March/early April for two weeks. The plan will then be open for Public Comment for a two-week timeframe before being brought back to the Commission for final review and recommendation on May 13.

The final adoption of the plan by the Council in May will be a great tee up to the 2026 budget discussions that will start at the staff level in June, 2025.

Attachments:

None

Item Relation to Commission Guiding Principles:

Sustainable Source of Funding for Parks and Recreation

A Leading Community with Invested Partners

Greater Connection to the Natural Environment

Vibrant and Diverse Community Programming

A Safe Connected and Walkable/Bikable Community

Active Recreation Facilities for All

Effective Two-Way Communication with an Informed Community



Parks and Recreation Commission

Meeting Date: December 10, 2024

Agenda Item: Parks and Recreation Strategic Planning Update

Item Type: Monthly Report

Department: Parks and Recreation

Contact: Meredith Lawrence, Parks and Recreation/Assistant Public Works Director

Background:

Included is the planning calendar that staff is utilizing to ensure progress. Each month, staff will provide an update on the strategic planning calendar.

The Commission should discuss a time to conduct their Strategic Planning for the 2025 calendar year, in order to update the team's Action Items, Strategic Initiatives, Responsibility, and Timelines.

Attachments:

1. PRC Planning Calendar 2024 ML December

Item Relation to Commission Guiding Principles:

Sustainable Source of Funding for Parks and Recreation

A Leading Community with Invested Partners

Greater Connection to the Natural Environment

Vibrant and Diverse Community Programming

A Safe Connected and Walkable/Bikable Community

Active Recreation Facilities for All

Effective Two-Way Communication with an Informed Community

2024 STRATEGIC GOALS

ACTION ITEM	STRATEGIC INITIATIVE	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE													
			Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	UPDATE	
Completion of Park System Master Plan	All	Parks and Recreation Director													The consultant shared their findings at the November 12 Joint Work Session. Staff and the consultant are working on the 95% plan to be provided to residents for public input. The Final Plan should be approved by Council in May.	
Finalize Sponsorship, Donation, and Event Policies	Sustainable Funding Source for Parks and Recreation	Parks and Recreation Director													The sponsorship policy has been approved by the City Council and is in effect. Staff will begin work on the donation and event policies in 2025.	
Work with businesses (Village and Plaza) for Event Engagement	A Leading Community with Invested Partners	Parks and Recreation Director/Recreation Program Coordinator													Cupid’s Crawl with businesses was held at Frozen Fun Fest. Music in the Park had a great 2024 year. Staff connected with businesses for Trick or Teeing.	
Work with the City of West Saint Paul to determine if a joint facility is feasible.	A Leading Community with Invested Partners	City Administrator/ Parks and Recreation Director													West Saint Paul has a community building on their 2025 Legislative Priorities. At this time, the City of Mendota Heights is not involved in that process.	
Create Trail CIP Program	Greater Connection to the Natural Environment	Public Works Director													This item was presented at the June meeting.	
Update Trail Maps to Be More Accessible	A Safe, Connected, Walkable and Bikeable Community	Parks and Recreation Director/Senior Engineering Technician													The interactive online map for the Mendota Heights Park System has been completed and is now launched on the City’s website.	
Diversify Programming Offered (Senior and Teen Programming)	Vibrant and Diverse Community Programming	Recreation Program Coordinator													The Coffee, Cards and Cribbage series has increased to a weekly event. The Summer Adult Walking group took place in 2023 and in 2024. Staff continues to look for ways to engage seniors and teens. Teen Nights are being planned for 2025.	
Coordinate Ongoing Community Engagement Plan for Commissioners	Effective Two-Way Communication with an Informed Community	Commissioners													Commissioners discussed engagement at their April work session for Phase 1 and Phase 2 engagement was discussed at the August meeting.	
Continued Success of the Volunteer in the Parks (VIP) Program	All	Commissioners and Staff													Staff continues to seek volunteers for events when necessary.	



Parks and Recreation Commission

Meeting Date: December 10, 2024

Agenda Item: Approval of 2025 Meeting Schedule

Item Type: Action Item

Department: Parks and Recreation

Contact: Meredith Lawrence, Parks and Recreation/Assistant Public Works Director

Action Request:

Staff recommends that the Parks and Recreation Commission review the proposed 2025 meeting dates and provide staff with any recommended changes. The Commission should discuss their start time of 6:30pm and determine if that is still desired, in addition to whether it would be prudent to move to an every other month format.

Background:

Each year the Parks and Recreation Commissioners set their meeting dates.

Below are the proposed meeting dates for the Parks and Recreation Commission in 2025. All meetings will have a 6:30pm start time and be conducted at City Hall.

- Tuesday, January 14 (**meeting will not be televised due to IT configuration change**)
- Tuesday, February 11
- Tuesday, March 11
- Wednesday, April 8 (Conflict for Staff)
- Tuesday, May 13
- Tuesday, June 10
- Tuesday, July 8
- Wednesday, August 13 (due to Primary Election Day on August 12)
- Tuesday, September 9
- Tuesday, October 14
- Wednesday, November 12 (due to Veteran's Day on November 11)
- Tuesday, December 9

Fiscal and Resource Impact:

None.

Attachments:

None

Item Relation to Commission Guiding Principles:

Sustainable Source of Funding for Parks and Recreation

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Parks and Recreation Commission

Meeting Date: December 10, 2024

Agenda Item: 2025 Fee Schedule Recommendation

Item Type: Action Item

Department: Parks and Recreation

Contact: Meredith Lawrence, Parks and Recreation/Assistant Public Works Director

Action Request:

Each year, the City Council approves the fee schedule that will be used to assess fees for services. Staff would like the Parks and Recreation Commission to review the City's current Parks and Recreation-based fees in order to make a recommendation to the City Council at their January 7, 2025 meeting.

Background:

The Mendota Heights Par 3 Community Golf Course fees were last amended in 2024 to include a \$1-per-round increase and the 10-round pass was increased from \$100 to \$110. In 2021, the City Council approved a new Senior Golf Pass which was added to the fee schedule.

The Field and Facility fees were last amended in 2019. Staff's estimate is that Picnic Shelter rental fees have not been increased for approximately 10 years. The City Council will meet to discuss the Field and Facility Use Policy and Fees in early 2025.

Tennis court fees were last amended in 2021, in which the fees changed from strictly an application fee with unlimited play, to an hourly charge for use. The City does not allow pickleball rentals--the courts are available on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Canoe Rack Rental fees have not changed since the canoe racks were installed at Roger's Lake.

The Park Bench Donation program saw an increase in cost in 2024 from \$1,000 to \$1,500. The total cost to the City of the park bench purchase and installation is currently \$3,000--which meets the goal of the donor and the City splitting the cost 50/50.

Fiscal and Resource Impact:

Staff recommends a \$1 per round increase for all rounds of golf at the Mendota Heights Par 3 Community Golf Course. Many surrounding courses have increased or plan to increase their greens fees due to the cost of supplies, equipment and labor increasing over the last few years. Staff has included in the packet a golf fee analysis that local Superintendents develop annually to compare the process of local comparable golf courses. With the addition of the Recreation Facilities Coordinator position in 2025, the fee increase will help to offset the additional personnel costs the course will have next year.

Staff recommends increasing the 10-round pass from \$110 to \$125 and the Senior Golf Pass from \$200 to \$220.

Staff recommends an increase in picnic shelter rates by \$25 per reservation. This would increase the resident rate to \$75/day, the non-resident rate to \$100/day, the resident business rate to \$100/day and the non-resident business rate to \$150/day.

As part of the Park System Master Plan and the Feasibility Analysis being conducted, the consultant is reviewing the Fee Schedule in regards to Cost Recovery and will be bringing forth recommendations this Spring.

Attachments:

1. 2024 Fee Schedule
2. Superintendents 2024 Golf Fee Schedule Review

Item Relation to Commission Guiding Principles:

Sustainable Source of Funding for Parks and Recreation

Guidance		2024 Fees
PARKS AND RECREATION FEE SCHEDULE		
Application Fee	Charged per permit season for all field/facility, permit application reservations. Due upon application. Non-refundable	\$ 25
Concessions Building Reservation	Must provide proof of Food/Beverage License	\$ 25 per event per day
Field Reservation Baseball/Softball/Soccer/Football/Lacrosse	Priority Level 3	\$ 7 per player per season
	Priority Level 4	\$ 10 per player per season
	Priority Level 5	\$ 10 per hour per field
	Priority Level 6 & 7	\$ 15 per hour per field
Field Reservation for Tournaments Baseball/Softball/Soccer/Football/Lacrosse	Priority Level 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	\$50 per day per field
Field Preparation	Non-Tournament Use	\$ 35 per field per day
Field Preparation	Tournament Use - Required for Priority Levels 3 and 4	\$ 35 per field per day
	Tournament Use - Optional for Priority Levels 5, 6, and 7	\$ 35 per field per day
Par 3 Community Golf Course Fees		
Par 3 Footgolf Fees		\$ 8 per round
Par 3 Greens Fees	Juniors/Seniors/Veterans-Weekday	\$13 per round
	Juniors/Seniors/Veterans-Weekend	\$15 per round
	Weekday	\$14 per round
	Weekend or Holiday	\$16 per round
Par 3 10-Round Pass		\$ 110 per year
Par 3 Senior Pass	Age 65 and over Does not include golf cart	\$ 200 per year
Par 3 Pull Cart Rental		\$4 per round
Par 3 Power Cart Rental		\$12 per round
Facility Reservations		
Ice Rink Reservation	Priority Level 3	\$ 4 per hour per rink
	Priority Level 4	\$ 6 per hour per rink
	Priority Level 5	\$ 4 per hour per rink
	Priority Level 6 and 7	\$ 8 per hour per rink
Tennis Court Reservations		\$ 5 per hour
Picnic Area/Shelter	Resident - Private	\$ 25
Picnic Area/Shelter	Non-Resident - Private	\$ 50
Picnic Area/Shelter	Resident - Business	\$50
Picnic Area/Shelter	Non-Resident - Business	\$100
NOTE: Mendota Heights schools, city events, and non-profit civic organizations are fee exempt for Picnic Area/Shelter rental fees.		
Picnic Table Additional	On-site	\$15/day
Canoe Rack Rental	Canoe Storage @Rogers Lake Park during summer months	\$ 50 per summer
Park Bench Donation		\$1,500

Golf Course Survey Par 3 Municipal Survey (Completed September 2024)		Par	Greens Fee	Weekend Holiday	2nd nine	Sr. Rate	Jr. Rate
Hyland (Bloomington) -Three Rivers Park District	2023	27	\$18.00	\$18.00	NA	\$14.00	\$14.00
	2024		\$19.00	\$19.00	NA	\$15.00	\$15.00
	2025		same	same	NA	same	same
Mendota Heights Par 3 weekday/weekend for seniors and juniors weekday/weekend for seniors and juniors	2023	27	\$13.00	\$15.00	\$7.00	\$12/\$14	\$12/\$14
	2024		\$14.00	\$16.00	\$8.00	\$13/\$15	\$13/\$15
	2025		\$15.00	\$17.00	\$9.00	\$14/\$16	\$14/\$16
Theodore Wirth Par 3 1240 yards	2023	27	\$14.00	\$14.00	\$9.00	\$11.00	\$11.00
	2024		\$15.00	\$15.00	\$10.00	\$12.00	\$12.00
	2025		\$15.00	\$15.00	same	\$12.00	\$12.00
Roseville Cedarholm 1342 yards * note: prices do not include sales tax	2023	27	\$15.25	\$15.75	\$8.50	\$14.25	same
	2024		\$15.75	\$16.50	\$8.00	\$14.00	\$9.99
	2025		\$16.00	\$17.00	\$9.00	\$14.50	same
Brookview (Golden Valley) 1287 yards * note: prices do not include sales tax	2023	27	\$14.50	\$14.50	\$9.50	\$11.50	\$11.50
	2024		\$16.00	\$16.00	\$11.00	\$13.00	\$13.00
	2025		same	same	same	same	same
New Hope Municipal 1331 yards Last increase in green fees was \$1 in 2024	2023	27	\$16.00	\$16.00	\$9.00	\$14.00	\$9.50
	2024		\$17.00	\$17.00	\$9.00	\$15.00	\$10.00
	2025		\$18.00	\$18.00	\$10.00	\$16.00	\$10.00
Birnamwood	2023	27	\$15.75	\$16.50	50%off regular rate	\$14.50	\$13.50
	2024		\$16.25	\$17.00	50%off regular rate	\$15.00	\$15.00
	2025		\$16.75	\$17.50	50%off regular rate	\$15.50	\$15.50
Centerbrook (City of Brooklyn Center)	2023	27	\$19.00	\$19.00	same	\$16.00	same
	2024		\$20.00	\$20.00	same	\$17.00	\$10.00
	2025		same	same	same	same	same

Area Executive Courses

Eagle Lake (Three Rivers Park District)	2023	31	\$18.00	\$18.00	NA	\$18.00	\$14.00
	2024		\$18.00	\$18.00	NA	\$18.00	\$14.00
	2025		\$19.00	\$19.00	NA	\$19.00	\$15.00
Brookland Golf Park (City of Brooklyn Park)	2023	30	\$16.50	\$16.00	\$5.50	\$15.00	\$13.00
	2024		\$17.50	\$17.50	\$5.50	\$15.00	\$13.00
	2025		\$18.00	\$18.00	\$5.50	\$15.50	\$13.00

* Do not include tax



Parks and Recreation Commission

Meeting Date: December 10, 2024

Agenda Item: Ivy Hills Playground Subcommittee

Item Type: Action Item

Department: Parks and Recreation **Contact:** Meredith Lawrence, Parks and Recreation/Assistant Public Works Director

Action Request:

Chair Blanks should appoint two or three commissioners to serve on the Ivy Hills Playground Subcommittee.

Background:

A subcommittee of three commissioners was utilized for aspects of the Marie Park and Valley View Heights Park Playground projects. First, the subcommittee worked with staff to establish the "must have features" to be included in the RFP. Second, the subcommittee helped staff narrow down the proposals received to three, in order to begin community engagement.

Staff is recommending a subcommittee be appointed to conduct the tasks previously completed by the playground subcommittees in the design of the Ivy Hills Park playground in 2025.

The time commitment will include one meeting to review the RFP with staff in January and one meeting after proposals are received to review them with staff.

Fiscal and Resource Impact:

None.

Attachments:

None

Item Relation to Commission Guiding Principles:

A Leading Community with Invested Partners
 Greater Connection to the Natural Environment
 Active Recreation Facilities for All