AGENDA

DATE:  Feb. 4, 2019 – 7:00 p.m.

LOCATION:  Fridley Civic Campus – 7071 University Ave NE, Fridley, MN 55432 – (upper level next to Council Chambers).

CALL TO ORDER
1. APPROVE PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES OF: Jan. 7, 2019
2. APPROVE PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION AGENDA:  Feb. 4, 2019

3. STAFF REPORTS
   a. Program Highlights (attached)
   b. Springbrook Nature Center Report (attached)
   c. Sports Camps and Update (Cleve McCoy)

4. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS
   a. Parks Master Plan Overview (Rachel Workin)
   b. Nature Based Play Areas (Heidi Ferris)

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:
   a. Follow up items from January meeting

6. ADJOURNMENT

Next Meeting: March 4, 2019 at the Fridley Civic Campus – 7 p.m.
CALL TO ORDER:
Chairperson Heintz called the Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL:
Members Present: Pete Borman, EB Graham, Mike Heintz, Dave Kondrick, Shanna Larson

Others Present: Mike Maher, Director of Springbrook Nature Center, Jeff Jensen, Operations Manager – Streets and Parks, and Deborah Dahl, Director of Community Services and Employee Resources

APPROVAL OF JAN. 7, 2019 PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES
MOTION made by Mr. Kondrick to approve the Jan. 7, 2019 meeting minutes of the Park and Recreation Commission, seconded by Ms. Graham.

Mr. Borman asked to make a correction to the minutes related to the discussion of River Edge Way Park. Mr. Borman said that he felt the minutes were not accurate and said he wanted to know how it would be removed from the listings of the parks that is listed in the directory. He went on to say he did not want to have it undesignated as a park and the park is accessible by land, which is easement that goes through his yard. Mr. Borman said that he had asked if there was a way it could designated as unimproved, saying that the City already has it designated as unimproved property. He said he wanted to know how to take it off the listing of the parks. He referred to the listings of parks that has all of the amenities, there is nothing listed on the River Edge Way Park.

Ms. Dahl asked to clarify his request and Mr. Borman said he wanted to know what it would take to get it removed from the listing and also to know what designates a park? Mr. Borman said – “What would it be to have it [a park] taken off the listing of the parks and what designates a piece of property as being a park?”

Mr. Borman handed out a map of the property to commission members and went on to explain his position and some of the history and concerns of the property.

Ms. Dahl asked if Mr. Borman beyond the modification for the minutes, if he wanted to add this item to the agenda for further discussion. Mr. Borman stated again that he wanted to make sure he wanted the other members on the commission understand the property in question and he wanted to know what designates a park.

Ms. Dahl said that she and Jeff Jensen would need some time researching that question and understand the history. Mr. Jensen said he needed to do some research because each park is different there are a number of reasons why parks are designated, such as with developers, donations, etc.

Mr. Borman explained some of the history of the land, the donation and the challenges. Mr. Jensen said that the park is classified and treated as a natural area. Mr. Heintz asked if we could put a sign up that said no access. Mr. Jensen said they had just dealt with this at Harris Park and would not work.

Ms. Dahl said that staff would do some additional research and get back to the commission.

To clarify for the record, the meeting minutes of Dec. 3, 2018 would reflect that Mr. Borman wanted to know what it would take to have a park removed from the listing of parks and what designates or qualifies a park?
CHAIRPERSON HEINTZ ASKED IF THE CORRECTION TO THE WERE ACCEPTABLE. BOTH FIRST AND SECOND PARTIES AGREED TO ACCEPT THE CORRECTION. UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL MEMBERS VOTING AYE, CHAIRPERSON HEINTZ DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED.

APPROVAL OF PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION AGENDA FOR JAN. 7, 2019.

Chairperson Heintz called for a motion to adopt the agenda for Jan. 7, 2019. Ms. Dahl entered one item for the agenda under New Business to discuss the Parks Master Plan. With the addition of item 4d, the MOTION was made by Ms. Larson, and seconded by Ms. Graham, to adopt the agenda for the Jan. 7, 2019 meeting.

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL MEMBERS VOTING AYE, CHAIRPERSON HEINTZ DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED.

1. STAFF REPORT
   a. Program Highlights
      Ms. Dahl reviewed key points from the Program Highlights included in the agenda packet. She noted the new registration software is now up and running with very few problems. She thanked staff again for their dedication and work, which was a very long time coming. She recommended the commission members go out and set up their profile.

      Ms. Dahl also reminded the commission of Winterfest on Jan. 26 from 12 noon to 3 p.m. and thanked those who have already signed up to help volunteer. She said if anyone was interested in volunteering to connect with Margo.

      Program staff recently worked together to focus on priorities for the coming year and brainstormed ideas for future programs. The two half-day meetings were led by Mike Maher and were very successful. Ms. Dahl said she would be updating the Commission members at an upcoming meeting.

      Ms. Dahl said that the Recreation Staff will be coordinating events and meetings in the Fireside room and out on the plaza. She said that if the requests are more than a daytime meeting and falls into the event area, it will be up to the Recreation staff to help coordinate the logistics. She mentioned that staff is working on the permit application and special use permit and will bring that back to the group.

      Ms. Dahl said that Cleve will be offering some new athletic programs and a summer sports camp series. She said she would have him come into the next meeting to give an update.

   b. Springbrook Nature Center Report
      Mike Maher provided an update to the commission about activities at Springbrook, referring to the attachment in the packet.

      Mr. Maher was happy to report that the repairs have been made to the exterior of the building and is complete and looks very nice. He was pleased with the outcome and appears to have kept the woodpeckers from attacking the building.

   c. Public Works Maintenance Report
      Operations Manager for Streets and Parks, Jeff Jensen, reported to the commission that the winter has been tough, with extra hours put in for ice rinks and the warmer and variable weather has been difficult on the rinks. He said that the move has helped get items reorganized in the shop.
Mr. Jensen has been busy with the CIP, reporting that he is getting new equipment. He also said that his team has been helping with the move and get items out of the old facility, haul and donate equipment and items to various groups like Concordia Language College, battered women’s shelter, etc. His staff has been busy helping with the City Hall records as well. Mr. Jensen said the next step is the salvage and demolition process.

The parks master plan is his next big project along with working with the GIS contractor to identify trees, which is helpful for the Emerald Ash Borer. He said he would do a full inventory of all parks, assets and values, which will help with insurance. Inspections will be done on all parks and playgrounds and hope to be put on ipads, so staff can inspect, see records and help with cutting down on paperwork.

Mr. Kondrick asked if the city has to have certified playgrounds and parks inspectors every month and Mr. Jensen said they are done monthly by a City employee, with one employee who is certified and overseeing the process. The process is required by law and records have to be kept for five years.

Mr. Jensen said he is looking at a number of grants, including one on energy and an emerald ash mitigation program with some for treatment in parks. He said that there are a lot of grants out there be that he wants to make sure we are doing a good job on them and are successful.

2. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

a. CIP (Capital Improvement Plan)

Ms. Dahl reported that the CIP Summary was included in the packet and stated that the new Finance Director has initiated a new process for the CIP and budget. She said the parks CIP is provided and has been approved by City Council and the entire budget/CIP document is on the City’s website.

Ms. Dahl highlighted a couple of items of importance, which are the state grants related to the SPRING PROJECT (the Pavillion) and the project itself. She said staff is still hoping to get additional in-kind donations and donations to help offset some of the expenses, noting that the City may be able to do some of the work, too.

The CIP also includes $200,000 in funding for the new civic campus for park improvements, which are still uncertain. Concepts have not been developed yet, however, staff is expecting to work with the developer to begin the design work and to understand their intentions/plans.

Ms. Dahl also noted that the park dedication fees have not been addressed in quite some time and hopes to work with the Park and Recreation Commission to learn their ideas and philosophies around them, particularly since there are a number of developments coming into the City. Ms. Dahl said she would have the Community Development Director come into a future commission meeting to explore this further.

Mr. Kondrick asked about investments and Ms. Dahl pointed to the report line of interest and investments where $15,000 was indicated for each year.

Ms. Dahl reminded the commissioners that the Moore Lake Park Master Plan was put on hold until the Master Parks Plan was finalized. The funding was given up and provided to support the SPRING Pavillion project with the shelter at Moore Lake being pushed out another year. She said that when we complete the Master Parks Plan, staff will have a better picture on what will be needed.

Mr. Heintz asked if the City would be doing about $60,000 on court resurfacing and Mr. Jensen said yes. Mr. Kondrick asked if staff had received any complaints on the tennis courts this past summer and their playability and Mr. Jensen said no, however, he said that Moore Lake will be
addressed. Mr. Jensen said that use is down from 20 years ago but where the courts are used regularly, the court surfaces are being maintained in excellent condition. He said that the CIP funds will be used for that.

Ms. Graham asked if there is any talk about having pickleball courts and Mr. Jensen said yes, it is used on tennis courts and it is cheap and easy to stripe. Ms. Dahl said that staff was hoping to work with the school to use the Fridley Middle school tennis courts for pickleball tournaments or leagues since there seems to be an interest in the sport.

Mr. Heintz asked about the Locke Park Playground and Ms. Dahl said that the playground was removed due to the civic campus project and will be relocating the playground to the southeast side of the development. She said that Mr. Jensen and she believed additional funding was necessary and added some to the CIP line item, particularly due to interest in providing ADA ammenities. She said that the plans had not been started and will be working with Engineering to get some conceptual drawings made up and will bring that back to the commission. She reported that there is an urgency of the neighborhood to assure the construction of the park is done. Mr. Heintz agreed and felt the neighborhood would appreciate seeing the designs and demonstrate that something is being done.

Mr. Jensen said he was grateful for the opportunity for funding and is looking forward to getting this project started. Mr. Kondrick asked if the neighborhood had input into the design or have made suggestions and Ms. Dahl said she would need to go back and look at the record and that there may be an opportunity for additional donations and the neighborhood to become involved in the construction or installation of the playground. Ms. Dahl said that there seems to be an interest in a similar playground with newer contemporary equipment and ADA accessibility. Mr. Jensen said that the rubber surface is important. Mr. Heintz asked if there was a letter that had been sent out to the neighborhood and Ms. Dahl said she would need to go back and look. Mr. Kondrick suggested that staff send something out for an update and ask for input.

Mr. Heintz asked if there was an action item needed and Ms. Dahl said not at this time, however, as the information and details unfold, she will keep the commission advised. She said that if the commission wants to add more items to the list for staff to consider, they are welcome to offer suggestions.

Mr. Jensen said once the designs are developed for playground equipment replacements and will be rehabbing possibly two small neighborhood parks, etc., he will bring them back to the commission for their input. Mr. Heintz asked if parts of the old playground parts can be reused and Mr. Jensen said he wasn’t sure, stating that experience has shown that it is difficult and not likely, due to the age, damage and condition.

Ms. Dahl said that while it is not on the list and the Parks Master Plan not finished, Moore Lake needs to be addressed this year, particularly the fencing, the beach, etc. Any changes will likely trigger some permitting through the watershed group. Mr. Jensen said that some things can be done to get it looking nicer, such as the basketball court, tennis court and fencing can be addressed without triggering a permit.

Ms. Dahl said that the commission’s feedback on Moore Lake is important and staff will be getting their input. Mr. Heintz asked about bringing in exercise equipment to the park and Mr. Jensen said he preferred waiting to install anything until the Master Parks Plan is done.

b. Springbrook Nature Center Pavillion Project Update

Mr. Maher provided the commission with a presentation on the background and an update on the Picnic Pavillion and Activity Center, showing slides of the designs of interior and exterior,
including the expected construction timeline and budget. He explained that there were a number of items that are on the wish list, such as a fireplace, which will be designed and if donations can be made, may become possible.

Mr. Kondrick asked if the bathrooms will be heated and Mr. Maher said that it is not in the initial plan but if there is room in the budget, staff would like to see it added. Mr. Borman asked if the project can be tied into the Geothermal system and Mr. Maher did not know and would look into it.

Mr. Heintz asked if entrances could be controlled/locked through a cell phone or electronically. Mr. Maher said he would look into it. Mr. Borman said he was familiar with some systems where there are options that can be time-controlled.

Ms. Larson asked if baby-changing stations will be included and Mr. Jensen said the accessories can easily be added, but the construction package purchased was the basic package.

Mr. Maher reviewed the kinds of programs they would use in the building. He went on to review the funding sources and contributions, including the contribution from the Springbrook Nature Center Foundation. He said that there are a number of initiatives underway to solicit donations.

The quote for the building materials came to $234,000, which doesn’t include some items such as the concrete, furnishings, cabinetry, picnic table, decorative stone work, fireplace, etc.

Mr. Kondrick asked if the picnic tables will be secured because of the possibility of theft and Mr. Maher was not sure if that would be useful, but will be considered. He said that currently the tables are not locked down and there haven’t been any issues to-date. Mr. Maher said an additional security camera could be added to this space.

Mr. Kondrick expressed excitement for the pavilion. Mr. Maher said that in addition to the Nature Center Staff, the Recreation Department will be able to use the pavilion, along with summer camps, community gatherings, weddings, rentals, etc. Being next the nature play area and amphitheater will be a nice compliment.

Discussion continued about the design, features, roof, life-time of roof.

Mr. Maher said that over the next few weeks, final designs would be completed, some of the demo may be done with tree and clearing the area, with ground breaking and construction starting in the spring and completion by mid-summer. He also mentioned fundraising will continue.

Mr. Heintz expressed concern of the siding being cedar, given the woodpecker damage. Mr. Maher agreed and will continue to explore options within the budget.

Ms. Larson thanked Mr. Maher for his hard work. Mr. Maher thanked Jeff Jensen and staff engineer Nic Schmidt who worked hard on the project as well.

c. Grant Applications

Mr. Maher summarized two applications to address invasive species like Buckthorn at Springbrook and Moore Lake, which are provided in the packet. He said that it is an ongoing problem and the grants allow the City to control it with professional help. He said the goal is to provide a healthy ecosystem here and that unfortunately, the buckthorn can’t be eliminated but there is hope to manage it.

Mr. Maher showed the maps of the project. The first grant through Great River Greening is $51,000 and requires a match of $8,000 over 3 years. Great River Greening will administer the
grant and select the vendors, inspect, and assure the work will be done. The grant will have a possibility of up to an additional $30,000 with a match of $6,000.

Mr. Maher explained the second grant through the DNR that also includes the dunes at West Moore Lake and Springbrook. The project includes invasive species and prescribed burns. Mr. Maher discussed the process of removal in further detail.

Following the discussion, staff asked for the commission’s support in the form of a motion.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Borman to support the two grant applications summarized by Mr. Maher and seconded by Mr. Kondrick.

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL MEMBERS VOTING AYE, CHAIRPERSON HEINTZ DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED.

d. Parks Master Plan Update

Ms. Dahl reported that staff will be finalizing an outline for the Parks Master Plan and hoped to have an update for the Commission at the next meeting. She said that we are working with the City Manager to get the outline and vision refined before bringing it back to the group.

Ms. Dahl said she would be able to get more information on how much time it would involve and the kinds of activities/input needed. Chairperson Heintz asked the group who would like to participate on the steering committee and serve as a liaison. Mr. Borman and Ms. Larson volunteered to serve on the committee.

3. UNFINISHED BUSINESS/STAFF REPORTS:

a. Follow Up Items

Ms. Dahl reported back on items raised at the last meeting:

1) Donation of cement treatment – Ms. Dahl said that the final specs will be available soon and can be given out to the commission to solicit donations. Mr. Heintz asked about an epoxy treatment that he may be able to find a donor. Mr. Heintz said he would be able to send over some samples.

2) Auto updates for birthdays – the software system does auto updates.

3) Home schooling at the Nature Center – there was a section in the last newsletter about that and Mr. Maher explained he can work with co-ops they could work with SNC staff directly.

4) Trail Cams – Mr. Jensen said trail cams get stolen and he prefers not to install them.

5) New Resident packages – New marketing team met last week and are working on upgrading the new resident packages.

6) Fees at the Nature Center – Ms. Larson said that she had talked to Mr. Maher about that already.

7) Sliding Hill – grooming along the snow fence is not likely. Mr. Jensen said that they don’t have the proper equipment to groom the hill. Ms. Larson asked if the snow fence could be moved at the bottom of the hill. Mr. Jensen said he would look into it.

8) Volunteer Dinner – no date has been set on that and it is likely in April.

b. Future Meetings:

- Parks Master Plan
- Year in Review
Meeting Minutes – Fridley Park and Recreation Commission (Jan. 7, 2019)

Marketing  
Event Permit Process  
Nature-based play areas  
c. Other

Ms. Larson said that she sees the family social media pages and sees comments/concerns about where can I take my kids to play and winter break. She feels that there are needs and asked if she should send the information to staff. Ms. Dahl said she can forward the information onto the marketing and communications team and also urged people to go to the city's website. Friendly Fridley and Fridley Families were the two sites.

Ms. Larson expressed an interest in indoor opportunities, like an indoor play area with play equipment.

Ms. Larson also mentioned that she was able to find out how many people open enroll in Fridley and she said she had asked at Stevenson and found that 127 are open enrolled out of 526.

Ms. Graham asked if there was an open gym. Ms. Dahl mentioned there are open gyms at the Middle School. Ms. Larson thought that it would not be for toddlers.

Ms. Dahl said she can research what is available and get back to the group.

ADJOURNMENT

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL MEMBERS VOTING AYE, CHAIRPERSON HEINTZ DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED AND THE JAN. 7, 2019 AT 8:55 P.M. - MEETING ADJOURNED.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Dahl, Director  
Community Services and Employee Resources
February 2019

WinterFest
The Fridley Recreation Department and Springbrook Nature Center hosted the 19th Annual Fridley WinterFest from 12:00 – 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, January 26th at the Fridley Community Center and Commons Park. Despite the chilly weather, the fun activities brought out approximately 300-400 people! This community building event was a great place for families to get out and enjoy winter in Fridley. The groups that participated in this year’s WinterFest really had a good time and were proud to be part of a community that works together to support families.

Outdoor Activities:
• Horse Drawn Hayride (Bunker Park Stables)
• Bonfire and s’mores
• Sledding
• Ice Skating
• Medallion Hunt
• Snowball Launching
• Mites Hockey Game - North Metro Youth Hockey Association

Indoor Activities:
• DJ Dance (Kidsdance)
• Concessions
• Target Photo Op
• Winter Tattoos
• BINGO

• Carnival Games
• Nature Table
• Recycling and Energy Booth
• Bantu Healing Drumming
• Arts and Crafts

Community Partners:
• Banfill-Locke Center for the Arts
• Boy Scouts
• Fridley District #14 Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE)
• Fridley Community Development Department
• Fridley Lions Club
• Fridley Fire Department
• Fridley Parks Maintenance
• Fridley Police Department – Reserves & K9 Unit
• Fridley 49er Ambassador Program
• North Metro Youth Hockey Association
• Pete Borman

Volunteers:
• Fridley High School Key Club
• Fridley High School National Honor Society
• Positively Fridley

A special thank you to all of the Parks and Recreation Commission members who attended and volunteered at WinterFest!
Other Recreation Programs

Cleve experimented with a Commons Warming House rental January on 11th, from 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. The group enjoyed the rental experience. An estimated 25 -30 middle school students and parents were in attendance. They played video games, ice skated, sled on Commons Hill, and listened to music on the outdoor PA system. Following the event they expressed interest in reserving again in 2020.

Multicultural Bantu Healing Drumming group did a demo and participated in WinterFest on January 26th.

Cleve completed outline for RSN (ROCKS Sports Network). This will be an 8-week sport camp during the summer.

Open Gym Sundays and Open Hoops Wednesday at Hayes elementary started this month, and will go until March.

One Thursday out of the month Cleve serves as Community Youth Mentor at Hayes Elementary. This volunteer opportunity allows him to work in collaboration with students and support staff at the school. He has a group of 6 - 8 students during recess. During this time they eat lunch and talk about life skills, caring for others, building confidence and leadership, and accountability.

Nine elementary students joined us for a trip to Green Acres for Snow Tubing on January 18th.

New Elementary After-school Programs were set to begin on Monday, January 28th, but will begin on February 4th due to the School Closings. Upcoming classes include (registered participant numbers listed with the title of the class): Martial Arts(15), Photography & Scrapbooking(5), Ice Skating & Snow Fun(8), Sculpture & Clay Creations(11), Floor Hockey Leagues (7/7), and Minecraft LEGO Engineering(13).

The new Community Engagement Specialist Alyssa Kruzel will start in Feb. She will be working on events, programs, and volunteer coordination to engage the community both at the Civic Campus and Springbrook Nature Center.

Marketing Manager Luke Cardona is working with City Clerk Deb Skogen to learn opportunities to expand financial support through the Twin Cities Gateway Association as well as the North Metro Chamber of Commerce. His efforts will likely provide additional funding and visibility for future Parks and Recreation programs, events, and activities.

Staff are researching options to purchase an event van to use yet this summer in events, summer programs and Rec on the Go.

Tot Time Open Gym for Toddlers began again on January 12th. Families are enjoying a warm place to run and play!
FRIDLEY WINTERFEST 2019
SATURDAY, JANUARY 26
• An Eagle Scout candidate, Joshua Toombs, is working to develop an area near our maintenance garage as an archery range that can be easily set up and taken down with a backdrop and cart for bows. This will reduce impact on the oak savanna which has been used as a range in the past. He has completed the construction of a bow rack to be used to make bows easily accessible.

• In partnership with Anoka Soil and Water Conservation District, a buckthorn removal event was held at Springbrook on January 19th. 25 youth and adult participants spent the morning cutting and stacking this invasive species to improve habitat for native plants.

• Please plan on supporting Springbrook Nature Center by attending the 2019 Springbrook Spree fundraiser. A dedicated committee has been busy planning the March 2nd event to be held at the nature center at 5 pm on Saturday, March 2nd. Tickets can be purchased at: https://springbrookfoundation.org/tickets/#ticket

• We received wonderful news of MN DNR Outdoor Recreation Grant Program funding being approved full in the amount of $150,000. A required match from existing park CIP funds was approved at the March 26th 2018 City Council meeting.
  o A staff committee has sought input and finalized the design and materials. Stamped engineered drawings have been ordered.
  o The Springbrook Foundation Development Committee continues to meet to discuss fundraising and opportunities to secure in-kind donations for the project, expected to begin spring 2019.

• A series of found Discovery Dinners is planned for the winter months. Details can be found at: http://www.springbrooknaturecenter.org/821/Discovery-Dinners. The astronomy program with WCCO’s Mike Lynch on Saturday, January 12th was a sell-out with 75 attendees. The next dinner will be on February 9th and the topic will be electric cars in Minnesota.

• Springbrook and Fridley Recreation launched a new registration program software. The system has been working great and has been well received by staff and the public. The system will be well-tested with the launch of summer day camp registration for the nature center on February 1st.

• We have been awarded several grants for habitat improvements at Springbrook Nature Center, with some work to be completed at Moore Lake Sand Dunes Natural Area. One grant from the Minnesota DNR is in the amount of $37,000 and the other state grant administered by Great River Greening is in the amount of $51,450 with an $8,000 City match payable over 3 years. Combined, the work will remove invasive buckthorn from large areas of the parks as well as including prescribed burns to encourage the healthy growth of native species.
• Thanks to our Friends at Cummins Power Generation, Springbrook has a beautiful new aluminum rack to store and display snowshoes for rental. The design, engineering, materials and construction were all donated!

• Ongoing regular programs continue at the nature center including our Playful Polliwogs parent/child class, Nature Buddies partnership with Spring Lake Park ECFE, Saturday Family Fun Days, bird banding, youth birthday parties and facility rentals.

• The Nature Center Staff participated in the City of Fridley Winterfest on January 26th, facilitating the medallion hunt and hosting an interactive nature table.

Eagle Scout Candidate Josh Toombs and Troop 90 Leadership

Cummins Power Generation Employees with Donated Snowshoe Rack

Volunteer Buckthorn Removal Crew in Partnership with Anoka Soil and Water Conservation District.