



PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
Fridley Municipal Center
7071 University Ave NE, Fridley MN 55432

AGENDA – Aug. 3, 2020

DATE: Aug. 3, 2020 – 7:00 p.m.

LOCATION: Fridley Civic Campus – 7071 University Ave NE, Fridley, MN 55432 – BANFILL ROOM
Upstairs – Next to Council Chambers (NOTE CHANGE IN LOCATION).

PLEASE BE PREPARED TO WEAR FACIAL COVERINGS IN THE BUILDING AND DURING THE MEETING

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. APPROVE PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION AGENDA FOR AUG. 3, 2020
3. APPROVE PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES FOR JUNE 1, 2020
4. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS:
 - a. Parks Master Plan Update
 - b. Other
5. STAFF REPORTS:
 - a. Springbrook Nature Center (Mike)
 - b. COVID-19 Update
 - c. Other
6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:
 - a. Other
7. ADJOURNMENT

Next Meeting: Sept. 8, 2020 (NOTE: Tuesday Night Meeting due to Labor Day)

Attachments:

June 1, 2020 Meeting Minutes, Highlights, SNC Update, Park Maintenance Memo



PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
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MINUTES

June 1, 2020

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Heintz called the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Members Present: Mike Heintz, Shanna Larson, Ryan Gerhard, Pete Borman, EB Graham, and David Kondrick

Others Present: Deborah Dahl (Director of Community Services and Employee Resources), Mike Maher (Director of Springbrook Nature Center), Jeff Jensen (Operations Manager – Parks, Streets and Facilities), Margo Numedahl (Recreation Division Manager).

2. APPROVE PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION AGENDA FOR JUNE 1, 2020

MOTION by Ms. Larson to APPROVE the March 2, 2020 meeting agenda. SECONDED by Ms. Graham. The MOTION PASSED unanimously.

3. APPROVE PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES FOR MARCH 2, 2020

MOTION by Mr. Kondrick to APPROVE the March 2, 2020 meeting minutes, SECONDED by Ms. Larson. The MOTION PASSED unanimously.

Note: Meetings for April and May were cancelled due to COVID-19 Stay at Home orders issued by the Governor.

4. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS:

- a. COVID-19 Response (Debbie Dahl)

Ms. Dahl presented on the City's response to COVID-19, particularly as it relates to programming for Recreation and Springbrook Nature Center as well as its impact on field and shelter reservations. She provided the commission with guidance and documentation from the CDC, MN Department of Health and others that drove the decisions to eliminate traditional programming until July 6.

Ms. Dahl said that the safety of program participants, staff and the public are the top priority and that the guidance is very restrictive. She stated staff are developing alternative programs with the new guidance in place and that plans will be reassessed by mid-June or as guidance changes.

Mr. Kondrick asked if there was any feedback from the public on the closure of programs and spaces. Ms. Dahl said that all feedback has been supportive with the decision, some indicating disappointment but general understanding of the decision. No objections or criticisms have been received from the public.

b. Summer Programs (Margo Numedahl and Mike Maher)

Ms. Numedahl showed the Commission with examples of the bi-weekly electronic newsletter called "Rec to the Rescue." She highlighted several programs that have been launched since the shutdown, including an Instagram launch, video programs, park highlights, 50k Run/Walk competition, a Mother's Day home-event, etc.

She also provided the Commission with a sampling of some of the ideas that staff are working on for the next two months under the current CDC guidelines, such as sports skills programs, painting/arts/crafts, family programs, scavenger hunt, chalkboard games, story walk, a lawn of the week, and possibly a state fair activity that allows people to enjoy the state fair from their homes.

Mr. Maher presented some of the activities happening at Springbrook, stating that his staff have been creating virtual programming to assist the schools with remote learning curriculum. He said he is working with the Columbia Heights Schools for contracting some possible programming on a remote basis, too. Staff is also planning programs with the camp theme and structure for small groups throughout the day. They are also offering staff led-trail walks, scavenger hunts, interpretive signage throughout the park for self-led walks.

Mr. Maher said that staff is holding off on deciding about some of the concerts at the end of the summer and Pumpkin Night until more information or guidance is provided.

c. Locke Park Playground

Ms. Dahl presented the preliminary designs for Locke Park Playground, which showed a slight modification to the earlier location due to the potential dangers

of pedestrian crossing. The playground location has been moved north of the previous location to avoid traffic hazards. Mr. Jensen mentioned that there were some additional challenges with drainage that needed to be addressed.

The Commission as asked what design concepts were preferred. No vote was necessary since the neighborhood will provide more input into the designs when the public meeting occurs. Commission members liked both options but gave preference to option number one (1).

d. SNC Pavilion Update

Mr. Maher provided an update to the SNC Pavilion project and showed a few photos, stating the exterior was recently stained and the finishing touches are being finalized. He thought the shelter will be completed by July 4th or 5th and should come in within projections and donations. Staff is working on an unveiling or open house later in the summer or early fall to thank the contributors. He said it will be a welcomed addition to the park and will be well-utilized.

e. Sports and Athletics

Ms. Numedahl discussed staff's position on re-opening fields for organized sports and athletics in light of COVID-19. She said staff was working with the various groups to help educate them on the governor's current mandates and guidelines. Groups who want to reserve fields and facilities will be given the guidelines, waivers, and instructions on what they will need to do in order to comply and be authorized to use the fields starting July 15. She said that it was still early and no formal requests have been finalized. Staff will continue to work with groups as more information becomes available or as mandates are lifted or revised.

f. Shelter Reservations

Ms. Dahl stated that shelter reservations will be re-opened when the governor's mandates are revised or lifted and will be communicated through the website, Facebook reminders and Instagram. She reported that the parks are seeing a large amount of use of people using picnic areas, playgrounds, and trails.

g. July Meeting

Ms. Dahl asked if the committee still wanted to forgo the July meeting as in past years. The committee agreed to not meet.

5. STAFF REPORTS

a. Parks Master Plan

Ms. Dahl reported that the Parks Master Plan is still progressing, and that staff will provide an update and report on the general estimates and preliminary recommendations for the Commission to review at the next meeting.

b. Other

No other reports or business considered.

ADJOURNMENT:

Ms. Kondrick made the MOTION to adjourn the meeting at 9:01 p.m., SECONDED by Ms. Graham. The MOTION PASSED unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Dahl, Director
Community Services and Employee Resources

HIGHLIGHTS



Recreation Division - July 2020

Summer Programs

Program offering began on July 7th. Below is a list of programs and participation numbers...

Preschool Youth

- Parent/Child T-ball: 14 (for both nights)
- Parent/Child Soccer: 6
- Parent/Child Track and Field: 3

Elementary Youth

- Soccer: 8
- T-Ball: 3
- Tennis Lessons: 6

Family

- Painting in the Park: 4
- Great Fridley Get Together: 8

Adult

- Zumba in the Park : 6 in each session
- Pickleball Clinic: 5
- Adult Softball: 8 teams



Summer Staff

This summer, we brought back seven of our veteran staff to cover a variety programming. We conducted masked-up, socially-distanced in-person training at both City Hall and Commons Park over the course of four days (3 hour long meetings each). A significant amount of time was spent discussing program content modifications that are necessary due to COVID-19. Staff did a great coming up with ideas to help keep our programs both fun and safe. Thus far, the group has done a super job facilitating programs keeping our 2020 mantra as a motivating force: Safe Summer Smiles.

Programs have been enjoyed by participants. Below is a message from a parent.

"I just wanted to let you know that the coaches for evening soccer, tennis and t-ball are phenomenal! I so appreciate how organized they are and how hard they are working! These nights have been great experiences for my son! Kudos to them!"

Shelter Rentals

Shelter rentals are steady, there are about 3 to 5 calls per day inquiring about availability and weekends at Commons and Flanery are booking quickly.

Rec 'n Roll

Last summer we ROCKED, we are ROLLING in 2020! Recreation staff have been traveling to a variety of Fridley Parks to provide the following:

- Take & Make – staff give out bags containing activity items and instructions so families can get creative while at the park. New activities are included each week and passed out at nine parks and four school lunch sites. We have distributed 150 bags during the first three weeks.
- Park Features – we have six features (story walks, scavenger hunts, and activity trails) that rotate to six different park locations each week.

Lawn of the Week

We have been recognizing Fridley residents whose yards exemplify creativity, neatness and beauty. Staff select a winner each week and place a sign their front yard. Recipients receive a certificate of achievement and a prize. In July, three lawns were awarded and the program has been well received. Below is a message we received from our first 'Lawn of the Week' winner.

We just wanted to thank you for honoring our yard as 'Lawn of the Week' from July 10 to July 17th. Our location generates not only vehicle traffic but also foot traffic because of its proximity to Briardale Park. We are still hear congratulatory remarks from neighbors. There have been many thumbs up 👍 or just people clapping 🙌 as they walk by and see one of us out.

"What a good idea Fridley. I'd say you've lifted the spirits of residents during these difficult times." - Bob & Connie

Rec to the Rescue

Staff have continued to offer programs for residents to participate in at home. Since the last meeting, we have completed 3 additional Activity Guides that have been emailed to participants as well as posted on the website and promoted with Facebook and Instagram. This guide was created to be easily viewed on a mobile device and also encourages participants to engage with us via social media. Within the last few activity guides, we have also been able to highlight upcoming program offerings.

A winner of the Finding Hope in Fridley Coloring Contest came in to pick up her prize (a Fridley Mug and \$25 Recreation Program Gift Certificate).

"She explained that this was such a good thing for her son to participate in because they were all feeling so low in her household. She was so very appreciative of this activity!"

Photo Contest

We have received 5 submissions for the photo contest.

Community Engagement - July 2020

Adopt-A-Park Update

July has been a busy month for the Adopt-A-Park program! Four city parks have been adopted through the program including Hackman Circle, Summit Square, Harris Lake and Flanery. Volunteers are currently in the process of getting onboarded with the help of the Parks Maintenance staff and will start to volunteer in their parks in the weeks to come if they have not already started. We are continuing to recruit for volunteers for the Adopt-A-Park program. Messaging to share with interested community members is below.

Are you looking to make a positive impact in the Fridley Community? Staff encourages you to Adopt a Fridley park! The City of Fridley is looking for community members, organizations, and businesses to adopt a park! Community members and groups will work alongside City of Fridley Park and Recreation staff to help keep our city parks clean and beautiful. You can make a difference in Fridley parks! Volunteers will be responsible for picking up litter, removing weeds, maintaining the area around the park sign, and reporting any vandalism or safety hazards to parks staff. Responsibilities may vary from park to park. Adopting a park is a minimum one-year commitment with 4 clean ups per year. The city has over 30 different city parks available for adoption.

To learn more about the Adopt-A-Park program and apply to adopt a park visit the city's website at FridleyMN.gov/AdoptAPark or call Fridley Parks and Recreation at 763-572-3570.

Locke Playground Open House

On Wednesday, July 29 the City of Fridley hosted a playground Open House for the Locke Playground from 6-7:30 p.m. at the Locke Playground site. The playground site is off Locke Parkway NE, south of 71st Avenue Ne and Locke County Park. In 2018, the Locke Playground was displaced due to the new Civic Campus Development. In 2017, an agreement was reached with the neighborhood to replace the playground and relocate it to the southeast end of the Civic Campus Development.

About 30 community members attended the open house, there was a good representation from all three neighborhoods: Holiday Hills, Lennar, and Pulte. Residents had the opportunity to speak with project staff, learn about project updates, look at playground designs, and help choose some of the playground elements. Construction on the playground will start later this summer and the playground will open this fall.

You can learn more about the project at FridleyMN.gov/LockePlayground including playground layouts and designs. Any community members unable to attend the Locke Playground Open House were able to provide feedback online through Friday, July 31.

Blood Drive

The City of Fridley will host a Blood Drive in partnership with the American Red Cross on Saturday, August 29 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Fridley City Hall (7071 University Ave NE). To make an appointment, please visit redcrossblood.org and enter sponsor code: CityofFridley or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

Springbrook Nature Center

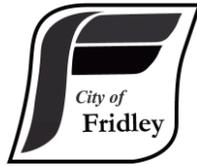
Monthly Report – August 2020



- In accord with the City of Fridley, Springbrook is responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic:
 - Trails remain open to the public and the park is at peak visitation.
 - With capacity restrictions in place, the interpretive center was re-opened to the public on July 15th. Some high-touch exhibits, café tables, etc. have been temporarily removed. We are now open daily from 9 am to 5 pm.
 - Small-group programming, Outdoor Adventures, are now available and include classes such as archery, insect discovery, pond exploration and survival skills can be scheduled Monday-Saturday.
 - Our new Nature out of the Box program is a monthly kit that features fun environmental education activities that can be done by groups here at the nature center, at home or a local park. A new kit is available for purchase each month.
 - Springbrook is providing live, virtual programming for the Columbia Heights Summer Encore program.
- The Pavilion Activity Center project is nearing completion.
 - The open-air portion of the pavilion is open and available for use on a first come first serve basis.
 - Vision Woodworking has completed installation of cabinetry and shelving as in in-kind contribution.
 - Rain gutters were installed the week of July 20th.
 - The planned May 28 grand opening event was cancelled with a reschedule date TBA.
- A grant application was submitted to the International Paper Foundation for enhancements to our live animal exhibits.
- We have been awarded two grants for habitat improvements at Springbrook Nature Center, with some work to be completed at Moore Lake Sand Dunes Natural Area. The grants are in the amounts of \$37,000 and \$51,450. Cutting of buckthorn is complete and prescribed burning began and will continue as weather and conditions allow.
- In partnership with Boy Scout Troop 714, scout Ammar Ishtaiwi will replace a deteriorated bridge along the Forest Trail as his Eagle Scout project this summer. Caden Barber, Troop 9106 of Blaine, will be completing an Eagle Scout project to develop and install interpretive signs along the trails.
- Three new memorial benches were installed the first week of July and another was recently purchased. Most of the park's older-style wooden benches have been replaced with new

commercial quality benches made of recycled plastic lumber. Three additional benches have been ordered to accommodate future sponsorships.

- Fall public programming is being evaluated and plans are in place to resume, with modifications, our Friday Night by Firelight series as well as our popular youth birthday party offerings.
- The outdoor amphitheater is booked for a number of small wedding ceremonies throughout the remainder of summer and fall seasons.



Public Works Department

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Deb Dahl—Director of Community Services and Employee Resources

FROM: Jeff Jensen, Operations Manager-Streets, Parks and Facilities.

DATE: July 29, 2020

SUBJECT: Parks Activity Report

The last two months have been very busy and difficult for the Parks Department. Along with our normal maintenance duties we have been dealing with Covid response plans, low seasonal worker numbers and working on many city projects. The Little league has cancelled for the years as well as FYSA baseball. We do have adult softball leagues at Community going on and we are waiting to see if there will be a fall soccer program that will take place.

Some of the large projects that have been going on are finishing the SNC Pavillion, working on our new remote storage site, regrading and seeding the sliding hill, adding irrigation and repairing goal areas at middle school soccer field, repairing damage from soccer at Commons, helping with Adopt-a Park and now removing fencing along University AVE.

We are approximately 7 employees short this summer which has made everyone's job much more difficult and reduced the amount of maintenance that we are able to do. I am working one a new strategy to get more seasonal employees next year.