

**CITY OF FRIDLEY**  
**PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING – SEPTEMBER 12, 2016**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairperson Heintz called the September 12, 2016 Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at the Fridley Municipal Center – Meeting Room 1.

**ROLL CALL:**

Members Present: Mike Heintz, Michele Barrett, Dave Kondrick, Shanna Larson and Greg Ackerman

Others Present: Jack Kirk, Director of Parks and Recreation  
Jeff Jensen, Streets and Parks Supervisor  
Mike Maher, Director of Springbrook Nature Center  
Mary Rose Iten, 7377 Memory Lane  
Kurt Iten, 7377 Memory Lane

**APPROVAL OF AUGUST 1, 2016 PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES**

MOTION by Ms. Larson, seconded by Ms. Barrett, to approve the minutes of the August 1, 2016 meeting.

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

**APPROVAL OF PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION AGENDA FOR SEPTEMBER 12, 2016**

MOTION by Mr. Kondrick, seconded by Mr. Ackerman, to approve the agenda for the September 12, 2016 meeting, moving item 2a to the first item of business for the meeting.

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

**1. STAFF REPORT**

**a. Program Update**

Mr. Kirk stated that the Program Update is included in the agenda packet for the information of the Commission members. The summer programs have come to an end and it was a good season. There was a lot of rain this year, but we were still able to get in most of the activities.

Mr. Kirk further stated that the summer camps at Springbrook Nature Center were very popular and we had good attendance numbers. Revenue from the nature center camps is up almost double from that of two years ago.

Mr. Kirk stated that the Summer ROCKS program had good participation numbers this year as well. Week number #10 for example, the final week, had 112 participants.

**b. Park Maintenance Report**

Mr. Jensen stated that the park maintenance crew lost most of the summer youth workers in August, as many of them are college students and they head back to school. He felt that they were able to accomplish much in the parks this summer. The park workers completed a lot at Springbrook Nature Center with trail renovation, bridge installation and tree trimming. They also helped with the moving of equipment and furnishings into the new building and helping with Grand Opening events'

Mr. Jensen stated that this time of year, the parks crew is still very busy with turf work and preparing/maintaining the softball, football and soccer fields. Picnic shelters are still being rented, so time is also allocated to maintenance of those shelters.

Mr. Kondrick stated that he wanted Mr. Jensen and the park workers to know that they do a great job taking care of the Fridley Parks and the facilities.

**c. Springbrook Nature Center Report**

Mr. Kirk stated that this report has been submitted by Mike Maher, Springbrook Nature Center Director. The finishing work on the interpretive building continues as the contractors respond to completing the punch list items. Most of the work should be finished in the next couple of weeks.

Mr. Kirk stated that the fall school programming has started with staff providing programs at Fridley Middle School, Hayes Elementary, Stevenson Elementary and Adams Elementary. Schools will be starting to make field trips to Springbrook in the near future. The new building should be a big help in providing a great teaching environment.

Mr. Kirk stated that the Springbrook Nature Center Foundation continues to do fundraising for the overall SPRING project. Committee members are working with local businesses and identifying grant opportunities to provide additional funds.

**d. Buckthorn Removal Project at Innsbruck Park**

Mr. Kirk stated that he and Parks Supervisor Jeff Jensen met with some neighbors to the Innsbruck Park about a volunteer buckthorn removal initiative this fall. The plan is for the volunteer group to do buckthorn removal on two Saturdays this fall. A flyer promoting the effort is included in the agenda packet.

Mr. Kirk further stated that the City appreciates volunteer groups showing such interest in improving our park system.

**e. Friends of Fridley Education Foundation Donations**

Mr. Kirk stated that a local non-profit foundation has awarded two grants to the Parks and Recreation Department. The Friends of Fridley Education Foundation is funded primarily by the Fridley Lions Club charitable gaming proceeds and supports Fridley education and community organizations.

Mr. Kirk stated that the first grant is to support the ZONE, our after school teen center program. The grant will allow us to have free admission one day per week for the teens and, in addition, to provide some type of a healthy snack for the teens.

Mr. Kirk further stated that the second grant is to support the youth soccer program by providing funds to purchase two complete sets of soccer goals. We will have the new goals on hand and installed for next year's soccer season.

Mr. Kirk stated that the City of Fridley and the Parks and Recreation Department appreciates the support from the Friends of Fridley Education Foundation.

**f. Pumpkin Night in the Park**

Mr. Kirk stated that the popular Pumpkin Night in the Park will be held on Saturday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> from 6:00 - 10:00 p.m. The event will include the enchanted trail, carving contest, costumes, and a dance with a DJ. Commission members are invited to attend.

**g. Springbrook Nature Center Phase 2 – Nature Play Area and Outdoor Amphitheater**

Mr. Kirk stated staff and the Springbrook Nature Center Foundation have been working with Hoesington Koegler Group to develop plans and specifications for two more projects at Springbrook Nature Center. A recommendation has been submitted to the Fridley City Council to receive the plans and move forward with accepting bids for the Nature Play Area and the Outdoor Amphitheater.

Mr. Kirk stated that the projects are being funded by the Springbrook Foundation through their capital funding campaign. Provided we get favorable bids on these items, construction should start this fall and the projects would be completed next spring.

**2. NEW BUSINESS**

**a. Madsen Park – Proposed Changes**

Mr. Kirk stated that at the November 2015 Commission meeting, there was discussion related to Madsen Park. Jeff Jensen, Streets and Parks Supervisor, was at that meeting and proposed some changes to the park facilities. He suggested a youth soccer field on the east side of the park, in the area that had been used as a softball field in past years. This was being suggested because of the growing demand or interest in soccer in our community.

Mr. Kirk stated that the sizes of youth soccer fields varies by age grouping, so multiple soccer fields are needed to accommodate the many youth playing the sport. A U-11 soccer field was striped at Madsen this past summer and worked out quite well. The U-11 field is smaller than a full sized adult soccer field. Staff had discussed with the Commission that they would like to try a soccer field in this location at Madsen Park and then come back to the Commission for some follow-up discussion.

Mr. Kirk stated that before this was made as a more long term change to the park, staff sent out a letter and aerial photo of the park with the proposed facility adjustments. The plan would be to take out the dirt part of the softball infield and remove the backstop. The infield area would become grass turf and the soccer field would be laid out in the east section of the park. Just west of the soccer field would be an open play area that could be used for softball, as well as other activities such as kickball, football, frisbee and other sports. If desired, a backstop could be installed in that area.

Mr. Ackerman asked if a dirt infield would be included.

Mr. Kirk stated that an infield area could be installed, but in keeping with an open play area, it would not need to be included.

Mr. Heintz asked what kind of use the soccer field got this summer.

Mr. Jensen said it was used several days per week by the Fridley youth soccer teams.

Mr. Kurt Iten stated that it is his understanding that the soccer field is a youth size field, but what they are seeing is a lot of adult use. He is one hundred percent behind a youth field for the youth program. He would have some concern if it was geared for adult league play.

Mr. Iten stated that many times the adult users of the soccer field park their cars on the street in front of the houses and cut through the yards to get to the park.

Mr. Kirk stated that the soccer field being planned for Madsen would likely be the same size as the field for this year. It would be striped as a youth soccer field. It should be noted that many of the adult soccer groups actually look for the youth size fields to have their games.

Mr. Kirk stated that the adults cutting through residents' yards is something that the neighborhood police officer could help with. He would suggest calling for police assistance if this type of thing continues to occur.

Ms. Mary Rose Iten asked if the soccer field could be positioned to go in an east-west direction, rather than the proposed north-south orientation.

Mr. Jensen stated that a very small field may be able to go that direction, but a U11 field would likely need to go north-south.

Ms. Larson asked the Itens what they would like to see as the most preferable outcome on the Madsen Park facilities.

Mr. Iten said that most important to him was that the soccer field be for youth league play. He understands that adults may continue to use the youth size field.

The Commission members thanked Kurt and Mary Rose Iten for attending the meeting and participating in the discussion.

MOTION by Mr. Ackerman, seconded by Mr. Kondrick, to approve the staff proposed changes to the Madsen Park facilities.

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

**b.. Springbrook Nature Center Use Policies**

Mr. Kirk stated that the City needs to come up with a policy for using the new Springbrook Nature Center Interpretive facility. Staff has worked on a recommended policy, after checking with other agencies throughout the area on their policies for rentals and use. A complete recommended policy was included in the agenda packet for tonight's meeting.

Mr. Kirk stated that he would like to go through the key components to this rental and use policy with the commission. He would like to get an approval from the Parks and Recreation Commission on a nature center use policy, so they can start using it at Springbrook. When a policy is in place, he would suggest trying it for a period of time, possibly a year, and then bring back any suggested changes to the Commission.

Mr. Kirk further stated that the primary options at Springbrook include the 40' by 80' gathering space and the 20' by 40' classrooms. There are four classroom spaces available. The rental document will include information on the furnishings and equipment that would be available with the rentals.

Mr. Kirk stated that in addition to renting one of the rooms, private use of the exhibit space would be available at an additional cost of \$50 per hour. The exhibit space will normally be closed during private events, but could be made available with this extra option.

Mr. Kirk stated that the recommended hours for the classroom rentals would be Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m. Classrooms would be available on Sundays from 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. The Gathering Space would be available for rentals on Fridays from 5:00 p.m. to midnight, with the event needing to be completed by 11:00 p.m. and clean-up by midnight. Gathering Space rental would be available on Saturdays from 12 noon to midnight, with the same requirement for the event to end at 11:00 p.m. and clean-up completed by midnight.

Mr. Kondrick asked if the times seemed reasonable to the Commission or should they be allowed more time for an event.

Mr. Heintz stated that he believes other facilities for weddings and events have similar restrictions and limits on time.

Mr. Kondrick stated that the times could be adjusted in the future if it was causing an issue with rentals.

Mr. Kirk stated that under this recommended policy, 50% of the full rental fee would be due at the time the reservation is made. The balance would be due seven days in advance for a meeting or use of a classroom. The balance would be due thirty days in advance for use of the gathering space/banquet hall. Reservations would not be complete until they are signed and returned by the renter.

Mr. Ackerman stated that information on the rental rates and the amounts should be early in any promotional information. That is the information people are going to be looking for first.

Mr. Heintz suggested that the potential renter initial all important clauses in the reservation requirements. That may help to insure they have the information.

Mr. Kirk stated the policy would include a damage and conduct policy. The deposit would be \$100 for classroom use and \$500 for the large room use for banquets or

receptions.

Ms. Larson stated that she has read through all of the policy and believes we are setting this up to be successful. There may be things that need to be adjusted in the future, but this policy is a very good starting point.

Mr. Kirk stated that the policy would have a cancellation policy which would be pro-rated and dependent upon how far away from the event date the cancellation was made.

Mr. Kirk stated a key feature to the policy is the rental rates schedule. It is the staff recommendation that the rentals include a rate for residents, for non-residents and for local non-profit organizations. Other non-profits that are not Fridley based could rent spaces at the rate established for Fridley residents.

Mr. Kirk stated that for the Gathering Space or large room rental, the Non-resident rate would be \$1,800. The resident rate would be \$1,600 and the local non-profit rate would be \$1,200. Individual classrooms would be rented on a per hour basis with non-residents at \$50 per hour and residents at \$30 per hour.

Mr. Kirk further stated that any non-profit requesting an adjusted rate or waiver for a special use would need to apply to the Parks and Recreation Commission at least 60 days prior to the date of the event. The Commission could then consider the request.

Ms. Larson stated that she thought the rental rates were fair and appropriate.

Mr. Kirk stated that the policy includes decoration guidelines which will help to protect the new facility.

Mr. Kondrick stated that we need to watch out for the facility and these suggested guidelines will help us do that. He wants to make sure the building is not damaged.

Mr. Maher stated that the ceiling, for example, has a special acoustical treatment that can be easily damaged if someone were to attach decorations.

Mr. Kirk stated that the guidelines should add that no decorations can be attached to the ceiling.

Mr. Kirk stated that the nature center is committed to lessening the impact on our environment, so a "zero waste" requirement is included in the policy.

Mr. Kirk stated that the policy also includes room set up and clean up guidelines. It also includes an extra fee for clean ups that exceed the allocated rental time frame.

Mr. Kirk stated that the policy includes catering guidelines that will require food and beverage caterers are registered with the City and on an approved caterer list. The guidelines list what the caterers are responsible for. He further stated that the alcohol policy complies with the Fridley City Code. Beer and wine are allowed at Springbrook Nature Center under the code.

Mr. Kirk stated the recommended policy includes information on the park being tobacco free, supervision of children during events, parking availability, accessibility and a listing of other park policies. The park policies listed will call attention to issues and concerns that are especially important to use of the nature center.

Mr. Kondrick stated that this recommended policy has been given a lot of thought and is well done.

MOTION by Ms. Larson, seconded by Mr. Ackerman, to approve the staff recommended Springbrook Nature Center Use Policies.

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

**c. Request for Skating Rink at Craig Park**

Mr. Kirk stated that during the Night to Unite event in August, a resident had asked that the City consider placing a skating rink at Craig Park this winter. It is not uncommon that individuals ask the City to consider skating rinks or other facilities be added to the neighborhood parks. The Parks and Recreation Commission approves a plan for skating rinks each year, with the idea that they are reasonably located to serve the various geographic locations in the City.

Mr. Kirk stated that many years ago the City did have a rink at Craig Park. It was during a time when the City had close to double the number of rinks and hockey facilities that are provided today.

Mr. Kondrick stated that we have a rink a couple of blocks away from this location at Springbrook Park.

Mr. Ackerman asked if we moved the rink from Springbrook Park to Craig Park, would it get more use.

Mr. Kirk stated that actually having a rink at Craig Park could be accomplished. As he stated before, we used to have a rink there. The problem encountered with the Craig Park location is that it is difficult to get the ice maintenance equipment into the park. It is also a concern to safely get participants to a skating facility in the winter. The park is in a bowl like area and it requires going up and down slopes to gain access. This is especially difficult in the winter months under icy conditions.

Mr. Kondrick stated that we have been through this before with Craig Park. It is a nice looking park and works well in the summer months. It is difficult to provide a rink here.

Mr. Jensen stated that to flood the rink from a hydrant would require hauling a hose across the street and a long distance. They use a tanker truck to flood and maintain rinks efficiently. Getting the tanker in and out of Craig would not be safe.

Mr. Kirk stated that a staff recommended skating and hockey rink locations plan will be to the Parks and Recreation at the October meeting.

MOTION by Mr. Kondrick, seconded by Ms. Barrett, to not recommend a general skating rink for Craig Park as requested by an area resident.

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

**d. Moore Lake Park Master Plan and Community Questionnaire**

Mr. Kirk stated that Moore Lake Park is one of the City's busiest parks in the summer months. It has attractions such as the swimming beach, picnic shelters, sand volleyball, play equipment, trails, fishing piers and other amenities. The City is going to be working

with Hoesington Koegler Landscape Architects to do a revised master plan of this park.

Mr. Kirk stated he would like to have the Parks and Recreation Commission actively involved in the planning process. Hoesington Koegler group (HKGi) will be at the October Commission meeting to discuss this park planning.

Mr. Kirk further stated that HKGi is working on a questionnaire that could allow for public input into the process. A sample is being provided to the Commission members and this would be put on the City's web page. He would appreciate the Commission members looking at the proposed survey and let him know what you would like to see added or changed.

Mr. Heintz suggested that we include Springbrook Nature Center staff in the discussion of improvements for Moore Lake Park.

Ms. Larson asked how residents will be notified of the on-line survey.

Mr. Kirk stated they would promote it on the city's Facebook page, through e-mail lists, and on the web page itself.

Mr. Kirk stated that he would like the Commission members to be thinking of what changes they might like to see at Moore Lake Park prior to the discussion at the next Commission meeting in October.

**e. Community Park Ball Field Restoration**

Mr. Kirk stated that the Metropolitan Council has been doing a major sewer project in the Fridley area and they needed a location to stage equipment and supplies. The City has provided the back two fields at Fridley Community Park for this purpose. The fields have been somewhat torn up during the work and it is now time to restore them.

Mr. Kirk stated a Memo from Public Works Director Jim Kosluchar related to this issue has been included in the agenda for tonight's meeting.

Mr. Kirk stated that staff has had some discussion related to how the fields should be restored. Should they be restored as softball fields or should they be changed to soccer fields? It is his opinion that they should be restored so the fields can be used for multi-sport opportunities. He would restore the softball infields and outfield fences, knowing that football and soccer fields can be overlayed on the turf if needed.

Mr. Kirk asked the Commission if they had any thoughts or suggestions on the field restorations.

Mr. Ackerman asked if teams used the back two fields for batting practice during softball league play and tournaments.

Mr. Kirk stated that when the fields were not used for youth league play, adult teams did use them for that purpose.

Mr. Kirk stated that if we have the fields restored with softball infields and fences, it gives us more flexibility when renting the park for tournaments.

Mr. Kondrick stated that he would suggest leaving the fields how they were before the Met Council project started. It still gives us flexibility for different uses.

Mr. Heintz asked if there are enhancements to the park that they could provide to the

City park.

Mr. Jensen stated that the Met Council has understood that they have inconvenienced the City by taking these fields out the past couple of years. He thought they would provide complete restoration and possible new items to improve the park. He further stated that he would recommend new electronic scoreboards on the fields.

MOTION by Mr. Kondrick, seconded by Mr. Ackerman, to restore the back two fields at Community Park as softball fields, with turf areas able to accommodate other sports as well.

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

4. **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION by Mr. Kondrick, seconded by Mr. Ackerman to adjourn the September 12, 2016 meeting at 9:03 p.m.

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL MEMBERS VOTING AYE, CHAIRPERSON HEINTZ DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED AND THE SEPTEMBER 12, 2016 MEETING ADJOURNED.

