

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
LITTLE CANADA, MINNESOTA**

**October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018**

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof a regular meeting of the Parks & Recreation Commission of the City of Little Canada, Minnesota, was held on the 4<sup>th</sup> of October in the Council Chambers of the City Center located at 515 Little Canada Road East in said city.

Chair Dave Miller called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and the following members of the commission were present:

MEMBERS PRESENT:      Ms. Anna Abruzzese  
                                 Ms. Rose Chu  
                                 Ms. Sharen Darling  
                                 Mr. Ron Horwath  
                                 Mr. Dave Miller  
                                 Mr. Tom Ray  
                                 Mr. Peter Schletty

MEMBERS ABSENT:

ALSO PRESENT:            Mr. Bryce Shearen, Parks and Recreation  
   and Community Services Manager  
                                 Mr. Tom Fischer, City Council Member  
                                 Ms. Vanessa Van Alstine, Cable TV Prod.

**MINUTES**

Horwath made a motion to approve the minutes from the September meeting. Rose seconded the motion. The motion passed 7 – 0.

**SPOONER  
PARK REPORT**

The Community Services Manager reported the Commission had discussed the Spooner Park Improvement Report at their workshop before the meeting. He explained staff was looking for more input from the Commission on the playground and container because one of the playground vendors he had received a sketch from was offering a 100% local match grant. The Community Services Manager stated the grant is through Gametime and the application closes at the end of October. He explained the Commission had discussed ADA accessibility and inclusivity as a focus for the playground, which would significantly increase the total cost. The Community Services Manager stated a grant could alleviate some of these costs. He asked the Commission if they

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wanted to move forward with the proposed location of the playground and if there was a preference to one of the proposed containers. Chair Miller suggested the Commission propose a location and ask the vendor for their thoughts on the shape of the container. Horwath asked Councilman Fischer how the Council felt about the increasing costs of the playground. Councilman Fischer stated the Council needed to see more specifics before discussing funding options. He explained it would be easier to discuss how to allocate the money once the Council had seen a proposal. Darling noted the grant may favor an ADA accessible playground. The Community Services Manager stated there was \$285,000 in the preliminary budget to fund the playground equipment, container, and trail modification.

The Community Services Manager asked the Commission what type of features they would like to see in the playground. Horwath stated he wanted to see less traditional equipment and more unique features. He explained ropes, bridges, and peaks are very popular. Schletty stated he would like to see some creative elements or interactive features. Abruzzese stated she wanted to see features that would help bring out a child's imagination. Many of the Commissioners also mentioned a natural element was important to the character of Spooner Park. The Commission thought that should be a separate feature in addition to the playground. Councilman Fischer stated the features should complement the nearby playgrounds, so equipment isn't duplicated.

The Community Services Manager asked what color the playground should be. The Commissioners thought a neutral color scheme would be appropriate with splashes of color. Darling mentioned she had seen tall canopies or covers that looked like giant leaves at playgrounds and that would fit well at Spooner Park. Chu noted nature can also have bright colors, and that may attract children to play on the playground. **Darling made a motion to direct staff to prepare a grant application for the Gametime grant. Abruzzese seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.**

**2019 BUDGET  
PLANNING**

The Community Services Manager reported the new City Administrator Chris Heineman had just started but wasn't able to attend the meeting. He explained the levy had been set at 3.41 percent, and could not be increased. The Community Services Manager stated Council was trying to lower it to 3 percent. He asked the Commission to try to choose a three-item priority list to share with the Council. The Community Services Manager stated the Spooner Park playground seemed to be a high priority for the Commission, as well as the Pioneer Park playground. He noted trail connectivity and signage also seemed to be important.

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The Community Services Manager stated one of the Commission's non-programmed items was to run sewer and water to the Spooner Park lower shelter. He explained he thought the Commission had discussed this and decided not to pursue it, but wanted more information from the Commission. The Community Services Manager noted there was also a non-programmed item to replace the lower shelter and redo the concrete. The Commission agreed they wanted to pursue replacement of the shelter for \$75,000 in lieu of adding sewer and water for \$419,000.

Abruzzese stated she would like to see bike racks be a priority as there is a need and they were fairly inexpensive compared to the larger projects being discussed. Chu asked about the Gervais Mill Park Garden. The Community Services Manager stated he needed to do some research to see where that cost estimate had come from and what it included. The Commission agreed this was still an important priority. Chair Miller stated the habitat restoration was an important priority to the Commission and especially to the residents living nearby. Chair Miller explained residents using the skate park had commented that the equipment was wearing and they would like to see some new features put in. The Community Services Manager stated the \$20,000 budgeted for the skate park was most likely much lower than what would be needed. He said staff wanted to have someone look at the equipment, and also estimate how much new equipment would cost. Horwath noted it is one of the most utilized park features and suggested expanding or adding features, if possible. Ray asked if there was Wi-Fi in the parks. The Community Services Manager explained there was.

The Community Services Manager stated he was hearing that the Commission's priorities were:

1. Spooner Park Playground
2. Pioneer Park Playground
3. Gervais Mill Park Garden

He stated the other priorities as mentioned would be discussed at future meetings. The Community Services Manager explained the Commission could begin discussing Habitat Restoration at Thunder Bay/Westwind Trail at the next few meetings. Chu suggested that the Commission continue working on the other priorities and gather cost estimates. Abruzzese asked that bike racks be included as a programmed priority, even if only a few could be added at a time. The Community Services Manager noted that he had researched bike racks and thought it could be a future scout project.

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**RESCHEDULE  
NOVEMBER  
MEETING**

The Community Services Manager reported he had a conflict with the November 1 meeting, and asked it be moved to Tuesday, October 30. **Ray made a motion to move the November meeting to Tuesday, October 30 at 6:30. Darling seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.**

**OTHER  
BUSINESS**

The Community Services Manager reported there was a new program called Explore Little Canada. The City partnered with a chiropractic clinic to walk around Little Canada. There are 5 planned outings, each a one-mile loop. The walks will take place on Tuesday evenings in October starting at 6:00 p.m. The chiropractor also offers some snacks and water, and the City will be giving away some Little Canada gear.

The Community Services Manager reported Cookies with Santa would be on Saturday, December 8. He noted it was well attended last year, and staff was planning to add a few additional activities this year.

The Community Services Manager reported basketball registration is open through October 12.

The Community Services Manager reported he had heard many positive comments about the City's pickleball program. Pickleball is on Tuesday's and Thursday's but will be wrapping up for the year soon.

The Community Services Manager reported Market Place Morning Talk was on Emergency Preparedness on October 10 at the Bingo Hall. He stated the November Morning Talk would be the Holiday Party.

The Community Services Manager reported senior exercise will be moved to City Hall during the Old Fire Hall remodel. The event takes place year round, every Wednesday and Friday from 1:30 – 2:30 p.m. at the Old Fire Hall. For more information on the exact days contact Bryce Shearen, Community Services Manager.

The Community Services Manager stated Monday, October 8 would be the last Farmer's Market of the year. Chair Miller asked if it had gone well this year. The Community Services Manager stated staff would have a discussion about the Farmer's Market after the season ended, but there were typically four vendors and a few more that would come intermittently.

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**ADJOURN**

Horwath moved the meeting be adjourned

Motion seconded by Abruzzese.

Motion carried 7 – 0.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Anna Leibel  
Recording Secretary