

**EAST GRAND RAPIDS
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING
EGR COMMUNITY CENTER
COMMISSION CHAMBERS
6:00 PM
Monday, July 24, 2023**

The regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission was held in the City Commission Chambers in the East Grand Rapids Community Center.

Kate Skaggs called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

Present in Person: John Arendshorst, Michelle Brown, Patrick Parkes, Kate Skaggs and Abby Sorota

Absent: Nick Abraham, Larry Fisher, Lauren Jacoby and Bill Saxton

Also Present: City Manager, Shea Charles, Parks and Recreation Director, Derek Melville and Sara Coffey

Guests: Chris Meyer

Public Comment:

None

Report of Commissioners:

Patrick Parkes: Nothing

John Arendshorst: Nothing

Abby Sorota: Nothing

Michelle Brown:- Children had swim lessons at Wealthy and on the way out they toured the playground. They are coming along, so exciting!

Kate Skaggs: T-ball everything was handled wonderfully, great communication from Parks and Rec staff!

Review of minutes:

Minutes of the May 22, 2023, Parks and Recreation Commission meeting were presented for approval.

MOTION to approve: Brown

SUPPORT: Sorota

YES: Arendshorst, Brown, Parkes, Skaggs and Sorota (5)

NO: (0)

MINUTES APPROVED

Special Event Calendar – FYI

East Grand Rapids Historical Sign Proposal:

Director Melville provided a background of adding historical signs to Lakeside Drive by John Collins Park. In a 2022 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting it was proposed that signs be placed in a bump-out so people stopping to read these signs would not be causing congestion on the sidewalk.

Sorota: Good solution verses the signs being on the side of the sidewalk.

Parke: Agreed with not wanting to disrupt sidewalks. Could QR codes be used as ways to highlight historical elements, since signs most likely be switched out regularly.

Melville: Likes this idea, QR code can send people right to Mary's work. The panels that are being considered for this can be printed and switched out if desired.

Brown: There is so much detail, font is small in the print-out, may be smaller once on a pane. QR might be helpful and easier to read.

Arendshorst: How big will the signs be?

Melville: Signs will be close to the signs already in JCP. Will also work with sign company to make sure they are easy to read.

Arendshorst: This seems like an ideal solution.

Skaggs: Will it end up being an area that kids will park bikes? The bump out is a great placement.

Brown: It would be nice to have a bench too.

Melville: Sounds like the feedback is favorable, we can look at the footprint.

Manhattan Park Improvement Process:

Director Melville presented information about the three in-person community engagement sessions held in June. What amenities was the community in/not in favor of? And why? This information will help drive the designs. The last survey collected 548 responses, thank you to the Public School District for help getting the word out. Information was posted in the East Express and the flyer sent in the mail invited community feedback. Great data was obtained from the survey. 60 people attended the in-person sessions.

Upcoming in-person community engagement sessions will mirror the previous sessions. August 2nd at Manhattan Park and August 3rd at the Community Center. Results of the previous survey will be available for review and the open house style gives community members the ability to see updated conceptual designs, speak with the design group and City staff. Another survey will be open August 2-16. Ideally, we will see at least the same number of people and responses as the first round.

Sorota: People don't have to go to an input session to be able to do the survey?

Melville: Designs will be within the on-line survey. But the disadvantage of not going to the sessions is not being able to talk to staff and ask questions.

Sorota: is there a way to find out if people completing the survey attended one of the sessions?

Melville: I will mention it to the design team.

Sorota: is there a chance people that come to the in-person sessions won't complete the online survey?

Melville: People might choose to only complete the comment card at the input session.

Parke: Regarding free form responses, can the system determine magnitude and frequency of same responses? Is this for the design firm to do?

Melville: Survey Monkey is used and within the program you can sort and try to organize to make seamless merging of data.

Brown: Is it on the honor system that only one person submits one survey response?

Melville: Yes, it's nice to see responses from open-ended questions.

Parks Improvement Project Updates:

Director Melville presented a slideshow of progress on all the different construction.

Much work to be done on Man-5:

- Sidewalk from restroom to spectator area
- Bleachers and new cement pad
- Replacement of scoreboard
- Raising level of ground by approximately one foot, bringing in sand and installing a drainage system, the new system has stone and pipes are wrapped in fabric
- End of September estimated completion

Wealthy School play structure, concrete work and repairs, estimated completion before school starts. pavilion will most likely not be done by the start of school, this item had a longer lead time.

Lakeside completion is expected this fall. Progress may seem slow, but infrastructure work needed to be done. Parking lot was reconfigured and there is a new retaining wall. Completion should be October/November.

Breton-Downs has had great progress!

- Most of the concrete and structure work is done
- Pavilion delivery is expected late fall
- Smaller scope/creative play area looks nice
- Access point walkway and walking trail in wooded area (for classroom nature walks)

The Dog Park looks great from the road but it has bare areas that grass needs to be established. Grand opening estimated in about 6 weeks, depending on weather.

Brown: Regarding the dog park, how did it go with 4th of July fireworks?

Melville: The small dog area was used and we loved that it was enclosed with plenty of space. It is not a quick process to set up and take down.

Report of Director:

Director Melville reported:

- Construction of Fred Bunn trail will begin August 14. Signage with QR code alerting the community of construction and updates of progress. The majority of the space will remain open and not all trails will be underway all at once. Low-impact equipment is being used. Weather and materials can impact work and progress.
- 4th of July was a great day and was well attended.
- One movie left for the summer.
- Last concert of the summer is Prior Noon.

Fall programs: participation number just continue to show high participation. Early registration is important and some programs can add additional classes. Mermaid camp is a great example of this, based on the waiting list we were able to add additional sessions.

Parke: Should there be an early registration incentive?

Melville: we do discount certain programs. Best to register early and secure your spot.

Melville: Kayak kiosks will be coming to Reeds Lake. They will not be staffed. The City wants to make access to lake available. Rent Fun was selected as the vendor

- App to secure waivers and rental payment
- No wires, good for remote locations
- City Commission has approved
- Company provides local staff person to replace equipment and has their own customer services line for issues
- Split revenue to cover the costs and help recoup upfront cost of the unit(s)
- Should be delivered this fall
- Fully roll out spring 2024

Charles: City Commission approved 4 units but debated on 8 units.

Skaggs: Artisan Market timeframe?

Charles: 5-9pm

Brown: Will the Artisan Market have alcohol?

Charles: City Commission has approved a Social District but the MLCC needs to give permission and logos will need to be made. Hopefully this will be up and going this year.

Next Meeting August 28, 2023

The meeting was adjourned at 6:58pm