

**CITY OF FALCON HEIGHTS**  
Regular Meeting of the Parks & Recreation Commission  
City Hall  
2077 West Larpenteur Avenue

**MINUTES**  
June 3, 2024 at 6:30 P.M.

A. CALL TO ORDER: 6:36 PM

B. ROLL CALL:

Jeff Yager  X  Mike Bradbury  X  Eric Brenton  X   
Bob Haight  X  Tom Faust  X  Randi Lundell  X  Erin Williams  X

COUNCIL LIAISON:

James Wassenberg  X

STAFF PRESENT:

Kelly Nelson  X

C. PRESENTATION: N/A

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. May 6, 2023 – Parks and Recreation Meeting Minutes - Joint Meeting - Community Engagement Commission

Faust motions to approve the Park minutes;  
approved 6-0  
Commissioner Yager arrived just after the vote

E. AGENDA:

**1. Ice Cream Social 2024 Event**

City Staff, Nelson, gives Commissioners an update that the City is awaiting a response from Blaze Credit Union in regards to whether cars could park in their lot for Ice Cream Social if it is held at City Hall.

Bradbury suggests having Ice Cream Social at The Grove.

The Commissioners discuss the logistics, including where to park cars/walk, etc.

Faust points out that there is an underground tunnel closer to the clubhouse but wonders if people would walk the extra distance in order to use it. And, parking likely won't be possible at the golf course or driving range.

Brenton says that we would need power and restrooms at the Grove.

Williams thinks City Hall would be more turnkey.

The Commissioners decide that City Hall would work and will allow Staff to make the decision based on the Community Park construction timeline and the response from Blaze.

## **2. Curtiss Field Amenity**

Nelson reminds the commission that \$5,000 was added to the budget in 2024 and earmarked for improving Curtiss Field through an added amenity. If the money is not used in 2024, it won't carry over for use next year.

Williams asks if we can solicit attendees at Ice Cream Social.

Brenton says that a few of the suggestions (collected at Spring Together) are already in the works at or best-suited at Community Park.

Williams suggests gathering data from those that submit the ideas so that we have a better understanding of their age and their park usage.

Commissioners consider whether there is water access at Curtiss Field.

Williams asks if the Environment Commission could help with a prairie garden.

Haight is not in favor of re-landscaping the pond area. He adds that the portable bathroom sees a lot of use.

Staff will look into how often the bathroom is serviced and can inquire if it could be done more frequently.

Bradbury recommends adding a timer to the lights. The State Fair Task Force mentioned how dark the park was last year. The timer could automatically turn the lights off at park close.

Wassenberg suggests redirecting the lights that are in the skating area so they are cast into the park more during non-skating months.

Yager reminds commissioners that a skating liner was previously discussed and that it would extend the use of the ice rink.

Bradbury summarizes that the commissions favors the following three amenities in this order: water fountain, timer for lights and a tarp for under the ice rink.

Faust says there is a tree that will need to be replaced at Curtiss at some point.

Williams mentions gravel beds and how you can plant bare root trees in the gravel and then transplant them elsewhere.

Bradbury and Wassenberg mention that there isn't a sidewalk to connect Iowa to Idaho and it would be nice to add that during a Pavement Management Project (PMP) in the Northome area.

## **3. Fall Programming**

Nelson updates the commission that the City hired three staff members for summer programming but the challenge is that the summer staff typically moves on and a different staff must then be hired for fall programming. Last year, the City did not offer fall programming.

Brenton suggests doing the same free rec programming model again in the fall but suggests having it at the Grove.

Yager questions what the current demographics are and if there are many young kids in Falcon Heights.

The commissioners continue discussions and say that printing the fall programming schedule in the biannual newsletter that gets mailed out isn't important since that has to typically be ready by August or September and fall staff may not be hired by then. Instead, they recommend taking a wait-and-see approach to how the free summer rec program does. Then, maybe that is repeated or maybe the City looks to hosting board games at City Hall in the fall, as an example of what programming might look like.

## F. INFORMATION/ANNOUNCEMENT

### 1. Recap 2024 Spring Together

Nelson says that 273 frozen treats were handed out in 2023 and 249 were handed out this year. There was less duplication this year so attendance was likely equal.

Staff and fellow Commissioners thank Brenton for the open mic portion of the event.

Bradbury says that if the Commission opts not to have an open mic next year, the City should hire an acoustic musician.

### 2. Update on Grant Requests

Nelson shares that the City was not selected to receive grant funds from AARP Community Challenge. The funds would have been used to purchase a wheeled pickleball net for the combination basketball/pickleball court at the Grove. AARP received over 3,300 applicants from communities nationwide.

The City was selected to receive grant money from the University of Minnesota Good Neighbor Fund. Nearly \$7,300 will be awarded to the City and be used to purchase sports and activities equipment for summer programming at Curtiss Field.

### 3. Update on Summer Programming

Nelson updates the commission that three staff members were hired for summer programming and that a work schedule will be put together next week so that the City can determine if additional nights/days of programming can be offered to residents.

---

Williams proposes discussing park improvement ideas that could be brought to the Lions Club at the next Parks and Recreation meeting in August. There will be no meeting in July and commissioners will conduct individual park audits instead.

Commissioners also discuss pricing estimates that the City received from Kraus-Anderson and how estimates were higher than anticipated. The City Council will discuss ways to reduce costs at their workshop meeting on Wednesday (June 5).

G. ADJOURNMENT: 8:22 P.M.

Yager motions to adjourn the meeting;  
Approved 7-0