

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

**MINUTES**  
August 5, 2024 at 6:30 P.M.

A. CALL TO ORDER: 6:38 PM

B. ROLL CALL:

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. June 3, 2024 – Parks and Recreation Regular Meeting Minutes

Williams motions to approve the Park minutes;  
approved 6-0

E. AGENDA:

**1. Park Audit Findings and 2025 Budget Planning**

The commissioners discuss park audit findings and begin brainstorming wish list items to add as future amenities at all parks.

Community Park:

Lundell suggests adding doggy bags near trash can receptacles at Community Park.

Haight says that rabbits have been invading the Community Garden and suggests improving the fencing.

Williams says that the bottom of the fence around the tennis courts has a gap and suggests adding something to prevent balls from rolling under.

Lundell asks how old the grills are in the parks and wonders if new grates could replace the old ones or if new grills are needed.

Williams suggests adding a Little Library.

Nelson says that Public Works might be able to construct a Little Library in the fall or as time permits; they are really handy!

Faust suggests moving a large boulder from the woods and one that juts out from the soccer field over to playground area.

The Grove:

Commissioners suggest replacing the playground at some point in the future to include more swings. A new grate for the grill or a new grill would also be nice.

Curtiss Field:

Commissioners previously brainstormed amenities to add at Curtiss Field during the the May 6, 2024 Parks and Rec Commission meeting. Suggestions that came from that meeting and still hold true from this meeting, is that the Commission would like drinking water added, push-button / timed lighting and a sidewalk added to connect the parking lot to the pathway.

Commissioners add that a new grate for the grill or a new grill is also needed.

Faust says that drainage correction is needed at one end of the basketball court and offers to provide instruction to Public Works, saying it would be a fairly easy and inexpensive fix.

Bradbury says that the basketball court could use a good power wash and parts of the court need to be repainted, as the pooling water has started to peel it.

Faust suggests adding a spiderweb swing for older kids to enjoy.

Nelson shares that park signage (i.e. rules of the parks) needs updating in all parks and perhaps relocated to be more visible as well.

## **2. Fall Programming**

Lindell suggests hosting basketball clinics.

Bradbury says you need a hook (ice cream truck, bouncy house, etc.) for the free programming nights.

Nelson suggests trying board games with pizza or movies and popcorn at City Hall this fall.

Faust suggests ordering signs to publicize free food and fun to place around signs the day of to help remind residents.

Wassenberg thinks that posting on neighborhood Facebook groups is helpful. He suggests tweaking the newsletter to have the newest news up front.

Nelson discusses programming being offered in cities with a similar population and suggests a model where residents book day camps, field trips, etc. to local attractions and the City covers a percentage of the enrollment fee.

Wassenberg likes the subsidized model and Haight agrees.

Haight says the U of MN youth programs offers a huge array of classes and the Bell Museum has weekly camps, too.

Bradbury suggests trying the field trips for fall to test it.

Brenton suggests a coupon code that residents redeem this fall. The City would then be billed the difference.

Commissioners support doing free events at City Hall in the winter and field trips this fall.

### **3. Vice Chairperson Election**

Eric Brenton would like to be considered for the position of Vice Chairperson. No other commissioners volunteer so Williams motions that the commission should cease taking further nominations and vote.

Motion passes unanimously in favor of Brenton becoming Vice Chairperson.

### **4. Fall Event Discussion**

The Parks Commission began discussing adding a fall event back in 2023 to occur in 2024.

Nelson says that the fall event can tie into a celebration of the City's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and add additional components.

Commissioners discuss dates and whether Saturday, October 26<sup>th</sup> might be an option either before or in partnership with Gibbs Farm, who will host a Trick or Treat Trail event later that day.

Nelson shares that she will be meeting with Gibbs Farm tomorrow, 8/6, to discuss their event a bit more.

Brenton suggests the date of Sunday, October 13 could also be a good date because there is a Vikings bye week.

Williams says the bouncy house was popular at Ice Cream Social and suggests adding that to this event.

Brenton says that you could do a Best Costume contest for the kids, a hayride and pumpkin carving.

Haight suggests live music.

## **Information/Announcement**

### **1. Recap 2024 Ice Cream Social**

Nelson shares that the city purchased 649 pieces of ice cream in 2023 and bumped it up to 861 pieces this year. That does not include an additional purchase that was done near the end of the event of a particular ice cream treat that had run out. The City spent approximately \$4,000 for the event but the rentals (tent and inflatables) accounted for over half of that total.

### **2. Update on MN DNR Outdoor Recreation Grant Request**

Nelson shares that the City was not selected to receive grant funds to be used towards a new playground at Community Park. The DNR said that projects that were awarded funds scored between 62 and 73 points; the City scored 61 points.

Nelson feels like the City could bolster their application and try again in early spring of 2024 to ask for playground funding.

Feedback provided by the DNR suggested that the City should identify existing vs. new walkways, note whether new benches and trash receptacles would be fixed in place and to elaborate more on the sustainability of the new playground.

Nelson says that we are further along in the process now than we were back in March (when the application was submitted) and much of this would be accomplished by having an actual design in hand that would be ready to construct from.

### **3. Update on Summer Programming**

Nelson shares that five out of 10 of the free programming nights were completely canceled by rain; several others were partially impacted by it. Attendance was low but the weather may have been a contributing factor.

G. ADJOURNMENT: 8:20 P.M.

Haight motions to adjourn the meeting;  
Approved 6-0