



**South St. Paul Parks and Recreation  
Advisory Commission  
Minutes of April 13, 2021**

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission meeting was called to order by Josh Regan at 6:00 p.m. at Central Square Community Center.

Members Present: Matthew Hamilton, Lori Miller, Josh Regan, Cindy Bonawitz, Mike Lindamood

Members Absent: Ron Morgan, Cynthia Callais,

Others Present: Joe Kaliszewski, Shannon Young, Amy Dybsetter

**1. INTRODUCTIONS**

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion by Lori Miller and second by Matthew Hamilton to approve the Minutes of March 9, 2021. 5 Yays. 0 Nays. Motion Passed.

**3. OLD BUSINESS**

**3A. Recreation Program Updates/Staffing** – Ms. Young reported that the search is on and positions posted online for summer programming, such as lifeguards, playgrounds, summer playhouse. There is still an active search for a field supervisor. Applicants must be 16 or older.

**3B. Kaposia Landing Phase 2 Construction Update – Playground Update** – Ms. Young reported that the playground installation is underway but has been delayed due to the weather. The materials are at Kaposia Landing.

**3C. Doug Woog Arena** – Ms. Young reported that Barb Yackel with the Blades N’ Motions and the Arena hosted the *Springtastic Classic* last weekend. It went smoothly, with small groups going in and out of the Arena, more than 64 events were featured. Upcoming events at the Arena include the *Ted Brill Great 8*, which consist of 8 teams of the top high school players in Minnesota, (April 16-18), the *Igloo Classic* and the *Stars and Stripes* tournament. After that, Rink 2 ice will come out for maintenance. There have been some Covid issues at the Arena, but staff made accommodations and balanced coverage, which worked out well.

**3D. Wakota Trailhead & Overlook – FLAP Grant 2022** – Ms. Young reported that there an active RFP distributed, but no other updates at this time.

**3E. SHIP Grant – Bryant Avenue Pedestrian Bridge Feasibility Study** – Ms. Young referenced the March 9<sup>th</sup> meeting in which SRF presented the options and details for this project. She reported the next phase will include virtual meetings for public engagement.

**3F. Park Assignments/Visit Reports** – Ms. Miller questioned if new park assignments should be discussed since there are new members and some time has passed since they have been addressed. This will be discussed in a future meeting.

Ms. Young advised that she and Pat Dunn from Public Works have been doing an assessment and inventory of the parks. She noted Howie Steenberg (Parks Lead) has been working with Landscape Structures, Inc. (LSI) to identify problem areas and potential costs, with the intention of replacing safety hazard items first. She stated that park and playground upgrades have been phased out in the CIP. The desire is to eventually have a certified playground inspector within the Public Works/Parks department. Mr. Kaliszewski stated that he has initiated contact with Pat Dunn to discuss the mulch around park trees. He added that mowing or trimming too close to the trees can cause scarring and damage, which occurs when there is not sufficient mulch around the trees.

**3G. Central Square Update** – Ms. Young reported that there was discussion at the City Council work session on Monday, April 12<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Kaliszewski was present at the Monday meeting and reported that the school district had proposed that the city buy the CSCC building for \$4.5 million. This was declined, and the school district came back with a \$1.6 million offer, which has also been refused. Council feels there are too many unknowns, including needed repairs and maintenance in addition to the cost deduced from a comprehensive itemized list of expenses. It is an estimated yearly loss of approximately \$250,000 per year. The Council is looking at moving Parks & Recreation out of the building, where they will likely go to City Hall.

Mr. Kaliszewski added that the city is in the process of purchasing the old Jefferson site from the school district. He also discussed the new trail connecting Saint Paul and Kaposia Landing, the Robert Piram Trail, and reported that he had visited a section and was pleased with how it is looking.

**3H. Garden Update** – Ms. Young reported that the Community Garden Plots have all been reserved for the season. She added that Public Works will be tilling the site soon for the third time and getting it staked out. If the weather cooperates, it should be available for gardeners to begin soon.

#### **4. NEW BUSINESS -**

##### **4A. New Board Member**

Ms. Young re-introduced new member, Cindy Bonawitz for those who had not yet been introduced. She is not new to local programming and activities, she worked at Central Square/Parks & Recreation as a team member for about a year and a half, lives in South St. Paul and frequents our local parks.

**4B. Athletic Fields** - Ms. Young reported that communication with baseball and softball associations have begun to go over dates, times, and tournaments. She added that there will be a meeting with the coaches and key players to go over details, field rules and expectations and distribution of keys.

#### **5. OTHER BUSINESS -**

**5A. DNR Shade Tree Funding** – Ms. Young reported that the city has been awarded \$94,600 in funding that will be used primarily for the Emerald Ash Borer issue. The money will be used primarily for disease management and replacement of boulevard and park trees.

**5B. DEED Funding** – Ms. Young reported that the city has been awarded \$522,991 in Redevelopment Grant Funding to assist in the financing of The Yards project. The progress was

discussed, including demolition of the building and the skyway that connected it to the old Wells Fargo building.

**5C. Kaposia Days** - Mr. Regan reported that Kaposia Days will include a parade this year, but that it will be traveling on 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, rather than 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue. It was discussed whether the fireworks were being held, as well as other events like Bingo.

**6. ADJOURNMENT** – Next Meeting: May 11, 2021 at Central Square Community Center.

Respectfully submitted,  
Amy Dybsetter