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**CITY OF ARDEN HILLS  
PARKS, TRAILS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING  
TUESDAY, JUNE 13, 2023, 6:30 PM  
CHARLES PERRY PARK PAVILION**

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**CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Committee Chair Marie Hinton called the June 13, 2023 meeting of the Parks, Trails, and Recreation Committee to order at 6:30 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chair Marie Hinton, Committee Members Dan Dietz, Kristine Poelzer, Lacy Loosbrock, Jill Anderson, Nancy Jacobson, Kate Olson, Emelia Rogers and Mark Kelliher

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Council Liaison Emily Rousseau, Recreation Supervisor Matthew Johnson and Senior Communications Coordinator Luke Cardona

**ABSENT:** Committee Members Tim Nelson and Kerri Seemann

**1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**A motion was made by Committee Member Kelliher and seconded by Committee Member Jacobson to approve the agenda. Motion passed unanimously.**

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**A. May 16, 2023 PTRC Minutes**

**Committee Member Dietz** commented that the motion at the bottom of page 5 was shown to be made and opposed by Committee Member Kelliher.

**Committee Member Poelzer** noted that she will be covering Triangle and Sampson Parks, not Perry Park as listed on the Parks and Trail Assignments.

**Chair Hinton** said she would also be checking Crepeau Park.

**Committee Member Poelzer** asked to clarify the third sentence in her first comment under the Volunteers section to say the call is relayed to Matt, and Matt relays the information to her.

**A motion was made by Committee Member Poelzer and seconded by Committee Member Anderson to approve the minutes as amended. Motion passed unanimously.**

**3. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. PTRC Parks and Trail Tour**

Recreation Supervisor Johnson reviewed that parks they would be touring.

**B. Luke Cardona Senior Communications Coordinator - Introduction to Committee**

**Senior Communications Coordinator Cardona** introduced himself to the committee, and gave his background. He has been figuring out what committees and commissions like to talk about and how they like to say it. He noted that he is a member of the Parks and Rec Commission in Fridley. He will be working with staff and Councilmember Rousseau to prioritize PTRC information. He asked what the committee would like to get from his position and what they'd like him to be aware of. The City is on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

**Committee Member Rogers** said she was surprised to find that the City newsletter was really read by a lot of residents. She felt that was exciting.

**Senior Communications Coordinator Cardona** said local newspapers aren't what they used to be so the City newsletter won't be going anywhere.

**Chair Hinton** said she'd like to see more engagement on social media from residents sharing ideas. She'd like to have more features on Parks and Rec in the newsletter. She would love to see a volunteer connections section where people could see what types of opportunities are available.

**Senior Communications Coordinator Cardona** noted the trails map would be in the next newsletter with current and proposed trails. One to three parks and rec related items are usually in the newsletter each month.

**Committee Member Poelzer** said she'd like to see a short survey to see how many people are reading and taking time to respond, and some numbers such as how many volunteers they have, keeping in mind that people on committees and commissions are also volunteers.

**Senior Communications Coordinator Cardona** replied those types of things are driven by the committees, commissions and Council; he wouldn't be the one to create the survey, just the messaging after direction from Council and his supervisor.

**Senior Communications Coordinator Cardona** felt there weren't a lot of Facebook users on the City page, but it was one of the best free communications channels a city can have. He is hoping to create a campaign to get more people to use the Facebook page.

**Chair Hinton** asked about Instagram.

**Senior Communications Coordinator Cardona** said he couldn't say if they were going to use Instagram or not, but that was a channel they should probably be using and recreation would be good to post there.

**Committee Member Poelzer** said she signed up through the City website to get email blasts and gets the majority of her information from those as they are timely.

**Senior Communications Coordinator Cardona** said the City uses newsflashes frequently to get information out to residents. He will most likely do a campaign to get more residents to register to receive alerts.

**Committee Member Rogers** thought plugging into other channels that are already active would be helpful, such as Nextdoor.

**Chair Hinton** said she has found at her job that they get different users on each of the different channels.

**Senior Communications Coordinator Cardona** told the committee members they can reach out to him, the Recreation Supervisor or the Council Liaison.

### **C. Interim Buckthorn Management Solution**

This item was discussed part way through the parks and trails tour.

**Committee Member Kelliher** stated there is a group of people working the Chatham trails area and have made considerable headway taking out mature buckthorn, but there are still a lot of really young buckthorn and the best way to mitigate that is to hire a herd of goats. Hazelnut Park and Floral Park are on the list for the upcoming grant cycle with Great River Greening, and they will have a better idea of how much money is granted this fall, with they money dispersed in June, 2024. A similar grant would be applied for the next park; he would suggest the Chatham trails area but there will be a two-year lag between the mature buckthorn being cut and when the grant money will become available. He is proposing to ask the City for \$4,500 to cover the cost of bringing in a goat herd for one grazing and to reseed grass and sedge.

**A motion was made by Committee Member Kelliher and seconded by Committee Member Poelzer to request \$4,500 from the City to bring in a goat herd to graze (\$3,500) and to reseed (\$1,000) the Chatham trail area during the two-year lag period before grant money is potentially available.**

**Committee Member Poelzer** added that one of the goat herders explained that if you know the goats are coming it's good to put down the seed first so the goats trample the seed into the soil.

**Committee Member Kelliher** said the process would be to graze down the smaller buckthorn, as recommended by Great River Greening. The difference is there isn't a plan in place for trees and other natural vegetation to remediate the area. The recommendation is to add the grass and sedge seed as a placeholder until grant money is hopefully available to do a complete remediation of the vegetation.

**Committee Member Jacobson** asked about waiting a year.

**Committee Member Kelliher** said they are in a good spot right now, but buckthorn will win the battle if they don't hit it with something else this season so the work they've done so far doesn't backstep.

**Committee Member Jacobson** thought a grant might be more easily awarded because of the work that has already been done.

**Committee Member Olson** wondered if they had considered using the Arden Hills Foundation as a source of funds. She thought they could have a campaign asking people to donate specifically to Chatham Hills buckthorn removal.

**Committee Member Kelliher** agreed they could do that if the City won't fund the entire \$4,500. He thought that might work for next year.

**Committee Member Poelzer** mentioned that Committee Member Kelliher and two other volunteers have hundreds of hours invested in the Chatham trails area. She thought the trail would feel safer for kids to go to and from school if it were more wide open.

**Council Liaison Rousseau** said she wasn't sure how the Council would feel but it didn't seem like they were asking for a significant amount of money so she wasn't seeing any red flags. She noted that they could speak with the Communications Coordinator to advertise donating to the Foundation.

**Committee Member Kelliher** stated having 25-30 goats grazing for a couple of weeks is a really good community awareness opportunity, for kids and residents to see what is being accomplished while having fun watching.

**A vote was taken, the motion passed unanimously.**

#### **4. REPORTS**

##### **A. Council Liaison Update**

**Council Liaison Rousseau** stated the City Council approved a permit for a rib fest at the Red Bull facility on September 16. There will be ribs, a beer garden and some mild recruiting for the trades and the army. She noted there is a bench grant program from Ramsey County with applications due June 26. She said the deadline for RSVPs to the July 18<sup>th</sup> appreciation picnic is June 30 and she hoped everyone would be able to attend. Also, the Economic Development Committee hopefully have their first meeting in August. They are anticipating interviews for the committee to begin July 10.

**Council Liaison Rousseau** asked what the next steps were for the dog agility equipment at Perry Dog Park.

**Recreation Supervisor Johnson** replied that since the money was approved they can order the equipment. They will coordinate with Boston Scientific for the installation.

**Council Liaison Rousseau** also asked about some safety issues that Committee Member Jacobson reported and that need to be looked at in Johanna Marsh Park.

**Recreation Supervisor Johnson** said Public Works is checking into it.

**Council Liaison Rousseau** stated the Arden Manor and Floral Parks improvements were tabled by the Council as the bids came back 31% higher than anticipated, so they will be discussing it again at the next work session. The grant for Arden Manor needs to be used this year. They were

originally hoping for the work to be done in September but it may now be a couple of months later if they ask for new bids. Her preference would be to get separate bids for each park to be sure they can use the grant money this year. The engineers felt they underestimated significantly for inflation and the volatility of the market.

**7. NEXT MEETING**

**B. Tuesday, August 21, 2023**

Due to the Commissions and Committees Appreciation Picnic in July, the next PTRC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 21, 2023.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.