



**CITY OF ARDEN HILLS
PARKS, TRAILS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY, JULY 26, 2022, 6:30 PM
ARDEN HILLS CITY HALL**

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Marie Hinton called the July 26, 2022 meeting of the Parks, Trails, and Recreation Committee to order at 6:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Marie Hinton, Committee Members Paul Beggin, Kristine Poelzer, Jill Anderson, Dan Dietz, Mark Kelliher, Kerri Seemann, and Council Liaison Steve Scott

OTHERS PRESENT: Staff Liaison Joe Vaughan, and members of the public: Brynlee Pike, Joelle Tourdot, Melissa Wagner, and Ava Wagner

ABSENT: Committee Members Suzanne McGaugh, Micah Kiernan, and Tim Nelson

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Hinton asked to add the pollinator policy to item 4A, and Committee Member Poelzer asked to have information about the cancelled summer camp to Item 5.

A motion was made by Committee Member Kelliher and seconded by Committee Member Dietz to approve the agenda as amended. Motion passed unanimously.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. May 17, 2022 PTRC Minutes

A motion was made by Committee Member Kelliher and seconded by Committee Member Poelzer to approve the May 17, 2022 PTRC Minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

Girl Scouts Silver Project

Resident Melissa Wagner said a group of Girls Scouts are hoping to complete a Silver project that helps their community and requires 50 hours of work per person. They would like to create a pollinator garden at Johanna Marsh park. They have their own funds and would have parents involved. The garden they would like to build would be approximately 10 feet by 6 feet.

Ms. Pike explained they would plant a variety of pollinator friendly plants so there would be different things blooming at different times of the season. She listed some of the flowers they were considering.

Ms. Wagner said they would have to cut sod but no trees, there is currently no plan to put a fence around the garden.

Committee Member Poelzer suggested they research what plants might be deer and rabbit resistant.

Chair Hinton asked if they would maintain the garden.

Ms. Wagner responded that they would maintain it for a couple of years. The hope is that it will fill in and not need much weeding. She said it would be nice to get wood chips or mulch from the city.

Committee Member Dietz said he could give them some guidance from what has been done at Floral Park if they would like to meet him there.

Committee Member Kelliher asked what will happen to the garden maintenance once the Girl Scouts are no longer taking care of it.

Ms. Wagner replied that the hope is that it will be done installing this fall and after that it would be community service hours by the Girl Scouts.

Chair Hinton explained that PTRC is an advisory committee to the Council.

Council Liaison Scott said it would probably be coordinated with Parks and Rec.

Ms. Wagner said she would like guidance as to where they might like the garden to be placed, she thought it would be good to add on to an existing garden.

Staff Liaison Vaughan said he will bring it up to the Public Works Director and Assistant Public Works Director to get their thoughts and next steps.

Council Liaison Scott asked if he could get a project summary and photos so they can get recognition from the Council.

A motion was made by Committee Member Kelliher and seconded by Committee Member Poelzer to acknowledge the pollinator project at Johanna Marsh. Motion passed unanimously.

The committee requested before and after photos and thanked the Scouts for their proposal.

3. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Trail Projects Update

Staff Liaison Vaughan stated the Old Snelling Avenue trail has been paved, crews are restoring the green area around the site and the project should be complete by the end of August. The Lake Johanna Boulevard trail project open house was well attended, but there is no funding at his time and it is not programmed into the County budget. Staff is working on a cooperative agreement with the County to construct the Mounds View High School trail in 2023, not all funding needed has been acquired. The engineering consultant is still updating the feasibility study on the Old Highway 10 trail from Lake Valentine Road to Highway 96. The Parkshore trail and exercise equipment construction should begin in August. Crack sealing and fog sealing on existing trails is scheduled to begin August 8.

4. NEW BUSINESS

A. Habitat Restoration Proposals

Chair Hinton said Committee Member Seemann had worked on the proposed restoration projects as shown in the memo.

Committee Member Seemann said she has plants from her yard that are ready to be planted.

Committee Member Kelliher asked if tree funds could be used for shrubs. He thought the plan looked great.

Committee Member Beggin said he was assuming Committee Member Seemann wasn't going to take on the maintenance of these areas by herself.

Chair Hinton asked if the city would be able to water the plants.

Staff Liaison Vaughan said they city doesn't typically use the water trucks to water plants.

Committee Member Dietz said at Floral Park they have water barrels that the city will fill when they are empty.

Staff Liaison Vaughan commented that they have volunteers from businesses in town that could help with the projects. The City Council will have to approve the projects and funding.

Council Liaison Scott said it would probably be discussed at a work session and then added as a consent item to an agenda.

Committee Member Seemann stated that she gets most of her plants from Landscape Alternatives and they may offer a bulk discount to the city.

A motion was made by Committee Member Beggin and seconded by Committee Member Dietz to approve the proposed habitat restoration projects put forth by Committee Member Seemann and to bring it forward to the City Council.

Chair Hinton mentioned that she sent a pollinator policy put together by Committee Member Seemann to the committee members and recommended they discuss it at the next meeting.

Committee Member Kelliher felt there would be monitoring on the City's part and he wondered if these items on the policy were things that could easily be incorporated into staff's workload.

Staff Liaison Vaughan said there are challenges because there isn't a separate parks department with time dedicated to parks, or during a year with fewer seasonal employees.

Committee Member Kelliher commented that if there aren't resources to do some of the things on the policy, he felt they would be ill advised move forward with it.

Chair Hinton said Council would have to look at it at a work session to see if they felt it was feasible. The committee will discuss at next month's meeting.

B. Park Survey

Chair Hinton said in May they talked about a park survey that would be available via a QR code in the parks. She asked for questions the committee would like to see asked.

Committee Member Poelzer suggested how often they use the park and would they recommend the park to others. They might want to ask the number of people with them.

Committee Member Anderson proposed what do you like about the park and what could be improved in the park.

Committee Member Beggin thought it might be important to ask the ages of the people visiting the park. He also thought they could add a scale of 1-5 to some of the questions.

Staff Liaison Vaughan said the Council would probably want to see the questions before the survey goes live.

Chair Hinton added that if they were going to use a single QR code they would need to ask what park they were at.

Committee Member Anderson was concerned that only using a QR code may exclude some people from completing the survey.

Staff Liaison Vaughan said they could do a Facebook post with the link to the survey, possibly something on the website.

Chair Hinton suggested they also put the link to the survey on the signs in the parks.

A motion was made by Chair Hinton and seconded by Committee Member Deitz to have staff move forward with creating a QR code to use in the parks and other places to facilitate a parks survey. Motion passed 6-1.

C. Website Request Tracker

Staff Liaison Vaughan stated that residents go to the City website to report a concern. In the Public Works section it could be something such as a parks or facility maintenance concern, or a tree inspection. When a concern is reported it is directly routed to the Public Works staff, who create a work order for the appropriate staff to complete.

Committee Member Poelzer said the process works smoother if you have an account set up. She felt the thing that stops people from reporting is the number of blank spots on the form, however not every blank needs to be filled in to make a report, as most information can be added in the comments. You get an automatic email response saying your concern was submitted and staff gets back to you to say what was done about your concern.

Committee Member Dietz was curious about the volume of request tracker submittals.

Staff Liaison Vaughan said he wasn't sure as he was only forwarded concerns having to do with recreation, but he could find out that information.

D. Volunteer Update

Committee Member Poelzer said the process is working well and staff has been very responsive in getting information to the volunteers and organizing with other staff.

Chair Hinton asked if there were enough projects to give to volunteers.

Staff Liaison Vaughan said he is always open to ideas for volunteers, and committee members could create lists as they are walking through their specific parks. For instance, he was thankful to have a list about what needed to be done at Floral Park when the group from Kansas City needed a last minute project.

Committee Member Poelzer said with a list she could also get in touch with her contacts to suggest potential projects for their groups. She noted there are two forms that need to be completed by anyone that volunteers. She suggested that committee members keep their forms on file with staff.

Staff Liaison Vaughan highlighted recent volunteers from Boston Scientific, Rolling Hills Church in Kansas City along with resident volunteer George Kruse, and a church group from Washington state.

Chair Hinton suggested that volunteers receive a safety vest so others could see they were official volunteers, as a token of appreciation and possibly for liability purposes.

Committee Member Dietz said about six years ago volunteers at Floral Park received one from the city and they wear them when they work in the park. He felt a shirt or hat were good ideas, or something for them to wear while they are in the park.

Committee Member Poelzer thought the Arden Hills logo should be on the back.

Council Liaison Scott thought the logo and the word “volunteer” should be on the shirt.

A motion was made by Committee Member Dietz and seconded by Committee Member Poelzer to request reflective vests with the city logo and “volunteer” on them to be distributed to volunteers. Motion passed unanimously.

E. Park and Trail Tour Recap

Chair Hinton asked if there was anything further they wanted to share with City Council regarding the park and trail tour they took on June 19.

Committee Member Kelliher asked if there had been any research done on a cistern pump.

Staff Liaison Vaughn said the Assistant Public Works Director had requested a quote but hadn't received it yet.

Committee Member Beggin said getting garbage can covers has been effective.

5. REPORTS

Committee Member Poelzer said she had received a complaint from a family that had been notified the playground program wasn't going to be held one day because there wasn't enough staff, and the next day they were notified that it was completely cancelled. This caused day care problems for those who were relying on the program. She wondered how many families or children were affected by the cancellation.

Staff Liaison Vaughan clarified that this was in regard to the afternoon playground program at Hazelnut Park. There were 30 kids enrolled in the program with only one staff member available. There had been four staff that were planning to work afternoons. During staff training he was told by three of the four that they had taken other positions and wouldn't be working the afternoon program. He tried to find alternatives to make it work, but ultimately, he just didn't have enough staff.

Committee Member Kelliher asked if volunteer chaperones could be considered.

Staff Liaison Vaughan didn't know the answer to that question.

Council Liaison Scott noted that the Bark and Rec event was Saturday at Perry Park.

6. NEXT MEETING

The next PTRC Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 16, 2022.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.