



PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
Fridley Municipal Center
7071 University Ave NE, Fridley MN 55432

AGENDA – June 1, 2020

DATE: June 1, 2020 – 7:00 p.m.

LOCATION: Fridley Civic Campus – 7071 University Ave NE, Fridley, MN 55432 – FIRESIDE ROOM
(NOTE CHANGE IN LOCATION TO ACCOMMODATE SOCIAL DISTANCING).

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. APPROVE PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION AGENDA FOR JUNE 1, 2020
3. APPROVE PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES FOR MARCH 2, 2020
4. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS:
 - a. COVID-19 Response Update (Debbie)
 - b. Summer Programs (Margo and Mike)
 - c. Locke-Park Playground (Debbie and Jeff)
 - d. Springbrook Nature Center Pavilion Update (Mike)
 - e. Sports Leagues, Athletic Fields and Tournaments (Debbie)
 - f. Shelter Rentals (Debbie)
 - g. July Meeting Determination
 - h. Other
5. STAFF REPORTS:
 - a. Springbrook Nature Center (Mike)
 - b. Parks Master Plan Update (Debbie and Jeff)
 - c. Other
6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:
 - a. Other
7. ADJOURNMENT
8. **Next Meeting: August 3, 2020 (July Meeting is typically cancelled)**

Attachments: March 2, 2020 Meeting Minutes, Highlights, SNC Update, Community Engagement Report, Press Release on Summer Programs (May 22, 2020)



PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
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MINUTES

March 2, 2020

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Heintz called the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting to order at 7:20 p.m.

Members Present Shanna Larson, Mike Heintz, Ryan Gerhard, and Pete Borman

Members Absent: EB Graham, David Kondrick

Others Present: Deborah Dahl (Director of Community Services and Employee Resources), Mike Maher (Director of Springbrook Nature Center)

2. APPROVE PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION AGENDA FOR MARCH 2, 2020

MOTION by Ms. Larson to APPROVE the February 3, 2020 meeting agenda. SECONDED by Mr. Borman. The MOTION PASSED unanimously.

3. APPROVE PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES FOR FEB. 3, 2020

Deborah Dahl requested to exclude page 6 of the minutes, since it was printed in error.

MOTION by Mr. Borman to APPROVE the February 3, 2020 meeting minutes with the exclusion of page 6. SECONDED by Ms. Larson. The MOTION PASSED unanimously.

4. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS:

a. Springbrook Nature Center Video

Deborah Dahl and Mike Maher shared the new Springbrook Nature Center video. This video will be used to capture the SPRING project and will be shared at functions and promotional opportunities. The link will be sent to City Council and shared with groups who played a key funding role.

b. Update on Springbrook Pavilion Project (Mike Maher)

Thank you to Chairperson Heintz for the in-kind contribution for the work that was done on the floors. Jeff is overseeing the last few components on the bathroom finishes. Vision Woodworking is donating the cabinets for the bathrooms.

Construction is on track for the grand opening that is planned for May 28th, look for more details to come. City Council will be presenting a plaque to Malcom and the Development Committee at the grand opening.

c. Feedback from Commissioners on Park Designs.

Any feedback can be sent to Deborah Dahl via email, phone or a separate meeting could be set up.

Ms. Larson thought it would be difficult for parents to be separated from their children with the proposed set up of the sledding hill and skating rink. She really liked the new design for Commons with the skating loop and the idea of it being rubberized and flooded for a potential longer skating season. She also liked the multi-use of the fields.

Deborah Dahl wasn't sure how long the skating season would be extended or the cost for refrigeration. Staff will research what kind of options are available.

Chairperson Heintz liked the indoor dome idea for a basketball and play area.

Deborah Dahl noted that nothing is finalized yet and staff will work on prioritizing what the Commissioners like and put together a budget. We hope to have the plan ready by May to share with the neighborhoods and public.

d. Joint Fridley School District – Fridley City Council Meeting:

Deborah Dahl stated that City Council and the School Board had a joint meeting at the request of the School Board. The School Board members raised a few questions about what the Fridley Community Education program is doing compared to the City's recreation program and what activities the school/city could work together on. The Community Education Director, Stephen Keeler presented to the group. Both the city and school continue to meet and work together and agreed to do a better job communicating between agencies.

The City Council reminded the Board that the city has four school districts and they haven't met with the other school districts. The city can try to minimize duplication like yoga that is currently in both brochures or the ROCK program that is similar to the Tiger Club and school daycare program.

Ms. Dahl stated that many of the after school programs are free as a part of their youth enrichment programs, and the city's programs have a fee. There are about 30 families that receive fee assistance which is only available for residents of Fridley.

A School Board asked the City to consider allowing families who attend a school located within the city to get fee assistance. It was mentioned by City Council that it was difficult to extend the benefit to non-residents, saying that the fee assistance paid by taxpayers should be used on residents of Fridley.

e. Fee Study Review (Shelter, Fields, Leagues)

Deborah Dahl shared a fee study that was conducted to compare Fridley's fees of shelters versus surrounding communities. Staff met with the Finance Director and discussion is still underway, they are looking for feedback to provide a recommendation to the City Manager.

Current rental fees and damage deposit requirements are being reviewed. A suggestion is to eliminate the damage deposit and maybe the City Attorney could develop a contract that the rental party would be responsible for any damages. There is also a requirement for a Special Use Permit for group sizes over 50 guests. Many renters opt out and find a shelter in another community or are dishonest with the size of the party leaving the city unprepared for the event.

The city is in line with most fees and staff will look at options regarding the damage deposit, required insurance and Special Use Permit.

f. Strategic Planning Discussion

Debbie Dahl said that they are working with recreation programming staff on the Strategic Plan. Any ideas the Commission would like to incorporate into the plan can be sent to Debbie. The Springbrook Nature Center will have a separate plan.

g. Other

Ms. Dahl mentioned there is a new art feature on the first floor, the word "Incomparable" was reconfigured from the Columbia Arena letters.

The latest pop-up event was at Springbrook Nature Center for the animal feeding. Over 100 people attended. The goal is to continue one event a month and promote on social media.

The warming houses will close this week since the weather is too warm for ice skating.

There is a new Fridley Community Connection newsletter. We are looking for summer staff and the job postings are on the web.

5. STAFF REPORTS

- a. Springbrook Nature Center Update – Mike Maher
60 acres of buck thorn was removed which was funded through a grant project.

There was a candlelight hiking event in February and about 70 people participated.

Summer camp registration is open for children ages 5-12.

Saturday is the annual Springbrook Spree and it is sold out.

The adult education series will be expanded a offering discovery dinner series. This is coming up in the next few weeks.

- b. Deer Management Update – Mike Maher
The areas have been selected, there is a lot of movement along the Rice Creek corridor and complaints east of Moore Lake.

Corn piles will be out for about a week to bait the deer and they are working with DNR local conservation officers and food shelves will accept the donation. Certified deer processors will package the meat and it will be distributed to those in need. The budget will manage up to 30 deer.

- c. Other - None

ADJOURNMENT:

Ms. Larson made the MOTION to adjourn the meeting at 8:42 p.m., SECONDED by Mr. Borman. The MOTION PASSED unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Krista Peterson, Recording Secretary

HIGHLIGHTS



Parks and Recreation Division - June 2020

Rec to the Rescue

Staff have continued to offer programs for residents to participate in during the Stay-at-Home order and through the upcoming months of social distancing. We have been providing activities in the following categories: Parks & Trails, Rec in the House, Challenge Yourself, Together Apart, Engage in the Environment, and Virtual Connections. Activities have been presented as videos or images with text on the website, Facebook and Instagram. We have also completed three Activity Guides that have been emailed to participants as well as posted on the website and promoted with Facebook and Instagram. This guide was created to be easily viewed on a mobile device and also encourages participants to engage with us via social media.



Instagram

The Recreation Division launched an Instagram page on April 24th and has been posting 3-4 times each week. Check out our page @fridleyrecreation to see the following activities: Find the Hidden Gem, Pets Do Rec, Quizzes, Surveys, Challenges, and more.

Moving Forward 50K

This virtual "race" was put together to give families, both from Fridley and afar, an opportunity to get moving together with a universal goal of completing 30.069 miles. Participants logged their miles and submitted log sheets when complete. Everyone who registered for the program will receive a t-shirt. We received a great response to the program with 48 registered participants from various parts of the state (majority Fridley) ranging in age from 4-73. A number of registrants are City employees and their families; a city council member joined in on the fun as well. We are currently making plans to roll out future opportunities.



Summer 2020 Planning Survey

With the cancellation of both Summer ROCKS and Springbrook Nature Center day camps, the division is planning alternative programming. A survey was created to help us think about potential enrollment and types of activities which was sent out to all members of the registration database. We received some solid initial feedback from 37 families, pointing to an interest in getting children enrolled in some sort of activity. Any of the programs offered this summer would be set up to meet guidelines and sanitization protocols; staff is currently creating standards (staff, facility, and participant) and researching availability of sanitization products.

Springbrook Nature Center

Monthly Report – June 2020



- In accord with the City of Fridley, Springbrook is responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic:
 - Trails remain open to the public.
 - Beginning June 1, the interpretive center restrooms and the interpretive center vestibule will be open daily from 9 am to 5 pm and staff will be on site to provide service by request.
 - School field trips and facility rentals have been cancelled through June Refunds are being issued.
 - Summer camp programming has been cancelled and refunds have been issued.
 - Volunteers are being asked not to report to the nature center as volunteers to monitor trails, pick up litter, etc. Parks staff continues to empty garbage cans and perform essential repairs.
 - Staff is working both on site and remotely through June 15th, and is working on a multitude of distance learning and digital engagement areas:
 - Small format programming is being planned for July and August to allow small groups to participate in “family camp” activities such as insect sampling and archery.
 - On site “pop-up” programs are being planned to engage park visitors
 - Facebook Live events such as animal feeding, arts and crafts
 - Weekly video edition of our Playful Polliwogs preschool program
 - Get Curious – weekly nature learning curriculum for three different school age groups
 - Weekly “Now in Nature” educational media shared across multiple platforms
 - Distance learning support for Fridley and Columbia Heights school districts
- The Pavilion Activity Center project is nearing completion.
 - Work is underway to complete the site grading and get grass planted in the work area.
 - An additional concrete pad was added to enlarge the area on the south “sidewalk” to allow for better flow into the concessions area, restrooms and drinking fountain. A bituminous walkway is planned to connect the pavilion to the primary trail walkway.
 - Plumbing work has been completed.
 - Vision Woodworking has agreed to design and build cabinetry and shelving as an in-kind contribution. (this arrangement is on hold)
 - Tables and chairs have been purchased and assembled.
 - The nature center Foundation made a second contribution of \$25,000 to the project, essentially providing full funding for the project.
 - The planned May 28 grand opening event is cancelled with a reschedule date TBA.
- Two seasonal naturalists, Emily Meyer and Kelsey Eibler, have completed their positions at Springbrook and were invaluable in creating engaging digital media for schools and social media this spring.

- Grant applications have been submitted to the Xcel Energy and International Paper Foundations for enhancements to our animal exhibits and for education equipment such as snowshoes, waterproof boots and GPS units.
- We have been awarded two grants for habitat improvements at Springbrook Nature Center, with some work to be completed at Moore Lake Sand Dunes Natural Area. The grants are in the amounts of \$37,000 and \$51,450. Cutting of buckthorn is complete and prescribed burning began and will continue as weather and conditions allow.
- Deer management activity was conducted within the City of Fridley by the USDA Wildlife Services division. In total, 11 deer were removed from a large corporate property along the Rice Creek corridor, where there were a large number of deer-auto collisions over recent years. I will recommend deer management activity at Springbrook during over the 2020-2021 winter season based on recent population surveys.



City of Fridley: Community Engagement Report

June 2020

2020 Census

As of Tuesday May 26, the City of Fridley's Census self-response rate was 73.6% which is slightly better than the state of Minnesota's at 70%. Minnesota continues to lead the nation in Census self-response rates.

Community Engagement staff will be reaching out to Homeowners Associations in Fridley in the next few weeks to encourage HOA's to share Census information with their residents and encourage their participation.

You can still respond to the Census online, over the phone, or by mail with a paper questionnaire until October 31. You can respond online at my2020census.gov or by calling 844-330-2020. Filling out the Census online is currently the safest option with social distancing measure in place. Census workers will be visiting addresses that have not responded to the Census from August through October for an in-person count. Please encourage your family, friends, and neighbors to fill out the Census.

Connecting Fridley: Summer Neighborhood Park Events

To maintain the health and safety of community members and staff, Connecting Fridley summer neighborhood park events scheduled for June 24, July 22, and August 12 have been cancelled.

Fridley Community Network

The Fridley Community Network held a meeting on Thursday, May 14 via Microsoft Teams. The call included updates from community organizations as well as sharing of community resources for COVID-19. The Network's next meeting is July 9.

Adopt-a-Park

Staff has been making modifications over the last month to the Adopt-A-Park program that follow social distancing guidelines. The program will officially be launch by mid-June, look for more information about the program in various City communications and in the July/August Recreation Brochure.

The city is looking for community members, organizations, and business to adopt a city park! Volunteers will be responsible for picking up litter, removing weeds, and reporting any vandalism and safety hazards to parks staff. Responsibilities may vary from park to park. Adopting a park is a minimum one-year commitment with 4 clean ups per year. The city has

over 30 parks available for adoption. Volunteers must be at least 18 years old or have a parent/guardian present at all clean ups. Volunteers will meet with Fridley staff for a short training and overview of responsibilities for their park prior to their first clean up. Volunteers will be recognized for their contribution to the city with a commemorative sign in their park. If you or a community member are interested in applying to adopt a City of Fridley park, reach out to Alyssa Kruzel, Alyssa.Kruzel@FridleyMN.gov or 763-572-3579.

Locke Playground

Community Engagement staff is working on community engagement plans for the Locke Playground project including identifying and reaching out to stakeholders and community partners such as the Holiday Hills neighborhood, Lennar and Pulte Homeowners Associations (HOA's) and residents, Woodcrest Baptist, and Banfil-Locke. Due to the new housing developments on the Civic Campus site, this playground project will provide the opportunity for Lennar and Pulte residents to make connections with city staff and their new neighbors from the Holiday Hills neighborhood. Specific plans for public participation such as an open house (in-person or virtual) and surveys are still to be determined. Additional opportunities for community engagement such as a ground breaking, ribbon cuttings, service projects, and public art are still to be determined as well. Stay tuned for more information.



Fridley Civic Campus

7071 University Ave N.E. Fridley, MN 55432
763-571-3450 | FAX: 763-571-1287 | FridleyMN.gov

UPDATE: City of Fridley Recreation and Springbrook Nature Center Summer Services

May 22, 2020

As the weather begins to warm up, the Fridley Recreation and Springbrook offices are typically buzzing with excitement as we plan activities for you all to enjoy throughout the summer. Like it is for many, this year is different. Our team is doing our best to keep up with the rapidly changing information regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and adapting our plans for summer programming and activities. We are committed to continuing our work to serve Fridley in a safe and meaningful way.

Your safety and health are our top priority as we explore new and different ways for the community to stay active, connect with each other, and have fun! We are currently updating our programming and facility operations for the summer. As this situation changes, we will continue to release updates on our websites and Facebook pages.

Facilities

- Springbrook Nature Center will open restrooms to the public on June 1.
- The Nature Center exhibit area will remain closed until further notice.
- Parks and trails are open and available for you to use.
 - Please keep yourself and others safe by following these guidelines:
 - Do not use parks or trails if you are exhibiting [symptoms of illness](#).
 - Always keep a minimum of 6-feet away from other people.
 - If this is not possible, find another location or leave the space.
 - Share the trail and warn other users of your presence as you pass, and step aside to let others pass.
 - Wash your hands and avoid touching your face.
- City playgrounds are open but are not cleaned or sanitized.
 - If you choose to use the playgrounds, wash and/or sanitize your hands before and after touching play structures and follow proper social distancing.
 - The City does not currently have satellite restrooms available and drinking fountains are not turned on.
- Picnic Shelters reservations will not be accepted until at least July 6.

Follow the [CDC's guidance on personal hygiene](#) prior to visiting parks, trails, or the nature center. Please wash your hands and avoid touching your face. It is recommended that you [wear a cloth face mask](#) whenever in a public building.

Programming

To maintain the health and safety of participants and staff, the following cancellations/changes have been made:

- Summer ROCKS, Springbrook Nature Center camps, field trips, special events (i.e. Wet & Wild Water Party, Nickel Jamboree) and Safety Camp are cancelled.
- Connecting Fridley Community events scheduled for June 24, July 22 and August 12 have been cancelled.
- Springbrook Summer Concerts:
 - June concert has been cancelled.
 - Decisions on July and August concerts will be announced in mid-June.

City staff is continuing to modify our offerings with new safety procedures in place. Please stay tuned to our [website](#) and Facebook pages for updates and new programming.

Sports

At this time, sports games are prohibited by the Governor's current [Stay Safe Order](#). Staff continues to wait for guidance from the Center for Disease Control and the Minnesota Department of Health. The following changes to sports are in effect:

- Instructional classes and lessons:
 - We are investigating alternative delivery methods and best practices for skills-based programs.
- Adult sports leagues (softball, pickleball, basketball, soccer, golf):
 - All leagues are postponed until at least July 6. We hope to offer one season versus a spring and fall schedule.
- Youth Sports Leagues are run by volunteer associations in Fridley.
 - Decisions on these programs will be made by the individual sports.
 - Field rentals will be available for groups after July 6.

Please continue to monitor FridleyMN.gov/Recreation and SpringbrookNatureCenter.com for up-to-date information and resources, including a list of ways you can still enjoy our parks and nature center while maintaining appropriate physical distancing to help slow the spread of COVID-19.