

CITY OF FALCON HEIGHTS
Joint Meeting
Parks & Recreation Commission
Community Engagement Commission
City Hall
2077 West Larpentour Avenue

AGENDA
March 18, 2024 at 6:30 P.M.

A. CALL TO ORDER:

B. ROLL CALL:

Jeff Yager _____ Mike Bradbury _____ Eric Brenton _____
Bob Haight _____ Tom Faust _____ Randi Lundell _____ Erin Williams _____
Cooley-Kistler _____ Ebbesen _____ Lindstrom _____ Stockford _____ Wang _____ Leighton _____

COUNCIL LIAISON:

James Wassenberg _____

Melanie Leehy _____

STAFF PRESENT:

Kelly Nelson _____

Elke van der Werff _____

C. PRESENTATION:

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. December 4, 2023 - Parks and Recreation Commission Regular Meeting

2. February 5, 2024 - Parks and Recreation Commission Regular Meeting

E. AGENDA:

1. Spring Together 2024 Event

F. INFORMATION/ANNOUNCEMENT

1. Update on 2024 Summer Programming

2. Community Park Update

G. ADJOURNMENT:

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

MINUTES
December 4, 2023 at 6:30 P.M.

A. CALL TO ORDER: 6:33 P.M.

B. ROLL CALL:

Jeff Yager X Mike Bradbury X Eric Brenton X
Paula Mielke X Tom Faust X Randi Lundell X

COUNCIL LIAISON:

James Wassenberg X

STAFF PRESENT:

Kelly Nelson X Jack Linehan X

C. PRESENTATION:

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. November 6, 2023 - Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Brenton
motioned to approve the minutes;
Approved 6-0

E. AGENDA:

1. Draft of Proposed 2024 Parks and Recreation Budget

Staff Liaison Nelson points out that the event budget shows additional funds added to it for 2024 so the commission can add a fall event. And, \$5,000 was added so that the commission can discuss adding a feature or equipment at Curtiss Field in 2024.

2. Community Park Renovation Survey Discussion

The Commissioners review the proposed park layout options from WSB and discuss the pros and cons of each.

Lundell likes Concept 1 for having the splash pad and playground away from the parking lot.

Brenton likes that the restrooms are adjacent to the playground in Concept 2.

Wassenberg likes Concept 3 because it utilizes the existing parking lot's footprint. The commission discusses and recommends WSB adjust the amount of parking reflected in Concept 3 so that it does not encroach nearer Falcon Woods.

Bradbury asks if there is a need for additional parking.

Staff Liaison Nelson says that the survey included a question in regards to the public's current parking satisfaction. Events and large groups playing soccer / flag football create slight parking issues.

Yager likes Concept 3 without moving the basketball court.

The commission decides that Concept 3, with revisions, is their favorite park layout for the following reasons:

- The proximity of the playground to the restrooms and building. If the Community Room is rented for a birthday party, for example, adults can see the playground from the room.
- Concept 3 utilizes the existing parking lot footprint. The Commission does recommend WSB revise the concept to reduce the total number of parking stalls slightly so that parking does not encroach nearer the Falcon Woods neighborhood. The Commission discussed whether there is a need for more parking at this time, taking into consideration both the survey results to question #10 and how parking overflows during events. Ultimately, it doesn't add much more expense to add the additional parking now vs. deciding to add it later when it would cost more to do.
- The Commission appreciates that the playground is not immediately next to the parking lot and is in favor of fencing it in and/or offering an additional buffer (i.e. shrubs) to the parking lot.
- The Commission does not wish to add in a hard-court surface at this time, as shown on Concept 3. Bids will be obtained to resurface the basketball court, but the basketball court, whether refreshed or not, would likely remain in the same or very similar area.
- Concept 3 shows a splash pad. Bids will be obtained to determine whether a splash pad or other amenity can be added during Phase 1 or later phases of construction. An open area should be retained for future expansion / additions at this time.

The Commission then discusses the three architectural design styles for a future park building.

The Commission is in favor of a building that features prairie style architectural design elements. They do wish to provide feedback to HCM Architects to slant the rooflines a bit and to not have completely flat rooflines. This is both to avoid snow buildups and to allow for the possibility of solar panels.

The Commission also recommends that the overall height of the building and height of the interior ceilings be considered, as high ceilings would be harder to heat and cool.

The Commission would like HCM Architects to add in roof overhangs to extend outdoor space but to not develop the outdoor space during Phase 1 if affordability is a consideration. The servery overhang shown would be part of Phase 1.

The Parks and Recreation Commission begins discussing exterior amenities and proposed floor plans of a future building. They look over cost estimates provided by WSB just before the meeting to determine which amenities can fit into the budget.

City Administrator Linehan says that a call with WSB earlier in the day revealed estimated costs and the idea that the renovation may need to take place in phases.

Commissioners consider whether to reduce the proposed square footage of the building.

Mielke thinks the building should be scaled back in an effort to include more exterior amenities.

Lundell thinks a building is an important amenity. It can be used as a rental space, warming house, for City programming, etc.

Yager states that it's tougher to add onto the building as easily as adding a splash pad in later. He adds that we need to think through what amenities residents want and need.

Faust asks if commissioners think the Flex Room is important. They discuss whether the lobby can be utilized as a Warming House.

Bradbury, Brenton and Wassenberg all state that they favor Floor Plan 1.

Commissioners are in favor of keeping the Flex Room. However, they recommend reducing its overall size as well as trimming the overall size of the Community Room. This is preferred rather than solely eliminating the Flex Room altogether as a cost savings measure.

The Commission also prefers that Floor Plan 1 features a smaller lobby and reduces the square footage there.

Lundell feels that the play area is such a draw and a building and parking lot are also needed now.

Linehan estimates that the new playground would be similar in size to the existing playground. But, it would be more inclusive.

The Parks and Recreation concludes that it would like to see bids for items 1 through 9, as outlined on the Master Plan Cost Estimate Concept 3 handout WSB provided to staff before the meeting. At this time, the Commission understands that the renovation may have to be done in phases, dependent upon the final price of various amenities, the grants and funding received, etc. In Phase 1, that may include a new building, parking lot, playground and electrical services. But, dependent on the actual bids obtained, then the Commission, the Council and the public could make determinations regarding Bid Alternatives in terms of preference and timeline. Bid Alternatives are items that appear to currently exceed our known budget and include an outdoor shelter, splash pad, basketball court, etc.

The Commission is mindful of seeking green energy alternatives and wants to make sure there are dollars available.

The Commission prefers engaging the public again once bids are obtained.

F. INFORMATION/ANNOUNCEMENT

Bradbury reminds the commission that they will not meet on January 1. So, the next meeting will be on February 5, 2024.

G. ADJOURNMENT: 9:09 PM

Commissioner Mielke motioned to
adjourn;
Approved 6-0

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

MINUTES
February 5, 2024 at 6:30 P.M.

A. CALL TO ORDER: 6:35 P.M.

B. ROLL CALL:

Jeff Yager X Mike Bradbury X Eric Brenton X
Erin Williams X Tom Faust X Bob Haight X

STAFF PRESENT:

Kelly Nelson X

C. PRESENTATION:

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. November 6, 2023 - Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Brenton motions to
approve the minutes;
Approved 6-0
(Commissioner Yager arrived just after the motion)

E. AGENDA:

By request, the Commission is asked to deviate from the stated order of the agenda so that the Commission may first discuss agenda item E3, Summer Programming, and allow time for any late-arriving commissioners to participate in officer elections. Agenda item 2 will then be to Adopt the Standing Rules and then the commission will return to Agenda E1, 2024 Officer Elections.

1. Summer Programming Discussion

Nelson says that the construction schedule related to the Community Park renovation is still not known but feels summer programming should move to Curtiss Park to avoid any potential issues.

The commissioners discuss low enrollment numbers in recent years and how best to change City programming.

Nelson asks if commissioners would support trying a new concept this summer since the location is changing by offering free programming and/or by donation and having family fun nights for approximately six weeks this summer. If Good Neighbor grant funds are available in 2024, she will apply for them to offset the staff expense to the City.

Bradbury says it's a good opportunity to showcase Curtiss Field.

Williams asks if the City could survey parents to get feedback on which sports/games to offer.

Brenton says the concept sounds like an open gym in the park and supports it.

Haight thinks having programming at Curtiss during the renovation sounds nice but thinks it should be free for everyone. He says that the playground is busy during the summer and it would be hard to separate park users from those in the rec program.

Brenton suggests having a QR code for a free-will donation.

Faust asks if this is aimed at kids or for families.

Commissioners discuss that it really comes down to safety and, while staff will be present, staff isn't necessarily there to provide babysitting. It would be at the comfort level of the parent if they would like to attend and play outdoor games with their child or not.

Nelson says that she has not spoken to Commonwealth Community Terrace (CTC) yet. Last year, the goal was to offer separate programming to CTC residents, but enrollment numbers did not support it moving forward.

Commissioners discuss when the summer programming might take place and suggest maybe one or two nights per week from 5:00 to 8:00 PM for a total of six to ten evenings. Staffing may determine the exact schedule.

2. Adopt the Standing Rules

Bradbury summarizes the standing rules to commissioners.

Commissioner Yager motions to approve the Falcon Heights Parks and Recreation Commission Standing Rules for 2024.
Motion carried 7-0.

3. 2024 Officer Elections

Yager nominates Bradbury as Chairperson. Brenton motions to approve Mike Bradbury to be elected as Chairperson. Motion carried 7-0 to elect Mike Bradbury as Chairperson.

Bradbury nominates Yager as Vice Chairperson. Brenton motions to approve Jeff Yager to be elected as Vice Chairperson. Motion carried 7-0 to elect Jeff Yager as Vice Chairperson.

Yager nominates Faust to be elected as Secretary. Brenton motions to approve Tom Faust to be elected as Secretary. Motion carried 7-0 to elect Tom Faust as Secretary.

4. 2024 PARC Goals

Bradbury suggests looking at the commission's 2023 goals first to determine how successful the commission was. From there the commission forms a semi-final draft of its 2024 Goals.

1. Develop a small-scale event
2. Maintain attendance and momentum for Spring Ahead

3. Expand the areas and people we currently reach to promote events and the City to; improve signage
4. To have regular meetings of the PARC, having quorum at least every quarter.
5. Maintain PARC event / agenda calendar
6. Make an ice-skating decision for 2025 for all locations
7. Analyze changes to programming implemented
8. Study and recommend amenities and improvements for Curtiss Field
9. Study and recommend amenities and improvements for Grove Park

Bradbury comments that the open play concept of summer programming at Curtiss may provide helpful feedback to what amenity kids want at Curtiss.

Yager wonders if we could put a sign out front of City Hall to promote upcoming events (similar to the one the Lions use for holiday tree sales).

The Commission strikes park audits from the 2023 list of goals and moves that over to the agenda calendar instead of making it a 2024 goal.

The Commission also removes “Bring back the 5K or some type of fun run,” which appeared on the 2023 goals list. Instead, the commission will just keep it in mind for a future event rather than stating it as a 2024 goal.

5. 2024 PARC Calendar

A draft of the 2024 PARC events and agenda calendar is shared. There is no decision needed, it’s merely informative. Nelson will make it a point to share it more regularly in 2024 so commissioners have a forward look at upcoming topics in case they would like to add anything to an upcoming agenda.

The commission recommends moving the park audits from July to September in case the July date is needed for a meeting.

6. Community Park Renovation Discussion

Bradbury suggests reverting back to the idea of the Flex Room being at the front of the building, facing the parking lot as shown in previous park layouts.

Lundell is flexible on either building layout concept.

Yager prefers the room with a view of the park.

Brenton could go either way. He feels the current plans are largely right and it’s really down to mostly small preferences at this point.

Williams asks if the two overhangs created from the building and large picnic shelter would create runoff issues and icy walkways in the winter. She would like the architects to be mindful of this.

Haight wants to consider the amount of shade created near the community gardens and to plan for permanent plumbing near the garden for ease of watering.

Commissioners decide to keep the current building layout and park layout as shown.

F. INFORMATION/ANNOUNCEMENT

Bradbury and Yager suggest the date of May 18 for Spring Together, following last year's date if there are no conflicts.

The commission would like to hold a joint meeting with the CEC (Community Engagement Commission) on March 18 to settle on a date and plan Spring Together.

Nelson shares that the ice rink and warming house were only open for seven days due to unseasonably warm weather.

G. ADJOURNMENT: 8:42 PM

Commissioner Yager motions to
adjourn;
Approved 7-0

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REQUEST FOR ACTION

Meeting Date	March 18, 2024
Agenda Item	E1
Attachment	Flyer from 2023
Submitted By	Kelly Nelson, Administrative Services Director / Deputy Clerk

Item	Spring Together
Description	<p>The CEC and Parks Commission should work together to discuss the City's Spring Together event on May 18th. The event was held from 4:00 to 6:00 pm last year.</p> <p>Discussion points may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lions' role • Flyers posted at apartment buildings • Volunteer sign-up sheet • Kids' feedback re: added amenity at Curtiss Field Park • Name tags for residents •
Budget Impact	TBD
Attachment(s)	Flyer from 2023
Action(s) Requested	Staff recommends commission members discuss the spring event.



Spring Together

FREE
ICE CREAM!

FAMILY
FUN!

GAMES!

The City of Falcon Heights Welcomes All!

**SATURDAY, MAY 20
4:00 - 6:00 PM**

CURTISS FIELD - 1551 IOWA AVE. W.

Enjoy free ice cream, meet your neighbors and have fun!

