

MIDLAND PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING OF MARCH 1, 2022
MIDLAND CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
7:00 P.M.

PROPOSED MINUTES

- 1) Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Chairperson Nancy Carney.

Pledge of Allegiance

- 2) Roll Call:

- a. MEMBERS PRESENT: Bartle, Billotti, Carlson, Carney, Montalbano, Rankin, Steidemann, Varela
- b. MEMBERS ABSENT: Wang
- c. OTHERS PRESENT: Marcie Post, Assistant Director of Public Services

- 3) Welcome new Commissioner: Murphy stated that Commissioner Ken Wang was unable to attend this evening's meeting. Wang will be welcomed to the Commission at the next meeting.

- 4) Minutes of December 7, 2021: Varela motioned, Carlson seconded to receive minutes of the meeting of December 7, 2021. Motion passed 8-0.

- 5) Call to Audience: None

- 6) City Forest signage proposal for dogs: As follow up to the December discussion on educating dog owners who bring their animals to the City Forest, Murphy shared proposed language for educational signage. The proposed language was presented as follows:

It's OKAY! MY DOG IS FRIENDLY!

NO - IT'S NOT OKAY!

Just because your dog is friendly doesn't mean other park users want to meet your dog. Other people and dogs may be nervous, fearful, allergic, not like dogs or want to be left alone.

Never let your dog run up to another dog or person.

Respect others & their need for space.

City Ordinance requires your dog be under your control.

If you have no voice control over your dog keep them on a leash or electronic restraint.

Murphy asked for input from the Commission. The City has a sign designer ready to create the sign and once produced, Parks staff will install at trail heads and parking areas.

- 7) City Forest e-bike consideration: Murphy shared that staff has received multiple inquiries about the use of e-bikes at the City Forest. Class I e-bikes are allowed under State law on improved trail surfaces. Murphy stated that allowing Class I e-bikes at City Forest would make the trails more inclusive for riders who need a slight assist while pedaling in order to enjoy the trails. The request has been reviewed and approved by the City Attorney. Current

Park rules prohibit motorized equipment on the trails, however a Class I e-bike is not considered under motorized equipment. Murphy said that if the Commission supported the concept of allowing Class I e-bikes on City Forest trails that staff would do additional research to determine whether the Park rules need to be updated. Murphy asked for a motion either in support or against the allowance of Class I e-bikes on established City Forest trails.

Steidemann motioned in support of allowing Class I e-bikes on City Forest trails and requested staff research whether a change in park rules is required. Carlson seconded the motion and the motion passed 8 - 0. Murphy shared that she will come back to the Commission at their next meeting with an answer on whether the Park Rules need to be amended.

- 8) City Forest winter operations end of season update: Post provided an end of season update on the City Forest winter operations. Post shared it was a phenomenal season for City Forest even though the operation wasn't open yet for Christmas break. The Chalet was open 28 days and revenues were up by \$12,000 over the 2019-20 season. Average revenue per day was \$942 compared to \$441 in 2019-20. City Forest did not operate in 2020-21 due to the COVID pandemic. Post shared that initially it was a struggle getting staff then a group of 16 years olds applied mid-season and that allowed us to fully operate with toboggan runs as well. Post reported that the City purchased a Snow Dog groomer that is used to roll out the mountain bike trails for fat tire bikes. This is bringing a lot of riders to the trails this winter.
- 9) Middle of the Mitt Miracle League update: Post shared an enthusiastic update on the Miracle League with the announcement of opening day on May 14. Post said that registration for players will begin on March 7. There will be a social media campaign to help name the teams for the first season.

Post also shared a Save the Date slide with dates for program registrations and upcoming events, including Youth and Adult Softball registration now underway, Beach Volleyball registration to start March 16, Pitch/Hit/Run competition on May 7, Make Midland Beautiful poster contest on May 9 and Tunes by the Tridge to start on June 11.

10) Project Reports

- a. **Recreation Fees**: Murphy reported that the City Council has approved and adopted the recreation fee increases. Increases are now in effect for all recreation programs with the exception of the City Forest rates for winter activities which will go into effect for the 2022/23 winter season.
- b. **Poseyville Riverfront Renovation**: Murphy shared details on the upcoming Poseyville Riverfront Renovation project. Initially led by the Michigan Baseball Foundation in partnership with the City's Planning Department, the project has been handed over to City Parks for final design and implementation. Murphy shared conceptual drawings and discussed the implementation plan for this project that will begin this summer.

11) Old Business : None

12) New Business: None

13) Adjourn: Motioned by Billotti, seconded by Rankin to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed 8-0. Meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Karen Murphy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "M" at the end.

Karen Murphy
Director of Public Services