

MIDLAND PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING OF AUGUST 3, 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: Billotti, Carney, McCoy, Montalbano, Rankin, Steidemann,
 - b. MEMBERS ABSENT: Varela, Bartle
 - c. OTHERS PRESENT: Marcie Post, Assistant Director of Public Services; Stephanie Richardson, Horticulturist - Parks/Forestry

- 3) Resignation of Commissioner Ken Wang: Murphy shared that Commissioner Ken Wang moved out of state, vacating his seat. Commissioner Patty Carlson's term ended June 30 and she opted to step off the committee after several years of service. Murphy then welcomed new Commissioner Jillian McCoy. Murphy stated that Wang's vacancy will be filled in the near future.

- 4) Election of Chair and Vice Chair: It has been the Commission's practice to elect a new chair and vice chair annually at the first meeting of the fiscal year. In keeping with the practice, Carney asked for nominations for the position of chair and an oral vote was taken.

Carney nominated Rankin to serve as chair and Steidemann seconded the nomination. Motion passed 6-0.

Steidemann nominated Carney to serve as vice chair. Billotti nominated Montalbano for vice chair. Carney declined the nomination in support of Montalbano so Rankin seconded the motion for Montalbano as vice chair. Motion passed 6-0.

Rankin took over as chair for the rest of the meeting.

- 5) Minutes of May 4, 2022: Carney motioned, Steidemann seconded to receive minutes of the meeting of May 4, 2022. Motion passed 6-0.
- 6) Call to Audience: None
- 7) Adoption of meeting calendar for 2023: The Commission reviewed the proposed meeting calendar for the upcoming year, and decided to continue meeting on the first Tuesday of the month. There are 3 potential dates for elections in 2023 that require altering the Tuesday meeting schedule on those months to the first Wednesday. The Commission decided not to meet in January and July due to the proximity to the respective holidays nor in April due to the proximity to the Midland Public Schools' spring break. Under the ordinance, the

Commission must meet six times per fiscal year. The following meeting schedule was discussed for 2023 with the understanding that meetings will be cancelled in advance if the Commission does not have official business to address:

Tuesday, January 3	Wednesday, May 3	Tuesday, September 5
Tuesday, February 7	Tuesday, June 6	Tuesday, October 3
Tuesday, March 7	Tuesday, July 4	Wednesday, November 8
Tuesday, April 4	Wednesday, August 2	Tuesday, December 5

Carney motioned to accept the meeting calendar with meetings the first Tuesday of each month with the exception of January, July and April when no meetings will be scheduled, and with meetings on potential election months to be held on Wednesday. Montalbano seconded the motion and the motion passed 6-0.

- 8) Discussion topics for FY 2022/23 Work Plan: Murphy reviewed last fiscal year’s work plan for the Commission to consider. The work plan defines the role of the Parks and Recreation Commission as an advisory committee to City Council, and explains the director’s role as staff liaison to the Commission. The plan also contains a recommended list of topics for the Commission to discuss over the course of the year.

Murphy asked for suggestions on discussion topics for the upcoming fiscal year. The Commission suggested modifying the existing topic list by removing the Central Park Master Plan unless new initiatives pop up over the course of the year, removing the skate park report, adding an update on the BMX track and new user group and adding to the Forestry update a report of disease/pest strategy. Murphy will bring the updated topic list back to the Commission for final approval at the next meeting.

- 9) Grant from Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network: Murphy shared that the Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network reached out to the City with an opportunity for a grant to support the upper Emerson riverfront renovation project that is being funded in part by a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant. Murphy applied for the grant in June and the City received notification of award. Murphy asked for a recommendation from the Commission to City Council to accept this generous donation. Montalbano motioned to make this recommendation to City Council, McCoy seconded the motion and the motion passed 6-0.

- 10) Summer Recreation update: Post shared an end of season updates and announced fall programs for the following recreation programs:

- Plymouth Pool had a great season. The regular season will end August 21 with the start of Midland Public Schools on August 22 which causes the loss of the majority of the lifeguard staff. The pool will be open on the two weekends after that (August 26/27 and September 3/4). Pooches at the Pool will be held for the 12th year on September 11 from 10:00 am – 1:10 pm. Teen Nights at the pool were a success with three nights of the event held in July and the August event cancelled due to weather.
- The annual Grand Experience Trip to Mackinac Island has 64 rooms reserved to date with 125 travelers and 3 motor bus coaches reserved. Post shared there is still availability if anyone is interested with registration closing on August 12.
- The adult kickball and softball registration is open for kickball games on Sunday nights and softball played Sunday through Thursday.

- A scavenger hunt will be offered again during Neighboring Week, September 26 – October 3 with a Neighborhood Park theme.
- An outdoor movie will be held at Stratford Woods Park again this year. The original Halloween movie will show on October 22 with the soundtrack broadcast over a radio channel so event attendees can watch/listen from their car.

11) Miracle Field end of season update: Post gave an update on the first Miracle League spring season and shared that while she hoped for 40 athletes, she ended up with 54 athletes. Post said the league had over 700 volunteer hours and that the United Way online app was used to register volunteers – this was a great tool. Post shared a list of the cities that each athlete came from with 30 athletes from Midland and the remainder from surrounding communities. Murphy added the age range of athletes was 5 to 70 years old. Post reported that a competitive unified wiffle ball league is currently underway on Wednesday nights and the Special Olympics used the field on Tuesday nights as well. Post shared details on registration for the fall “sandlot” style Miracle League with four weeks of play but no practices.

12) Horticulture update: Richardson gave an update on the horticulture program including information on riverbank clearing new Hart Park which will receive a wildflower mix planting, the M20 bridge to the Tridge on the Chippewassee Park side where the City forestry crew cleared buckthorn to open up views and the upper Emerson Park riverfront from the red trellis overlook to the Bradley House where similar work was done. Richardson also shared detail on aging landscapes that are reaching 15-20 years that need work, including the Eastman Overpass. Richardson reported that the junipers were removed around the City Hall parking lot and replaced with sod and trees from last year’s pedestrian plaza display. More pedestrian plaza trees will be planted in this section in the fall as well. The Red Circle art piece was shared along the Grand Curves as well as the living wall that Richardson designed for the pedestrian plaza that includes a framed window for photo opportunities. Richardson also shared photos of the concrete seating area across from Ace Hardware that was donated by Great Lakes Bay Construction, and the colored concrete plaza under the M20 bridge near the public art mural. Richardson gave an update on the community garden on Edwin and Cambridge which has been under City management for seven years now. The garden is first come, first serve at \$30 for the season. The garden continues to be all organic and a garden manager is available for advice. Richardson wrapped up with disappointing news about the cat mint at the Circle which has contracted a soil based fungus. Richardson is working with MSU on how to manage this with over 500 plants suffering from root rot. It may require complete removal of the plants and soil.

13) Project Reports:

- a. **Poseyville Riverfront Restoration** – Murphy shared that the construction bid for phase I has been awarded to Fisher Contracting Company and tree clearing is underway west of Poseyville Bridge. Murphy shared that phase I includes installation of a parking lot and stormwater detention area, clearing along the riverfront, a new pathway from the foot of the Tridge along the riverfront, rubblization and site grading and installation of two fishing piers and associated boardwalks along the pathway. Murphy showed the updated conceptual plan and explained the project will be a two year project with hopes of final plantings to be completed in spring 2024.

- b. **Currie Stadium demolition:** Murphy shared that the City is ready to seek competitive bids for the demolition work with demolition to begin after November 1 when events are done for the season. Murphy showed an aerial view of the stadium and noted that the field and associated backstop fencing will remain in place, with only the stadium structure being removed. Murphy shared that once the stadium is gone and the public gets a chance to see the park with the stadium gone, the City will start the master planning process for the future of Emerson Park without the stadium in place. This will likely happen late next summer. Murphy also stated the City does not have funding to support redevelopment of Emerson at this time but the first step is having a master plan in place.

- c. **Eagle Ridge Nature Area:** Murphy reported that the ribbon cutting event for Eagle Ridge occurred recently and the area is now open to the public. Murphy shared a map of the trails and stated there are 5.2 miles of trails that go through five different habitat areas. The trails are natural surface with a small section of paved walk near the accessible parking lot.

14) Old Business : None

15) New Business: None

16) Adjourn: Motioned by Steidemann, seconded by Montalbano to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed 6– 0. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Karen Murphy
Director of Public Services