PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

Wednesday, March 6, 2024 – 5:00 p.m.
Virtual - WebEx

MINUTES

PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD (PRAB) MEMBERS PRESENT: Sydney Futrell, Chairperson, Marty Tessmer, Rosie Comet, Sarah Moll, Rick Eriksen, Vice-Chairperson; Mike Ely, Robert Armstrong

MEMBERS ABSENT: Bobbie McClure, Bryan Taylor

OTHERS PRESENT: Brooke Bell, Director of Parks, Recreation and Open Space Department; Joe Sack, Manager of Recreation Services; Nicole Ankeney, Manager of PROS Planning, Design and Construction Division; Suzie Jaquith, Administrative Supervisor

I. CALL TO ORDER:  By Sydney Futrell, Chairperson, at 5:05 p.m.

II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA: The Agenda for March 6, 2024 meeting was approved after a motion was made by Member Eriksen and seconded by Member Comet.

III. ADOPTION OF PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES – The January 3, 2024, meeting Minutes were approved after a motion was made by Member Tessmer and seconded by Member Moll.

IV. BOARD DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS/REMINDEERS

A. Nicole Ankeney, Manager of PROS Planning, Design and Construction Division, gave an overview on Parks, Recreation and Open Space Department 2024 Projects.
   - A GIS map was shared with the board, GIS Map with Current Project Info. The map includes the current PROS Department projects with on-going status updates.
   - Some highlighted current projects include:
     o Fulton Park – Playground Renovation Project. The Grand Re-Opening Ceremony and Ribbon Cutting is scheduled for March 22, 2024, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
     o American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Projects, Reviving Parks, Renewing Communities: American Rescue Plan at Work (ARPA). PROS received approximately $4.5 million dollars in ARPA funds that will be used to fund twelve renovation projects at various parks throughout the city. An additional $4.9 million dollars from the PROS Department will also be utilized to fund these projects.
     o There are three primary Master Plan or Master Plan Amendment projects underway. Central Community Park – Master Plan, Red-Trailed Hawk Park – Master Plan Amendment, and Signature Park – Master Plan.
     o Horseshoe Park Renovation Project will include a renovation to the playground and irrigation system.
     o Morrison Nature Center Renovation Project, Nature Exploration Area at Morrison Nature Center, will include a nature play area.

NOTE: By simple majority vote, Board may re-establish Agenda order. There is quorum with five members in attendance.
o Xeric Median Program – There are four different types of medians. Undeveloped, curb and cutter only, xeriscaped and landscaped. PROS receives approximately $1.25 million dollars on an annual budget cycle. Approximately 10% of the budget is used for design, survey and permitting costs. A map was shared with the board showing the current median projects.

o Turf Conversion Projects. Each acre of turfgrass converted to native grass saves over 500,000 gallons of water each year. Native grasses are evolved for the city’s climate and adapt to drought. To date, 65 acres have been converted to native grass and Bermuda grass. A link to the marketing campaign, Back to Our Roots: It’s all about water conservation, was shared with the board.

o Playground Surfacing Projects. Playgrounds are routinely inspected for safety and repairs and replacement of surfaces are identified during the process. A Request for Proposal (RFP), is currently underway to replace/repair playground surfaces throughout the city, as needed.

o Sports Court Renovation Projects. Courts are evaluated in coordination with the PROS Operations and Maintenance Division. Based on findings, a Request for Proposal (RFP) is processed to replace surfacing each year based on the budgeted funds. Transitions of identified tennis courts to the popular pickleball courts are also part of the process, based on public feedback and the needs of the community.

o Older Adults Needs Assessment Project. Staff are currently working closely with the Aurora Commissions for Older Adults and engaging with the community through public outreach. The project also crosses over to other city departments as well such as Public Works with the involvement of transportation. The city received funding last year through city council to develop a micro transit program geared towards older adults. A draft for proposal is underway to create a transit program aimed at serving residents 60 years and older.

o PROS Dedication and Development Criteria Manual Project. There are standards and specifications needing to be updated that are associate with water conservation and turf conservation ordinances recently passed in 2022.

• Member Comet asked if there are plans to add concrete to the cobble in medians. Nicole Ankeney responded, yes, a new standard to have cobble in a concrete mortar has been implemented.

• Member Eriksen asked what the maintenance schedule is for the native area along Auror Hills golf course and Bicentennial Park. Nicole responded she will follow up with Operations and Maintenance staff to provide more information. Bermuda grass typically has a shorter period of staying green. Native areas are kept longer to help establish the plant. He asked if more shade structures are planned to shade playground equipment. He suggested protective coatings on play equipment to guard against the heat of the sun. Nicole responded that shade is evaluated through the master planning process and also once into the specific design components of a project. One of the challenges is shade structures are very expensive. Staff keep up to date with new products on the market and evaluate them for effectiveness, and good wearability to meet industry standards.

• Member Tessmer asked what type of renovations are planned for playgrounds this year. Nicole responded that playground renovations include replacing existing equipment
and re-designing it using new components. In some parks where space is available and budget allows, the playground area will be expanded. An assessment is also done to make sure there is ADA access to meet all the regulations.

B. Joe Sack, Manager of Recreation Services, updated the board on upcoming vacancies and interview process.
   - There are currently three openings on the board. Joe called for the board to choose a date to conduct interviews. The date chosen by the board is March 20, 2024. Interviews will be conducted virtually. Member Tessmer was chosen to lead the interviews.

C. Joe Sack, Manager of Recreation Services gave a PROS Update.
   - The Grand Re-Opening Ceremony of Fulton Park is scheduled for Friday, March 22, 2024 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Invitations will be emailed to board members.

V. BOARD MEMBERS REMARKS
   A. Comments from Board Members

VI. FUTURE MEETINGS
   A. April 3, 2024 – In-Person, Central Recreation Center
   B. May 1, 2024 – TBD

VII. ADJOURNMENT – Member Ely made a motion to adjourn, and Member Comet seconded. The motion passed at 6:12 p.m.

Sydney Futrell, Chairperson; Suzie Jaquith, Administrative Supervisor
Parks & Recreation Board
ADOPTED June 5, 2024________________________