

**CITY OF WIXOM
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING
Monday, October 14, 2024
6:00 p.m. Wixom Community Center**

CALL TO ORDER BY CHAIRMAN:

ROLL CALL:

Maryann Chupa (6:22 pm)
Tom Menzies
Shondra Okimura
Peggy VanSickle
Dan Williams
Jeff Winters

CITY STAFF:

Community Services Director: Deanna Magee
Parks & Recreation Supervisor: Kathy Venegas
Recording Secretary: Mona Freiburger

GUESTS: Olivia, Lakeland HS, AP Government Class

Absent: John O'Brien

DETERMINATION OF QUORUM:

Quorum was met.

CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA:

No changes to the Agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

MOTION by Commissioner Okimura and second by Commissioner Winters to approve the Wixom Parks and Recreation Agenda, as submitted

VOTE:

MOTION CARRIED

CORRESPONDENCE:

CALL TO THE PUBLIC: See Rules of Conduct listed at the end of Agenda

None

TABLED MOTIONS

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Mack Park Pavilion Completed. TBD Landscaping, Clock, Bike Repair Station

Director Magee stated the Mack Park Pavilion is completed. We are still working on getting the clock and landscaping installation. The three large pine trees will be removed on October 21st.

2. Community Center Improvements: Construction August – December

Director Magee indicated the updates will be done to this building; the process has begun on the front and patio along with the fencing and the benches. This was installed as part of the Oakland County grant. There are still some upgrades to be completed on the restrooms. This will be happening toward the end of the year.

3. Gunnar Mettala Park Improvements: Restroom replacement, Pavilion replacement, Shade Shelter for Trailhead, Walking Path Improvements. Bids to be let in November – Spring Construction.

The restroom replacement, pavilion replacement and shade shelter improvements are to be done. The pickleball courts have been busy. The Next Up system has been installed. The system is a place to wait while the courts get open. Your paddles are put in the colored slots. There are rules to tell you how the system works is posted. This is a well-known system which is also used in other communities.

Commissioner Williams inquired if there was an update on other communities wanting to rent the space for the pickleball courts. Director Magee commented they have not determined whether they are going to rent them or not. They are waiting to see how much demand and how often the courts are being used. A policy will be determined possibly by spring. Director Magee commented her, and Supervisor Venegas have had discussions on this subject and have indicated once we start renting the courts, a staff person would have to police and control it. One of the concerns and biggest issues is the staff time. This is also why the tennis courts are not rented out. This is a recreational park, the concept right now is that taxpayers have paid for this, we want it to open it to the taxpayers. Director Magee stated there is nothing written in stone, and we are going to see how this plays out. If you are renting a pavilion at the park, you can have use of the courts, but you are not having exclusive use of them.

4. Gala Event for 2025 – Collaboration with Wixom P&R and Hospitality House

The Gala event will be held on Wednesday, March 12, 2025.

The Gala is a collaboration event with Wixom Parks and Recreation and Hospitality House. We will donate the facility use for Hospitality House to run the event.

Supervisor Venegas commented this is an established event with Hospitality House. Last year, it was noticed that the Wixom Gala was on Friday night and the Hospitality House fundraiser on the prior Wednesday. They were, basically, having the same event. It was benefitting two different organizations during the same week. Hospitality House approached Parks and Recreation looking for space and it was thought to be a good partnership.

Director Magee indicated Hospitality House is a good organization. In the latest statistics for Hospitality House, they have increased Wixom participants by 40% since last year. It is a nice way for us to give back.

5. New Wixom Logo, Branding, and Signage Rollout.

Assistant City Manager Benson commented the City rolled out a new branding logo, and signage plan. The City is continuing the rollout of trying to get the image out there. The plan is for next year to have the first round of community signage updates for both wayfinding and gateway.

The logos provided in the packet are the 30% schematics. These aren't the final signs. The City is working through the design process this fall and through the winter. Specifically related to the Parks and Recreation piece, it is the second page. There are some park IDs, and some different options. It is not finalized, but it is to give the Commission a flavor of where the steering committee for this project is leaning towards. As the City is continuing through the revisions, some of the pieces are not as applicable. As an example, the brick footings, most of the park signs have landscaping around the bottom. It would not make sense to install the brick footings. There will probably be some minor design changes. The DPW facility sign looks very different than the fire department or Gunnar Mettala. The idea is the signs would have a consistent feel to them, so when you are driving through and around Wixom, you will be able to tell that this is the City, or you are in the City. These are concepts and are not finalized at this point. Assistant City Manager Benson indicated if there are any thoughts, they are open to hearing them and to let him know.

Assistant City Manager Benson stated there are department specific logo variances, as well. Parks and Recreation has both a band and a horizontal logo with Wixom Parks and Recreation underneath it. We can roll out some unique versions as we are going through the process.

Assistant City Manager Benson commented the City is trying to make the gateway and wayfinding signs more visible so that people can find Gilbert Willis Park, as a great example. The City will continue to rollout the signs and will be doing that for the next two or three phases. City Council has budgeted a significant amount of money. In total, across two fiscal years between the DDA and City Council, it is \$1.2 million. The gateway signs drive up the cost, especially if they are illuminated. The City is being very conscious to what will last and what would be a good return on investment in terms of lifespan, maintenance and functionality. It will be a policy decision on City Council's side on what the appropriate number and the appropriate locations for the signs.

Commissioner Williams commented that the color design coordinates on the "X" would be positive for the community. The "x" is bold, it appears to you right away. Also, the "x" in Wixom and the signage differentiates the City from a lot of the common signs that you see in other communities.

Commissioner VanSickle commented there is consistency in the signs. The sign designs are simple signs, but she liked the consistency and continuity in the City.

6. Tree Lighting Festival.

Supervisor Venegas stated the Tree Lighting Festival is going to look similar to the last couple of years. The event is growing, so a few changes will be made. One of the biggest changes, for safety reasons, is that the traffic will be eliminated around the Civic Center pond. People will have to enter from the west side of City Hall and park in the rear and exit the same way. The carriage rides will not go through that area, as well. There are many people and children walking across the street that it was decided to eliminate the vehicles right in the event. The carriage rides will be running from across the street at Sibley Park and will go through the neighborhood and make a loop back.

Supervisor Venegas indicated since the event is spreading out northward, there will be some kind of activity/event, either Fire and Ice Tower, which will be brought back, or another activity for the kids. Parks and Recreation is working with JAG Entertainment to book the events, so that people are entertained.

The event will run from 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. this year on Friday, December 6, 2024. Atomic Radio will perform in the beer tent. Santa will arrive at 6:30 p.m. to light the tree.

Director Magee commented the Tree Lighting Festival has become a very popular event. The DDA is also lighting up the downtown and the businesses. Parks and Recreation is working together with the DDA to make the tree lighting festival a nice event.

7. Fitness Park at Gunnar Mettala Park - \$60,000 Grant from Ralph Wilson Foundation via Michigan Airline Trail Funding.

Director Magee indicated the Fitness Park at Gunnar Mettala Park is in the Parks and Recreation plan for the 2025 budget. Parks and Recreation is very excited about the Fitness Park. The beauty is that the fitness park is through the Michigan Air Line Trail, and funds were received from the Ralph Wilson Foundation in the amount of \$60,000. The total cost will be approximately \$225,000. The idea is to go off the Trail, do the fitness park, and return to the Trail.

Fitness parks are very popular and located in many communities.

Director Magee will be proposing the Fitness Park to City Council in the 2025 budget.

8. Review of Events:

- BBQ & Blues: Supervisor Venegas commented it was a beautiful night; there were approximately 5,000 attendees. The number of attendees is up from last year. The event was moved to a new date in August this year; normally the event is held at the end of July. The event for next year will be planned in August, as well.

- Barkin' in the Park: The event was held on Sunday, September 19, 2024. The day was very nice. This is a small event with vendors, people bring their dogs. There were approximately 600 to 650 attendees this year. The entertainment was with the Rock and Roll K-9's. The event was very successful.
- Fall Fest/Panther Hunt: The event was very successful for 2.5 hours and then it was rained out. There were approximately 400 kids who attended the event. The event was started early because of the rain in the forecast. It was very successful until 7:00 p.m. when the rain hit; of course, everything was still on the trail. DPW and the Parks and Recreation staff spent the next morning drying out the props. DPW and Parks and Recreation pulled it together. Supervisor Venegas indicated it was challenging this year for Panther Hunt, but better than last year when the event was cancelled for the first time in 30 years. The good news is that after drying all the props, animatronics and blowups, there was only approximately \$200 lost.

9. Upcoming Events:

- Tree Lighting – December 6

10. Disc Golf Course Phase I – Concrete Tees and Signage Install for Phase I

Director Magee stated the tees on the first nine of the course were poured and the signs are installed. She indicated Supervisor Venegas did a nice job designing the signs using the new logo.

Supervisor Venegas indicated she felt like the disc golf course is the number one used amenity, even more than pickleball. Eight of the signs are done. The later holes are getting worked out to make sure the yardage is correct. Discraft and their employees, located in Wixom, are designing the course. A professional disc golfer did a promo on YouTube on the course. Disc golfers are touting the course as a great place to practice aces because it is a shorter course. Supervisor Venegas sent the YouTube link via email to the Commission.

INFORMATION:

COMMISSION COMMENTS:

Commissioner Chupa commented the traffic on Pontiac Trail is so bad. It is hard to travel around Wixom now. More houses and structures are going to be built, and it will not be easy to travel around town. Part of the challenge is I-96 is closed at Milford Road both ways, so people are taking Wixom Road as a venue. Assistant City Manager Benson commented he has had frequent conversations with the Road Commission. The traffic is a recognized point.

STAFF COMMENTS:

Assistant City Manager Benson stated there is a road millage replacement on the ballot this November for Wixom. The proposal is to replace the current millage of 1.15 mils with a new road millage of up to 2.5 mils. The main difference is that this replacement millage would collect more revenue, but it would also be usable for Wixom's major and local roads. The current road millage is only for local roads. As an example, Loon Lake Road this year or Charms, the City does not have the same revenue source, currently, since it is hard to get those as quickly. If this millage can be approved, the City would be able to do local roads quicker, but the City would also be able to have a better, more consistent revenue source for the major roads. This is a 10-year proposal. If there are any questions or concerns, the City does have an informational website set up. It is on the City's YouTube page, and it is on the City's webpage. There are also some social media pushes for this.

Assistant City Manager Benson indicated the second thing he will talk about, there is a proposed residential development coming to the 13-acre property just west of Gunnar Mettala Park. It would be 43 single family homes. The proposed homes will abut to the park. Basically, it would be the last of the Village Center area subdivisions. They do propose to leave a stub road that connects to the edge of Gunnar Mettala in case the City, at any point in the future, has an interest in connecting Mettala Lane. Assistant City Manager Benson commented he did not think the connection road would happen, but it was contemplated in the original VCA development plan, so the developer offered to do this. They have received preliminary approval from City Council and the Planning Commission. The City is waiting on them to submit for final. It is anticipated to break ground next year. Assistant City Manager Benson commented he was family with the old land swap proposed that wasn't well received. City Council is not in favor of it. The argument has been, if they leave a stub and it never gets built, there is no harm; but 20 years from now, it might make more sense for people to get to drive in that way.

Assistant City Manager Benson stated there is also a proposed 72-unit townhouse development on the property east of the Gibson House. They received conditional rezoning approval. It was already zoned for higher density downtown uses and then this proposal allowed the townhouse piece. It would be the seven acres that is right next door to the Gibson House.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION by Commissioner VanSickle and second by Commissioner Chupa to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 p.m.

VOTE:

MOTION CARRIED