

## Park and Rec Minutes

(Joint meeting with Farmington Park and Rec)

10/11/2021

The meeting was called to order by Chair Mike Carey. Present were Mike Carey, Jordan Johnson, Mark page, Jessica Boelman, Nicole Bower & Dawn McCracken.

Mike shared our recent upcoming park projects to include Sach's Park installation, general trail maintenance and the upcoming installation of Town Hall Park in 2022. Empire Preserve Park is next however, it will be a few years yet.

Farmington has a park installation with a shelter in the works. This has not been named at this time. In addition, they also have the installation of neighborhood trails that will connect the new park and a small parking lot. Work is being done to extend Flagstaff Meadow Park near the high school and they are designing the master plan this winter. Marigold and Prairie Pines were the neighborhood installations in 2019. Farmington trails are becoming severely damaged by willow roots and will need to be fully replaces at some point starting with the worst and progressing to the best.

Farmington may go for the referendum in 2022 that did not pass in 2016. This will be a phased approach with community surveying taking place in early 2022. The location is Jim Bell Park.

Currently Farmington and Empire are partnering on the Puppet Wagon and Summer Park Adventures. The swim bus in no longer in commission.

Farmington offers movies in the park and works with a specific company to provide the movies. They always look for multiple sponsors for each event as licensing cost range from \$200.00 to \$2,000. Though expensive, they are well received.

Jordan mentioned our desire to host a food truck night which Farmington would like to partner on. The Empire Ballfields at Stelzel Park would be an ideal location. A Friday evening in the spring may be the desired time. We'll continue to coordinate efforts on this.

Jessica shared who we worked with for Sunday Night Entertainment in the Park and our success with the programming. Farmington does Music in the Park on the last Wednesdays of the month in the summer. They geared  $\frac{3}{4}$  of these evening to adults this year which was successful. They also hosted 2 movies in the park- one in July and one during Dew Days. Next year they're planning for one kids' movie and one family friendly movie geared to a larger audience.

Mike gave an overview of our softball/baseball schedule and the teams that primarily utilize the field. Typically, Farmington youth usually book 4 days a week and we see tournaments and AAA leagues renting each year.

Empire has no residential or commercial project in the works. Eventually we may see a water treatment facility go in.

Farmington has many new developments going in now with many planned for the future as well. A 55+ community is also going in. A few new businesses have gone into the vacant strip mall locations; however, no new commercial developments are planned.

Mike gave an overview of the Empire Town Celebration with 500+ residents in attendance. He also gave an overview of the Holiday party.

Dew Days was hosted as a one-day event this year due to Covid. Koo Koo Kangaroo was the biggest draw and they'd like to bring them back again. The marching band was a huge success too. They plan to bring back the traditional event layout and activities in 2022 pending no future restrictions. They'd like to bring in a bigger name for the Saturday night entertainment.

Jessica and Nicole gave an overview of our Story walk and the Story Walk Contest that was well received. Farmington suggested opening it or hosting a separate opportunity for local children's authors to feature MN stories.

Mike shared about our yoga and exercise classes which have been successful. Farmington hosted free yoga in the park this summer. They'd like the opportunity to cross host yoga in the park with us next year.

Farmington will be hosting their annual Halloween Walk outside this year on October 29<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 – 7:00 pm.

The meeting was adjourned.