

PR Minutes Joint Meeting with Farmington
October 10th, 2022

The meeting was called to order by Chair Mike Carey. Present were Mike Carey, Jessica Boelman, Mark Page and Dawn McCracken. Also joining the meeting was the Farmington Park and Recreation Commission.

Recent and Future Park and Trail Improvements

Mike shared our recent park update at Town Hall Park. With the help of the Minnesota DNR Park and Trails Grant Program, the new Town Hall Park Playground has been installed and it was even ahead of schedule! The grant also allowed us to make updates to the landscape surrounding the park. Part of these updates included the addition of wildflower plants and beds. Natural landscaping material was incorporated into the design.

In 2023, Empire's future plans include resurfacing part of our trails. Priority will be given to the trails in most need. It is anticipated that some of the area resurfaced will be the trails that our Story Walk is on.

Farmington has redone their trails by Mystic Meadows. As part of this process, 2200 ft. of root barrier was installed. Farmington has also added a new parking lot at the arena. They anticipate adding a drop off lane in the Spring of 2023. There will be a trail on the South side and a sidewalk on the North. In addition, there is now a new trail along Highway 3. As the popularity of Pickle Ball increases in the area, Farmington will be adding new Pickle Ball courts to Rambling River Park.

Jim Bell Park (Farmington)

An advisory committee was formed consisting of representatives from a Farmington neighborhood, a Farmington council member, a local teen, a member from a Farmington sport's team, a local disability group as well as a senior. Due to the cost, it has been decided that the Jim Bell Park will remain a nature area. There will be no referendums this year.

Empire/Farmington Collaborations

There continues to be good attendance at the puppet wagon during the summer. The summer camp was discontinued. The Food Truck events put on by Empire and Farmington were a definite success. A discussion was had about a possible

change of location and date for the Fall event. The location will most likely be in downtown Farmington. Most likely the event will take place the same day as the Farmington parade. The Spring Food Truck event will take place May 19th 2023 from 5-8:00 at Stelzel Park. Trash collection options for both events were discussed but will be finalized at a later date. We also discussed the possibility of music at these events. Next year it was determined that the field lights would need to be on during the Spring event at the ball fields to help clean up after the event.

New Residential/Commercial Developments

Possible development by Deer Creek Developers is being considered on the East side of 197th Street on both sides. A concept plan has been submitted but is not considered approved until final plotting is approved. DNH development is in the process of being approved for light commercial development.

Farmington has seen significant growth with the approval for 200 new townhomes across from Bachmans. Sapphire Lakes, Whispering Fields and a new 55+ community by McDonalds is also expected to have growth. Currently, there are no new commercial developments in the works.

Update on Empire Incorporating

On August 31st, Empire Township received an order for incorporation. As a result of this, the governing body of Empire will go from a 3-member Town Board to a 5-member City Council and Mayor. On February 14th, a special Election will be held to elect these officials.

Music and Entertain in the Park

This year Farmington showed the movie ET and the Avengers in the park as part of their summer entertainment. Ways to increase participation and get the word out for these events was discussed.

Empire Township Celebration

Approximately 500 residents enjoyed our annual Celebration. Free food was provided as well as many activities for families. Some of these included free balloon art, face painting, bouncy houses, race cars, pony rides, a petting zoo and a fun interaction with the Farmington Fire Department and Dakota County Sheriff Department.

Farmington Dew Days

With beautiful weather there was great attendance this year! All vendor spots sold out. Marshal Lines provided a shuttle to people to their facility for free food and a chance to see many big rigs. The parade was also well attended, and the food trucks a big hit. The Taste on Thursday drew many participants for the samplings of a variety of beverages and food. The beer, brats and bingo events were also a success

A discussion was had on some of the possible park options that both Empire and Farmington would possibly like to see in the future. Some options discussed were a possible archery park, nature park, skate park, bike park, dog park as well as a Ninja park.

The meeting was adjourned