

MINUTES

1. CONVENE CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MEETING

Mayor Labadie called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.

A. Roll Call

Present: Mayor Labadie; Councilmembers Maddy, Sanschagrín, Gorham (arrived at 5:48 p.m.), and DiGruttolo; City Attorney Shepherd; City Administrator Nevinski; Parks and Recreation Manager Czech; City Clerk/HR Director Thone; Planning Director Griffiths; Director of Public Works Morreim; City Engineer Budde; and Park Commissioners: Hirner, Garske, Bahneman, and Wenner.

Absent: None

B. Review Agenda

Sanschagrín moved, Maddy seconded, approving the agenda as presented. Motion passed 4/0.

2. COUNCIL DISCUSSION WITH PARK COMMISSION

Park and Recreation Manager Czech explained that 2025 was shaping up to be a pretty big year for the Park Commission and the Parks Department so they felt it was a good idea to get the Council and the Park Commission together to review roles/responsibilities, the City's strategic priorities, and the 2025 Park Commission Work Plan to make sure they were in alignment with the Council.

Councilmember Sanschagrín referenced the discussion requested section of the staff report about the roles and responsibilities of the Park Commission and what information they needed to have from the Commission. He stated that something he felt would be helpful would be to get more data around usage of the parks related to things like volume of usage, demographics, and understanding what was going on in the parks related to visitors from other cities, such as Cathcart.

Councilmember Maddy asked if Councilmember Sanschagrín was expecting the Park Commission to document who was using the parks or if it would be staff's responsibility.

Councilmember Sanschagrín stated that he was envisioning the Park Commission working together with staff to gather data.

Park and Recreation Manager Czech stated that during the Parks Master Plan, there is a demographics portion that the consultant will help uncover for the City.

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Mayor Labadie noted that the City had started doing a people counter for some of their large-scale events, like Movie in the Park. She asked if Tonka United did any counts for their large-scale tournaments or if they would be able to give the City a rough number based on the number of entrants.

Park and Recreation Manager Czech stated they can provide a rough number of attendees to the City.

Mayor Labadie stated that the warming house attendants also kept a tally of the usage. She asked Councilmember Sanschagrín if he had something beyond what was already in place in mind, and expressed concern that involving staff would involve time.

Councilmember Sanschagrín explained that he did not realize that the data that was just mentioned existed, and felt that starting with that data would be helpful. He stated that if possible, he would like to have the ability to take snapshots of the park usage at different times of the day and in different seasons would also be useful. He stated that it would be helpful to know what the residents were looking for about the City parks, but that sounded like it would be part of the data-gathering process for the Parks Master Plan. He asked if the Park Commissioners might have time to check out the parks a few times a month to see what was going on in them.

Parks Commissioner Wenner stated they had a meeting with one of the sports associations, and they had data related to the number of Shorewood residents who participated in their league, and asked if that would be something the Council would be interested in.

Councilmember Sanschagrín stated that he would be interested in that type of data.

Councilmember DiGruttolo stated that for her, she would like to see the Commission make recommendations on priorities, which she felt was the point that Councilmember Sanschagrín was trying to get to. She noted that the most useful information that the Council can get from the Park Commission was how to prioritize the City's scarce resources and ensure that everybody can enjoy the parks at and relatively the same level, supported by logic and data for funding decisions.

Councilmember Sanschagrín stated that the other thing that would be helpful for the Park Commission to reflect on their meetings over the last year and determine if there were any points where they had wanted direction from the Council. He asked what may be able to be done to exchange more information between the two bodies.

Mayor Labadie stated that the observation and opinions of the Park Commission meant a lot and noted that, for example, just doing a people count of Southshore Park would not provide an accurate reflection, and he would also like to hear their opinions and what they have seen. She explained that she was not intending to add to their duties and constrain them, but putting their minds together can sometimes result in a greater opinion.

Parks Commissioner Wenner stated that there were a few things that the Commission had been asking for, such as surveys, and noted that they did not have this data themselves. She explained that her understanding was that they would be doing extensive surveying, which would help. She noted that for CIP requests, things like playground equipment, she did not feel experienced enough to assess how long it may last. She stated that was one of her questions for when they do go visit parks they had been talking about getting their feet on the ground and visit the parks

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to make observations, but reiterated that she would not know how to assess the life span of playground equipment which she felt may also be a communication thing.

City Administrator Nevinski stated that he felt part of this would be, as residents of the City serving on this Commission, what they are seeing and hearing while they were in the parks or when they were out at the grocery store or dropping them off at school about what people want to see in the parks. He stated that he also did not think he would assess whether a piece of equipment had another year, but felt it may be more about what they hear or observe from the community, and gave the example of, over a five-year period, starting to see more young kids using the parks. He explained that he felt these kinds of observations would be incredibly helpful for staff and the Council to receive.

Mayor Labadie stated that she agreed and suggested that they pass along what they were hearing more frequently than when they come to report to the Council. She suggested that they could make a record of what they had heard or had seen and then periodically share that information with Park and Recreation Manager Czech, who can then share it with the Council. She asked what the Commission felt was needed from the Council to help them execute their role as Commissioners.

Park Commission Chair Hirner stated that he had served on the Commission for a long time, and they had never talked much about the City's trail system. He stated that they have been involved a bit in some of the trail aspects, but it would be helpful for them to have some guidance from the Council on where they see trails going, as well as their expectations and vision for the City and its trail system. He referenced the four-foot-wide section of trail along Vine Hill that was in pretty rough shape and explained that they had never talked about it but were assuming that it would be taken care of when the road was done, but were not sure if that was the right answer.

Councilmember Sanschagrín asked how 'trail' was defined and if it included sidewalks.

Park Commission Chair Hirner stated that there were examples like the Vine Hill trail throughout the City and asked how they should look at those.

Mayor Labadie stated that it popped out when she was reviewing the Park Commission handbook. She thanked staff for putting the handbook together and noted that it had not existed before. She noted that under Park Trails, it referred to Appendix H, the trail plan implementation report from 2011, which she believed was the plan that had three phases. She stated that Phase One trails were not done yet, and some may never be done. She noted that she felt it was important for the trail plan implementation report to be updated, and felt that it would help the Council, the Commission, and the community understand what was going on.

City Administrator Nevinski stated that as the City approaches the 2050 Comprehensive Plan, that was a component that would be an excellent project for it because spending time on that subject would help inform the Comprehensive Plan and would be a good use of time.

Park Commissioner Wenner noted that she also heard a lot of input from people about the trails in Freeman Park, and it would be helpful for the Commission to have some education on what their trails were made of and when they would be filled or tended to.

Mayor Labadie stated that there have been numerous times that staff have worked together to provide the Council with talking points on various topics so they could all have the same

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messaging within the community. She stated that if there were issues like that where the Commission was hearing from residents, they were probably not approaching staff like they were the Commission and suggested that they report this information to Park and Recreation Manager Czech so a statement could be prepared so all of the Commissioners would be up to speed on the messaging that could also be shared with the Council so they were all sharing the same unified message about the plans.

Park Commission Chair Hirner stated that he felt being able to have a consistent message would be good.

Councilmember Sanschagrin asked if it might be helpful to have a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Park Commission Chair Hirner stated that he did not feel it would hurt to have an FAQ section and felt having the same information would be beneficial, so there would be less confusion.

Councilmember DiGruttolo suggested that the Park Commission come up with the FAQs of the things that they have heard people asking about.

Park Commissioner Wenner asked if the idea was for an FAQ section for the website.

Mayor Labadie stated that if it were something for the website, the Council could discuss that with staff. She noted that if it were related to hypothetical things that may be done in twenty years, they may not want to include that on the website.

Park Commissioner Chair Hirner explained that the one that most frequently came to mind that they needed a good answer for was what is happening and what the City was going to do about the trees in the parks with the diseased trees.

Mayor Labadie asked the Park Commissioners to give some input on the recently updated Park Commission Handbook.

Park Commissioner Garske stated that he felt the Handbook was very comprehensive, beneficial, and would be very helpful for new Commissioners.

Park Commission Chair Hirner stated that he felt the Handbook was really helpful to have current, up-to-date information.

Park Commissioner Wenner stated that one thing she had added was that when they were asked to vote on whether the City would like to receive cash in lieu of land or land dedication, she felt that there would be some additional documents that would be helpful for the Commission to have. She stated that in addition to the Handbook, she would like to have access to the Tree Preservation Policy and the Tree Preservation Replacement Policy, the Davey Resources Tree Plan, and the relevant sections from the Comprehensive Plan. She shared an example from when she first started on the Commission and explained that she had seen some discrepancies with how the City was treating the development versus what their plans actually said, because they were supposed to be protecting trees that were on steep slopes and away from the shoreline. She reiterated that she felt this would be helpful information for them to have because they seem to be getting more questions related to trees.

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Park Commissioner Bahneman stated that it would also be helpful to have technical information about emails or tech support.

Councilmember DiGruttolo stated that she felt it may be good for the Park Commission to coordinate with the Planning Commission on some projects, such as Truffle Hill, and be able to crosstalk when there was a new development where trees would be involved. She noted that she felt the City should post their various policies and things like the tree inventory, so they could be found by the residents.

City Administrator Nevinski stated that they can check on that information but was not sure about the tree inventory because it was almost ten years old and was not sure there would be much value in it. He stated that as the City developed plans and data, that would typically be information that would want to be out there for the public. He stated that he felt they would need to have a conversation with Planning Director Griffiths on where the intersection may be with the Park Commission and the Planning Commission.

Mayor Labadie stated that the idea confused her because the Park Commission would be dealing with park land, and the tree preservation policy was different from the park dedication fee and was not overly discretionary. She clarified that she was not sure how much overlap there may be between City parks and private development.

Planning Director Griffiths stated that the park dedication fee was a flat rate based on the plan that was currently being updated. He explained that the way the Comprehensive Plan established that relationship was that now it says the City's park system was essentially built out, and the only time they should be taking park land instead of cash in lieu was if parkland became available immediately adjacent to existing parks. He noted that meant that there may just be one or two situations where the Park Commission would get to weigh in on a project, but otherwise it would just continue to follow the plan with the Planning Commission.

Park Commission Chair Hirner stated that he felt the Commission was involved in the process just to say 'yes' to taking the cash in lieu of land.

Park Commissioner Wenner stated that in their roles and responsibilities, the second point from the bottom says that they need to submit to the Planning Commission comments on any proposed subdivisions and explained that she was not clear on this point either.

Planning Director Griffiths reiterated that the situation would not come up very often.

Councilmember Sanschagrín stated that he thought the Council had, in the past, held joint meetings with the Park and Planning Commission and asked if that was something they envisioned making sense to do again.

Planning Director Griffiths stated that he felt it would make sense to do it once they get into the Comprehensive Plan process, because there would end up being a lot of crossover between them.

Mayor Labadie stated that she can only recall this happening once, and it was related to the fire lane issue.

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Councilmember Maddy noted that the last time he recalled the City doing a park dedication fee rather than park land donations was with the golf course development and asked if the City was considering that open space a park.

Planning Director Griffiths stated that he would have to go back and look at the specifics of that situation but believed that most of it was just open space because the City was still interested in receiving a park dedication fee for that project.

Councilmember Gorham apologized for arriving late and asked if they had talked about the Parks Master Plan, in relation to the Park Commission Work Plan.

Mayor Labadie stated that they had not gotten there yet and explained that she had been planning to go through the three items listed in the staff report labeled 'Discussion Requested'. She moved the discussion onto the second request regarding the Council's strategic priorities and stated that over the years, she felt that the Park Commission presentations before the Council have gotten better and better. She noted that the information they share has been professional and thorough, and makes her feel like she has attended the meetings.

Councilmember Sanschagrín referenced fiscal responsibility and thinking about things in terms of return on investment, but clarified he was not necessarily thinking just in terms of dollars, but also personal enjoyment of the parks for the public was always helpful information. He stated that he felt that environmental stewardship was a given, and making sure there was engagement with the community. He explained that he felt those things were what could be tied most closely between the Council and the Park Commission.

Councilmember DiGruttolo stated that, for her, she felt it was the Vegetation Management Plan because the City spent so much time and money on buckthorn, and it would be good to have a consolidated consensus on the appropriate amount of financing for that. She explained that she felt it was important for the Park Commission to help the Council prioritize the City's financial resources. She stated that she knew they were getting into the IPM and the Bee Safe Policy and would appreciate it if they could help level set and harmonize that for the Council, so they can also make sure they were adhering to those policies.

Mayor Labadie stated that if the Park Commission was not all in alignment in their thinking about things, that was okay, but the Council needed to know that as well. She stated that because the Park Commission was an advisory body so if something came to the Council with a recommendation where the vote was 3-2, that was okay and encouraged the Commission to speak their mind.

Councilmember DiGruttolo clarified that she had not meant harmonization amongst the Commission, but within the City's policies.

Councilmember Gorham noted that one of the things discussed at the last Park Commission meeting was the Bee Safe report that was written into the City's resolution. He stated that with the leadership in the Park Commission, he felt this was something that they could shape the report, how they report, its formatting, tone, and overall purpose. He stated that the resolution does not say much except that the City must do it. He explained that he did not see it as a lengthy technical report on invasive species management, but they could provide a link to that kind of information that would be found elsewhere. He stated that he would like to see it be more user and resident-friendly and noted that the bigger the report, the fewer people who will read it. He

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stated that he felt the current Park Commission was filled with competent people and believed that they would be able to come up with a recommendation and work with staff to create that vision for this report.

Park Commissioner Wenner stated that the actual ordinance says that the City shall communicate to residents the importance of creating and maintaining a pollinator habitat and shall publish a Bee Safe City progress report on an annual basis. She stated that the way that was worded made it sound like it was out of the Park Commission's hands but noted that one of their ongoing questions since its implementation and since the Park Commission was named as the oversight body, was to get clarity on how they were supposed to be reviewing and reporting to the Council on park and natural space maintenance. She stated that it seemed like the Park Commission was supposed to be questioning Public Works and going out on their own and gathering this information and then reporting to the Council but noted that they were not clear on that either.

Mayor Labadie stated that in the past, the Commission has done park tours and the Council and public could tag along with them but noted that last year was the first time anyone from the public tagged along. She stated that beyond that, she was not sure if the City had historically done anything and explained that she felt comfortable with the approach based on the feedback from the tours. She noted that she understood the Commission was questioning the validity of the tours and whether they were a good use of their time.

Councilmember Gorham explained that he did not see the Commission going home and crafting a newsletter about the Bee Safe report, but he did think that working with Public Works and coming up with what that will look like did make sense. He stated that there had been two reports for the last few years that he did not think were Bee Safe progress reports, and felt there was a void in leadership there, and what it wanted to become. He explained that he could see Park and Recreation Manager Czech working with Public Works to come up with what they want, for example, two pages maximum covering these specific topics.

Councilmember Sanschagrín stated that in addition to that, he could picture a scorecard that evaluated how the City did over the past year versus what the plan was. He stated that it could show the extent to which the City followed their Turf Management program and noted that he felt something easy to measure would be the amount of treatments that were purchased and what treatments were used. He noted that the overall intent would be that those items would decrease over time.

Councilmember DiGruttolo stated that she liked the idea of a scorecard because it would show where the City had room for improvement.

Park Commissioner Garske stated that Councilmember Sanschagrín had said something earlier in the meeting that stuck in his head about prioritizing the parks. He asked if it would be helpful for the City to have tiers of its parks and explicitly state, for example, that the City's Tier 1 parks were Freeman and Badger, which meant that they needed to be in a certain condition, and the lower tier parks had different overall condition standards. He stated that he felt that it may help them in their CIP planning.

Councilmember DiGruttolo noted that this was what she had originally asked for and felt that was where they needed to have the data and input, because they were all making assumptions that people do not use some parks as much as they use the others. She stated that this was how they handled things in the military too because you have enough resources to make every unit a

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Tier 1 unit, so they have to prioritize, which meant that, for example, Tier 1 units get fully resourced all the time, Tier 2 units get resourced most of the time, and Tier 3 units get resourced when they had available resources. She stated that she did not think that was a bad idea for the City, but the Council would look to the Park Commission for input on those designations.

Mayor Labadie asked Park and Recreation Manager Czech if he thought that was something that would be beneficial.

Park and Recreation Manager Czech stated that in a Parks Master Plan, there is a tiered approach where they have designations or classifications for destination parks, community parks, and neighborhood parks. He noted that he felt Freeman would be considered more of a destination park, which had a lot of people from outside the community who come in to use it, and Manor would have more use by the neighborhood.

Councilmember Sanschagrín stated that he felt that was a good way to think about it, instead of tiers, where they would be saying that one park was less than another, because they all have different purposes, and they could craft their approach that way.

Park and Recreation Manager Czech stated that they could classify them by looking at what community they serve.

Park Commission Chair Hirner stated that the City has seven parks and, in his opinion, tiering them seemed a bit crazy. He stated that he would see it differently if the City had thirty parks but felt that there would be residents who believed that their local park was the most important. He stated that if the City began using a tier process, he felt it may cause unintended consequences within the community.

Mayor Labadie stated that for the park tours last year, it was mainly the people who used Freeman Park who attended that portion of the tour and then drove away, and it was like that for the remaining parks, as well. She stated that she felt the point being made by Park Commission Chair Hirner was accurate, that people were interested in the park they use. She stated that she felt this was something that staff could work on with the Commission and moved the discussion onto the Park Commission 2025 Work Plan.

Councilmember Gorham stated that he had a gnawing feeling that the Cathcart Park playground needed to temporarily take a backseat. He stated that the Parks Master Plan, which will give them all new priorities, and he was not sure that replacing the playground equipment right now would be the best use of money in 2025 and suggested that they hold off for now.

Park and Recreation Manager Czech stated that the Park Commission had also discussed this late last year/early this year, and their idea was also to essentially kick the can down the road a bit on the Cathcart playground equipment. He noted that with playground planning, it was not just a simple thing to pick out the equipment and install it the next month, but was a long process to undertake. He stated that he believed the initial thought for this year was to start the planning process, so if it was identified in the Parks Master Plan as a necessary capital investment, they would be ready to roll moving into 2026.

Councilmember Sanschagrín stated that they should evaluate the equipment to see if it needed replacement and noted that he did not want the City to just replace it for the sake of replacing it.

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Park and Recreation Manager Czech explained that the Cathcart playground equipment will be thirty years old in August, and generally, playgrounds are designed to last fifteen to twenty-five years.

Park Commissioner Chair Hirner stated that he agreed that spending money to plan for something that was already in the Parks Master Plan did not make a lot of sense. He stated that he felt the Commission could do some preliminary work and look at some of the catalogues and decide what general kind of equipment they would like to see go into the park, because there would be little to no cost in doing that kind of work. He reiterated that he did not believe it made sense for them to spend money on Cathcart this year while the Parks Master Plan was being worked on.

Councilmember DiGruttolo stated that she was glad the City had consultants coming in to do some data collection for the City because she did not want to spend two hundred fifty thousand dollars on a playground that four kids use, especially if the demographics were changing. She stated that she did not want the City to just make a plan because this is what should be done, because the equipment was thirty years old. She stated that with what was currently happening with the economy, it may be advantageous and prudent to think about ordering playground equipment sooner rather than later, if it will be imported from outside the country.

Councilmember Gorham asked if playground equipment was usually American made.

Park and Recreation Manager Czech stated that it would depend on the company.

City Administrator Nevinski stated that there is a company in Delano that makes playground equipment.

Mayor Labadie noted that their raw materials may be imported, though. She stated that she agreed that the City should not be rushing if improvements do not need to be made right away.

Councilmember Maddy stated that the Council was being asked to allocate forty thousand dollars to a Parks Master Plan later tonight and asked if that was a requirement to get this done. He stated that if someone gave him forty thousand dollars to spend on parks, he did not think he would go hire a consultant to tell him how to spend it, and would go update some of the equipment and add pollinator areas. He explained that he was trying to figure out how important the Parks Master Plan contract was.

Park Commission Chair Hirner stated that from an expertise perspective, the contractor brings a lot of different skill sets that were not represented on the Commission. He stated that they would potentially do some of it with staff time, but much of it was construction-related and would do the work to canvas the community, which took time. He stated that he felt that, from a value perspective, he thought the cost was a bit low and had been expecting it to come in higher. He stated that he felt what they were asking them to do would be of value to the City as a whole and having them coordinate it and do the work would save a lot of work that would be necessary within City staff.

Park and Recreation Manager Czech stated that he would not disagree that forty thousand dollars was a lot of money, but believed many of the questions that had already been asked tonight would be answered with the Parks Master Plan, and would give the City a concrete plan to operate off of. He stated that, in addition to that, it will also give them something to refer to when people ask why they were spending money on things like the Cathcart playground. He stated that he felt the

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Parks Master Plan would help answer a lot of questions and noted that during the park tours last summer, there were a lot of residents who were super upset about a trail because all of their documents were outdated. He stated that updating those things will provide some certainty for residents and also guide the Park Commission for the next ten to fifteen years.

Councilmember Gorham stated that they cannot even refer to the Trails Plan because it was so outdated and stated that the consultant will also look at that to analyze it and give the City a vision for a trail plan. He stated that he felt the point was that they were bringing in experts to give the City a unified vision, direction, and priorities for the City parks with a document that they can all refer to. He stated that if Shorewood was a City that valued its parks, he felt they should also bring in experts to reinforce and guide the overall vision.

Park and Recreation Manager Czech stated that the Parks Master Plan would not be trail-specific, due to the budget.

City Administrator Nevinski stated that they had talked about trails as part of the Comprehensive Plan process.

Park Commissioner Garske noted that the 'updated' Parks Master Plan was older than the Trail Plan. He stated that having the consultant come in and give the City ideas about what other cities have, what may be missing, or what they have too much of in this community would be helpful and may prevent the City from making narrow decisions. He stated that, for example, pickleball was something that they constantly hear about, but he did not know if that was something that the City needed to have, but having the consultant's expertise to look things over and let them know what is and is not a good idea for the City.

Mayor Labadie noted that at the Council retreat, they had talked about ways to engage the residents more on the large, generational type decisions, and her understanding was that the consultants were going to engage with the residents regarding the City parks.

Councilmember Sanschagrin asked if there was an appetite for dog play areas within the parks.

Park Commissioner Wenner stated that she felt there was an interest in having dog play areas within the parks. She noted that Councilmember DiGruttolo had several good ideas when she served on the Park Commission and hoped her research was still on file somewhere in the City. She shared an example of the contentious situation in Minnetonka, where people want to take away the off-leash areas and fence them in, and would like the City to get ahead of that kind of issue.

Mayor Labadie stated that there are a lot of cities that have off-leash areas are taking them away and have become extremely contentious within those cities. She stated that if this was something they were discussing, she suggested that they discuss it with Park and Recreation Manager Czech and the consultant, and possibly City Attorney Shepherd if there may be liability issues.

Park Commission Chair Hirner stated that the Commission has had some damage and vandalism take place in a few of the parks, and they have put up a few security cameras. He stated that he would like the Council's perspective on whether they should plan to put up cameras in all of the parks or not. He stated that he did not think they needed an immediate answer from the Council, but felt it may be useful to be able to prioritize this within the Parks Master Plan.

Mayor Labadie stated that security measures are great, but they all cost money.

City Administrator Nevinski noted that on tonight's regular Council meeting agenda, they had an item related to investing in security cameras and access controls for buildings and parks because there had been more vandalism than they wanted to see.

Councilmember DiGruttolo cautioned that they had to be careful when they talked about surveillance and putting up cameras, and felt that they needed input from the community because there have been a lot of complaints about privacy since the cameras on Highway 7 went up, which was nothing the City had control over.

Mayor Labadie asked if the Park Commission had ever thought about including someone from the high school age group as a Park Commissioner, as a non-voting member. She stated that she felt students would clamor for the position because it was something that would look good on their college applications. She noted that she also felt their input may give the City a voice that they would not normally hear from. She asked about Gideon Glen Park, which is a wild, open area. She stated that she liked it how it was and felt that was what it was meant to be, but stated that she felt the signage was past its prime. She noted that the existing signage was done in partnership with other agencies and suggested that if they update the signs they reach out to the same agencies who partnered with the City last time to see if they would be interested in assisting again.

Councilmember DiGruttolo stated that there was a question asked in the staff report about whether the park goal statement needed to be updated, and she felt that the statement from August of 1996 still worked for the Commission.

Park Commissioner Wenner stated that she felt they should add some verbiage that mentions their natural areas or the environment and be able to change the date.

Mayor Labadie stated that she felt the discussion between the Council and the Commission was very worthwhile.

3. SHOREWOOD COMMUNITY AND EVENT CENTER (SCEC) TASK FORCE DISCUSSION

Park and Recreation Manager Czech stated that at the Council retreat, there had been discussion about the formation of an SCEC task force to help analyze the building and provide recommendations to the Council. He stated that staff have put together a framework of what that kind of task force may look like and what some of their duties may be. He briefly reviewed roles, responsibilities, and a tentative timeline for their meetings. He explained that he was looking for some guidance from the Council on their vision for this task force and what they saw as the goals and outcomes they were hoping to see.

Councilmember DiGruttolo stated that she felt the primary goal and expected outcome of the task force would be recommendations on how the City can make the SCEC self-sustaining and self-supporting, and if that meant repurposing the building or charging more money. She stated that if they were not able to make it self-sustaining, she would like to have some recommendations for what the City can do with that piece of property.

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Councilmember Sanschagrín stated that he would like to see a financial plan around the SCEC. He stated in considering other possible uses, a resident had mentioned the idea that the VFW may be interested in the facility and noted that there may be some other potential uses that could benefit the community. He stated that he would like them to look at how they could market it better and find out what the community wanted and how they would use it, if they could. He stated that he felt part of the challenge to the SCEC was that its location was concealed and asked how they might be able to compensate for that shortcoming.

Councilmember Gorham stated that he liked the text about the composition of volunteers, but his concern was if the City put out a 'wanted' ad in the Shore Report looking for people to serve on the task force, they may not get a marketing or hospitality person. He asked if there may be a way to support the people they end up getting with some additional marketing support, because he felt that they were talking about ways to lift the SCEC by its bootstraps and make something of it. He explained that he did not want to set the task force up to fail.

Mayor Labadie stated that she felt that was a good point and referenced the Country Club because when it was going in, there were a lot of concerns about traffic, and the City formed a task force. She explained that they had a hard time getting enough people interested in serving and felt the concern shared by Councilmember Gorham on whether they would be able to get people with marketing and hospitality backgrounds was a real concern. She stated that she was not against forming a task force but would agree that if the City was going to do this, it needed to be set up so they could feel they were useful.

Councilmember DiGruttolo stated that she felt the City should have a decision point that, if, after three months or sixty days, there was no task force or its composition was not appropriate to the task, the City would decide that they would put money towards hiring a consultant instead. She stated that the City absolutely had to figure out what they were going to do with the SCEC and could not just keep passing a levy increase every year for something unsustainable.

Councilmember Gorham stated that he felt the City should hire a consultant because he did not foresee the City getting the perfect mix of people the City needed to serve on this task force, but still felt there was value in forming the task force. He stated that he felt like they needed expertise, but also needed locals to work hand in hand on the outcomes the City was looking for.

Mayor Labadie stated that she agreed with Councilmembers DiGruttolo and Gorham and felt it was a good idea.

Councilmember Gorham stated that he felt participation in the task force may be more appealing if it were being led by a market professional. He stated that he liked the proposed timeline from the staff report because it lands them in March of 2026 when they would need to start making budget recommendations.

City Administrator Nevinski stated that he has been told that there was a wealth of experience and skill within Shorewood. He stated that what he felt would be helpful for the next level of this process was if the Council had other ideas for skillsets that they would like to see as part of the task force, which would be helpful for staff. He explained that he felt staff could use that to put something together to bring back to the Council and then wrestle more with the decision point once they have a bit more meat to the task force idea. He stated that what they presented tonight was still very conceptual, and they were still working on putting some structure into it.

Mayor Labadie stated that if there were frequent users of the facility for renters, it may be a good idea to also reach out to them to see if they have any ideas about the SCEC or may want to contribute someone to serve on the task force. She stated that she believed the Council supported the concept of having a task force, with a deadline, for the SCEC and that they want to stay on the proposed timeline as much as possible.

City Administrator Nevinski encouraged the Council to email him and Park and Recreation Manager Czech if they had other thoughts or areas they felt should be considered before this is brought back to the Council.

Councilmember DiGruttolo asked if this may be a potential Vantage kind of project for the high school.

Mayor Labadie stated that she felt it could be a Vantage project for one of their strands and suggested that they talk to Communications and Recycling Coordinator Wilson because he was working with them as part of their Global Sustainability strand.

City Administrator Nevinski stated that they have contacts with the Vantage program and would reach out to them about this idea.

Mayor Labadie stated that the other thing she heard from the Council tonight was that they would be open to the possibility of hiring a consultant.

4. COUNCIL BYLAWS

Mayor Labadie noted that they needed to wrap up this meeting in time for their regular Council meeting and outlined their options for covering this agenda topic.

City Administrator Nevinski explained that at the very least, he was looking for direction on where the Council was, in relation to the Bylaws, because he felt they were important from a good governance kind of standpoint. He stated that they have not had a chance to talk about them, but if the Council had a little bit of guidance to pass along, it would be appreciated but acknowledged that he did not feel it needed to happen tonight.

Mayor Labadie asked City Administrator Nevinski to add Council Bylaws to a future Work Session meeting agenda.

5. ADJOURN

Maddy moved, Sanschagrín seconded, Adjourning the City Council Work Session Meeting of April 28, 2025, at 6:54 P.M. Motion passed 5/0.

ATTEST:



Sandie Thone, City Clerk



Jennifer Labadie, Mayor