

**City of West St. Paul
Open Council Work Session Minutes
February 11, 2019**

1. Roll Call

Mayor Napier called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Present: Mayor Dave Napier
Councilmembers Wendy Berry, Lisa Eng-Sarne, Anthony Fernandez,
John Justen, Bob Pace and Dick Vitelli

Absent: None

Also Present: City Manager Ryan Schroeder
City Attorney Kori Land
Police Chief Manila Shaver
Fire Chief Mike Pott
Asst. Chief Mark Juelfs
Asst. City Manager/HR Director Sherrie Le
Finance Director Char Stark
Community Development Director Jim Hartshorn
City Clerk Shirley Buecksler

2. Review and Approve the OCWS Agenda

Council approved the OCWS agenda, as presented. .

3. Review the Regular Meeting Consent Agenda

Council approved the Regular Meeting Consent Agenda, as presented.

4. Agenda Item(s)

A. Appointments to Environmental Commission and Park & Recreation Committee

Both the Environmental Commission and Park & Recreation Commission have members with terms that will expire March 1, 2019. Openings for these commissions were advertised and applications were received through the City's website. The lists below include all applications received from January 2015 through February 6, 2019.

Environmental Commission

According to the bylaws, appointments to the Environmental Commission shall be made by the City Council. Members are appointed for a term of three (3) years and shall hold office until March 1 of their expiring terms or until their successor is appointed.

There are three positions open on the Environmental Commission: two current Commissioners are seeking reappointment and one position is vacant. The vacant position is for a term expiring March 1, 2021. This position was previously filled by Olivia Newfield but she was unable to attend any meetings in 2018.

Commissioners Seeking Reappointment:

Rebecca McCarty, Ward 2	Completing Term 1
Kristy Otte, Ward 2	Completing Term 1

Applicants who have expressed interest in the Environmental Commission include:

Jamie Averbek, Ward 1	Application Received 10/17/2016
Carly Dusseau, Ward 2	Application Received 11/07/2018
Jade Pennig, Ward 3	Application Received 1/29/2019
Stephanie Schempp, Ward 3	Application Received 2/01/2019
Jason Smock, Ward 2	Application Received 2/02/2019
Thomas Vavreck, Ward 2	Application Received 2/14/2017
Laura Zanmiller, Ward 1	Application Received 4/24/2018

Council discussed the Commissioners seeking reappointment and the list of applicants interested in the Environmental Commission.

Councilmember Justen commented that there is no Ward 3 representation on this Commission and suggested that the vacant position be filled with an applicant from Ward 3. There are only two applicants from Ward 3: Jade Pennig and Stephanie Schempp.

Councilmember Pace recommended reappointing Rebecca McCarty and Kristy Otte. He agreed with Councilmember Justen that there should be representation from Ward 3.

Councilmember Vitelli suggested appointing Jade Pennig, stating that her application was received before Stephanie Schempp.

Council unanimously agreed to appoint Jade Pennig to the Environmental Commission.

City Attorney Land told the Council that they may make motion on these appointments in OCWS.

Motion was made by Councilmember Eng-Sarne and seconded by Councilmember Pace to appoint Jade Pennig and reappoint Rebecca McCarty and Kristy Otte to the Environmental Commission.

All members present voted aye. Motion carried.

Park and Recreation Commission

According to the bylaws, appointments to the Park and Recreation Commission shall be made by the City Council, with each member of the City Council having the right to nominate one member from their respective wards. Members are appointed for a term of two (2) years and shall hold office until March 1 of their expiring terms or until their successor is appointed.

There are four positions open, and all four Commissioners are seeking reappointment.

Commissioners Seeking Reappointment:

Bonnie Bellows, Ward 3	Completing Term 2
Robert Gausman, Ward 2	Completing Term 2
Dave Lynch, Ward 3	Completing Term 3
Rachael McNamara, Ward 1	Completing Term 1

Mayor Napier said the application from Andrea Morris was received after the Council packet was published but should be included for consideration.

Applicants who have expressed interest in the Park and Recreation Commission include:

John Cronin, Ward 3	Application Received 2/08/16
Lindsay Duncan, Ward 3	Application Received 4/05/17
Andrea Morris, Ward 2	Application Received 2/08/19
Kirsten Mulraney, Ward 2	Application Received 2/01/19
Ken Paulman, Ward 3	Application Received 11/12/16
Judy Rangel, Ward 2	Application Received 5/03/18
Stephanie Schempp, Ward 3	Application Received 2/01/19
Lauren Smith, Ward 3	Application Received 5/30/18
Jason Smock, Ward 2	Application Received 2/02/19
Timothy Tabor, Ward 1	Application Received 3/06/18
Karen Vavreck*, Ward 2	Application Received 2/01/19
Thomas Vavreck, Ward 2	Application Received 2/14/17
Paul Wendlandt IV, Ward 1	Application Received 3/05/15

* Karen Vavreck is currently on the Charter Commission. She is also interested on serving on the Park and Recreation Commission.

Council discussed the Commissioners seeking reappointment and the list of applicants interested in the Park and Recreation Commission.

Mayor Napier stated that all four Commissioners are seeking reappointment and that there is equal representation from every ward.

Motion was made by Councilmember Berry and seconded by Councilmember Vitelli to reappoint Bonnie Bellows, Robert Gausman, Dave Lynch and Rachael McNamara to the Park and Recreation Commission.

Councilmember Justen said some constituents had objection to Dave Lynch's reappointment, due to his previous description during discussions of the RC motor park that Kennedy Park was a garbage park.

Councilmember Eng-Sarne said she supports the reappointment of Dave Lynch.

Mayor Napier said he remembers there being some misunderstanding but that he doesn't think there were any bad intentions.

All members present voted aye. Motion carried.

Councilmember Vitelli asked if anyone responded to the City Manager about putting basketball hoops back in the parks. He said others were for it but he is not, for the very reason they were removed.

Mayor Napier said he was here when the hoops were removed. He said his personal opinion is that times have changed and he would like to give it another shot and would like to see them put back.

Councilmember Fernandez said basketball is an inexpensive and healthy sport and he is in favor of putting them back. He said he thinks it's a good idea because most kids now are sitting at parks on their phones.

Councilmember Justen said it was a temporary removal but they've been out for close to six years now. He said he feels we have an obligation to give it another shot.

Councilmember Berry said she thinks there was a plan to stagger them and not put them all back at once. Mayor Napier agreed. Councilmember Berry agreed that they should be put back.

Councilmember Pace asked if there has been a lot of requests for hoops to be put back. Schroeder said he had only heard about it from the Park and Recreation Commission a week ago.

Councilmember Pace said he is in favor of it but not in favor of spending money and time on it but not having them used. He said Staff should look closely at one to three of the best places to put them. Schroeder said he would like the Park and Recreation Commission to weigh in on this, as well.

Mayor Napier said if the majority is in agreement it can be given back to the Park and Recreation Commission. He added that Staff should attach a budget to it when it comes back to Council. He said he would like to see our parks alive again.

Councilmember Vitelli suggested bringing up this subject at the Neighborhood Meetings.

B. Discussion to Identify a Name for Neighborhood Meetings

Mayor Napier said he would like to have a name added to the Neighborhood Meetings because it is critical to attracting people to attend. He said he wants to be creative with a name that will help us get the most people there and that they will feel comfortable and welcome to provide input.

Council discussed calling these meetings ‘Listening Sessions,’ which will tell people we are actually here to listen to what they want and it may draw in more attendance.

Councilmember Eng-Sarne said social media posts should include the structure of these meetings so people know that they are coming to talk to us, not us to them. She said we need to emphasize that we want to hear from them.

Councilmember Justen said we need to note which meeting is for which ward and that social media posts have only included the dates of the meetings. Mayor Napier said we could try to indicate them as ward specific in future posts. He said Dan Nowicki could get creative and gear them towards each ward. Schroeder said we didn’t want people to think they couldn’t go to one meeting or another. He added that the survey will have a ward question.

Council did not agree on a new name for the Neighborhood Meetings.

C. Update on March 2, 2019 Strategic Planning Meeting

The Strategic Planning Meeting will begin with a session on Roles and Responsibilities at 8:00 a.m. led by Pamela Whitmore from the League of Minnesota Cities. At 10:00 a.m., Jim Miller of The Mercer Group, Inc. will facilitate the Strategic Planning Meeting. Schroeder said he will get background information to Council prior to the meeting.

Mayor Napier said it is critical that Council take this serious and do the work in advance of the meeting so everyone is prepared to have a great productive day. He said he is going to push everyone hard in hopes to set the vision and a fun road to get

things done. He said we need to incorporate community feedback into what Council thinks the city should look like.

D. League of MN Cities Conference on Communication – Report

Councilmember Berry said there was a lot of information at the conference for newly elected Councilmembers. She said it made her realize how much Council depends on Staff for information. She said this conference was a great experience.

Councilmember Eng-Sarne said she attended a good presentation on finance at the conference. She said there were 130 Cities attending, and the biggest takeaway is that the League is a great resource for us.

Mayor Napier said there were a lot of other Mayors attending and it was a great conference, especially the presentation on Leveraging Communication Styles for Effective Conversations. He said it was a valuable conference to learn how to communicate effectively to accomplish goals. He said it takes someone to keep the communication going and communicating with each other. Mayor Napier suggested driving to the League if Council has questions or concerns. They can help walk you through solutions. He encouraged everyone to use the League as a great resource.

5. Adjourn

Motion was made by Councilmember Vitelli and seconded by Councilmember Justen to adjourn the meeting at 6:02 p.m.

All members present voted aye. Motion carried.



David J. Napier
Mayor
City of West St. Paul