

**CITY OF PARK RAPIDS
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP
APRIL 23, 2013, 5:30 PM
Park Rapids Public Library-Lower Level
Park Rapids, Minnesota**

1. CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Pat Mikesh called the City Council Workshop for April 23rd, 2013 to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL: Present: Mayor Pat Mikesh, Councilmembers Rod Nordberg, Erika Randall, and Paul Utke. Absent: Councilmember Dave Konshok. Staff Present: Treasurer Angela Brumbaugh, Police Chief Terry Eilers, Planner Dan Walker, and Clerk Margie Vik. Others Present: Ulteig Engineer Brian Hiles, Butch DeLaHunt, Dennis Mackedanz, Katie Magozzi, Cynthia Jones, and Anna Erickson from the Enterprise.

3. PRESENTATION:

3.1. Update on the 2013 Governor's Fishing Opener: Mikesh stated the reason we're here today is to bring the Council up to date. I was blindsided by a phone call from the news media, and they tore me up for my lack of knowledge. Magozzi stated I was reminded by John McKinney who said "and whose fault is that". So here we are.

Magozzi stated because of the things that the city is contributing we consider you to be a sponsor of the event, and we're very thankful. On the regular agenda we have a lot of applications for different permits. We're hoping that you continue to sponsor our many and varied activities. We appreciate all you do for us.

Cynthia Jones thanked Terry Eilers and Scott Burlingame. They have met with us to go through all of this. We have received 100% support from the city and it is most appreciated.

Dennis Mackedanz stated the city has stepped up on certain pieces to help with this event. In particular, Eilers and his team will provide security downtown for the whole weekend because of the big tent that we're going to have there, all of the people that we're going to have around, and the community picnic that will take place on Friday. It's a very large community event with 2,500 people expected, obviously weather dependent. Jones stated when you give free food in Park Rapids it doesn't matter what the weather is like. Utke stated all you have to do is think about Trick-or-Treating. When you have 1,000 kids, and that's not counting the adults, so you can go to 2,500 pretty easily.

Magozzi stated it's going to be a great event for the community with live entertainment, free food. So many people have stepped up. Our resorters are going to have booths showcasing their places. They are going to give away gummy fish for bait to kids. Fun stuff like that. We'll have minnow races, fishing tanks, Nascar simulators, climbing walls.

Mackedanz stated I wanted to point out that we as a committee added a third day to the event. This event starts on Thursday morning. We knew that Itasca Park was going to

be a draw for people. When you go up there it takes the whole day. So that will not take away from the City of Park Rapids. That is an important aspect. If we would have sent them up there on Friday, we wouldn't have been able to do some of the other events that we planned for the downtown and the rest of the businesses in Park Rapids, which is what we are trying to do, showcase the community. Friday is a full day of events, cumulating with the picnic and then the fireworks display. Saturday we're hoping the water will be crystal clear and melted. We know that the river will be. As we go forward we'll make adjustments as needed. All of the smaller lakes will be open. We're confident based on the current weather forecast. Northern Pines Camp is a contributor for this event.

Magozzi stated we invite you to our second to the last large meeting at Northern Pines Camp at 4:30 p.m. We'll go over everything. Every meeting is filled with volunteers. It's astonishing. We'd like to thank the city for allowing Dan Walker to volunteer and give up his time for this event. He's in charge of the shore lunch out there. He's doing a great job. Butch DeLaHunt stated he'll be using donated fryers. We found a vendor who donated six deep fry cookers. We'll be able to use those into the future. Walker stated he would be frying three-hundred pounds of walleye.

Magozzi stated I provided you all with an overview of the community picnic. It's the big free event that everyone's talking about. The media will be buzzing around town at noon that day as well because there will be a Tasting of Park Rapids during the day for the media. Each restaurant will have a little piece of their menu to sample. Then they'll continue on with their day. That's one way we're showcasing our town. Another item we provided is a press release and some speaking points. I will tell you that you don't have to take any media calls. You can say I'm in the middle of something, and give Mackedanz's or DeLaHunt's phone numbers. Park Rapids has gotten a lot of media attention every day on every channel because of the ice situation.

DeLaHunt stated Mikesh's phone call really facilitated this press release that has gone out local newspapers and radio, and also went out to Explore Minnesota. The Governor's Fishing Opener is linking to this notice on the Chamber website. The key to this is it's really going to answer and provide guidance to what the community is saying about the thickness of the ice so we can talk in the same language. Mikesh deflected a phone call from KSTP and it was on the news last night at 10:35 p.m. talking about this. I went through these talking points with them but they put their own flavor on it. It wasn't exactly what I would have liked to say, but we have to understand that the media is going to facilitate a conversation and they'll write the story the way they think it best portrays what they are trying to accomplish. They were talking about bad weather in Minneapolis, and then let's go check on the ice and the event people, so here's what's going on in Park Rapids. I also got a phone call from FOX9. We'll have a report tonight on FOX9 Minneapolis at 9:00 p.m. Their media people sit in a room and decide they'll talk about an ice safety story, then they launch into what's going on up here. The pictures of us having fun with the ice situation got over 681 shares today as of 4:00 p.m. and over 70,000 views. It's a frenzy that's happening. The media is engaged. We have to understand that if you don't feel comfortable there's contact information here. Nobody's going to die if they have to wait a half hour to talk with them. If you feel comfortable now, from a city standpoint being on the Council, you can say we're excited and here are the people to contact for more information. The media will always tell you that they have a deadline to meet. Approach them the way you want. We've given you some good points to work with. Utke

stated its publicity and they are talking about Park Rapids. Magozzi stated that's what this is all about.

DeLaHunt stated we're trying to quantify it when we're done. Explore Minnesota is recording every contact we make, so that at the end of the day we can say this was worth it. The amount of coverage that Park Rapids is getting right now is just crazy. The stories work their way back and forth. We have to be cautious about the way we approach this. Utke stated the late ice out is positive. If we'd have had last year's ice out and the lakes were open, they wouldn't be talking about Park Rapids yet. We wouldn't be getting these hits on the news each and every day. Now it will be talked about right up to the event.

DeLaHunt stated this is a media event and this is the frenzy we're creating to put Park Rapids on the road map and make it an opening fishing destination from here on out. It has had an impact on future years for many other communities. That's why I feel so strong about it. I think the way the community has stepped up and everyone has helped, I've never seen a community come together this hard. We all should be proud of it. It's amazing.

Cynthia Jones stated we had people selling raffles tickets on Saturday. There were a couple of angry people because we're doing this because of the governor. This is not about the governor. This is all about media. The governor is an attraction. It's totally irrelevant if you like or don't like the governor in this situation. It would be helpful if you could reinforce that.

Mackedanz stated I'm excited that we're the 11th of May. Wisconsin's Fishing Opener is the 4th of May. Good luck to them. They'll start with Wisconsin and continue to catapult into our week. It's going to be a crazy time.

Utke questioned how much is going to be blocked off. Jones stated everything is going to be blocked on Friday morning, from Highway 34 to Third Street, Highway 71 to Pleasant Avenue. You may hear some concerns. We have notified everyone. We've talked them through it. We didn't talk to the renters, only the landlords. We will try to get a letter to those that have renters on top to tell them as of 4:00 a.m. on Friday, law enforcement will be blocking those streets. On Saturday it will just be Second Street with the big tent. I'm assuming we'll open the streets at 9:30 p.m. on Friday night. Main Street will open back up. All of those things are written in the documentation you've been given. Public safety will be putting porta-potties along Main, so there will be bathroom facilities. There will be additional trash cans to what the city already provides. Public works will be emptying those trash cans on Friday and Saturday mornings. They'll also be cleaning the streets. The chief has been wonderful to work with. The county and state patrol will be covering the highway crossings to make sure those points that people do use will have caution signage.

Nordberg questioned if the chief had any concerns. Eilers stated we are short of officers. I have two officers out. We are currently training in two new part timers. Utke stated we'll probably have more state trooper presence because of the governor. Eilers stated he'll come with just his crew of three. They'll take care of him, but the event is up to us. The sheriff's posse and some of the officers are going to be working with us. We'll have plenty of guys around.

Nordberg questioned since this is a media event, but were getting general public interest and mass media exposure, what should we say to non-media people who ask us about it, are they welcome, what could they be involved in other than the community picnic? Magozzi stated you have the schedule of everything that is happening. The

reasons we need to raise all this money with sponsorship is to host the media. There were almost seven-hundred invitations that went out to the media and government VIPs. The tours are primarily for them. The fishing hosts that are escorting the media to their fishing holes of their choice, they get a special dinner on Thursday night and a box of commemoratives that will be given to them out at Blueberry Pines. The fishing hosts are very important. They're spending more one on one time with the media than anyone else. They need to be ambassadors for our area. They will be at the shore lunch along with the media people that they are hosting. Volunteering to be a fishing host is one way to participate. The celebration dinner on Saturday night is by invitation only. City and county officials will probably be invited.

DeLaHunt stated the local radio stations will be following events that the public is not invited to. Most stations will be giving live updates starting on Friday morning by doing different coverage about the event like whether or not the governor catches fish. Stations from Paul Bunyan Broadcasting, Detroit Lakes, and Wadena also will be doing updates at the non-public events. There will be coverage on the local level to tell people what's going on. The Enterprise website will be providing coverage. Social media will become a component. The Chamber of Commerce will be tweeting all weekend about different things taking place throughout the weekend. They'll be able to find out a lot about what's going on even if they're not there.

Nordberg questioned if they are just fisherman is lake access normal? DeLaHunt stated yes. Jones stated the only true community event is the picnic. That's when we want everyone to come so we can show the media what a wonderful community we have. Many organizations will be represented there with booths. The Nemeth Art Center project, the woven mat, is two-hundred feet that the community has woven, from school children to senior citizens have participated in that.

Magozzi stated I handed out a Vacation Guide and there is a feature in there about the Governor's Fishing Opener for your reading pleasure. There will be a lot of signage posted for the media. DeLaHunt stated if there is anything that I can help you with, just email me. I can add anyone to my GFO media relations email list.

Nordberg questioned where is the media headquarters if people want a referral? Magozzi stated for the video trucks for the TV stations, it's in the first half of the block before you hit the city. The Heartland Express will be going in and out of the alley and around to drop off senior citizens, then loop around. We have a transportation plan. Nordberg stated I'm asking about a coordinator if you have questions. Jones stated there will be an information booth right on the node by What-Not. If you have any questions get in touch with DeLaHunt. That place will have persons in it all day from 11:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m. The media space in front of the boat is where the governor will take interviews after the program. As things come up that space will be used or other resources as needed. DeLaHunt stated most media coming in will have designated times set up for specific interviews. They'll be taken to specific places. We'll also have PA systems and radios down there. The information booth is the first stop. Magozzi stated as the dignitaries come in you'll be informed.

Nordberg questioned are the alleys blocked off to the public? Jones stated no. The alleys have to remain open for fire, security, and access. The only thing blocked off to the public is they wouldn't be able to turn on Pleasant Avenue and drive to Main Avenue.

Mikesh stated I appreciate you all coming. If anyone has questions get a hold of Magozzi, DeLaHunt, Mackedanz, or Jones.

4. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

[seal]

Mayor Pat Mikesh

ATTEST:

Margie M. Vik
City Clerk