

Attendees:

Aaron Thelen	City of New Hope
Mason Moore	City of Shakopee
Mark Schneider	City of Shakopee
Thomas Gorycki	City of Owatonna
Jon Hagen	City of Woodbury
Meredith Lawrence	Mendota Heights
Darryl Thibodeaux	Mounds View
Tonya Love	City of Elk River
Warren Ellingworth	City of Elk River
Deb Weinreis	MRPA
Bill Bird	City of Apple Valley
Stacy Chouinard	City of Crystal

10:01 Meeting Start

- Introductions
- Motion to approve May minutes – approved.
- Agenda additions:
 - Lactation Station
 - Seasonal Pay Matrix

Scenario: Rental groups not renting but showing up to use outdoor space for a party. New facility in New Hope, not available for rent this year due to a few reasons: new pool, performance center events and COVID. Many times, large groups come and set up their party. Theater group has practice Sunday night, staff got a call, a birthday party had set themselves up and wanted to use the performance center. It was 300 people! Bouncy house, U-Haul showed up with 5 llamas. Police nearby, Staff contacted them and the police had the conversation with the group, the group wanted to go until 10:30 pm but police gave them an hour to have their event then they had to start cleaning up. Told them no live animals. What would you have done, have you had this situation?

- Woodbury: Open air shelters, outside rentals are first come first serve. Permits needed with insurance. Haven't had that issue and would have also called the police. Hold security deposit for cases where they have too many show up. Largest rental space has a higher security deposit which has helped, went from \$100 to \$250 deposit. Open Air shelters have signs saying who rented it.
- Crystal: had bounce house issue, addressed it with park associates and it has ceased. More of an education issue at a new park.
- Elk River: Smaller groups showing up, not an issue. New pavilion was available for rent immediately once ready. Another new one coming online, also rentable right away.
- New Hope: will be renting the space so permits are available and hope that will help.
- Past experience with Three Rivers, put locks on all electrical options and water options. Clear signage stating priority for reservation with listed reservation but if not reserved fist dibs. Have the phone numbers up for callings.

Summer Recap:

- Crystal: Came fast a furious, restrictions lifted and everything went forward.
- Shakopee: Successful summer, 95% of stuff went. Canceled a handful of things. Came fast but great.
- Woodbury: Did well, everything full and many waitlists. Felt busier but felt like things filled fast without having to push for registrations. People wanted to sign kids up and get out.
- Mendota Heights: Double a typical year for registrations, golf exceeding rounds from year pervious. Direction from city council, to double the amount of programs next summer.
- New Hope: 95% of programs went, for cancellations people understood. Special events successful, performance center was used for first time in summer, very positive feedback. Parks filled with people. New Activities: Past playground program June/July, stretched it into August this year and parents liked it and had 60 kids sign up!
- Elk River: Lightened program offering, everything went, but numbers were low. Special events well attended. Brochure cut in 2016, work with community ed, fliers for preschools, daycares.
- Apple Valley: recently switched seniors to youth and family programs/events. Like Elk River registrations were way down. Not sure if COVID or what we offered or marketing. Thinking maybe marketing. Just got a communications person two months ago. In those 2 months many great things happening hoping that continues onto marketing materials. Special events way up in attendance. City golf course has had 2 record years. Adult sports maintained, not up. Traditional brochure, 3/year. All addresses in apple valley. A batch goes to apartment homes.
- MRPA: Amazed at turnaround, could fill pickleball tournaments fast. People were eager to see people and play. Softball numbers are better than 2020 but less than 2019. Tournaments started strong April/May then fizzled.

- What kind of camps do you offer and do you have a brochure?
 - Crystal: program guide, 2/3hour camps, added a separate summer brochure because of COVID so we had most accurate out there.
 - Woodbury: Variety, shorter and full day, marketing spring/summer brochures, but tried to make sure it was what would run. Didn't have to market much so they could post pictures and focus social media on showing programs in action. Summer brochure in March, 2-page flier as a reminder.
 - Mendota Heights: Cut brochure, now do every other month postcards. This way there is more timely, updated information on it. This spring was the first time. People would use that brochure all season long so when things changed they didn't know about it. Booklet is on the website. Full sheet is the same price as a small postcard for mailing, not as much information on it. State what we have not specific. The change allowed for decisions to be made closer to the program.
 - Residents of Maple Grove feedback – they don't list details. Just saying we have these things directing people to the website. Still a glossy brochure but not as big.
 - Owatonna: revamped their senior brochure, seniors like the paper copy, won't read the digital copy. First month saw a 10% increase in numbers. Made it more digitally appealing, easier to read. Programs into categories, changed it to why do I want to

become a member and broke it into categories. Doubling order and sending out to everyone over the age of 50, anyone that has an address over 50. Tracking monthly enrollments to see if changes. Saw people who hadn't heard of them coming in, changed from just members to all 50+.

Survey results - COVID

- Good to see on paper what people are doing, we know each city operates differently.
- Mendota Heights: not required in city buildings, partner with West St Paul on 75% of programs and they do have a mask mandate for government buildings. Working through what the policy is for the program. Now, host is the governing body so their rules apply.
- Apple Valley, similar to above. Anyone 2 and older in school facilities mask. Apple Valley City all staff must wear them in city buildings but not the public.
- Woodbury: Similar above. Programs are in the schools; private rentals participants have to wear masks entering and exiting but once in the gym up to renter's discretion. Not requiring participants to wear masks. Staff no required to wear masks, strongly encouraged.

How many departments can make masking decisions?

- Most from city manager/council.
- Crystal: Mostly council/manager but some discretion.
- NH: Departments could make decisions. Use Robbinsdale school sites that has a mask mandate, but with agreement in those gyms NH is mandating masks for renters in those facilities. Once playing sports masks can come off. Youth Dance, had a lot of questions from parents. Instructors say 90% of dancers are wearing masks.
- ER: UP to discretion to department directions.
- Complaints when there are different rules for different spaces
 - Notifications sent out ahead of time to let people know.
 - Crystal – more people complaining about not requiring vaccinations or masks for senior programs.
 - Owatonna: Complaints about requiring masks. Waiting to hear if changes coming with nearby outbreak. Now for staff see's if someone is wearing a mask when they come in staff will personally put in a mask to help them feel successful and let's staff know if one person is wearing a mask then staff will mask up.

Anyone still remote:

- MH: Based on your day. Post COVID working from home could continue on, not full time but if a day scheduled of zoom calls, maybe that can be at home. Snow days could be helpful. Police department – two admin give daily report on what they worked on if they work from home.
- NH, ER, C, O: In every day.
- Owatonna: senior center is open less days/week. Pushing to say if someone is vaccinated they can come in specific additional days of the week. Grey area because building is open to the public, just not specific rooms. Director works from home every Friday, showing leadership for the department that they can continue some work from home. Full time staff bring laptops home no difference working from home for getting work done.

- Woodbury: Flexible work schedule.

Fall/Winter

- Woodbury – new program 2020 Halloween Hoopla, planning to do it again. Miniature carnival, pumpkin decorating, craft, games. Hybrid inside/outside.
- Warming Houses – what will come? Up to cities right now.
 - Anyone having not staffed warming houses:
 - Some have them.
 - Some set open/shut times for the doors.
 - Mendota Heights: Has a rover, start the day unlock them, check them throughout shifts, close them at end.
 - Apple Valley: Opened two largest ones, trying to open this year.
- Shakopee, Halloween event – going to try a 21+ event after the family event. Carriage rides, fall games, restaurant will serve beer, pumpkin carving contest. See how it goes this year. Pumpkin hunt, have some pumpkins with a dot that correlates to a prize.
- New Hope: Halloween trick or trot – done with Crystal but at New Hope: Reached out to youth groups and associations and fire/police to hand out candy at stations. Paid event, after is a free movie in the parks.
- Elk River: Not doing Halloween event, would have been 22nd year, didn't do it last year and the year prior it rained and was outside. Wanted to do it but focusing more on downtown associate and help them with their trick or treating.
- Apple Valley: partnering with police department on some events – trying a new touch a truck event.

Lactation Station

- Crystal secured funding for a Lactation Station from Hennepin County SHIP Funds. It is available for anyone who has an outdoor event and wants to use it, contact Stacy. It contains: a tent with sides, chairs, side tables, changing table, rug, toddler play toy. [Here is a link to an IG video of the items.](#)
- Contact: Stacy Chouinard, stacy.chouinard@crystalmn.gov

Seasonal Pay Compensation Study

- Mendota Heights: Trying to do a study on part time staff pay. Is there a way we can all kind of submit a one pager? As minimum wage is increasing but other departments are not increase employees pay if we increase pay then our rec associates are being paid more than those people out there plowing streets or CSO's.
- Elk River: Needs new descriptions so would love this.
- Minimum wage is going up. Google Survey is an easy route.
- Apple Valley: going through review of their titles and descriptions. Priority is giving a nice boost to the inexperienced to get them in because they aren't coming to us to work anymore. If we get a bigger increase there they will stick around for more years.
- MRPA has all the past job descriptions that have been posted if anyone wants to get their hands on one.

- Owatonna: Looks at it as what is the level of service we will get for that extra dollar. Do we get teachers and super qualified staff for another dollar it could be worth it?

MRPA update:

- Facebook connections page is a good place for questions.
- First look at budget – went well. Still a work in progress.
- Park Operations group is meeting next week.
- Young Professional Network call went well. City/County differences and staffing, goals.
- Athletic management group meets Tuesday in Blaine.
- Pickleball tournament in Richfield 25th.
- Playground Safety Institute is full last week of Sept.
- ERLI starts in October.
- Gearing up for conference. Discussing mask mandates and all that.

Email Aaron if you want to host:

Motion to adjourn. ADJOURNED.