

To: Park Board

From: Aimee Peterson, Superintendent of Recreation

Date: March 11, 2022

Subject: Recreation Newsworthy

Community Events

Each year programmers evaluate program successes, identify trends and monitor community needs when deciding what programs to offer. In 2018, Wonders of Winters, was the first city run free special event outside of the Farmers Market, Town Green concerts/movies and the Candle Light Memorial event. Since that time, staff continue to add meaningful free special events that create community at our parks and facilities as well as continue and support many community organizations who host events in Maple Grove. Below is a listing of free City run events we plan to offer this year along with the year of their debut. This year we are excited to launch a new Juneteenth event at Central Park.

2022 Planned City Run Events:

Wonders of Winter (2018) – Central Park – January
Juneteenth (2022-new) – Central Park – June
Harvest -tober Fest (2020) – Central Park – September
Trunk or Treat (2020) – Community Center – October
Pop up Rec Rest (2018) – Sports Dome – November
Candle Light Memorial – Arboretum – December
Sensory Santa (2021) – Town Green – December
Skate with Santa (2018) – Central Park – December
Farmers Market – Community Center – Indoor and Outdoor year round

Esports

Our Esports Club is going strong thanks to a donation from Amazon and support from Minnesota Esports Club. We are currently able to offer Esports to any youth free of charge. Currently we have over 20 youth registered and participating both in-person, in our Esports Lounge, and virtually. This is a fantastic program allowing youth to make new friends and to feel a part of a team.

Teen Nights in the Gym

We have started offering Free Teen Nights in the Gym in March. Using Sign up genius we are able to let limited numbers of teens come to use our gym on Saturday nights. Saturday, March 5 was our first night and we had 18 participants sign up. We are excited to be providing more options in the gym for our community.

Pickleball Demand and Space

The Community Gymnasium is host to nine pickleball courts making it highly desirable for the pickleball community. Maple Grove Middle School staff reached out to Parks and Recreation staff in late 2021 sharing their need for the Community Gym space during the day for physical education classes. Daytime use has traditionally been available for Park and Recreation programming but the gym use agreement allows the school priority access during the school day. Staff worked with the district to develop a schedule that would have the least impact on our pickleball community but also serve district needs. This change impacted the March pickleball schedule but not January and February schedule. We have heard from the pickleball players who have memberships to use the Community Gym and have grown accustomed to utilizing the space during the day that they are disappointed with the schedule shift from daytime to early morning and late afternoon. We have supplemented the loss in hours by adding more pickleball hours in the Community Center. District staff continue to express their student population is growing which will increase demand on gym space to meet curriculum goals. The Community Gymnasium is used evening and weekends by the youth basketball association. We foresee the district demand will continue to increase leaving the pickleball community to find other options. Staff is researching opportunities for this growing sport.

Farmers Market

This week the indoor market was back at the Community Center and we have three more indoor markets on March 24, April 7 and April 24. The outdoor market will open on Thursday, May 12. As we transition with staff Courtney Leason, who started as an intern with us in 2020 and has stayed on working as a Farmers market attendant will be working additional administration hours to help prepare for our upcoming markets and summer season. A big thank you to Kiley Meyhoefer for her leadership during this transition as well as Sue Simons for her detailed work reconciling the market finances. Kirsten Bansen Weigle has been an instrumental with the development and management of the market. We are thankful for her thoughtful succession planning which will guide us to continue managing the Farmers Market with excellence.

55 Forward Programs

Recently the 55 Forward program was highlighted in the [March/April edition of the Maple Grove magazine](#). Elizabeth Faust was interviewed and shared the variety of programs offered through Maple Grove Parks and Recreation and also share her thoughts and views on the many benefits of these programs. She ended sharing some of our new programming with the initiative to continue growing programs to meet community needs and keep adults active.