

MEMORANDUM



TO: VICTOR CARDENAS, CITY MANAGER
FROM: JEFF MUCK, PRCS DIRECTOR
SUBJECT: WE CAN IMPROVE OUR PARKS/ ENVIRONMENT PROPOSAL
DATE: AUGUST 29, 2024

Mayor and Council –

FYI, only.

- Victor

This summer, Nick Weigel-Hubler, a fourth-grade teacher at Village Oaks Elementary, contacted PRCS with the "We CAN Improve our Parks/ Environment Proposal." He has been a teacher for sixteen years, the science captain, and co-sponsor of the Novironment, an after-school club. This club takes life science from the classroom into engaging creative activities. The proposal would benefit city parks, educate students, and assist with CAPRA accreditation as a citizen science program.

At the August 15 PRCS Commission meeting, Mr. Weigle-Hubler presented the proposal (attached). Highlights included:

1. The partnership would give students a chance to make real some of the life science they are learning in the classroom and bring it into the local community.
2. While walking in Heritage Park in Farmington Hills he saw a decorated garbage can that was adopted by a local elementary and thought he could bring this idea to Novi with a partnership between the schools and the parks department. The goal of this project is to provide students with a chance to apply what they learn about healthy environments in the local community.
3. Taking what is learned in textbooks, the students would then create websites, Google slide presentations, and/or an art installation to share with community members through adoption and displays on parks garbage cans. Students would decorate the cans and post QR codes which citizens can use to see what the students are learning and promote the overall health of the park.
4. Brookfarm Park would be the pilot park due to its proximity to Village Oaks. Timeline: On August 26th, school starts, and the first week of September begins science units; by October 1st, students can create the digital resources, and by November 1st, the school will be ready to officially adopt a can.

After questions and discussion among the commissioners, a motion was passed unanimously "to direct park staff to work with Nick and his team at Village Oaks to establish the We CAN program this fall as a pilot program at Brookfarm Park with up to three garbage cans."