



VOLUNTEERISM REPORT

January 2024

Abstract

This report documents existing conditions and gaps, and recommendations for organizational structure, tracking systems, recruitment and recognition for the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board's (MPRB's) volunteer program. This is one part of a four-year project designed to fulfill the 2023-2026 Volunteerism Performance Goal set by the Board of Commissioners.

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Purpose of this Report

This report documents existing conditions and gaps, and recommendations for organizational structure, tracking systems, recruitment and recognition for the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board's (MPRB's) volunteer program. This is one part of a four-year project designed to fulfill the 2023-2026 Volunteerism Performance Goal set by the Board of Commissioners.

MPRB 2023-2026 Volunteerism Performance Goal

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board of Commissioners established a 2023-2026 Performance Goal for volunteerism. It is as follows:

Enhance and unify organization-wide volunteer management infrastructure by creating a single tracking system, recruitment strategy, and recognition program that supports all cultures easily accessing volunteer opportunities that range from grassroots to large-scale, and establish a 2026 growth target for volunteerism that incorporates the cultural diversity of the city and the budget request that supports accomplishing the target.

Comprehensive Plan Guidance

This work also implements portions of the Priority Comprehensive Plan Strategy - 1.20: Provide meaningful recurring and drop in volunteer opportunities for a variety of abilities, skills, and interests that furthers the work of the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, fosters connections between neighbors, generations and parks, and celebrates the important role that volunteers play in the park system.

Key Findings

A team comprised of staff from Environmental Management, Visitor Services, Human Resources, Strategic Planning, and Youth and Recreation Center Programs helped compile information about the current volunteer programs within the organization. Additionally, all departments were asked to share information related to current and future volunteerism within their areas of service delivery. The following is a summary of key findings:

Dedicated Staffing – The MPRB employs staff in each division – Environmental Stewardship, Recreation, Planning, Superintendent's Office, Deputy Superintendent's Office – that per their job descriptions and work duties include volunteer responsibilities. These staff are passionate about their work and continue to innovate and work tirelessly to meet the demands of community for volunteer opportunities and/or to recruit volunteers to run critical MPRB programming and services. Chart A shows the hours of dedication volunteer staffing per division in 2023.

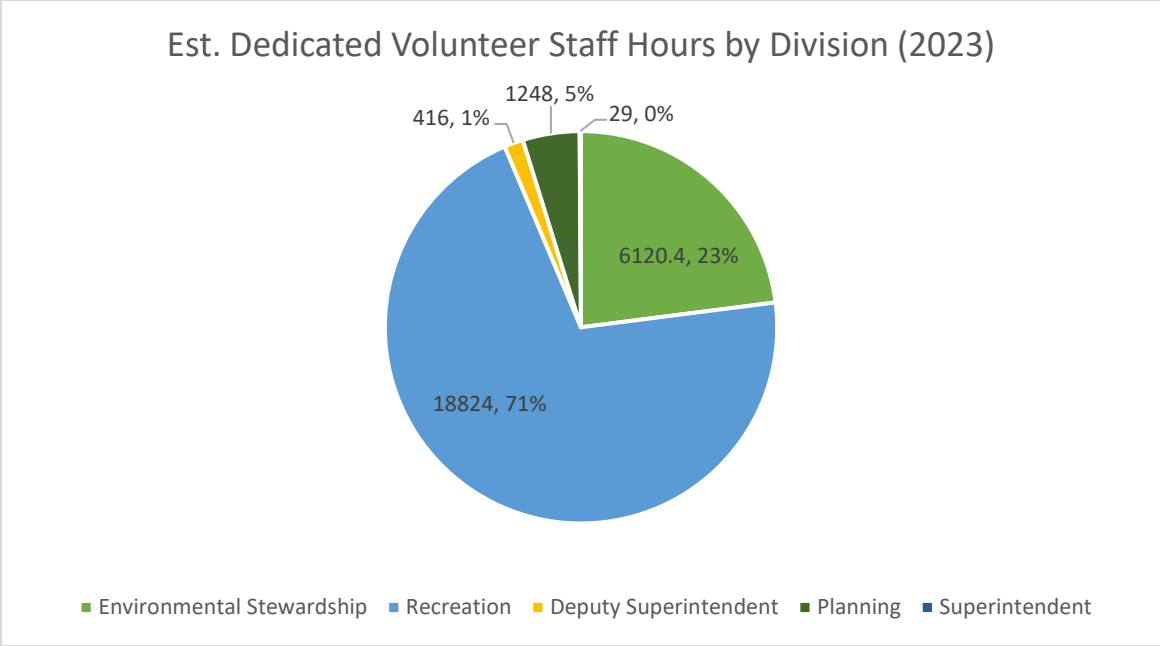


Chart A – Estimated dedicated volunteer staff hours by division in 2023

The 2024 budget includes new staff positions that will add an estimated 2,418 dedicated volunteer staff hours within the Environmental Stewardship Division of the organization (Chart B).

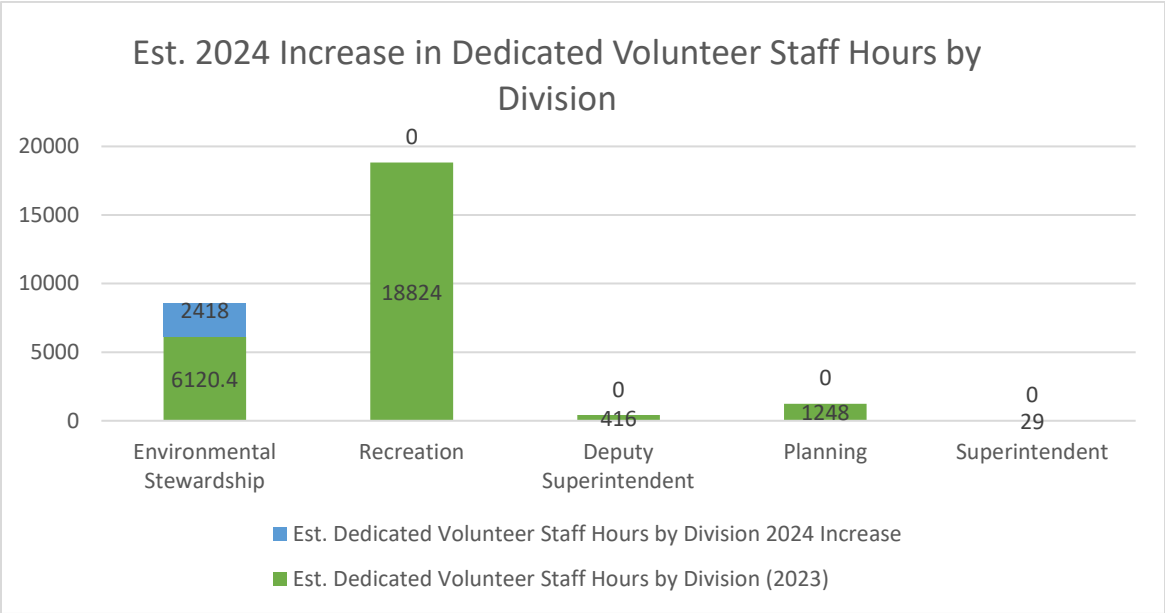


Chart B – Estimated increase in dedicated volunteer staff hours by division based on 2024 approved budget

Management of Volunteer Hours – Each division includes some level of management of volunteer hours, however, the greatest amount of volunteer hours is recorded in the Environmental Stewardship and Recreation Divisions (Chart C).

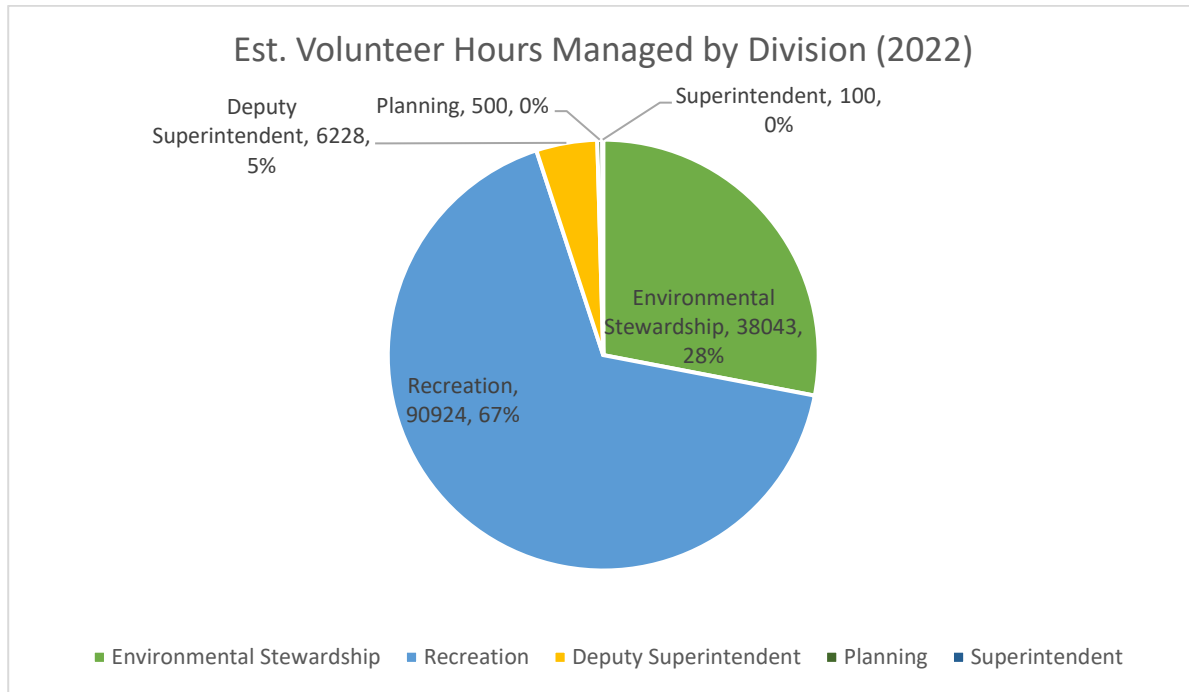


Chart C – Estimated volunteer hours managed by division 2022

Accreditation – The MPRB has successfully achieved accreditation through the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) since 2010. One of the standards is volunteer management (Table 1). In the last accreditation review, the MPRB met all of the aspects of this standard except having a performance evaluation process for volunteers. The MPRB is encouraged to develop a volunteer evaluation process prior to the next review and has begun implementing a process in 2023 for some volunteer categories. Where implementation has begun, it includes asking the volunteer about their experience as well as staff evaluation of the volunteers.

4.7 Volunteer Management	There should be a volunteer management function within the agency, including a comprehensive Volunteer Management Manual.
4.7.1 Use of Volunteers	Volunteers should be used by the agency in a variety of positions.

	4.7.2 Volunteer Recruitment, Selection, Orientation, Training, and Retention	There should be an on-going function within the agency for the recruitment, selection, orientation, training and retention of volunteers, including procedures on background screening.
	4.7.3 Supervision and Evaluation	Agency volunteers should be monitored, should receive supervisory visits and conferences, and be evaluated regarding performance.
	4.7.4 Recognition	There should be a function within the agency for the recognition for volunteers.
	4.7.5 Liability Coverage	Agency volunteers should be covered for negligence liability by the agency.

Table 1 – Volunteer Management Standard for CAPRA

Program Diversity – The MPRB has dozen or more distinct categories for volunteerism. This includes a range of opportunities, such as group one day events, ongoing park stewardship agreement, community gardens, earth day events, coaches, and community advisory committee members (Chart D).

MPRB Volunteerism within its Org Chart

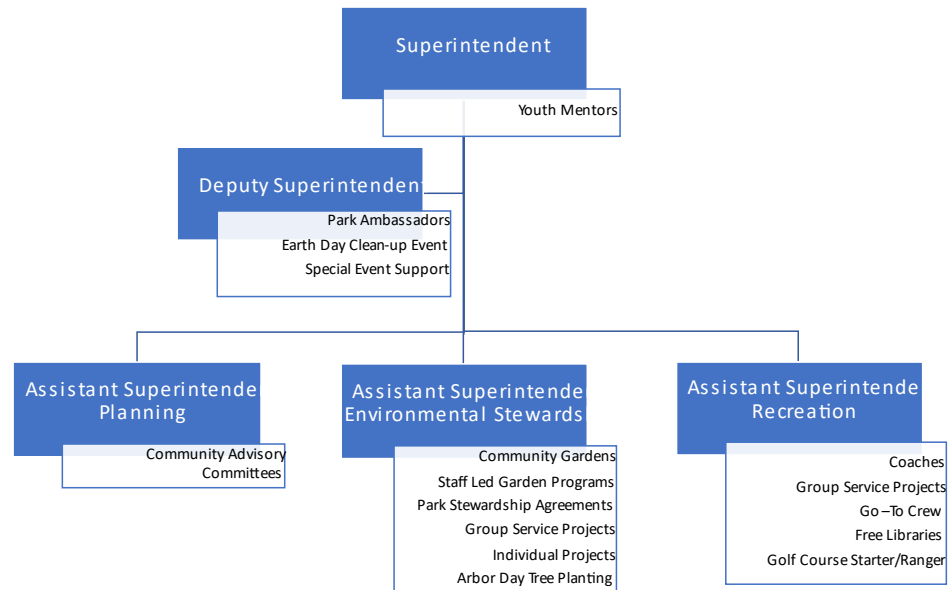


Chart D – Programs by division

Organizational Structure and Vision – Volunteerism within the organization is not coordinated through a specific division, team, or leadership structure. The organization-wide goals or desired outcomes for volunteerism have not been established.

Equity Framework – The organization does not have an equity framework to guide the equitable application of volunteer resources to the programs and services of the organization.

2022 Citywide Community Survey – The 2022 Citywide Community Survey, a statistically valid survey conducted by Morris Leatherman Company, included questions related to volunteerism. The survey included the following information and question:

“Volunteers are an important part of the Minneapolis Park system including youth athletic coaches and caring for natural areas. Do you think the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board should increase the number of volunteer opportunities? Do you feel strongly that way?”

The survey revealed that sixteen percent of respondents support the Board increasing the number of volunteer opportunities, while a majority, 57% oppose.

<i>Response</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
STRONGLY SUPPORT	6%
SUPPORT	10%
OPPOSE	46%
STRONGLY OPPOSE	11%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	27%

The survey asked a few follow-up questions related to the type of volunteerism and amount of hours participants would be willing to volunteer. The summary and conclusion from Morris Leatherman Company was:

“Only sixteen percent of the sample support the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board increasing the number of volunteer opportunities. A majority, 57%, oppose such action. Among the sixteen percent, only two items: “park maintenance” and “enrichment instructors” post over 1% of the overall sample. Only eight percent indicate they would be willing to volunteer hours with the Minneapolis Park system.” Attachment A includes the full results from Morris Leatherman Company.

Reporting, Recognition, Onboarding – The MPRB has a successful annual report process that produces a Volunteer Impact Report each year (Attachment B-2022 Volunteer Impact Report). The MPRB also has in place some structure for annual recognition, on-boarding, regular tracking and supervision of volunteers. These structures can vary by division.

Recommendations

- Establish an organizational leadership structure and vision for volunteerism at the MPRB. Cultivate areas of potential growth based on the established vision.
- Develop a consistent tracking system for volunteers.
- Develop an equity framework to guide the distribution of volunteer opportunities and results.
- Identify additional administrative support for tracking, recognition and recruitment efforts.
- Continue to design and implement an evaluation system for volunteers that is consistent with CAPRA standards.
- Establish training processes for volunteers based on need/duties of the volunteer.
- Establish standard processes and practices throughout the volunteer program.

Attachments

Attachment A – Morris Leatherman Survey Results

Attachment B – 2022 Volunteer Impact Report

Acknowledgement

The report is possible due to the collaboration of staff across the organization. Thank you to the Volunteer Performance Goal Team:

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