

MINUTES

**Naming Committee Meeting
City Hall, 203 South Troy Street
Conference Room 136
Royal Oak, MI 48067**

Wednesday, August 9, 2023, at 7:15 p.m.

1. Call to Order: 7:19 PM
2. Roll Call: Present: Alex McMall, Robin Winter, Tania Slaughter, Judy Davids
3. Public Comment: Com. Brandon Kolo gave remarks on Com. Patricia Paruch, calling her an “amazing figure” in local government and stated he supported naming a park after her.
5. Approval of Agenda: Motion made by McMall, second by Slaughter. Motion passed unanimously.
6. New Business

- a. Renaming Waterworks Park to Patricia Paruch Park

A presentation on Com. Patricia Paruch was given by Judy Davids, community engagement specialist.

In 1979, at 28, Patricia Paruch made her first foray into politics by announcing her campaign for city commission. No one knew then that this ambitious candidate would achieve groundbreaking success in Royal Oak's political landscape. Her first election left city officials astonished. She topped all candidates in the city commissioner's race, securing the most votes. By 1983, she earned the position of Mayor Pro-Tem, showcasing her rising influence within the city's administration.

In 1989, Commissioner Paruch decided to pursue a higher office – the mayor's seat – and won by a landslide at 38 years old. Her victory was extraordinary, securing all but two precincts. As mayor, she championed recycling programs, advocated alternatives to trash landfills, and prioritized preserving residential sectors. Her support for a strong business community was evident from her city commission voting record. Upon completing her second term as mayor, she made the difficult decision to step down to embark on a career in law after earning her degree from Wayne State Law School.

Two decades later, she made a triumphant return to local government. In 2014, the Royal Oak City Commission unanimously appointed her to fill a vacancy. What was intended to be a one-year commitment resulted in nearly another decade of service.

Today, Commissioner Paruch holds two remarkable records on the city commission: the youngest woman ever to serve and the oldest woman to have served. In addition, she boasts the title of the longest-serving elected official, with an impressive tenure of 23



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years. At the age of 72, she has dedicated almost one-third of her life to serving the residents of Royal Oak.

Waterworks Park is one of a dozen or so parks that are not currently named after a person of good character. Its name is derived from the fact that it was previously home to a waterworks facility that supplied the Village of Royal Oak with fresh water.

Motion by McMall to rename Waterworks Park to Patricia Paruch Park; second by Winters.

7. Unfinished Business: None

8. Adjournment: Motion made by Winter, second by Slaughter, to adjourn at 7:43 PM. Motion passed unanimously.