

MEETING MINUTES

RECORDED BY: Melonie Trang

MEETING PURPOSE: PRC Board Meeting

MEETING DATE
AND LOCATION: August 17, 2016
Community Center



ATTENDEES: PRC Board Members:

Rick DeVore, Tom Rupsis, Dayton Rush, Lew Morris, Marcia Clousing, Catherine Grott, Marc Wahl

PRPL Staff Members:

Mike Whitaker, Director
Kory Thomson, Recreation Superintendent
Jon Thompson, Park Superintendent
Lee Stadtmiller, Cemetery Superintendent
Mark Jarvis, Park Planner
Chris Waite, Volunteer Coordinator

I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Chairman Rick DeVore called the meeting to order at 11:30 am

A. INTRODUCTIONS

Jolene Rieck, Peaks to Plains Design
Mike Mayott, Amend Development Council
Michael Svetz and Kristina Campbell, Pros Consulting Inc.

B. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A motion was made to approve the July 13, 2016 minutes. Board member Lew Morris approved. Board member Dayton Rush seconded. On a voice vote, all were in favor and the motion passed.

C. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None

II. DIRECTORS REPORT – Michael Whitaker

- Michael had nothing to report.

III. PUBLIC/BOARD COMMENT

Rick DeVore said there will be an unveiling ceremony of Musburger Field at Centennial Park August 23rd starting at 9:30am. Members of the Musburger family will be at the ceremony.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. Funding Undeveloped Parkland:

Discussion on funding for undeveloped parkland will go before City Council at the September 6th work session. Rick DeVore and Tom Rupsis have put together a presentation that they will be showing to the Council. (*A copy of that presentation is in the PRC board binder.*)

Rick asked for a motion for recommendation from the board to approve one of the options to fund the undeveloped parkland. ***Board member Tom Rupsis made a motion for recommendation to move forward with Option 2 giving the City of Billings authority to issue revenue bonds up to fifteen million dollars the next 15 years starting with five million right away to do Centennial and Castlerock Parks and to have the payment back to the bonds by supplementing the Park District 1 assessment over and above what we already receive. Board member Lew Morris seconded. On a voice vote all were in favor, motion passed.***

B. Update on Amend Park:

The agreement for Amend Park with Amend Park Development Council (APDC) is complete.

Jon Thompson and his staff have worked on decreasing the costs on upgrading the maintenance giving over \$4,000 in saving to the APDC for the first half of the season. The cost for that half was over \$22,000 and was for mowing, weed spraying and litter pickup. Jon Thompson said the APDC and the department have settled on the second half of the season costs to be around \$20,000.

Comments made regarding the operation and maintenance of Amend:

- Jon said restrooms are being opened and closed by both the department and the APDC.
- Mr. Mayott said that the APDC is still doing the stripping of the fields. He said the costs for doing that are being billed out to the user groups. The APDC is also in charge of all the scheduling of field usage.
- Mike Mayott who is the current president of the APDC expressed that they have received several compliments on how good the fields look since the City has taken over the maintenance. Jon responded back on how well it has been working with Mike and the APDC.

C. Animal Control Ordinance:

City Council has approved the ordinance to allow dogs and cats on leash in City Parks contingent upon the total number of licensed dogs must reach 10,000 before January 1st, 2017.

Staff said signage and additional dog waste bag dispensers will be added and changed at our parks once that number of licenses have been reached. Jon said we will have about a month window once that has happened.

D. Swords Park Update:

Mike Whitaker said that following the discussion with City Council regarding the

some of the safety issues at Swords Park was to look into using a Park Ranger to enforce the ordinances.

Both Michael and Jon commented that the safety issues at Swords is city wide problem in our parks. Jon said that just this week we had the following:

- A call that there were transients living at Lampman Strip Park on the westend and the caller said they didn't feel safe to walk there.
- At South Park there have been kids swimming in the pool every night and about 10 transients living there.
- Rose pool was broken into three times this past week and they vandalized and stole a cash register.
- The Skate Park bathroom was vandalized.
- Stewart Park has people partying there at night leaving a mess.
- Graffiti is everywhere from the rims, to the trails to inside our parks regularly.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Parks & Recreation Comp Plan:

It has been 17 years since the last comprehensive plan for the department was updated. The purpose of the plan is to create a compelling vision and determine the right path to follow for the Parks, Recreation and Public Land department (PRPL).

To ensure the success of updating the plan, PRPL has contacted PROS, a national, full-service management consulting and planning firm to assist along with Jolene Rieck, from Peaks to Pains Design (local landscape architecture, planning and civil engineering firm). Michael Svetz and Kristina Campbell of Pros Consulting Inc. were at the board meeting to give a presentation on their purpose, background, process, experience, work to date, the next steps in updating the plan and the desired outcomes.

The following points were touched on by Mr. Svetz from his presentation.

- Pros is a national full service consulting and planning firm with over 100 years of experience in the field as public sector managers and municipal leaders.
- Pros has expertise in Parks, Recreation, Transportation and comprehensive planner.
- Pros has done over 600 parks and recreation surveys.
- Peaks to Plains Design has expertise in Parks and Recreation planning as well as public participation and meeting facilitation. They have worked extensively in Billings as well parks and recreation agencies in North Dakota, Wyoming and Montana.
- Pros desired outcomes are to engage the community, leadership and stakeholders through public input. They have started meeting with staff and local stakeholders.
- Pros will utilize a variety of data sources to get information including a statistically-valid survey. An analysis of the level of service, priority

investment rating such as is nature trails considered a high priority or are soccer fields considered a low priority, service area and equity mapping, and assessment and inventory.

- Plans are to align the Master Plan with the City's Growth Policy update.
- Their desire is to determine a level of service standards and shape financial and operational preparedness.
- The Master Plan areas of focus will be on Parks, Recreation services, facilities and trails.
- There will be a review of existing programs and services with staff.
- A modeling of cost benefit for capital improvement prioritization.
- Look into funding and revenue strategy options through such things as sponsorships, partnerships with public and private partners, facility leases, grant opportunities and dedicated funding.
- The upcoming steps will be to; get community input through a community survey, do a facility and park inventory and program assessment, get strategic recommendations including funding strategies and strategic action plan and look at the Capital Improvement Plan.

Pros will be in contact regularly with staff. They plan to be back sometime in January 2017 to go over their findings with the board.

VII. DIVISION REPORTS

A. Recreation Division-Recreation Superintendent Kory Thomson:

In addition to his report, Kory said that they are expecting a large crowd at the Dog Days of Summer based on the response to our Facebook page. The event is scheduled for Sunday August 21st.

B. Park/Urban Forestry Division-Park Superintendent Jon Thompson:

In addition to his report, Jon said that the BBWA canal which supplies irrigation water to several of our parks including the Cemetery and Par3 went down for repairs and was down for about 10 days. He said it has since started back up again.

C. Park Planning Division-Park Planner Mark Jarvis:

In addition to his report, Mark said the bid for Swords Park-Yellowstone Kelly's Interpretive Site will go as soon as they have finished the discussion on the funding.

D. Volunteer Coordinator's Report-Chris Waite:

No additions to his report.

E. Cemetery Division-Cemetery Superintendent Lee Stadtmiller:

No additions to his report.

VII. ADJOURNMENT - 1:30 pm