

# MEETING MINUTES

RECORDED BY: Melonie Trang

MEETING PURPOSE: PRC Board Meeting

MEETING DATE August 9, 2017  
AND LOCATION: Community Center



ATTENDEES: PRC Board Members:

Tom Rupsis, Jim Ronquillo, Tim Warburton, Rich Lorenz,  
Mark Wahl, Lew Morris

PRPL Staff Members:

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

---

## I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Vice-chair Tom Rupsis called the meeting to order at 11:27 am

### A. INTRODUCTIONS

Public attendees: Julie Thomason, Marcie Smith, Merissa Henderson, Sadie Michael, Leann Zahn, Michael Verseman  
City Council member Brent Crowley

### B. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None

### C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

*A motion was made to approve the June 13 & 14 meeting minutes. Board member Jim Ronquillo approved the minutes. Board member Lew Morris seconded. On a voice vote, all were in favor and the motion passed.*

*A motion was made to approve the July 12, 2017 meeting minutes. Board member Jim Ronquillo approved the minutes. Board member Lew Morris seconded. On a voice vote, all were in favor and the motion passed.*

## II. DIRECTORS REPORT – Michael Whitaker

- Michael announced the September board meeting date has changed from September 13<sup>th</sup> to September 6<sup>th</sup>.
- Michael invited the board to the retirement party of Park Superintendent Jon

Thompson on August 31. He announced Park Supervisor Mike Pigg will be the Interim-Superintendent until the department finds a replacement.

### **III. PUBLIC/BOARD COMMENT**

Vice-Chair Tom Rupsis announced a special board meeting is planned for next Wednesday, August 16 at 11:30 am to discuss Park Development Funding.

### **VI. OLD BUSINESS**

#### **A. Poly Vista Master Plan:**

Funding to create Poly Vista's Master Plan has come from Landon Legacy group, Billings Kiwanis and the City. The final plan was presented by Land Design.

The design plan presented included the following features;

- New trail connection to St. John's Ministries
- New baseball plaza
- New paved trails
- New culvert crossing
- Adult exercise station
- Sensory playground
- Quiet pod
- Splash pad
- raised planters
- 3 season park shelter
- New Miracle Field (a Miracle Field is a custom-designed field for people with physical disabilities such as wheelchairs or visually impaired. This will be the first special needs field of its kind in Billings. It is in memory of Landon, who loves baseball)
- Small park shelter
- Landon's memorial
- Donor wall
- Drop off and entry plaza
- Monument entry sign
- Restroom and concession
- Bus parking small park shelter
- 68 stall on-street parking and 139 stall parking
- New batting cage
- Seat retaining wall

Costs to do the design work will range between \$4.5-5.5 million.

Landon's Legacy group expressed their plan to raise \$1.5 million in donations for the miracle field. They also gave their support of the final master plan.

*A request for a motion to accept the Poly Vista Master Plan was presented. Board member Rich Lorenze made a recommendation for City Council to*

*approve the Poly Vista Park Master Plan as presented by Land Design. Board member Jim Ronquillo seconded the motion. On a voice vote, all were in favor and the motion passed.*

The master plan will go before City Council on August 28<sup>th</sup> for approval.

**B. Update on Park Projects:**

- South Park sprayground is moving ahead with construction. It should be completed at the end of August with an estimated opening in September weather permitting.
- Rose Park pool construction bid/contract will go before City Council for approval on Monday, August 14. Funding for this project will come from Park District 1 (PD1) and the insurance settlement from the fire.
- Yellowstone Kelly's interpretive site at Swords Rimrock Park should be completed this month.
- Staff is working on a request for proposal for the Hawthorne playground equipment replacement. Funding for this project is from PD1 and the Land & Water Conservation Fund.
- The departments Comprehensive Plan is expected to be completed sometime this fall.
- An engineering firm has been hired to do the construction documents for the Optimist parking lot. Estimated completion should be sometime this fall. This project is being funded by the South Billings Urban Renewal District.

**C. Cell Tower in Terry Park:**

**Update:** The City of Billings and Verizon met to discuss the cell tower agreement for Terry Park. The City's Legal Department will be working with Verizon to finalize the agreement.

**D. Un/Underdeveloped Parks Funding:**

Park Board members will go before the November 6 City Council work session to present their Park Development Plan. Vice-chair Tom Rupsis did a quick review of the presentation and made a note that there was an addition made. He said he and Rick DeVore added the additional option to develop the infrastructure of parks first and partner with private organizations to add amenities. There was some concern presented with this option. It was decided the board needed further time to discuss the presentation and additional option before their presentation to council. Due to the time constraint, Tom asked to hold a special board meeting the following Wednesday. The board and staff decided to hold a special Park Board meeting on August 16<sup>th</sup>.

**E. Oasis Agreement:**

It was brought up that there has been recent talk regarding the agreement between the Better Billings Foundation and the City. The specific talk was in regards to the portion of the agreement that pertains to Irrevocable Standby Letter of Credit in the amount of \$100,000. This letter of credit was initially set up in case

foundation/Oasis Waterpark went bankrupt, and the land was reverted back to the City. Those funds could be used to either repair or demolish the facility/facilities.

Based on the recent talk, it was said that the request to release the \$100,000 back to the foundation was brought up again. Several years ago, the Better Billings Foundation had come to the Park Board requesting the amount be released back to them and at that time, it was denied.

Staff commented that nothing official has been brought up to the department or Council regarding the release of funds. Tom suggested the board look at this agreement sometime soon in near the future.

## **VII. NEW BUSINESS:**

### **A. Parks Rx Collaboration:**

Michael said the department has decided to partner with Riverstone Health on a program called “Parks RX”. Melissa Henderson of Riverstone Health gave a presentation on the program and what it all in details. Points from the presentation are as follows:

- Obesity is a problem within our community.
- Mental health is on the rise.
- Parks are a great way to get people out and moving.
- Their goal is to increase physical activity and social connectedness through a Parks Rx pilot.
- Their objectives are to; 1) increase access to places for physical activity and organized activities that encourage social participation and inclusion. 2) engage community residents, specifically those at greater risk of cardiovascular disease and/or mental health conditions, to identify park features and needs to increase accessibility. Plan is to organize and host a community park audits
- Their first step is to form a committee and develop an assessment tool. From there they will organize and host community park audits, analyze data, select and map developed, plan distribution & promotion efforts, monitor progress and then identify next steps. This should take until next summer.
- They will be looking into a \$20,000 grant to support pilot in two local parks, North and Pioneer park.

Melissa asked for any board members to be on the “Partners RX” committee. Tom Rupsis offered. The committee will begin meeting together soon.

## **VIII. DIVISION UPDATES:**

### **A. Recreation Division-Recreation Superintendent Kory Thomson:**

In addition to his report, Kory said the following:

- summer programs will be wrapping up next week
- August 20<sup>th</sup> is the “Dog Day at Rose Pool”
- His staff has begun working on fall programs

**B. Park/Urban Forestry Division – Park Superintendent Jon Thompson:**

In addition to his written report, Jon said the following:

- July was extremely busy with shelter rentals, soundstage rentals and special events

Jon finished his report by thanking his parks and forestry staff for all their hard work over the years and expressed how much he has enjoyed working with the staff in this department.

The Park Board expressed their thanks for his hard work in the department.

**C. Park Planning Division – Park Planner Mark Jarvis:**

No additions to his written report.

**D. Volunteer Coordinator Report – Chris Waite:**

No additions to his written report.

**E. Cemetery Division – Cemetery Superintendent Lee Stadtmiller:**

No additions to his written report.

**IX. AJOURNMENT - 1:15 pm**