

MEETING MINUTES

RECORDED BY: Melonie Trang

MEETING PURPOSE: PRC Board Meeting

MEETING DATE AND LOCATION: September 13, 2017
Community Center

ATTENDEES: PRC Board Members:
Rick DeVore, Tom Rupsis, Tim Warburton, Rich Lorenz, Marc Wahl, Lew Morris, Rich Lorenze



PRPL Staff Members:
Mike Whitaker, Director
Kory Thomson, Recreation Superintendent
Mike Pigg, Interim Park Superintendent
Lee Stadtmiller, Cemetery Superintendent
Mark Jarvis, Park Planner
Chris Waite, Volunteer Coordinator

I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

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

A. INTRODUCTIONS

None

B. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes for August 9th and 16th will be approved at next month's meeting.

II. DIRECTORS REPORT – Michael Whitaker

- Staff brought attention to the board a conflict with room usage for the board meetings. A recommendation to have either the day changed or the start time changed from 11:30 AM to 11:00 AM was presented. The board agreed to keep Wednesdays but change the time.

III. PUBLIC/BOARD COMMENT

None

VI. OLD BUSINESS

A. Update on Current Projects:

Update on projects was given by Michael Whitaker.

- Staff was just informed that the South Park sprayground will not be done as planned. It should hopefully be done by the end of September.
- Rose Park pool construction is moving ahead. The roof on the existing building has been removed. Demolition of the structures should be coming down in the next week.
- Staff will be having a walk through this afternoon at the Yellowstone Kelly's interpretive site at Swords Rimrock Park.
- Have done some preliminary work Hawthorne playground equipment replacement project. Hope to do the installation sometime this next spring.
- The final Comprehensive Plan document should be on our website next week. We should have another presentation of the final plan next month with the board. We also hope to include the Planning Board at this meeting.
- The Poly Vista Master Plan has been recently approved by City Council. Fundraising has begun for this project/Landon Legacy Miracle Field.
- The bid for the construction of the Optimist parking lot has come in less what the engineered expected. It should be going before City Council on September 25th for approval. The bid came in at \$302,000.

B. Un/Underdeveloped Parks Funding:

Rick gave the updated final copy presentation on the funding plan to build Billings parks. He touched on the following points:

- Funding options; GO Bonds, Revenue Bonds, PD1 Assessment, General Fund Reserves.
- Put together five packaged examples for funding;
 - #1 one-time PD1 increase of \$8M to build top priority projects such as Centennial
 - #2 \$8M revenue bonds issued and serviced over 20 years via PD1 assessment to completely build top priority projects
 - #3 City-wide vote to sell GO bonds in amount of \$8M; serviced over 20 years via PD1 assessment to completely build top priority projects
 - #4 increase PD1 assessment from \$2M to \$3M annually and focus on infrastructure development at parks and partner with private organizations to add amenities
 - #5 Increase PD1 assessment from \$2M to \$3M annually and provide a “kickstarter” fund from the General Fund Reserves to focus on developing the infrastructure and core amenities at parks and partner with private organizations to add amenities
- Proposing to; mix funding from PD1 and general fund reserves, projects requiring more than \$1M would be “saved for” and ask Council to express support for a 10-year development period. In addition, to look at the funding source Cash-in-lieu which is funding from developers in replacement of land given for parkland. (Michael Whitaker cautioned adding this until the City's Legal department has had time to look into this as a possible funding source.)
- Total estimated costs for the current projects is between \$5.5M- \$13.5M

The board will be going before a City Council work session in November with their proposed funding presentation. It will be at that meeting that Council should give the board direction on how and if they should proceed further with their request.

Rick asked for a motion from the board to accept the funding proposal for undeveloped parks from package #5 as what they want to use to move forward to present to City Council.

Board member Rich Lorenz made a motion to approve the package #5 funding option with the Cash-in-Lieu questions answers by the City's Legal department if it is capable to use those funds and push this to the City Council. Board member Lew Morris seconded. On a voice vote, all were in favor and the motion passed.

C. Oasis Agreement (added to the discussion today):

Michael gave an update on the agreement. He stated that there has been a request made by the Better Billings Foundation to modify the Development agreement with the City. It is on the City Council agenda for September 25th to vote on whether we will amend the agreement. The foundation would like to eliminate the Irrevocable Standby Letter of Credit in the amount of \$100,000 that was initially set up in case the pool closes. Those funds would be used to do any repairs to the facility or demolish it.

A question was asked Michael if this was being discussed before now or did it just come up at City Council work session. Michael said it had just come up at a work session. He said Council directed staff to bring it up at a Council business meeting to vote on it.

Rick DeVore brought up that the agreement states somewhere in it that if both parties do not like something within the agreement that the City and the Better Billings Foundation are to meet together for discussion.

A question was asked on what the staffs perspective was on this. Michael said it is evolving. He said initially we had concerns that the foundation might be able to operate this facility but they have proven that they can and at a profit.

A question was asked if the foundation has produced any financials to staff. Michael said he has received a quote from Chuck Barthuly stating that their revenue is around \$80,000 a year. That was stated at a work session.

It was noted that the Park Board has requested Chuck on at least two occasions to come to a board meeting and present the financials but they not done so at this time.

A question was asked if it states in the agreement for them to present their financials to the Park Board. Rick said it is not but we ask them to. A comment was made by one of the board members that as a business owner he would not want to present his books to someone and have them look at it.

There was concern with the long-term maintenance of the facility and the costs involved with that. It was pointed out that at some point they would need to possibly replace a waterslide and if the funds were not there to do that, then what.

Michael said every year they operate the staffs' concerns decrease.

A board members comment was that they seem to be doing better every year.

Michael said it is up to this board on whether or not they want to give a recommendation to council on how they should proceed with the agreement.

Board member Tom Rupsis made a motion to recommend to City Council that they direct staff and the Better Billings Foundation along with some representatives from the Park Board to discuss amendments to the agreement and report back to them amendments that would both improve the Better Billings Foundations financial capabilities at the same time protecting the City of Billings interest. Board member Marc Wahl seconded.

Additional comments; Cemetery Superintendent suggested looking at a assuredly bond for them. He said it would be less expensive and the foundation would have to less money left in the bank.

No other comments were made.

On a voice vote all approving the motion were Board members Rick DeVore, Tom Rupsis, Marc Wahl, Lew Morris, Tim Warburton and Chuck Platt. Opposed; Rich Lorenz. Motion passed with a 6-1 vote.

VII. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Oil Spill Grant Projects:

Interim Mike Pigg said the department has presented 4 grant applications and the grants we have put in are:

1. For Coulson Park to rebuild the boat launch, add a vault toilet similar to the one at Swords park and to do some adjustments to the parking area.
2. Enhance the fisheries at Lake Josephine in Riverfront Park. Install a floating dock assessible to handicap.
3. Re-do and pave the trail through Riverfront all the way over to the Washington Street bridge.
4. New hand boat launch right off South Billings Boulevard and Riverfront.

He said all four proposals will go before the committee October 12th.

VIII. DIVISION UPDATES:

A. Recreation Division-Recreation Superintendent Kory Thomson:

In addition to his written report Kory said the Recreation Division had an outstanding summer in terms of participation and revenue. Set a new standard in enrollments. He said about half the dogs attended this year's Dog Day at the pool.

There was a lot of concerns in the community and statewide about kennel cough or canine flu that might have kept owners and their dogs away. Fall programs are off and running. There is plans to hold an ice cream social on the senior services side September 20th.

B. Park/Urban Forestry Division – Interim Park Superintendent Mike Pigg:

In addition to his written report, Mike said staff is continuing to keep restrooms open, mowing the parks and starting fertilization.

C. Park Planning Division – Park Planner Mark Jarvis:

No additions to his written report.

D. Volunteer Coordinator Report – Chris Waite:

In addition to his report, Chris said we received some funding from Lucky's Market. It was around \$4,000.

E. Cemetery Division – Cemetery Superintendent Lee Stadtmiller:

No additions to his written report.

IX. AJOURNMENT - 1:12 pm