

# MEETING MINUTES

**RECORDED BY:** Melonie Trang

**MEETING PURPOSE:** PRC Special Board Meeting

**MEETING DATE** November 28, 2017  
**AND LOCATION:** Community Center



**ATTENDEES:** PRC Board Members:  
Rick DeVore, Tom Rupsis, Lew Morris, Jim Ronquillo, Chuck Platt

PRPL Staff Members:  
Mike Whitaker, Director  
Kory Thomson, Recreation Superintendent  
Mike Pigg, Park Superintendent  
Lee Stadtmiller, Cemetery Superintendent

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## I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Board Chair Rick DeVore called the meeting to order at 11:00 am

### A. INTRODUCTIONS

None

### B. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Park Funding was added under Old Business

## II. DIRECTORS REPORT – Michael Whitaker

- City Council approved the Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan. Plans are to take it out to the community next year.

## III. PUBLIC/BOARD COMMENT

None

## VI. OLD BUSINESS

### A. Par 3 2018 Proposed Budget:

Board chair Rick DeVore went over the Exchange City Golf Corporation proposed budget, highlighting the following items.

- \$6,700 in renovations to 16 tee
- \$2,000 in renovations to isolation valves
- \$1,500 in improvement to drainage issues on 6 of the holes
- Looking at \$36,659 in equipment investment
- There will be \$30,000 in distributions with \$20,000 of that given to the City.
- Proposed fee increases will be minimal for cart rentals, range balls and

yearly passes.

Rick asked for a recommendation to council.

***The Park Board made a motion to recommend City Council to approve the 2018 fiscal year proposed budget for the Exchange City Golf Corporation Par 3 Golf Course. Board member Lew Morris approved the motion. Board member Tom Rupsis seconded. On a voice vote, all were in favor.***

**B. Better Billings Foundation/Oasis:**

Rick gave an overview from the discussion on Oasis at the November 8<sup>th</sup> Board meeting that included Chuck Barthuly from the Better Billings Foundation.

- There was bought up at a City Council meeting back in July by Council Member McFadden to give back the \$100,000 Letter of Credit/Escrow to the Better Billings Foundation.
- The letter of credit was set up to cover any costs pertaining the land and Oasis facility if it was ever given back to the City.
- There was an issue brought up by area neighbors regarding users of the waterpark, parking in front of homes, driveways and mail boxes. The Better Billings Foundation proposed that if the \$100,000 letter of credit was released to them, they will take approximately \$50,000 and invest in additional off-street parking.
- The Foundation said they would place the remaining \$50,000 in a maintenance fund for any future maintenance or repairs at the waterpark. They presented at the November 8<sup>th</sup> meeting a deferred maintenance analysis which shows there is a lot more spending than funds available. It also does not show funding for repairs/replacement of pumps and motors.
- The Foundation presented a design concept for future amenities. This includes an outdoor picnic shelter, volleyball and basketball court and a Low-Ropes course.

A question was asked if the land was all owed by the Foundation. Michael said around 6.5 acres belongs to the Better Billings Foundation; the remaining portion of the land, is city owned parkland.

Rick said the Letter of Credit were designed to protect the City and parkland if the Oasis should ever go under.

Tom brought up that in the August Park Board meeting, it was suggested by the board to create a committee with park board members, PRPL staff, the City's Finance Department and members of the Better Billings Foundation to look at other possible options to release the Letter of Credit funds and to still protect the City. He said he still felt that this was the best recommendation to do right now.

Board member Jim Ronquillo expressed that he felt we should leave it as it is with the Letter of Credit in place for the next two years until the agreement is up for renewal. He also said that he feels like the Better Billings Foundation has done a good job so far but felt the city should be protected.

Board member Chuck Platt commented that the Oasis generates a lot of income.

A question was asked as to what will happen with the agreement if the Letter of Credit was released back to the foundation. Michael said the remaining items in the agreement would not change and that would include the part in the agreement that states if for some reason the Oasis could no longer run, it would be given back to the City. It also states in the development agreement, that the land could not be sold.

Rick suggested looking into lease deferred bonds and to set up this committee Tom recommended.

He said the board needs to make a recommendation to Council on what they should do. Michael said the recommendation needs to be whether Council should release the Letter of credit or not.

Michael said Council will be looking at making a vote on this in December. He would like the board to make their recommendation before then.

Rick asked for the boards recommendation. *Board member Tom Rupsis made a motion to recommend to City Council to not release the \$100,000 Line of Credit at their December meeting but to establish a committee made up of Park and Recreation staff, Finance Department staff, Better Billings Foundation members, and Park Board members that can report back to Council with different options that would both free up the capital from the Better Billings Foundation as well as secure the City of Billings risk. Board member Lew Morris seconded. On a voice vote, all were in favor and the motion passed.*

### **C. Park Funding:**

Rick, Tom, and Michael met with the current acting City Administrator Bruce McCandless, to get a feel after the boards presentation to Council on park funding. Rick said the board would like to have Council vote on this before the new year starts with a new mayor, city administrator and new council members. Tom said they expressed their concerns to Bruce about the process taking too long before any funds are available to use. He said Bruce expressed his concern on the board pushing too hard before the new council is seated and damaging some of the good already built with the current council members. Bruce said his perception from council was their plan was well received and the majority supported it. He would recommend the board put together a detailed schedule and budget on projects for the next year or even two years. Tom said they agreed and will look at putting that together to present to the board in December.

## **VII. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION DISCUSSED**

Michael gave an update on the cash-in-lieu funds. He said Mike Pigg and Melonie Trang worked with finance to give for an exact amount of cash-in-lieu funds we have. He said to date this is over 1 million in that account. The money has been specifically

earmarked for Cottonwood and the other various neighborhood parks. He indicated that there are possible funds to kick start a project.

Tom asked if the million dollars has been broken down. Michael said it has been broken down by sub-divisions.

Rick asked how much of the funds are for Centennial. Mike Pigg said he did not have the numbers broken down for each park but subdivisions. Rick asked if that could be done. Mike said yes.

A question was asked how much it would it take to get Wilson Park up to standards for use, such as a dog park. Mike said the park has been cleaned up, pots have been removed that were left by the previous occupant, and the ground leveled. He said there are still plans to do blading and seeding. He also said that for the park to be turned into a dog park, you would have to look at doing a master plan and figure how to create parking and install irrigation.

**VIII. AJOURNMENT - 12:15 pm**