

MEETING MINUTES

RECORDED BY: Melonie Trang

MEETING PURPOSE: PRC Board Meeting

MEETING DATE April 11, 2018
AND LOCATION: Community Center



ATTENDEES: PRC Board Members:
Rick DeVore, Rich Lorenz, Mark Wahl, Tom Rupsis, Lew Morris, Tim Warburton, Chuck Platt, Jim Ronquillo

PRPL Staff Members:
Mike Whitaker, Director
Kory Thomson, Recreation Superintendent
Mike Pigg, Park Superintendent
Lee Stadtmiller, Cemetery Superintendent
Mark Jarvis, Park Planner
Chris Waite, Volunteer Coordinator
Cole McQuillan, Park Supervisor
Steve McConnell, City Forester
Steve Riley, City Arborist
Triniti Halverson, Senior Services Specialist
Paul Reinhardt, Recreation Specialist
Sean Brandenburg, Recreation Specialist
Brad Knutson, Recreation Specialist

I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Board chair Rick DeVore called the meeting to order at 11:00 AM

A. INTRODUCTIONS

Kari Boiter, Neil Kiner, Mike Ferguson, Matthew Colebank, Kristi Drake, Steve Zeier, Dianne Lehm and Steve Arveschoug

B. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Board member Rich Lorenze approved the February 14, 2018 minutes. Board member Lew Morris seconded. On a voice vote, all approved.

Board member Lew Morris approved the March 14, 2018 minutes. Board member Rich Lorenze seconded. On a voice vote, all approved.

II. DIRECTORS REPORT – Michael Whitaker

- Mike Pigg recognized staff Arborist Steve Riley as the Outstanding Urban Forestry Leader for 2017. Steve has worked for the department over 5 years and has served as interim City Forester for 2 of those years. He has led the Forestry Division to completing the first pruning cycle 2 years ahead of schedule.
- Michael reported the proposed cell tower agreement for Terry Park is moving ahead. The agreement has been agreed upon between the City and the cell tower organization. He said it will be going before Council in the near future.

The agreement shows a portion of the cell tower lease revenue will go towards Terry Park. The remaining revenue will be going to the Fire Department.

A question was asked by the board as to how much revenue will be coming from the cell tower. Michael said roughly \$40,000.

A question was asked by the board as to why the department is no longer receiving all of the revenue from the lease agreement. Michael said initially the tower was going to be located in the park but now it will be on the Fire Station. Rick mentioned that the new Fire Chief has asked that the revenue be given back to the station contrary to the former Fire Chiefs plan to give the Parks department the full amount of revenue.

Rick asked if the agreement could be reviewed by the board prior to it going before Council. Michael said he would try to get a copy.

III. PUBLIC/BOARD COMMENT

Kristi Drake asked if the Skyline Trail was added to the PRPL FY19 budget. Michael said he has not been directed to add funding for the trail to the FY19 budget.

Kristi asked if it was possible to bring the Parks Board and TrailNet committee together to discuss trails. Michael said yes, we could do that.

City Forester Steve McConnell wanted to let the board know the department is doing an Arbor Day event on May 3rd at Optimist Park. Rick invited the board to attend.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

A. Sports Tourism:

Steve Zeier gave a presentation from the South Billings Urban Renewal Association (SBURA) as it relates to the proposed South Billings Aquatics & Recreation Center. Highlights from the presentation below:

- Yellowstone County Sports Facility Feasibility study was done and shows the market analysis, facility needs and user groups.
 - Funding was provided by MT Department of Commerce, Billings Aquatic Club, USA/Montana Swimming, VisitBillings, Laurel

Aquatics & Recreation, Laurel Urban Renewal Agency and SBURA. It was about a \$60,000 study.

- Part of the market analysis is what does the area need and what can be supported.
- Yellowstone County Sports Tourism
 - 1. Venues – new state-of-the-art Sports Facilities (uses)
 - 2. Location – Regional and commercial hub for residents of Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, North and South Dakota (people from surrounding areas drive to tournaments)
 - 3. Amenities – restaurants, breweries, lodging, shopping and all fairly priced. (what do we have)
 - 4. Reputation – family friendly, supports youth sports and Montana’s Trailhead. (do people want to come to your community)
- Tournament Facility Demand Examples (what type of activities can you have in the facilities you have) - ASA softball, Big Ballin, Legion Baseball, Montana Swimming, NAIA, Scorpion Lacrosse, Rimrock volleyball and basketball.
- Economical and fiscal impact analysis of an indoor sports center, 2-sheet ice arena and competitive swim center.
 - Over a 30-year period, if all three sports facilities are developed in Yellowstone County, it is estimated to have the potential to produce total impacts with a net present value of nearly \$622 million in cumulative net economic output, 269 sustainable annual jobs, and over \$13.8 million in state and local hotel tax/surcharge revenues.
- General recommendations (discussions amount user groups) include:
 - Improvements to Stewart Park (not in the SBURA area)
 - Improvements to Amend Park
 - Aquatics facility
 - Indoor sports center
 - 2 sheet ice facility
- In moving forward (concept development plan):
 - Available properties; Popelka Commerce, Miller Crossing and Midland Road properties
 - Analysis of available land and acquisition is important to secure control of any property and investigate available parcels and attributes of each.
 - Establish an operations and maintenance plan
 - Establish a framework for ownership and operations, clarify the needs of the user groups
 - Provide a higher level of cost analysis
 - Capitalize on market needs assessment
 - Ongoing discussion with the ownership group on the potential repurposing of the Red Lion/Montana Convention Center space (4 acres located in the SBURA area)

- Partnerships with both public and private to raise private funds
- Current City of Billings FY19 CIP budget request projects located in the SBURA area include:
 - Improvements to Amend Park
 - South Billings Aquatics/Recreation Center Land
 - South Billings Aquatics/Recreation Center
- Action Items:
 - Adoption of FY19 budget requests and/or any needed FY18 budget amendments
 - Amend Park improvements planning
 - Available land analysis & acquisition
 - Concept Development plan by forming a steering committee of stakeholders to procure and advise. The goal is to have a draft document by the end of 2018

Board member Rupsis asked if the aquatic center would be handed over to the Recreation Division to be run and then turned over to be rented out. Steve Zeier said that was still being determined. There would be a possibility that the facility would be city owned but managed by a third party.

Steve said they will be putting together a steering committee as part of the planning process. He said Michael will be part of that committee.

B. Park Development:

Rick said he, Tom Rupsis and Michael Whitaker met with Mayor Cole and City Administrator McCandless to discuss park funding. It was discussed to have Michael include in the departments FY19 budget presentation to City Council in June the following:

- Add 1 million from reserve funding
- Use cash-in-lieu to fund Centennial Park
- Increase Park District 1 from 2 million to 3 million

Rick said it is our goal to ask for 1 million in reserves every year.

Michael said it has been over 50 years since a park has been developed.

C. Additional Discussion-Coulson Park Development:

Michael said the department is partnering with the Big Sky Economic Development Authority (BSEDA) on the development of Coulson Park. Both BSEDA and the department are working on grants for the development of this park.

Dianne Lehm from BSEDA gave an update on their fundraising efforts. She said to date they have raised locally \$32,000 of the estimated \$90,000 study. They have heard through the Exxon Oil Spill grant funding that it is at the public

comments stage. Those grant awards/funds should be approved by the governor at the end of May. She said that of those grants, BSEDA has requested \$45,000 towards the Coulson Park Master Plan. Dianne said with the total raised and Exxon grant money, \$13,000 is still needed.

Dianne said the total Exxon grant money, \$400,000 is projected for Coulson Park between BSEDA and the Parks Department.

Mike Pigg gave a report on the grant requests the department has applied for on the Exxon grant.

He said we have put in for 3 requests;

- \$110,000 ask for upgrading boat launch, putting in new restrooms and enhancing the parking lot at Coulson
- Multi use trail through Riverfront Park
- Josephine Lake to enhance the fisheries and install a pier for handicap fishing

VII. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Yellowstone Valley Citizens Council:

Kari Boiter from the Northern Plains Resource Council gave a presentation on the Yellowstone Valley Citizens Council. She spoke on who the council is, what their accomplishments are and after looking at the PRPL Comprehensive Plan, their interest in collaborating with the department.

Kari said the council would like to offer up their resources for such items as;

- partner on projects – upgrade equipment or/and facilities
- converting lighting to LED
- parking lot materials- such as recycled glass
- alternative transportation such as trails
- reduction in water usage

Following further discussion, staff and board believe this would be a good fit.

B. South Park Mural Proposal:

This topic item has been postponed until next month.

VIII. DIVISION UPDATES:

A. Recreation Division-Recreation Superintendent Kory Thomson:

Highlights from the written Recreation staff report;

- Update; through the first ten days, registration has been up by 20% from last year
- Hope to get the batting cages open as soon as the weather changes. We did sustain a lot of damage from the snow. Park staff is working on getting us up and running. We had hoped to open later this week but due to weather forecast we are not.
- Planning on getting ready on swimming operation next week

- We continue to see increase in participation in our senior services both in events and programs

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

Highlights from the written Parks and Forestry staff report;

- Will start opening restrooms when the weather improves
- The weather has set us back about a month on cleanup, restrooms, etc.
- We have 30 seasonals returning; still need to hire about a dozen more

C. Park Planning Division – Park Planner Mark Jarvis:

Mark had nothing to add to written report.

D. Volunteer Coordinator Report – Chris Waite:

Chris had nothing to add to written report.

E. Cemetery Division – Cemetery Superintendent Lee Stadtmiller:

Lee had nothing to add to his written report.

IX. AJOURNMENT – 12:49 pm