

MEETING MINUTES

RECORDED BY: Melonie Trang

MEETING PURPOSE: PRC Board Meeting

MEETING DATE
AND LOCATION: September 12, 2018
PRPL Office



ATTENDEES: PRC Board Members:

Rick DeVore, Tom Rupsis, Tim Warburton, Chuck Platt, Lew Morris, Clark Johnson, Marc Wahl, Rich Lorenz, Jim Ronquillo

PRPL Staff Members:

Mike Whitaker, Director
Kory Thomson, Recreation Superintendent
Mike Pigg, Park Superintendent
Mark Jarvis, Park Planner
Chris Waite, Volunteer Coordinator
Lee Stadtmiller, Cemetery Manager
Officer Lam, Park Police Officer

Planning Staff Members:

Elyse Monat, Alternative Modes Coordinator

I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

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

A. INTRODUCTIONS

City resident Kevin Nelson

B. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

“Board Decorum” was added under New Business after item A.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Board member Lew Morris approved the August 8, 2018 minutes. Board member Clark Johnson seconded. On a voice vote, all approved.

II. DIRECTORS REPORT – Michael Whitaker

- A 3rd of Norm’s island is being donated to the city. Originally, it was owned by the McCall family who in turn donated it to the Parks, Recreation and Preservation Foundation. The foundation has now decided to donate it to us. We currently own a 3rd as well as the state owns a 3rd.
- Update on the Billings Senior Citizen Inc. situation: the organization spoke at a City Council work session asking the city to lease the center to them and they would operate the center. City Council at the time did not want to go in that

direction. City Administrator Bruce McCandless said he will attempt one more to work with this organization.

III. PUBLIC/BOARD COMMENT

Board chair asked for an update on the Billings Senior Citizens Inc. and the city. Michael said the senior organization was at a recent City Council work session requesting for the city to lease the community/senior center to them. Council decided not to go that direction. The City Administrator has decided to try one more time to talk with them.

Citizen Kevin Nelson asked staff about the mowing at Optimist Park. Mike Pigg explained that during the baseball season, staff mows the turf at 3 inches once a week. We invite the Little Leagues to mow it an additional time if they want to and most of them do that. Once the season ends, staff goes back to mowing it at 3 inches once a week.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Community Volunteer Project (Paint the Lillis Park Basketball Court):

Volunteer Coordinator Chris Waite gave an update on a project being done by two seniors from Central High School. He said part of their senior volunteer project is to paint a mural in city park. After discussion with staff, it was decided to paint a mural on the basketball court at Lillis Park. (*A printed concept of the design was presented to the board.*)

A request for a motion on the mural at Lillis was presented.

Board member Tom Rupsis moved to recommend moving forward with the basketball mural at Lillis Park. Board member Jim Ronquillo seconded. On a voice vote, all were in favor and motion passed.

B. Board Decorum:

Board Vice Chair Tom addressed a few things regarding the board's decorum both during the meetings and outside the boardroom. Those are as follows:

- The board is there to contribute to the community, city and parks
- As a board member, we do not always get what we want, but as a board we make decisions and we need to support those decisions in front of City Council or stay quiet. We do not actively lobby against the board decisions. If a board member is strongly against the decisions made by the board, it would probably be best for that member to go off the board and lobby as a citizen.
- This is a public board, we serve the public purpose. All our meetings are public.
- It is not a good idea to use your personal email for your own personal lobbying to other board members, staff, or council

Board chair Rick DeVore commented that the Parks Board does not make decisions but advises City council on or recommends to do certain things pertaining to the department. He said it is an advisory board appointed by the Mayor.

Board member Tim Warburton brought up discussion on the behavior and inappropriate emails sent to staff, board and council members by board member Clark Johnson. Additional board members brought up their thoughts and concerns on the behavior and emails by Clark. Mr. Johnson adamantly defended himself. *Board member Tim Warburton made a motion to have Mr. Johnson removed from the Parks Board. Further discussion was made. Board member Mark Wahl seconded the motion. The motion was again discussed. Board member Tom Rupsis commented that the board does not want to remove Mr. Johnson but would like for him to change his behavior. Tom then made a recommendation to amend the motion and to postpone the motion to remove Clark for one month and give him an opportunity to cease all actions that are counterproductive to the purposes and goals of this board, to take down the Facebook page “Centennial Shame”, stop the negative emails and to stop lobbying Council against the actions on the votes this board has taken. Board chair Rick DeVore seconded. On a 5-3 vote, motion to postpone action until next meeting was passed.*

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Major Park Projects Update:

Michael gave the following update on park projects;

- Rose pool bathhouse and operations building is complete except for a few punch items
- Money left over from the LWCF grant for Hawthorne playground equipment replacement will be used to purchase and install a shade structure there.
- South Splashpad; because of drainage issues, plans are to increase the cement pad
- Optimist parking lot is complete
- Hiring an installer for the playground equipment at Optimist
- Started working on the Coulson Park master plan. Funds for the plan will come from Big Sky Economic Development and the Exxon Mobil oil spill settlement
- A contractor has started removing black mold found in the drywall in several rooms at Dehler. They should be complete with their work within the next 2 weeks.

B. Centennial Park Development:

Park Planner Mark Jarvis said the contract for Centennial Park development is getting finalized. We will be getting signatures sometime next week and should go out for notice to proceed the first part of next month.

VIII. DIVISION UPDATES:

A. Recreation Division-Recreation Superintendent Kory Thomson:

No additions to his report

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

In addition to his written report, Mike added that staff put out 100 Emerald Ash Bore traps all throughout town this summer. Staff has since picked all of them up. We have analyzed them and no reports of Emerald Ash so far. We will continue to do this so we can stay ahead of this.

C. Park Planning Division – Park Planner Mark Jarvis:

No additions to his report

D. Volunteer Coordinator Report – Chris Waite:

In addition to his report, Chris added that staff has been meeting with the Dog Park committee over the last month to discuss raising funds. There are plans to do a kickoff at Centennial Park on Saturday, October 13.

E. Park Patrol Report – Officer Nick Lam

Officer Lam touched on the following;

- Busy August with 100 tickets and 28 arrests. (*An individual could have several warrants and each warrant is considered an arrest so some of those arrests are for one individual. Also, one person can receive several tickets at a time*)
- Would like to create or amend a “No Smoking” in city parks. See how much Park staff are picking up cigarette butts throughout the parks including in the playground areas.

F. Cemetery Division – Cemetery Superintendent Lee Stadtmiller:

In addition to his report, Lee reported work will start on the outside of the mausoleum in the next day or two. It will include power washing, fixing any cracks and painting.

G. Planning Report - Elyse Monat:

Elyse reported that there will be coming a proposal to council to add an opt in or opt out to donate to fund trails on the water bill. It should be on the October 1st council work session.

IX. AJOURNMENT – 12:40 pm

(Please note these minutes are summary minutes)