

## MEETING MINUTES

**RECORDED BY:** Melonie Trang

**MEETING PURPOSE:** PRC Board Meeting

**MEETING DATE  
AND LOCATION:** September 11, 2019  
PRPL office



**ATTENDEES:** PRC Board Members:  
Tom Rupsis, Chuck Platt, Lew Morris, Jim Ronquillo, Thom MacLean, Clark Johnson, Marc Wahl, Tim Warburton

PRPL Staff Members:  
Mike Whitaker, Director  
Mike Pigg, Park Superintendent  
Kory Thomson, Recreation Superintendent  
Mark Jarvis, Park Planner  
Cole McQuillan, Parks Supervisor  
Chris Waite, Cemetery/Parks Supervisor

Planning Staff Members:  
Elyse Monat, Alternative Modes Coordinator

City Administrator:  
Chris Kukulski

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### I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Chairman Tom Rupsis called the meeting to order at 11:00 AM

#### A. INTRODUCTIONS

Public attendees: Mike Mayott, Rick DeVore, Eden Sowards, Sarah Music, Nathan Stahley and Bryan Schwarz

HDM Senior Associate: Eric Meadows

#### B. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None

#### C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

*Board member Jim Ronquillo approved the May 8 2019 minutes. Board member Lue Morris seconded. Board Member Thom MacLean mentioned there was a correction; personal should be personnel. On a voice vote with the updated correction, all approved.*

*Board member Jim Ronquillo approved the August 14 2019 minutes. Board member Lue Morris seconded. On a voice vote, all approved.*

## **II. DIRECTORS REPORT – Michael Whitaker**

Michael said City Council approved the contract from FieldTurfUSA Inc. to construct a synthetic turf soccer field and lighting at Amend Park. Location of the field will be in the far west/northwest side of the park near the concession/restrooms. Cost for the construction is \$1,514,582.71. Funding for the project will be from the South Billings Urban Renewal Association (SBURA). Mike Mayott said a special fund will be set up by the Amend Park Development Council (APDC) of \$23,000 annually to replace the synthetic turf in the future. The field should be ready in the spring of 2020.

Michael said the playground equipment at Primrose park has been installed. There will be a ribbon cutting ceremony on October 1 at 11:45 am.

He said a new playground swing set has been installed at Central Park.

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

## **VI. NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. Coulson Park Master Plan:**

Eric Meadows from DHM Design presented the final draft design option for the Coulson Park Master Plan. He broke down the design in three sections.

- Section 1 is the south node. The area includes; 40x60 shelter, south parking, nature play area, ramble area, restrooms, river improvement, berming along the westside, 2-acre dog park
- Section 2 is the central node. The area includes; lookout point, flow and pump bike track, looping trail for access, Coulson pond, central parking, outdoor classroom area, Coulson square/plaza, nature play area, event overflow parking, and dance arbor
- Section 3 is the northern node. The area includes; northern parking, boat ramp, restrooms, river day use sties, sculpture and grass area

The following are comments and questions presented by both the park board regarding the Coulson Park master plan presentation.

- There was a concern expressed regarding the need to access the river by vehicle if unable to walk or do not want to walk to the river. Eric said there may be an opportunity at artist point or near the boat launch on the north end node.
- A question was asked if there are any groups willing to help finance this project. It was commented that there has been discussion from the bike and Native American groups for their support. It was also said that programming could also be a funding mechanism. Michael Whitaker mentioned that there are resources in place to install 2 vault toilets and the Big Sky Economic Development raised funding to do the master plan.

- A question was asked if Sharleen Street will be resurfaced with this project. Eric said that it has come up in the discussion but it technically not part of the park boundary.
- A question was asked if you could run the creek through the dog park. Eric said it is possible but there could be a potential problem with moving the creek and causing elevation issues.
- A question was asked if there would be any provision for a gate/locked gate. Eric said this was the first time he has heard this being floated around as an idea. He said it has not been addressed. The response to that was that we should consider it.
- A question was asked what a bump track was. Eric said it was a BMX bike track. This kind of track has a series of mounds; gravity propelled.

## **B. Non-Smoking Policy in Parks:**

Representatives from Riverstone health gave a presentation on a non-smoking policy for parks. They along with Officer Nick Lam have been working on changing the current City Code 19-202 regarding alcoholic beverages in parks to include tobacco free parks.

Their goal is to make Billings parks tobacco-free. Based on the community's response to the 2017 Comprehensive master plan survey; 70% of those surveyed said they would like the parks to be tobacco-free.

The benefits for tobacco-free parks is that it will promote healthy lifestyle, protect against secondhand smoke, model tobacco-free norms, keep our land clean, and reduce fire risk.

A progressive report for Montana on the tobacco use prevention program shows the following policies that have been adopted; there have been 9 local e-cigarette restrictions in indoor public places, 10 local tobacco-free park policies, 12 college campuses with tobacco free policies and 14 public housing authorities with smoke free policies.

Their goal at today's meeting was to get feedback from the board on this policy. The board chair asked for comments from the board.

- A question was asked if this policy would have individuals removed or fined if they were in their car smoking on parkland. Riverstone Health representatives said it was a good question, they were not sure of the answer and that it should be something they needed to look at looked at.
- A concern was made in regards to who would be park monitors for smoking. Riverstone Health representative responded that they learned from other counties putting up signage and having peer enforcement is a big help. They also said the counties they have spoken with this policy have not issued tickets to offenders.
- A comment was made that Officer Lam is on board with this policy and worked on creating this it.
- A question was asked if Dehler Park was smoke free area. Staff commented yes.

- A suggestion was made to advertise to the public; making them aware of this possible policy and to give their opinion on it.
- A board comment was to see that this policy not fine a person right away if they are first time offender.
- A question was asked as to how much second hand smoke is in a 50-acre park. Riverstone Health said statistics show that second hand smoke can be detected up to 30 feet.
- A question was asked if staff supports this. Michael said this is the first time seeing this document. He made a suggestion for Riverstone Health to take the boards comments and revise the policy and bring it back to next month's board meeting.

### **C. Capital Improvement Plan (CIP):**

Michael said the City Administrator has changed the schedule for doing the CIP. In the past, the CIP was part of the budget and was adopted along side the budget. Now, the CIP will be done and approved prior to beginning the budget process.

Michael presented the process of the CIP and asked for any input to that process from the board. No projects were presented during the presentation.

- CIP is to present to Council the current needs of a department.
- It establishes funding amounts of projects for budgeting, funding sources, and time frames.
- Projects must be \$25,000 or more
- 5 year rolling plan
- Projects on the list may be tweaked depending on comments from maintenance staff
- The CIP is used by all city departments; not just Parks & Recreation
- The department is looking at developing 2 CIP plans; one for lifecycle replacements and the other for park development
- Park staff will recognize the current needs in the park system and update the CIP; this document will then be presented to the park board to get their input; following getting the board's input, the document will be tweaked and brought back to the board for their recommendation to City Council

Michael said due to the time schedule, staff is recommending to have a special park board meeting October 4<sup>th</sup> to look over the CIP plan. He would like to receive the boards input and make any changes prior to bringing it back to the board at the regular board meeting October 9<sup>th</sup>. The Council will review the CIP in November and adopt it on December 9<sup>th</sup>.

Michael asked for input from the board in regards moving forward on continuing more water conservation with the recirculating system or spray to drain spray parks. He said this will help with our CIP process.

### **D. Centennial Park Playground:**

Public citizen Rick DeVore spoke on behalf of the Parks, Recreation and

Preservation Foundation regarding their plans to raise \$300-400,000 for a playground at Centennial Park.

**E. Evaluation of Public/Private Partnerships:**

Tom said he would like to see what the board can do in putting something together to help people understand how the projects work and help City Council understand how to encourage projects.

**VII. OLD BUSINESS**

**A. Centennial Park Development Update:**

Park Planner Mark Jarvis gave an update on Centennials development.

- Curbing should be going today
- Working to get the flatwork done; they have been cut out
- Currently behind in concrete work due to the lack of concrete installers
- Have the amendments for the soil
- Working on the irrigation system

**VIII. AJOURNMENT – 1:33 pm**

*(Please note these minutes are summary minutes)*