

# MEETING MINUTES



**RECORDED BY:** Melonie Trang

**MEETING PURPOSE:** Monthly PRC Board Meeting

**MEETING DATE:** July 9, 2008  
PRPL Office, Billings Community Center

**ATTENDEES:**  
PRC Board Members:  
Tom Iverson, Jim Strecker, Richard Deis, Margy Bonner,  
Wanda Walker, Rachel Cox, Mary Fitzpatrick, Rick DeVore

PRPL Staff Members:  
Mike Whitaker, PRPL Director  
Joe Fedin, Recreation Superintendent  
Lee Stadmiller, Cemetery Superintendent  
Mark Jarvis, Parks Planner

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## I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Chair Tom Iverson called the meeting to order at 11:35 am.

### A. INTRODUCTIONS

PRC Board Chair Tom Iverson introduced Jolene Rieck from Peaks to Plains Design to give a presentation on Riverfront Park Master Plan.

### B. APPROVAL OF MAY 14, 2008 MEETING MINUTES

May 14th meeting minutes were presented for approval. *PRC Board Member Richard Deis made a motion to accept the minutes as presented to the Board. Board Member Rick DeVore seconded. On a voice vote, the motion was unanimously accepted.*

### C. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

No additions to the agenda were given but a change was made to move *Riverfront Park Master Plan* from the Director's Report to New Business.

## II. DIRECTORS REPORT – Mike Whitaker

➤ Director Mike Whitaker informed the Board on the great success of the Grand Opening of Dehler Park. Mr. Whitaker contributed the success of the opening due to the help of PRPL Senior Office Assistant Dana Jefferson and all the user groups. Board member Rick Devore commented, “*It was fabulous; it couldn't have gone off any better.*” Mr. Whitaker said everyone from the department came together to assist to make it a great opening day. Mr. Whitaker said the only negative comment he received regarding the opening was the lack of drinking fountains and the concerns of baseballs going on North 27<sup>th</sup> Street. Mr. Whitaker said they are looking into the

matter of the baseball flying outside of the stadium. Mr. Whitaker said there is a design from the architect for netting along North 27<sup>th</sup> Street but costs run about \$100,000. He said for right now due to costs they are considering temporary signage warning people of the possible flying baseballs. Board member Rick DeVore brought up a concern about balls flying into the concourse area. He made a suggestion to hang netting down from the canopies to keep the balls from coming onto the concourse. Mr. Whitaker said they hope to use the left over dollars from the project to purchase netting.

- Mr. Whitaker said Park Planner Mark Jarvis and himself plan on meeting with Chuck Barthuly of the Better Billings Association/ Harvest Church to look at sites in the heights area for a pool. They are looking at at least 10 acres. One site possible is High Sierra Park. Board Chair Iverson asked if there were any other sites locations considered other than the heights. Mr. Jarvis said at this point no. A board member asked a question on whether Better Billings Association/Harvest Church is only looking at city parkland to build the pool. Mr. Whitaker said the pool could be located on parkland or purchased property; they will discuss that with Chuck at the meeting. Concerns and mixed thoughts on the city partnering with the BBA/Harvest Church were brought up again. Mr. Whitaker reminded the Board that this is only the preliminary stage and at this time we are only giving our advice and resources of information.
- Park Planner Mark Jarvis updated the Board on the Rush Subdivision Park. (Rush Park is located west of Shiloh off Poly Drive.) Mr. Jarvis said there are plans to begin developing Rush Park. Our process to begin design and construction for the park will start after the bid on the road construction has gone out. Chairman Iverson asked if there was a master plan already for the park. Mr. Jarvis said yes there was. Board member Rachel Cox asked if it was a neighborhood park and if so would an SID be attached to residents' taxes. Mr. Jarvis said yes it was a neighborhood park and yes there would be SID's attached.
- Mr. Whitaker informed the Board that the installation of the playground equipment at Central Park is going slower than planned. They are about fifty percent done with the project. The Parks Division is hoping to have it completed by August 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **III. PUBLIC COMMENT**

No comments were made from the public.

### **IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no unfinished business presented to the Board.

### **V. NEW BUSINESS**

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

Park Planner Jarvis told Board members that Peaks to Plains is finalizing the Master Plan for Riverfront. He said once it is altogether then it will be presented to the Board for their recommendation and then sent before City Council for adoption.

Mr. Jarvis introduced Jolene Rieck to give a presentation on the updates to the master plan. Ms. Rieck explained that the graphics presented at today's meeting would not be changed before being presented to the Council. She shared several things that have been updated and they are as follows:

- Existing entrance along South Billings Blvd. will be realigned and a possible turning lane put in.
- Audubon Society adding a nature center on Norm's Island
- Expand trails – continue the big bike trail
- Add a possible dog park close to the entrance or off Lake Josephine
- Additional entrances
- Motorized boat launch area – in the area of the old Washington Street Road

A question was asked if the bathrooms could be updated and include running water. It was told that due to the fact that Riverfront Park is in a 100-year flood plain, it is not possible.

A question was asked if porta potties would be available near the boat launch area. Mr. Whitaker expressed that this was a good question and Ms. Rieck said she would look into it.

Mr. Whitaker asked for the Board to decide if the department should move forward on presenting the Master Plan to Council.

Board member Richard Deis brought up the master plan not being presented to the Billings Task Force residents in that area. He suggested the presentation be presented to the Southwest Task Force for opinions, comments and information before presenting it to council.

After additional discussion on this matter, it was decided to have Peaks to Plains present the updated master plan to the Southwest Task Force and then wait until the August meeting before voting on recommendation of the updated master plan.

## **VI. DIVISION UPDATES**

### **A. Recreation Division:**

Recreation Superintendent Joe Fedin gave the following oral report for the recreation division:

- Swimming pools are doing well.
- Vermont Systems, provider of the RecTrac system used for registering recreation programs and rentals, will be coming in to train and do a web update to our system July 14-18<sup>th</sup>. Following the update installation and training the Recreation Division should be able to accept online registration off our website.
- Mr. Gene Blackwell has indicated a willingness to assist on the Skatepark bathroom project.
- Beginning to work on the specifications for the recreation buses that the department will be purchasing through the Exxon Mobil agreement.
- End of summer will give a final report on our summer programs financial outcome.
- The department is looking at having to replace the pool blankets and liner at Rose.

**B. Park Division:**

Mr. Whitaker said the department is continuing their search for a Parks Superintendent. The final day to apply for the position is set for July 11<sup>th</sup>. To date only fifteen people have applied.

**C. Park Planning Division:**

Park Planner Mark Jarvis gave an update on the planning division.

- Mr. Jarvis said the Briarwood Master Plan is just about complete. It will be going before the cities work session sometime in August and shortly after that before City Council.
- Board Chair Tom Iverson asked if the Pioneer Park Master Plan would be updated sometime soon. PRPL Director Mike Whitaker said yes it will and funding to pay for the updates will come from the sell of parkland in an industrial area near Amend Park.

**D. Cemetery Division:**

Cemetery Supervisor Lee Stadmiller gave a brief update on the Cemetery Division.

- The Cemetery is looking a little dry but they are working on that.
- Staff is busy with requests from all over the country to have their loved ones buried in Billings Montana.
- The 08 Budget for the Cemetery Division was all spent. The division did bring in about \$174,000.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

*Meeting adjourned at 1:05 pm*