

MEETING MINUTES

RECORDED BY: Melonie Trang



MEETING PURPOSE: Monthly PRC Board Meeting

MEETING DATE: October 8, 2008
Dehler Park Conference Room

ATTENDEES: PRC Board Members:

Tom Iverson, Richard Deis, Margy Bonner, Wanda Walker,
Rachel Cox, Rick DeVore, James Strecker, Dave Williams

PRPL Staff Members:

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

I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Chairman Tom Iverson called the meeting to order at 11:30 am.

A. INTRODUCTIONS

Introduced was Chris Hertz from the city's Public Works Engineering department.

B. APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 10, 2008 MEETING MINUTES

September 10th meeting minutes were presented for approval. *Board member Dave Williams made a motion to accept the minutes as presented to the Board. Board member Rick DeVore seconded. On a voice vote, the motion to accept the minutes was unanimously accepted.*

C. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

No additions

II. DIRECTORS REPORT – Mike Whitaker

PRPL Director Mike Whitaker informed the Board that following a recommendation from Park Supervisor Dean Sjolseth, the Better Billings Association (BBA) is considering the 10 acre undeveloped parkland Sahara Park as a new location for their heights pool project. He said a matrix on the pros and cons comparing Sahara to Castlerock Park has been done and the site is considered to be the best location for a pool. Mr. Whitaker said the only drawback at the site is power lines along the east side. He added that from a design perspective it would be possible to locate the parking lot there eliminating the concern and safety issues of having water near electricity. Mr. Whitaker said the department was asked to serve on the BBA's design team and we did accept.

Board Chair Iverson asked if Sahara Park had a master plan. Mr. Whitaker said no. He said he has spoken with the City Administrator Tina Volek and from their discussion it was decided to create one following site plan procedures. Those are; create a plan/design, make a presentation of the plan to the public for their input, go before the PRC Board for a recommendation to accept the plan and then finally follow that by going before City Council for final their approval.

Board Chair Iverson asked if the church liked this location. Mr. Whitaker said they liked this idea better than Castlerock.

Board member Wanda Walker asked if there was going to be a trail link put into the park. Park Planner Mark Jarvis said no, it was going in at different location.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

No comments were made from the public.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Dog Park:

Park Planner Mark Jarvis said the Dog Park committee held their October meeting and discussed the preliminary costs for the High Sierra Dog Park. He said estimated pricing for irrigation, fencing, drinking water, benches, shade structures and hard surfaces would be around \$137,000 with the greatest cost coming from irrigation. He explained that the cost is primarily for parts/materials and does not include labor costs. He said he does hope to bring down the price tag by involving volunteers to do some of the labor.

A Board member asked for the size of the park. Mr. Jarvis replied that it will be approximately 8 acres. He said they will be dividing it in half so four acres will be resting while the other side is used until worn down.

Board member Rick DeVore asked if they had looked into the Boy Scouts for help. Mr. Jarvis replied yes; he said there is an area vet who is attending the meetings and bringing along an Eagle Scout. The young scout is interested in participating as well as possible other scout/scout troops in putting up the fence.

Chairman Iverson asked if there would be offered advertising space for donations. Mr. Jarvis replied that the committee hasn't thought through that but it was a possibility.

Board member Rachel Cox requested an update on Riverfront Park. Mr. Jarvis reported there is a list of consultants who can do a wetland analysis on a contract basis. The committee plans to contact several of the consultants to see if they would be willing to donate their services. Cost to do the study is around \$1,800 - \$3,600.

Board member Margy Bonner asked what kinds of professionals do wetland

analysis. Mr. Jarvis said they are engineers or resource specialists.

B. Department Recognition and Exhibit Policy:

Park Planner Mark Jarvis along with Board member Margy Bonner and Wanda Walker attended a meeting with the Western Heritage Center to discuss exhibits and get insight on how to better handle recognitions. Ms. Walker was asked to create a draft on policies for recognitions and exhibits. Ms. Walker said she has created a two part policy so far; one regarding recognition of gifts and the other pertains more to exhibits. The Board briefly looked over the policies and will have further discussion at a later date once the policies are complete.

C. American Legion Baseball Hall of Fame Plaque:

Board members continued their discussion from last month's meeting on plaques inside Dehler Park stadium. Members agreed on having the standard policy include; all plaques carry the Parks and Recreation logo, all plaques are subject to the PRC Board's approval, be baseball related, and have a maximum of two logos. They determined based upon review of September's board minutes that they will follow Sam McDonald's plaque design for the American Legion plaque and then come up with standards that relate to it to create a formalized policy. Parks Director Mike Whitaker agreed to put together a draft policy and bring to the Board at next month's meeting.

D. Peggy Purvis Request:

Due to no finalized policy for plaques and exhibits, it was agreed upon by board and staff to write a letter to Peggy Purvis regarding her request. A recommendation was made by Board member Margy Bonner to have Parks Director Mike Whitaker write a thank you to Ms. Purvis thanking her for the information; telling her we are developing a policy in order to make sure information is historically accurate generally recognizing the development of baseball in Billings; that we do not anticipate having this policy fully developed for another 6-12 months; that we will rely on local professionals to guide us; that we will certainly make her information available as consideration and finally to let her know we are limited in time and money. Board member Dave Williams seconded the recommendation. On a voice vote all were in favor of accepting the recommendation made by Ms. Bonner.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Billings Parks Foundation:

Board members Margy Bonner and Rachel Cox setup a meeting with the Billings Parks Foundation and the Parks and Recreation Department to discuss a partnership. From the recent meeting the foundation expressed several things; their desire to involve more of the younger generation with their committee, to market the foundation to the community in a greater way and that they have money set aside currently for projects that they would like to donate.

Board Chair Iverson expressed we should get the media involved to do a story on

the foundation to give the public knowledge of what the foundation is about.

Mr. Whitaker expressed that the key is developing a marketing plan on how we want to market the foundation. He said he has asked Recreation Superintendent Joe Fedin to come up with a concept that relates to doing website.

Board member Rick DeVore mentioned doing a little flier on the foundation and putting it in the water bill.

Mr. Whitaker said the department and foundation will be meeting again October 30th.

B. Rim Point Park:

Park Planner Mark Jarvis said due to the widening of Rimrock Road and the extension of the cities storm water plans it has become necessary to implement the detention pond at Rim Point Park. City Engineer Chris Hertz was at the meeting and explained that there is an existing smaller storm drain in Rimrock Road but it is severely undersized and cannot handle any excessive amounts of water. Mr. Jarvis described the storm water detention pond as a dry bottom basin. He said when a major storm event happens the water will back into to the pond, preventing the smaller storm drain from being overwhelmed.

Mr. Hertz informed the Board that installation for the detention pond has already begun and will hopefully be finished by the end of this fall. He added that during the installation there were several trees that were removed but at this time there are no plans to replace them due to irrigation but they plan to revegetate the park to its natural setting with a natural seed following the completion of the project.

Board member DeVore asked how much rain would have to fall before water goes into the park. Mr. Hertz said they base their rain event on years; there are two storm, ten year and 100 year events and a ten and hundred year event would probably go into the pond.

Board Chair Iverson asked if there were any plans to develop the park. Park Director Mike Whitaker said that it all goes back to resources. Mr. Jarvis responded by saying residents have expressed both support in putting in a traditional park with an area for children to play; while others said they would like to see it stay as a natural park.

Board members further discussed the development of the park and expressed interest in contacting area residents to see if they would be on board in the development or not.

C. Parks Superintendent Position:

PRPL Director Mike Whitaker told the Board the department has narrowed down the candidates for the Parks Superintendent position to three individuals; two are in house and one from Great Falls. Mr. Whitaker said a final decision should be

made and the applicant in place by the middle of November.

VI. DIVISION UPDATES

A. Recreation Division:

The final report documents on the summer programs were passed out and reviewed by board and staff at the meeting. Recreation Superintendent Joe Fedin gave the following comments on the report:

- Overall it was a fairly decent year.
- Attendance at Rose Park pool was up about 1,000 and South Pool attendance dropped slightly.
- Fees increased this year causing revenue to be up.
- Batting cages brought in about fifteen thousand.
- There were fifty-five sound stage rentals.
- The new summer programs like the baseball summer camp and the nature camp did well.
- The division spent about ten thousand dollars on life guard incentives.

Mr. Fedin gave a brief summary on the current Specifications for the recreation buses being purchased through the Exxon Mobil grant should be finalized in the next two weeks.

Pools and batting cage are being winterized.

Doing housecleaning on the registration software system. The department now has the capability to go with online registration.

Several staff members were able to attend the September NRPA conference in Helena.

The Federal Government this past year has adopted a new federal law requiring all pools including wading pools, to have specialized covers (which have not been approved as of yet by the government) on all drains and that there be more than one main drain. Currently, our main pools regular drains will be fine because they are large enough but the southside wading pool has only one main drain. Our options to fix the problem would be to either tear into the wading pool floor and install another drain or turn it into a spray deck. Long term it would be cost efficient to turn it into a spray deck. Further discussion on the issue will be discussed with the department and City Administrator.

The liner at Rose Pool needs to be replaced soon. Costs would run around \$175,000.

B. Park Division:

No report for this division

C. Park Planning Division:

Park Planner Mark Jarvis said they are working on finishing up the Riverfront Park Master Plan. They are asking for the last revisions before going to City Council for a final vote.

Chairman Iverson asked about Briarwood. Mr. Jarvis said they are just waiting to get on the Council work session for Briarwood and also Howard Heights-Dicki Park.

D. Cemetery Division:

Written report was included in Board packet. No comments or questions were asked regarding the report.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Board member Rick DeVore made a motion to adjourn meeting at 1:00pm. Board member Rachel Cox seconded. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned.