

# MEETING MINUTES

RECORDED BY: Melonie Trang



MEETING PURPOSE: Monthly PRC Board Meeting

MEETING DATE: December 12, 2007  
PRPL Office, Billings Community Center

ATTENDEES: PRC Board Members:

Denis Pitman, Tom Iverson, Richard Deis, Mary Fitzpatrick,  
Rachel Cox, Margy Bonner, James Strecker, Wanda Walker

PRPL Staff Members:

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

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## I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Chair Denis Pitman called the meeting to order at 11:30 am.

### A. INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions include Special Guests: Darlene Tussing and Wyett Friday from City Planning; & Chuck Wissehbach from Peaks to Plains Design.

### B. APPROVAL OF November 14<sup>TH</sup>, 2007 MEETING MINUTES

The PRC Board reviewed the minutes. An action was made to accept/decline the November Minutes. *Mary Fitzpatrick made a motion to approve the November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2007 meeting minutes. Margy Bonner seconded. All were in favor and the motion carried.*

### C. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

No additions

## II. DIRECTORS REPORT – Mike Whitaker

### 1. Ballpark Update:

Mike made the following comments in regards to the ballpark:

- The construction of the ballpark has continued to remain on schedule.
- The ballpark shortfall is at \$28,000. The beginning balance was \$400,000 but through a steady flow of contributions, it has reduced it substantially.

- The brick campaign is doing great; purchase forms are coming in on a daily basis.
- There will be a change order request presented to City Council for replacement of the sidewalk along 27<sup>th</sup> Street and also an electrical upgrade to the power sources for the kiosks that will be located throughout the concourse.
- Mike passed around copies of the City Council Staff Report “Agreement to Place Art with Lyle Johnson” dated November 8, 2004, (a copy of the agreement is in the December Board packet) to clarify on the donation of the Ed Bayne statue for the ballpark from Mr. Lyle Johnson. He made note that this was a gift donation from Lyle to the City of Billings at no cost and that it was approved by the Cities Art Committee and City Council.
- Margy updated the Board that a resolution has been agreed upon regarding concession sales and scheduling in the Management Agreement between the City of Billings and Mustangs.

The Mustangs have agreed to handle concessions sales during all baseball events. Non-event concession sales will be handled by the Parks and Recreation Department. Parks and Recreation will manage the booking and scheduling of all non-baseball events at the stadium. Mustangs will handle scheduling of all baseball events. Included also in the agreement is the upkeep of the grounds which will be maintained by the Parks and Recreation.

### **III. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment presented.

### **IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

No unfinished business was presented.

### **V. NEW BUSINESS**

#### **A. Riverfront Park Master Plan Community Survey Results:**

Chuck Wissehbach from Peaks to Plains gave a PowerPoint presentation on the results from the community survey for Riverfront Park. (*A copy of the PowerPoint presentation is included in the December Board packet*) Comments from the presentation are as follows:

1. 721 surveys were sent out to area city residents; out of the 721, 317 responded.
2. Residents reflected positively on the park; one major complaint was the hindrance mosquito's cause.
3. People preferred using the park for social gatherings trail hiking, nature walks, wildlife observation and fishing.
4. They would like to see the existing park improved.

5. Facility preferences were toilets with running water to wash hands, additional picnic tables and shelters, drinking water, lighted parking and picnic areas and concessions and equipment rental.
6. Additional things people would like to see added to the park would be a nature/educational center, boating and fishing access & more trails.
7. Two thirds like the nature concept for the park.
8. Activities preferred in the park: water sports, nature classes, jet skiing, in-line skating, dog walking and bicycling.
9. Majority of those surveyed expressed there should be no unleashed dogs permitted in the park.

A question came up on whether dogs are required to be on a leash at Riverfront Park. Gene explained that dogs must be on leash if they are within the city limits. Dogs do not have to be on a leash but must be controlled by owner if they are on county property. Riverfront Park lies on County jurisdiction, dogs do not have to be on a leash; but due to the fact that the city owns the park we are allowed to create rules which include no dogs are allowed to freely roam on the landscaped areas around the lake.

**B. Dog Park:**

Mark informed the Board that a public interest meeting on creating a local dog park was held November 29th. Approximately 50 people were in attendance. The overall consensus was in support of the park. An exploratory committee will be formed to discuss further issues regarding the park. Mark requested that a PRC Board member be included on the committee. A request was made for volunteers; Rachael Cox and James Strecker both accepted.

**C. Draft Trail Maintenance Plan- Attachments A & B in December Board Packet:**

Darlene Tussing presented a draft of the Trail Maintenance Plan. This draft was created to help ease the concerns brought up by the community on the maintenance of these trails and what policies are in place to address these issues. This plan is to set the standards for maintenance of trials.

Currently, the city's Parks and Recreation Department maintains trail corridors within city parkland, some sections of the county, trails built by private developers through commercial subdivisions and trails in subdivisions through the Park Maintenance Districts. The city's Public Works Department maintains all trails built along public roadways within the City Public Right of Way. There is no formal maintenance fund agreement between the city and county.

Public Works has requested to be taken out of the Trial Maintenance Plan because they are maintaining their trails to what level they feel comfortable with; currently they don't have extra money to work with. They are hiring PRPL to care for and maintain trails due to the amount of funds they have budgeted.

It is recommended based upon the information collected for the plan to have only one entity caring for all the trails.

The final Trail Maintenance Plan will be presented at an upcoming City Council meeting for approval.

**D. Draft Trail Donation Policy- Attachment C in December Board Packet:**

The Trail Donation Policy was developed due to inquiries and questions from developers and the Home Builders Association regarding how donations funds were recognized, dispersed and maintained. Wyette Friday from City Planning reviewed the policy with the Board for their input before he will present a final copy to the City Council for approval.

It was clarified in the policy that cash-in-lieu payments are not considered donations. They are considered a requirement for sub-divisions to pay.

The policy will follow the same guidelines used by the City for cash donations which are that any amounts over \$500 must be approved by City Council.

Donations over \$5000 will be honored through signage. Currently, there are several signs posted along trails giving credit to the individual or organization that have donated thousands of dollars for trails.

A comment was made to see the \$5000 donation amount raised higher before receiving a sign for their contribution.

A suggestion was made to have a sign person involved in signage process.

Ideas given for placement of signs were: along the trail in the ground or integrated into a structure.

After further discussion, Wyett made note of all suggestions and comments to update the Trail Donation Policy before returning back to the PRC Board for their final approval.

**E. Parks & Recreation Fee Adjustments:**

Joe presented to the Board a proposed rental fee increase for 2008. (*Copy of the proposed fees are included in the December Board Packet*) Fee increases would include all shelters, the Veterans Crafthouse, the South Gazebo, North Park and Zimmerman Center, soundstage, sound system and stage light rental, park use permits and picnic and volleyball kits. Alcohol permit fee increase was included in the proposal but must be approved of by the City Administrator separately from all other rental fees. An action was made to either accept or deny the proposed fee increase with the exception of the alcohol permit. ***Margy Bonner made a motion to accept the proposed rental fee increases excluding the alcohol permit to be***

*adopted as presented. Mary Fitzpatrick seconded. The motion passed unanimously.*

*Margy Bonner moved to send a recommendation to Tina Volek, City Administrator to have the Alcohol permit fee increase from \$25 to \$50.00. Mary Fitzpatrick seconded. The recommendation was accepted unanimously.*

*Rachael Cox made an additional recommendation to be included with proposed rental fee increase that funds received for shelters are earmarked for the maintenance of the shelters. Margy Bonner seconded. The recommendation was accepted unanimously.*

#### **F. Election of Officers:**

Denis Pitman, PRC Board Chair gave a letter of resignation effective December 13, 2007 to Mike Whitaker. *Denis opened the floor for PRC Chair nominations.*

*Margy Bonner and Mary Fitzpatrick nominated Rachael Cox. Denis Pitman and Richard Deis nominated Tom Iverson. No other nominations were made. Margy Bonner moved to have the floor closed for nominations. Richard Deis seconded. All were in favor and floor was closed. Denis requested for a public raise of hands for their nominee of choice. With a final count of 3 to 4; Tom Iverson was noted as choice for PRC Chairman. Denis opened floor for Vice-Chair. Margy nominated Rachael Cox. Mary Fitzpatrick seconded. Richard Deis made a motion for nominations for Vic-Chair be closed. Motion was made and accepted unanimously.*

## **VI. DIVISION UPDATES**

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

There was no recreation division report in the December 12<sup>th</sup> Board packet. Joe informed the Board on the following:

- The annual Santa Calling is scheduled for that evening. Close to 300 letters were sent in.
- The VSI website for online registering is now in progress.
- Our grant from Exxon for the purchase of new vehicles has finally been approved. We should be able to get two new buses for the Recreation Department and a new garbage truck for the Parks Department.
- Pools and Cemetery fees will be on the City Council work session January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2008.
- The Winter Program brochure is complete and will be in the Billings Gazette on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008 and online earlier than that.

- The solar panels that were installed by Northwestern Energy in Community Center are working. The energy bill was down for the first time all year.

**B. Park Division:**

The Park Division report was included in the December 12<sup>th</sup> Board packet for review.

**C. Park Planning Division:**

The Park Planning Division report was included in the December 12<sup>th</sup> Board packet for review.

**D. Cemetery Division:**

The Cemetery Division report was included in the December 12<sup>th</sup> Board packet for review.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:05 pm.