



## MEETING MINUTES

**RECORDED BY:** Melonie Trang

**MEETING PURPOSE:** Monthly PRC Board Meeting

**MEETING DATE:** January 13, 2021

**AND LOCATION:** Due to COVID19, meeting was held via Zoom

**ATTENDEES:**

City Staff:

- Mayor Bill Cole
- Assistant City Administrator, Kevin Iffland
- Elyse Monat, City Planning

PRC Board Members:

- Thom MacLean, Maia Dickerson, Lew Morris, Jami Clark, Chuck Platt, Tom Rupsis, Thelma Armstrong

PRPL Staff Members:

- Mike Whitaker, Director
- Mike Pigg, Park Superintendent
- Kory Thomson, Recreation Superintendent
- Mark Jarvis, Park Planner
- Paul Reinhardt, Community Outreach Specialist

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### I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Chairman Tom Rupsis called the meeting to order at 11:01 AM

#### A. INTRODUCTIONS

City Council: Danny Choriki, Mike Boyett  
Public attendee: Mike Mayott  
Newest Park Board members; Maia Dickerson, Jami Clark

#### B. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

No additions to the agenda

#### C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

*Chairman Rupsis asked for a motion on the December 9, 2020 minutes. Board member Thom MacLean moved to approve the minutes. Board member Lew Morris seconded. On a raised hand vote, the motion passed.*

### II. DIRECTORS REPORT – Michael Whitaker

Director Michael Whitaker welcomed Maia Dickerson and Jamie Clark to the board. He announced Board member Larry Brewster has/will be leaving the Park Board. Mr. Brewster was elected to the Montana Legislation in the November's election.

Director Whitaker informed the board of the new Parks Police officer; Nate Schara

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

Chairman Rupsis opened the floor for public comment.

There were no comments at the time, and the floor was closed.

### **VI. NEW BUSINESS**

#### **A. Election of 2021 Park Board officers:**

*Board member Thom MacLean made a motion to have Tom Rupsis continue as Park Board Chair. Board member Lew Morris seconded. Motion was voted on and accepted.*

*Board member Chuck Platt made a motion to have Thom MacLean as Park Board Vice-chair. Board member MacLean accepted the nomination. Board member Thelma Armstrong seconded the motion. Motion was voted on and accepted.*

#### **B. Parks and Recreation Monthly Report:**

##### **Recreation Superintendent Kory Thomson report:**

- Interest in senior health, wellness and fitness has increased
- 4-6<sup>th</sup> grade boys basketball has started
- Registration closes for adult city league. Down by 10 teams from last year.
- Opened registration for co-ed adult volleyball
- Grade school girls volleyball will start after 4-6<sup>th</sup> grade boys basketball

##### **Parks Superintendent Mike Pigg report for Parks, Forestry, and Cemetery divisions:**

- Staff is going through all pump stations and doing any repairs
- Shrub beds are being rebuilt-CooperRidge Subdivision
- Removed some trees on Montana Avenue
- Sweeping trails; trails seem to be very busy right now
- Buckthorn removal going on at Riverfront Park
- Staff removed fall protection and the old playground equipment at Rose Park prior to the contractor doing the install. By staff doing the removal it saves the city around twenty-thirty thousand dollars.
- Update: most of the headstones at Mountview Cemetery that were damaged from being flipped over, have been repaired. Only a few that were older were replaced
- High Sierra restroom sustained damage from someone trying to blow it up. Staff was able to get it back to being operable in a day.

##### **Park Planner Mark Jarvis gave the Parks planning report:**

- Castle Rock master plan is just about finished and will go before City Council on January 25. Once the plan is adopted, plans are to move forward on the playground.
- The contractor is installing the playground at Rose. Should be finished in another couple of weeks, weather permitting.
- Working on the drawing for the first phase of Coulson Park. Once completed, the department will move forward on the construction of the

restroom facility, upgrades to the boat launch, installation of picnic areas and parking.

- Further implementing the master plan at Optimist Park; working on a major shelter, benches, picnic tables, and security lighting.
- Continuing to move forward on Poly Vista Park, reviewing 30% design. This will help chart us to move forward on the project. (Announcement: Landon Legacy recently received a \$350,000 donation for the Poly Vista project)

Chairman Rupsis opened the floor for board discussion on the division reports.

Board member Armstrong asked how it was going on personnel (seasonals) recruitment. Park Superintendent Pigg said there are currently no park seasonals employed but in about a month, we will be sending out a letter to all our returning seasonals to confirm their return. He said this procedure helps in the department determining how many additional seasonal staff we need to go out and actively recruit. Board member Armstrong asked if there was anything, the board could do to help with recruitment. Park Superintendent Pigg said if the board knows of anyone interested in a summer seasonal part time position, let them know we are hiring. Recreation Superintendent Thomson commented that the recreation division hires around 200 seasonals per year. Mr. Thomson said in the spring, the division offers a lifeguarding class that is used as a recruitment tool. He said they also work closely with Human Resources to put out personnel requests at the beginning of the season. These jobs are posted on the city's website.

Board member Lew Morris asked about the restroom facility at Centennial Park. Park Planner Jarvis said we have had some issues with the supplier of that facility. He said we are going to need to go out to an additional vendor and that staff is working through the process now.

Chairman Rupsis asked Mr. Jarvis to explain his comments further. Park Planner Jarvis said there has been some issues with the supplier and the city's legal department is involved in it and he cannot give any more information than that on it. Mr. Rupsis asked for more information on the contract procedures. Mr. Jarvis said the city's contract system is set up to protect us and that this contract is doing what it was set up to do in this situation.

Chairman Rupsis asked Mark Jarvis if the shelter he was referring to earlier at Optimist is new. Mr. Jarvis said it will be new. Mr. Rupsis asked how it would be funded. Mr. Jarvis said through the South Billings Urban Renewal District. Chairman Rupsis asked if there was a way to do a budget amendment to start on the project at Poly Vista. Assistant City Administrator Kevin Iffland said we have meeting next week to discuss Poly Vista.

Chairman Rupsis asked about the grading at Centennial Park. Park Superintendent Pigg said there is work being done on the southwest end of the park and on the other end where a future parking lot will eventually be going in. These two areas are being done to help with flooding issues.

No further comments from the board, Chairman Rupsis opened the floor for public comment.

Mayor Cole called to let the public know there is a board vacancy position open.

Public attendee Rick DeVore asked for an update on the Centennial Park bathroom. Park Planner Jarvis said he would respond with his comments earlier; the department is having issues with the supplier providing the facility according to the contract. He said we are going out to a different vendor and that is causing us some issues.

**C. Amend Park Development Council (APDC) Proposed Budget and Fee Structure:**

Mike Mayott presented the 2020-2021 financial report for the Amend Park development Council.

Chairman Rupsis opened the floor for questions or comments.

Chairman Rupsis asked if the \$25,000 put away every year, is for maintenance on the new turf field. Mr. Mayott said yes. Mr. Rupsis asked if it was on the budget. Mr. Mayott said he was not sure but would make the adjustment to show it.

Board member Lew Morris commented that he appreciated all the work Mike Mayott has done and organized at Amend.

***Chairman Rupsis asked for a recommendation to City Council on the Amend Park Development Council proposed budget and fee structure as presented by Mike Mayott of the Amend Park Development Council.***

Chairman Rupsis opened the floor to public comment. No comments were made, and the floor was closed.

***Board member Lew Morris made a motion to accept the report. Board member Chuck Platt seconded the motion. On a hand-raised vote, the motion passed.***

**D. Centennial Park Grand Opening:**

Paul Reinhardt, Community Outreach Specialist announced the grand opening for Centennial Park is being planned for this coming June. A committee is being formed to plan the celebration. Board member Thom MacLean, Mayor Cole, Friends of Billings Dog Parks, Parks Foundation, Little League, West End Task Force and Faith E are on the committee.

Board member Lew Morris asked if he could be on the committee. Paul said yes he could add him.

Chairman Rupsis asked for public comment on the grand opening.

Mayor Cole commented that he would like to see this be a large party.

After no additional comments, public comment was closed.

Board member Platt asked if there was any more discussion on moving School District II stadium to Amend Park. Director Whitaker said after yesterday's Zoom meeting with the APDC, South Urban Renewal District, and City Administration, they are looking into the feasibility of locating the stadium there. He said we are only in the preliminary stages if that is a good site. Mr. Platt asked how long that will take. Mr. Whitaker said he did not know and will keep the board updated. School District II board representative Marc Wahl said he was asked to meet with Michael Whitaker and the South Urban Renewal District to explore this further.

Board member Morris asked if the move of the stadium was part of the South Billings Urban Renewal District's plan. Chairman Rupsis said no

## **VII. OLD BUSINESS**

### **A. Parks and Trail Ballot Issue:**

Board chair Rupsis continued his discussion on the parks and trail ballot issue from the previous board meetings.

The floor was opened to questions and comments from the board.

Vice-chair Thom MacLean said we have been getting a lot of good feedback from City Council members. He said Council does need details, so we would like to work out some of those to get some questions answered.

Chairman Rupsis opened the floor to public comment.

City Council woman Penny Ronning commented the advisory board is doing a great job. She believes we have great support from the community.

City Council member Danny Choriki commented that the board should consider a general capital fund for all city projects.

Mayor Cole commented about the subject of moving the stadium to Amend and not giving up the recreation center. He also made the following comments on the parks ballot issue:

- Go out with the public safety mill levy but wait on parks
- Do a big parks levy
- Do hybrid levy that is half safety and half parks; shifting parks money out of the general fund and into this special levy freeing up the money in the general fund for safety.

He also wanted to encourage the board to communicate with public safety advocates.

After no further public comments, the floor was closed.

## **VIII. AJOURNMENT – There was no further business, and the meeting adjourned at 12:26 PM**

**(Please note these are summary minutes)**