

MEETING MINUTES

RECORDED BY: Melonie Trang

MEETING PURPOSE: PRC Board Meeting

MEETING DATE: March 11, 2009
Dehler Park Conference Room



ATTENDEES: PRC Board Members:

Tom Iverson, Margy Bonner, Wanda Walker, Rick DeVore,
Catherine Grott, Todd Royal, Darwin George, Gary Gray

PRPL Staff Members:

Mike Whitaker, PRPL Director
Jon Thompson, Park Superintendent
Joe Fedin, Recreation Superintendent
Lee Stadtmiller, Cemetery Superintendent
Mark Jarvis, Park Planner

I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

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

A. INTRODUCTIONS

Names recorded on the attendance roster were: Jim Larson, Bryan Benjamin, John Schmitz, Jim Sommerville, Jon Egeland, Tony Leenknecht, Donell Small, Rob Walla, Kevin Funyak, and Garth Clarin

Chairman Iverson introduced the three newest members of the Board; Gary Gray, Todd Royal and Darwin George.

B. APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 11, 2009 MINUTES

February 11th meeting minutes were presented for approval. Board member Margy Bonner made a motion to accept the minutes as presented to the Board. Board member Rachel Cox 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

- Mr. Whitaker said the Citizen Survey will be presented at the City Council work session on April 6th at 5:30pm.
- Mr. Whitaker said the Heights pool project is moving ahead. He along with Recreation Superintendent Joe Fedin and Recreation Supervisor Kory Thomson were

- assisting the Better Billings Foundation in the selection of an aquatic consultant for their pool project.
- Mr. Whitaker said the Funding Committee has held their first meeting. The committee consists of five staff and three Board members.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Several individuals from the public were in attendance to express their concerns, comments and suggestions regarding the Athletic Field Use Policy for primary and secondary permit holders. Those comments, concerns and suggestions are as follows:

- Concern: New policy offered by Little League would reduce access to sports teams.
- Comment: Keep current policy
- Comment: Current policy is dissatisfactory
- Comment: Secondary users have helped in paying for the upkeep at the parks ballfields.
- Comment: Agree with the new proposed policy. Need to be fair to everyone and this new policy does that.
- Comment: Cost for maintenance of fields should be shared by everyone.
- Suggestion: Preventative maintenance by all user groups would and does help with costs.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Billings Park and Recreation Preservation Foundation:

Board member Rachel Cox said the foundation has not meet for about a month but their brochure is set-up and online at the Park and Recreation website.

B. Centennial Park Baseball Field:

Board member Rick DeVore said the District Little League is moving forward on raising the \$70,000 in additional funds as noted in the agreement for the grant from the Baseball Tomorrow Fund. He said the deadline to have all the funds in is March 31, 2009.

C. Centennial Park Lease:

Director Mike Whitaker said the Centennial lease was reviewed by City Attorney Brent Brooks. Mr. Brooks has expressed for the department to send a letter to the Billings Amateur Hockey League informing them that we will not be renewing their lease in 2010 due to section 10 of the agreement.

Board member Rachel Cox made a motion to have the letter written before the next PRC Board meeting. Board member Rick DeVore seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

D. Sahara Park Master Plan:

City Council has reviewed Sahara Park Master Plans A & B and has decided to delay their approval until a later date. They concluded that the language concerning the transition from Plan A to Plan B was not clear.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Athletic Field Use Policy:

Board and Staff reviewed and discussed the old and newly presented field use policy. From the comments made by the public, staff and board it was clearly shown that both groups are having communication problems. It was suggested that both Primary and Secondary permit holders meet regularly on neutral ground to discuss usage and maintenance of fields. It was also suggested that both groups share costs for day to day usage, continue using the current policy this season and any field projects need to be done in the fall not the spring.

B. Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment:

Mr. Whitaker said the department is going forward on the needs assessment for Parks and Recreation. This will be a statically valid survey that the department will be conducting in the city. He said 28 Request for Proposals (RFP) for a consultant to do the assessment have gone out and the deadline for responses is 5 pm on March 13th.

C. Pioneer Park Master Plan:

Park Planner Mark Jarvis said he is pulling together a RFP on a consultant for the Pioneer Park Master Plan. He said the department will be very selective on which one they choose. Mr. Whitaker said the two things driving the update of the master plan are; one - the current plan is about 50 years old and only consists of a one page document with a few items drawn and two- users' conflicts; mainly being disc golf.

D. Park and Recreation Business Plan:

Mr. Whitaker said he has been given direction along with all other city departments to come up with a business plan as it relates to their departments operation. He said he has been directed to develop this plan in the next couple of months. He hopes bring a draft back to the Board for their input.

VI. DIVISION UPDATES

A. Recreation Division-Recreation Superintendent Joe Fedin:

Update report was included in the board packet.

B. Park Division-Park Superintendent Jon Thompson:

- Mr. Thompson said the park division is working on the Fiscal 2010 budget which begins on July 10th. He said their main focus has been on the PMD budget.
- Mr. Thompson said the park staff is currently working on snow removal, irrigation issues and picnic tables.
- Mr. Thompson said graffiti has been a big problem in the parks lately. He said recently they were hanging over the side of the rims sandblasting graffiti off them.

- Mr. Thompson commented that we have added over 22 new parks under the park maintenance since 2003 and have added no new staff. There is currently 12 park staff and each one has approximately 184 acres to maintain.

C. Park Planning Division-Park Planner Mark Jarvis:

Update report was included in the board packet.

D. Cemetery Division- Cemetery Superintendent Lee Stadtmiller:

Update report was included in the board packet.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

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