

MEETING MINUTES

RECORDED BY: Melonie Trang

MEETING PURPOSE: PRC Board Meeting

**MEETING DATE
AND LOCATION:** January 11, 2012
Community Center



ATTENDEES: PRC Board Members:
Tom Iverson, Catherine Grott, Margy Bonner, Rick DeVore,
Rachel Cox
PRPL Staff Members:
Mike Whitaker, Director
Jon Thompson, Park Superintendent
Joe Fedin, Park Superintendent
Mark Jarvis, Park Planner
Lee Stadtmiller, Cemetery Manager

I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

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

A. INTRODUCTIONS

Tina Volek, City Administrator

Public citizens: Jim Berg, Diane Jung, Dave Brown, and Don Jones

B. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Board member Margy Bonner made a motion to approve the November 30, 2011 meeting minutes with the corrected name change for Al Koezler. Board member Rick DeVore seconded. On a voice vote, motion passed unanimously. Board member Margy Bonner made a motion to approve the December 9, 2011 meeting minutes. Board member Rachel Cox seconded. On a voice vote, motion passed unanimously.

Board member Rick DeVore made a motion to approve the June 1, 2011 meeting minutes. Board member Rachel Cox seconded. On a voice vote, motion passed unanimously.

C. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Action Items was added to the agenda under New Business.

II. DIRECTORS REPORT – Mike Whitaker

Mr. Whitaker announced there will be a ribbon cutting ceremony for the Swords Park Trail II Grand Opening on Tuesday, January 17th at 12:30 pm.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Jim Berg questioned the \$245,000 a year for weed management on the three year spending plan. He also asked if weeds were being managed now in our parks. Mr. Thompson said all of our parks in the general fund, which included Pioneer, North, South

and Riverfront, are not sprayed for weeds and have not been sprayed due to cuts from the budget back in the early 1990's. Mr. Thompson said the \$245,000 is for the department to spray for weeds in our general fund parks and includes being able to deal with noxious weeds in our natural parkland areas which include Phipps and Swords.

Don Jones questioned Jon Thompson on a situation this past summer involving the park staff closing the bathrooms at Stewart Park at 9 pm during a Legion game. His concern was people needing the use of a bathroom and it was closed. Mr. Thompson said the department has spoken with the Legion regarding bathroom closures and we are working on fixing the problem.

Don Jones questioned the Recreation Division on their creation and funding of a baseball program. He stated that there is already a huge baseball program being facilitated in the community; referring to the privately funded Little League so why would the Park and Recreation Department create and fund an additional baseball program. Mr. Fedin said the department will program any area that the citizens/tax payer shows a demand for. He said this baseball program was created due to the request from citizens wanting this type of program. This program focuses on the 13-15 year old age bracket on a smaller playing field. He said we are not adding any additional age brackets. He said the program is not out to compete with Little League. He said this program is in its third year. He said the department is always out to meet the need of its citizens. Mr. Whitaker said the teams playing in the program pay for the direct costs doing the program so there is no direct impact to the city/department.

Don Jones commented the need for more dog parks.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Sub Committees Development:

Board member Bonner said that her along with several other board members are anticipating a huge amount of work responding and addressing to the City Councils issues with the city-wide assessment district. She said their thoughts are to create sub-committees that would address specific issues. She would like the board, staff, council and the public to be a part of the committees. She said it is recommend to have three committees; one to study the Park Maintenance Districts, second to study the sale of parkland and third to be a public information committee.

Board Chair Iverson said it was fine and asked how the committees would be setup, where they would meet and how they were going to hold these meetings. Ms. Bonner said they would probably be regular meetings. Mr. Whitaker said he would like to see the meetings held here and staff can advertise them.

Mr. Iverson said he would like to see these meetings very open.

Mr. Whitaker said the committees should make quarterly reports to City Council and include in part of the report an update on the assessment.

Board member Rachel Cox volunteered to coordinate the Sale of Parkland committee with Margy Bonner and possibly Darwin George as committee members. Park Planner Mark Jarvis may also be assisting.

Board member Rick DeVore volunteered to coordinate the Park Maintenance

Districts Committee with the assistance of staff member Jon Thompson and Board Chair Iverson.

Board member Cathy Grott volunteered to coordinate the Public Information Committee with the assistance of Chairman Iverson.

It was recommended to hold a first meeting with all the committees this month or the first part of February. It was suggested to hold the meetings in the morning due to people's work schedule.

Ms. Grott suggested coordinating a schedule of meetings for the next 6 to nine months. She said the meetings should not be held on the same day.

City Administrator Tina Volek suggested: limiting its members on each committee, include a public comment time at every meeting, make sure the committees are known publicly and to have the agendas available in advance to the public.

Mr. Whitaker said once a meeting schedule has been made, the department can post the schedule on the PRPL. He requested for each coordinator to contact him with their meeting dates and times.

Chairman Iverson said the committees should have a limit on the number of members. It was recommended to have 3-5 in each committee.

Ms. Cox said she would like to have five members on her committee. Mr. DeVore said he would also like five members. Ms. Grott said she would like to have only three.

Chairman Iverson asked if the board should come up with a time line for the committees to present their information and recommendations to the Park Board and Council. Mr. Whitaker said we will know more on the direction we need to take following the board's meeting with council at the end of the month.

Chairman Iverson asked for action to create the sub-committees. ***Board member Margy Bonner moved that the Park Board establish a committee to study the Park Maintenance Districts and that Board member Rick DeVore chair that committee, that the committee be set at five people and that Rick would be the designated person to move forward to get the committee put together. Board member Cathy Grott seconded. On a voice vote, all were in favor.***

Board member Margy Bonner moved that the Park Board designate a committee to study the issue of the sale of property, to have Board member Rachel Cox be designated as chairperson for that committee, that the committee consist of five persons and that Rachel be authorized to set up the first meeting to go forward on this. Board member Rick DeVore seconded. On a voice vote, all were in favor.

Board member Margy Bonner moved that a Public Information Committee be established, that Board member Cathy Grott be designated as chairperson, that the committee consist of three persons and that Cathy set the first meeting and

get the committee organized to move forward. Board member Rick DeVore seconded. On a voice vote, all were in favor.

It was brought up to send out an email to board members not present at today's meeting to request their participate on one of the sub-committees. Mr. Whitaker said he would send out that email.

B. Number of Monthly Board Meeting:

Ms. Bonner made a proposal to have the park board temporally meet twice a month while staff and board are working through the process of the city wide assessment district. Ms. Grott said the second board meeting should solely be for the city wide assessment district. Following further discussion Ms. Bonner moved to table any decision until next month's board meeting.

Ms. Bonner made a request for staff reports to be distributed at the time the agendas are sent out to give the board adequate time to process the information.

C. Action Items:

Board member DeVore requested to add action items as part of the monthly agenda. He said it could be added under unfinished business. Mr. Whitaker said we could do that.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Parks and Recreation Funding:

City Administrator Tina Volek told the board that she has requested city council to give her any questions they had pertaining to the city wide district. Council is to have those questions to her by next week Tuesday, January 17th. She will send any questions on to staff and the board to answer prior to the park boards meeting with Council on January 30th.

Ms. Volek brought up some of the questions/topics she felt the council already had. Those were, what would be the list of projects, what is the actual assessment amount to be and what will it generate, and sun setting the assessment. Final list of topics to discuss with council are amount, projects, sunset, timeline including the timing for funding and advanced funding.

Chairman Iverson asked if the board should do a presentation at the meeting with council. Ms. Volek said they could since there are three new council members who replaced the three council members that left in December. She suggested for the board to go over their recommendations and how those recommendations came about. It was discussed to include in the presentation information on the PMD's; use the spreadsheet that Jon Thompson had created.

Mr. Whitaker brought up that Park Planner Mark Jarvis is working on a timeline that he can provide Council based on the spending plan on when projects will be started, and when they will be completed. He said due to work load not all projects will be done at the same time.

Ms. Volek told the board that funding from the city-wide assessment district will be received from taxes in about year from now, January 2013. It was also explained that the city is currently starting the budgeting process for FY13, which means that the department can start budgeting for projects that the assessment money will be paying for but will not be able to start spending those funds until January 2013.

Board member Rick DeVore asked if the budget goes forward and we have a spending plan in place for 2013 but its decided upon in 2012; is there any way to spend money in advance to do bathrooms in the fall as opposed to the middle of winter. Ms. Volek said the city has not identified a source of money to borrow from. She said there are probably some funds but you would probably pay a rate of interest on it that would be comparable to what we would be paying in investing the money somewhere.

Mr. Whitaker said staff has been talking internally about borrowing money from the general fund for engineering services so when the money starts coming in, we can immediately go out to bid because we have the engineering aspect done.

Ms. Volek said City Council will have to approve any money that is borrowed and that this is a topic, advanced funding, probably should be brought up in the meeting with council on the 30th.

VI. DIVISION UPDATES

A. Recreation Division-Recreation Superintendent Joe Fedin:

Recreation Superintendent Joe Fedin printed report was handed out at the meeting

B. Park Division-Park Superintendent Jon Thompson:

Park Superintendent Jon Thompson gave an oral report.

- Due to the warm weather, the ice skating rink at Veterans Park has only two small patches of ice and is not usable for skating. He said they are not sure if we will attempt to flood anymore this season due to the weather the way it is and has been.
- The Billings Figure Skating Club has donated \$2,000 to the department to purchase an ice skating liner.
- Park staff is currently working on a lot of winter things such as refurbishing and making new signs and restoring and repairing picnic tables. Left over aluminum from Cobb Field is being used to refurbish the picnic tables.
- The park crew has been removing the old beat-up chain-link fencing along the front part of Central Park. Staff has left fencing in front of the ball diamond area.
- All of the park staff has recently gone through CPR training.
- Park staff has been working with Rick DeVore/Little League on the new concession building addition at Central Park. Concrete for the building was poured yesterday, January 10.
- With the warm weather and windy conditions, garbage pickup has been an issue. Park crew is doing a lot more pickup than normal during this time of year.

C. Park Planning Division-Park Planner Mark Jarvis:

Park Planner Mark Jarvis printed report was handed out at the meeting.

- He encouraged everyone to attend the grand opening/ribbon cutting of Swords Park Trail II.
- He also invited everyone to the Friends of Billings Dog Park and Bones Brewing sponsored event Woofstock 2012 to be held on February 25. Funds from this event will go towards the Billings Dog Parks.

D. Cemetery Division-Cemetery Manager Lee Stadtmiller:

Cemetery Manager Lee Stadtmiller printed report was sent in the mail.

I. ADJOURNMENT

1:15 pm