

MEETING MINUTES

RECORDED BY: Melonie Trang

MEETING PURPOSE: PRC Board Meeting

MEETING DATE
AND LOCATION: May 9, 2012
Community Center



ATTENDEES: PRC Board Members:

Margy Bonner, Rachel Cox, Rick DeVore, Todd Royal,
Catherine Grott, Gary Gray, Mark Wahl, Darwin George

PRPL Staff Members:

Mike Whitaker, Director
Jon Thompson, Park Superintendent
Mark Jarvis, Park Planner
Joe Fedin, Recreation Superintendent
Lee Stadtmiller, Cemetery Manager
Fred Bicha, City Forester

I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Vice-Chair Rachel Cox called the meeting to order at 11:30 am.

A. INTRODUCTIONS

Drew Brown, Jesse Arstein, Riverside Little League and Arlene Priest, Compassionate Friends Regional Coordinator.

B. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Vice-Chair Rachel Cox asked for approval of the April 11, 2012 minutes. On a voice vote, all were in favor.

C. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None

II. DIRECTORS REPORT – Mike Whitaker

Mike reported that David Morales has requested to run some basketball camps at the South Park courts. As part of allowing him to run those camps, he is proposing to come back and put a 32 inch overlay blacktop over the courts. Park Planner Mark Jarvis has put together the specs for that project. Mr. Morales is out raising funds to do the project. Costs for the blacktop are around \$20-\$30,000.

III. PUBLIC/BOARD COMMENT

No public comment

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Rose Park Memorial Statue:

Park Planner Mark Jarvis along with Arlene Priest from Compassionate Friends presented a request on behalf of Compassionate Friends to install a memorial statue at Rose Park located in the flower bed. The statue will be a 7.5 ft. bronze

sculpture of a female angel holding a small child. Cost for the statue is \$16,000. All funds were privately raised by Compassionate Friends, an international support organization for families that have experienced the death of a child to pay for the sculpture. This project will be no cost to the city. Artist of the sculpture is Drew Brown.

A motion was made to approve the statue. Board member Gary Gray moved for the sculpture to be placed at Rose. Board member Todd Royal seconded. On a voice vote, all were in favor and the motion passed.

B. Urban Forestry Program:

Jon Thompson introduced the new city Forester, Fred Bicha. Fred was chosen out of five candidates. He formerly worked for the Department of Natural Resources Urban and Community Forestry Program. He has a degree in Forestry from Missoula.

Mr. Bicha discussed his work with the parks tree inventory done back in 2010. He said the Parks department is currently approaching 9,000 trees in its parks. The Ash species makes up about 23% of the trees. 73% of the trees in the parks need some sort of pruning. He said if we were to have our trees appraised, they would be worth around twenty eight million. The community receives about \$10 per year per park tree in environmental benefits. From the inventory we have produced GPS maps identify all of our trees and where they are located.

Mr. Bicha discussed the plans for the Forestry division.

1. Prune trees yearly
2. Have 1 seasonal arborist + an additional seasonal
3. Have 2 seasonals to handle weed abatement
4. Budget for contract pruning
5. Planting each year more trees
6. Have education programs twice a year for the general public
7. Plant a tree with as many schools as possibly once a year.

Ms. Bonner asked the status of the pine beetle. Fred said there has been no activity locally but they have seen it in the forest around the area. He said they will be spraying pine trees again this year as a precautionary measure.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Optimist Park Proposal:

Jesse Arstein from Riverside Little League returned to the board requesting them to reconsider their decision and allow fencing at the dedicated baseball field in Optimist Park. Last month Mr. Arstein requested improvement to the ballfield and add fencing. The board made the decision after careful consideration to allow Riverside Little League to improve the existing backstop, benches and dugouts but not put up fencing. The board again reviewed his request for fencing and discussed again the matter of no master plan for this park and Riverside Little League's actions to begin installation of fencing prior to the approval from the board or staff.

A motion was made to reconsider previous motion made at the April 11 board meeting. Board member Gary Gray seconded.

Further discussion was made and it was concluded to approve the fencing since the holes for the fencing were already in place, Little League was already using the designated ballfield for games and practice and there was no funding or time to create a master plan.

Board member Margy Bonner made a motion to approve Riverside Little League to go ahead with putting up fencing at Optimist Park baseball field and improve the existing backstop, benches and dugout.

Ms. Grott asked that the motion include that there be communication process between Little League and PRPL staff Jon Thompson regarding any improvements or changes to a park at least two weeks advance.

Board member Gary Gray seconded with the understanding that the fencing would be done in a standard quality workmanship and have PRPL approval.

Mr. Thompson recommended to include in the motion for Little League to be responsible any irrigation modifications necessary to accommodate the fencing under the direction of PRPL staff.

Ms. Bonner restated her motion that Little League be allowed to go forward and finish the fence and contingent upon working with Park Superintendent Jon Thompson on if necessary moving the irrigation and have an understanding that they would assume any additional maintenance that is required due to putting up the fence. Ms. Grott added for there to be communication between Little League and PRPL staff prior to any improvements or changes to the park.

Board member Gary seconded. On a voice vote all approved, board member Rick DeVore abstained. Motion passed.

B. Parks and Recreation Funding:

Mike Whitaker said staff will be presenting the top four projects and top four ongoing improvements for the park assessment funds at the May 29th Council work session. Those top projects and improvements are:

1. Replace Rose Park slide
2. Rebuild/replace 9 restrooms
3. Emergency maintenance
4. Playground fall protection upgrades at 36 sites

1. Improve park maintenance
2. Weed management
3. Replace 75 picnic tables
4. Keep restrooms open 3 months longer & 4. Trail maintenance (combined these both for 4th place.)

C. Additional Comments:

Margy Bonner said the painted mural located in the Shiloh tunnel looked good. Local students who painted the mural did a great job. The mural was part of the Global Youth Service Day held on April 21.

D. Board Sub Committee Update:

- Sale of Parkland committee: Margy Bonner reported the committee will be reviewing 38 parks for sale at their next meeting.
- PMD committee: No report

VI. ACTION ITEMS

- Exxon Mobil Spill: Jon Thompson reported that Exxon has done extensive cleanup along the riverbanks including our parkland areas. State of Montana continues to come back and do follow up testing and monitoring of our shorelines and areas impacted. Last fall, Exxon did make one settlement with the State of Montana regarding the river itself. There is ongoing assessment on the impact the oil spill had on the use of the parks, public and private lands. State of Montana, US Fish Service, Bureau of Land Management and Fish, Wildlife and Parks is negotiating with Exxon Mobil on compensation for damage done by the oil spill. There is still oil located on land that is inaccessible. Attorney's will be sitting down this summer to work with Exxon. They expect to settle this fall. They are not sure how much will be paid nor when it will be received. Jon said any money the department receives will go towards improving Riverfront Park according to its master plan. A question was asked if Lake Josephine had any oil damage. Jon said there was minimal impact to the lake.

VII. DIVISION REPORTS

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 printed report was handed out at the meeting.

C. Park Planning Division-Park Planner Mark Jarvis:

Park Planner Mark Jarvis printed report was included in the board packet.

D. Cemetery Division-Cemetery Manager Lee Stadtmiller:

Cemetery Manager Lee Stadtmiller printed report was included in the board packet. No additional information was given.

I. ADJOURNMENT

1:10 pm