

MEETING MINUTES

RECORDED BY: Melonie Trang

MEETING PURPOSE: PRC Board Meeting

MEETING DATE July 9, 2014
AND LOCATION: Community Center



ATTENDEES: PRC Board Members:
Rick DeVore, Dayton Rush, Catherine Grott, Rich Lorenz,
Tom Rupis
PRPL Staff Members:
Mike Whitaker, Director
Kory Thomson, Recreation Superintendent
Mark Jarvis, Park Planner
Lee Stadtmiller, Cemetery Superintendent
Chris Waite, Volunteer Coordinator

I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Chairman Rick DeVore called the meeting to order at 11:35.

A. INTRODUCTIONS

None

B. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

No minutes were available from the June meeting for approval.

C. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None

II. DIRECTORS REPORT – Mike Whitaker

- City Forester Fred Bicha has accepted another position in Kalispell Montana. His last day will be July 18.
- The Mayor will be doing a proclamation declaring the month of July as Park and Recreation month. A copy of the proclamation was handed out to the board.
- A video was shown on the recreation program Adventure Camp. The video showed kids enjoying zip lining.
Recreation Superintendent Kory Thomson spoke on some of the family oriented recreation programs offered this summer, including a family and group white water rafting trip through Absarokee River Adventures. This program and the Adventure Camp are self-sustaining programs. This means the fees cover all direct costs of the program.

III. PUBLIC/BOARD COMMENT

None

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. City-wide Park District Projects 3-year Plan:

- Tennis court repairs and resurfacing project at Pioneer and Rose are complete. This was an \$87,000 project. The Billings Tennis Association supplied around \$45,000 to the project.

Working on these projects:

- Waiting on contract from the state for the South Park playground equipment upgrade. We received a \$75,000 grant from the state for this project.
- Rebuild Pioneer and Castlerock tennis courts. Just received proposals on the engineering aspects.
- Swords Park trail extension and Aronson bridge.
- Sale of parkland/parcels for Rehberg Ranch, Briarwood and Lampman.
- Centennial Park Master Plan study.
- High Sierra Disc golf course. City Council approved an initiative for \$20,000 to build a course at High Sierra Park. Working with a new disc golf organization on a fundraiser tournament in September.
- Swords Rimrock Park trailhead improvements.
- Park kiosk concept for Swords Rimrock Park.
- Zoo Montana to Riverfront Park trail study
- Highway 3 corridor study
- Ponderosa School path/trail project

Projects coming up:

- Parks and Recreation department wide comprehensive plan
- South Park sprayground.
- Stewart Park infrastructure improvements.
- Pioneer Park shelter in early spring next year.
- Amend Park water service.

Staff will be putting together their list of proposed projects for the upcoming 3 year spending plan. The board was encouraged to give their input on what projects they would like to see added. Board Chair DeVore suggested adding ADA accessibility to sports area such as soccer fields, ballfields. Mr. Whitaker said once the list is complete they will begin to prioritize the projects based on the criteria the board put together in the past.

Mr. Whitaker said that City Council has discussed using \$200,000 from the 2015 Park District 1 funding to remove rocks on parkland along the rims/6th Avenue. Mr. Whitaker suggested to the City Administrator to take \$200,000 from the 1.2 million set aside for the Stewart Park infrastructure improvements to pay for rock removal. Board Chair DeVore commented that he didn't think we should use part of the money for the Stewart Park project on the rock project if we cannot do the whole project at one time. Mr. Whitaker said the department believes we can still

do a lot at Stewart with the remaining 1 million. A suggestion was made to wait on doing the complete Stewart Park project for another year and look at some of the other projects to do. Mr. Whitaker and Park Planner said that there is a possibility that the Stewart Park project could be less than 1 million or could be more. The 1.2 million was an estimate.

Chairman DeVore discussed the problem with the ground squirrels in several of our city parks. He said they are creating holes everywhere and kids are stepping into those holes and getting injured. He wanted to see this issue resolved for liability/injury reasons. He suggested using Park District 1 funding to pay to have the ground squirrels removed. Mr. Whitaker brought up that if there is funding left over from the Stewart Park project that it could be used for the ground squirrel problem. He suggested for us to get cost estimates first on the Stewart Park projects to see if we will need more than the 1.2 million or if we will be under and have money left over.

He also said we should continue to look at ways now to get rid of the ground squirrel problem. It was suggested to add the ground squirrels to the upcoming proposed 3 year spending plan list under the deferred maintenance section.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Park Use Agreements:

Amend Agreement: APDC (Amend Park Development Council)

- Comment: Agreement should have a time frame. Suggestion was 3-5 years.
- Mr. Whitaker said the Park Board can only recommend items to add or change in an agreement.
- Under #7 there is currently no one serving from the Park Board on the committee. Comment was to make sure that the new agreement continues to have a board member serve on the committee. Board member Tom Rupis volunteered to serve on behalf of the Park Board. Mr. Whitaker said it has been awhile since they had a meeting.
- Under # 5.2.2 and 5.2.3 says the APDC will provide turf maintenance. Mr. Whitaker explained the parks crew mows it once a week. The APDC chose to give up their share of the additional day(s) of mowing but can mow if they would like it mowed more than once a week.
- Under #6.2 it was explained that the city rents portable restrooms for the city's recreation programs.
- Under #10 it was asked if we see an proceeds or their financial documents. Mr. Whitaker said that since he has been here we have not received any proceeds nor have we seen any of their finances.

The park board agreed to do more research and discuss it further at next month's meeting before giving any recommendations. It was asked that it is kept at the top of the list. Mr. Whitaker said he would talk with APDC as to when their next meeting is. He believes it is important to get this committee up and running since it has not had a meeting in a while.

Stewart Agreement: BSA (Billings Softball Association)

- Add to the agreement a section regarding the BSA providing security if serving alcohol during a game.
- Under termination, it says they have to provide one year in advance of the termination date. Suggestion was to change that to 30-90 days in advance.
- Under #9 talks about a maintenance fund. A question was asked if there is a fund. Recreation Superintendent Kory Thompson said he is not aware of any maintenance fund. Mr. Whitaker said he is unaware of any money from that fund.
- Under #7 it was brought up that the Superintendents of our department are required to meet with the BSA annually to discuss the operations of Stewart.
- There was discussion on whether we should include in the new agreement an insurance policy similar to the one we have with the Better Billings Foundation regarding if the BSA gets out of the agreement we would have funds to any kind of clean etc. to the parkland. Comment was we should have uniformed policies among the user groups.
- A suggestion was made to look at adding our naming policy to both the Amend and Stewart Park agreements.

The park board agreed to do more research and discuss it further at next month's meeting before giving any recommendations. They would like to keep this at the top of the list. There was a comment to bring the BSA sometime in either January or March 2015 to review the agreement. Staff will need to meet with the BSA prior to bringing them before the board.

Par3 Agreement:

- Par3 agreement has been recently updated. A comment was made that the next time the agreement is to be updated that the board, staff and Par3 get together to discuss the agreement.

Cell Tower Agreement:

- Mr. Whitaker said the person representing the company looking into putting a cell tower in one of our parks was unable to make the board meeting today. He said that they said over the phone that they would like to put a tower at Terry Park. Mr. Whitaker said he would like to have the person come to next month's meeting to discuss further their plans. The park board suggested doing some research on what other cities are doing regarding cell towers locations before next month's meeting.

ACTION/ADDITIONAL ITEMS

- Continue discussion on PRPL agreements. Priority agreements are Amend and Stewart. Look more at Par3 and Dehler Park at next meeting.

- Build accreditation into the strategic plan.
- Check into using Poly Vista ballfield for a dog park.
- Continue discussion on the priority list of projects for the next 3 year plan for District 1 funding to the agenda.
- A request was made to recognize the Forbes family for their donation of parkland. Staff will be looking into options for that recognition.

VI. DIVISION REPORTS

A. Recreation Division-Recreation Superintendent Kory Thomson:

- Attendance was down in June due to cooler weather.
- Water slides are functioning great.
- Batting cages are probably going to set a record this year.
- Enrollment is up 67%
- New youth sports camp series includes cheer camp, soccer, volleyball, basketball, baseball & flag football. Trying to cater to the younger kids.
- Archery camp is full.
- Waiting list 3 out of the 5 weeks of Adventure Camps.

B. Park Division-Park Superintendent Jon Thompson:

No report-was not at meeting.

C. Park Planning Division-Park Planner Mark Jarvis:

No additional information.

D. Volunteer Coordinator's Report-Chris Waite:

No additional information.

E. Cemetery Division-Cemetery Manager Lee Stadtmiller:

No additional information.

I. ADJOURNMENT

1:05 pm