

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

RECORDED BY: Chris Waite

MEETING PURPOSE: Special Meeting/Centennial Park
Master Plan Concept Review

MEETING DATE March 25th, 2015
AND LOCATION: Community Center



ATTENDEES: PRC Board Members:
Rick DeVore, Rich Lorenz, Marcia Clausing, Dayton Rush,
Mark Wahl, Lew Morris, Tom Rupsis
PRPL Staff Members:
Mike Whitaker, Director
Jon Thompson, Park Superintendent
Kory Thomson, Recreation Supervisor
Mark Jarvis, Park Planner
Chris Waite, Volunteer Coordinator
Lee Stadtmiller, Cemetery Superintendent
Guest:
Stan Griswold, David Selvage, Connie Petre, Richard Clark,
Mike Ferguson, Sue Bressler, Tyler Bush

I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Chairman Rick DeVore called the meeting to order at 11:34

A. INTRODUCTIONS

N/A

B. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

N/A

II. DIRECTORS REPORT – Mike Whitaker

Mr. Whitaker reminded those present of the public meeting at Meadowlark Elementary School this evening at 6:00p.

III. PUBLIC/BOARD COMMENT

None

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. CENTENNIAL PARK MASTER PLAN CONCEPTS REVIEW

Mark Jarvis (Park Planner) introduced Stan Griswold and David Selvage from the Land Group. This presentation is a preview of the information that will be presented at the public meeting tonight at Meadowlark Elementary School. Mr. Jarvis explained that this was a time for the board and community members to

give comment and perspective on the Centennial Park Master Plan concepts. Mr. Griswold explained that it was important to look at the existing master plan for reference. The current plan is more similar to a neighborhood park plan and was in need of an update. Some elements were in place such as ball fields, but much of the land is undeveloped. The site is very accessible by streets and bike paths. There is also a storm water basin on the site. The purpose of the new plan is to determine what changes are needed.

Mr. Selvage discussed the changing demographics in Billings and the area around the Park. The park will serve around 10,000 people within 1 ½ mile of the park. Additionally, with further development, there could potentially be an additional 10,000 residents in the area. Demand is expected to increase for family recreation, young adults and aging residents. There is a need to ensure adequate parkland for the growing community. Mr. Selvage continued with a list of general issues facing the Parks and Recreation Department including limited fiscal resources for monitoring and improving the quality of existing facilities. Statistics were also presented on sports fields in Billings. With comparisons to other communities, Billings is average on baseball field capacity, but short on other sports fields. Recommendations were provided on adopting a level of service along with a standard of care for sports facilities.

Mr. Griswold explained that the recommendations for the master plan were developed from the aforementioned analysis. They identified the main concepts of including a large multi-use play field, maintaining a community park with neighborhood elements, and an off leash dog area. From these concepts, three plans were developed.

Plan Draft A: (see attached) The elements of Plan A were discussed. Discussion of the parking capacity took place as well as the placement of the playground in relation to the baseball fields. The parking capacity was determined without taking on-street parking into consideration. Board Member Lorenz asked if there was capacity for an additional little guy football field. Mr. Selvage suggested that it would be difficult to fit an additional field in the space provided.

Plan Draft B: (see attached) This plan has a smaller multi-use play field. The dog area is approximately 6 acres. Chairman DeVore asked how many parking spaces are in the plan. There are approximately 130 spaces.

Plan Draft C: (see attached) This plan has a different approach for the ball fields. The fields are reduced to three in the north east corner with a picnic shelter and gathering area in place of the 4th field.

General discussion proceeded about the need for more field space to accommodate lacrosse, rugby and soccer. Chairman DeVore asked if there were plans for exercise stations along the path. Stan explained that this is a master plan that is a guiding document for development and does not specifically address

placement of all the amenities. Board Member Rush noted that the community areas were closer to the cemetery as opposed to the houses and wondered if other layouts were considered. Stan said that the location of the stormwater basin made it a better fit for the off leash area as it could potentially have water. Additional explanation of the placement and size of the dog area were discussed in terms of need for large space due to only having one other dog park. Signage was discussed alerting dog park users of the potential for baseballs to be entering the off leash area due to its proximity to the ball field.

A community member asked if there were plans to light the ball fields. Mark said there were not plans to light the fields because of the park curfew. Additionally, David said that in a residential area, there would be disturbance caused by lighting the fields at night.

Mr. Whitaker explained that following the board meeting and the public meeting, the Land Group would take the input and make a plan for the Board to review. Then following the review, it will be presented to City Council for adoption.

Adjourned 1:05