

MEETING MINUTES

RECORDED BY: Melonie Trang

MEETING PURPOSE: PRC Board Meeting

MEETING DATE AND LOCATION: February 10, 2010
Community Center



ATTENDEES: PRC Board Members:
Tom Iverson, Rick DeVore, Rachel Cox, Catherine Grott,
Darwin George, Margy Bonner

PRPL Staff Members:
Mike Whitaker, PRPL Director
Jon Thompson, Park Superintendent
Joe Fedin, Recreation 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

Public attending were MSU –B students; Joe Lindau, Charles Smith, Vicki Holgard and Lance Anderson

B. APPROVAL OF THE January 13, 2010 MINUTES

Chairman Iverson made a request to have the January minutes approved. Board member Margy Bonner made a motion to approve. On a voice vote all present approved and motion passed.

C. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Mr. Iverson announced New Social Networking Site/Facebook has been removed off the agenda due to online technical problems the city was having.

II. DIRECTORS REPORT – Mike Whitaker

- Mr. Whitaker told the board the MSU-B students were attending today's meeting to get information for a paper they were writing concerning advisory boards.
- Mr. Whitaker announced next months board meeting will be a joined with the Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee to discuss their role and our role as it pertains to our trail system.
- Mr. Whitaker informed the board that there would be a special Park Board meeting on March 24th to discuss the Pioneer Park Master Plan. He said the whole meeting would be dedicated just to that subject.

- Mr. Whitaker said the department is working with the Chamber of Commerce on a applying for a grant through Pepsi in the amount \$250,000 to be used for interpretive signage and a trailhead at Swords Park.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Heights Pool Project (Revised Development Agreements):

Mr. Whitaker said the Better Billings Foundation has signed the agreement with City of Billings. They have accepted all terms and requirements that have been requested by the city. He said plans are for the city to continue to own and maintain until the Foundation has come up with the funds to build the aquatic center.

B. Pioneer Park Master Plan Update:

Park Planner Mark Jarvis passed out the latest Pioneer Park newsletter. He said the issue includes a summary of the results from the first public meeting. He noted from the thirty people who attended many turned in comment cards. Several of those comments are included in the newsletter.

Mr. Jarvis said they are planning a stakeholder meeting on March 1st and a second public meeting on March 2nd. He said at the 2nd public meeting the consultant will present three alternatives to the master plan based on their analysis. They plan to get public comment on those alternatives at this meeting. Mr. Jarvis said the Park and Recreation Board will be holding a special meeting on March 24th for review of the alternatives and make a recommendation to City Council. He said City Council will be presented the final board recommended alternative on April 5th for final approval.

Board member Catherine Grott asked if disc golf has damaged Pioneer Park. Mr. Jarvis said yes. He commented that they are looking at the sustainability of that parkland. He said if we over use it whether it is disc golf or other activities and destroy the park what have we done long term. He said that is why they are taking a critical look at sustaining it.

Mr. Iverson commented on the first public meeting and how he witnessed both the neighbors surrounding the park and disc golfers sitting down together for discussion on the issue of disc golf in the park.

Board member Rick DeVore commented on looking for alternative site locations for disc golf to help reduce the volume of traffic at Pioneer. Mr. Jarvis said that is what they have asked the consultants to do.

C. Mountain Pine Bark Beetle:

Ms. Grott asked if the cold weather was helping kill the beetles. Park Superintendent Jon Thompson said no; the reason is they are a native to Montana and we need a few days of sub-zero temperatures of 25°-30° below to do that. Mr. Thompson said the proposed program and request for \$20,000 in the preventative spraying of pine trees presented back in January at a City Council work session, has been unanimously approved. He said the department will be putting a package together of how many trees, where they are located and the scope of services needed before getting formal quotes from commercial pesticide applicators. He said they will be looking at trees in the developed parks and in the cemetery only. Mr. Thompson said they will begin spraying sometime in April. He said the spray they will be using is not toxic to bees and birds. Mr. Iverson asked if this would be annual spraying. Mr. Thompson said yes and funding will be included in the departments' supplemental budget requests annually.

Mr. Thompson informed the board that the department is currently doing a tree inventory of all of the trees in our developed parks. He said they have two women who are certified arborists from local tree services performing the inventory. Information collected is being put into a tree inventory program here at the office and will be available for our use. Mr. Thompson said majority of the funding for the project is being provided by the State Urban Forestry Bureau, DNRC. The only costs to the city are the setup of the computer and GIS program and mileage. Mr. Iverson asked when the project will be done. Mr. Thompson said they hope to be finished by the end of February.

Mr. Thompson explained how having a tree inventory will help in the department purchasing insurance coverage for all of the trees in our developed parks. He said the insurance will go under the city's assets management system and will cover lost or damage and not on insects or diseases. Ms. Grott asked if this will raise the city's insurance premium. Mr. Thompson said it should only raise it a small bit.

Ms. Bonner asked if we had a tree farm. Mr. Thompson said we had a very small one located by the operations center. He said it is limited in scope.

Mr. DeVore asked if we still had the Trash for Trees fund. Mr. Thompson said yes we do and said we annually get around \$4,000. He also discussed additional funding received by the Kiwanis for their license plate campaign, which earns around \$3,000 yearly. Mr. Thompson said the funds from both of these goes towards the purchasing of trees.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Federal Funding Requests:

Mr. Whitaker said the department has put in a request in for federal funding for a regional parkland acquisition. The request is number nine on a list of ten from the city that will be sent to Washington. If the federal government approves the

request, it will be part of this coming year's budget. Mr. Whitaker will keep the board updated on the progress.

Mr. Iverson made a request for action on the Federal Funding Requests. Board member Rick DeVore made a motion to support the requests. Board member Rachel Cox seconded. All were in favor and motion passed. Board member Catherine Grott made a recommendation to make the requests public.

B. Swords Park Trail Project:

As mentioned under Directors report, Mr. Jarvis discussed that the department is working with the Chamber of Commerce to come up with a grant with Pepsi for our trail system. Funds from the grant will be used for a trailhead at Swords Park and for standardized signage for our park trails.

C. Rimrock Mall Proposal:

Mr. Whitaker said Rimrock Mall is looking into expanding their building. They have come to the department requesting to use Stewart Park for additional parking space. Mr. Whitaker said they are currently landlocked and unable to add the required additional parking on their site. Mr. Whitaker said department has discussed working out a partnership with them if they would consider paying to have some parking area of the park paved. He said this is in the beginning stages and no decisions have been made as of yet.

VI. DIVISION UPDATES

A. Recreation Division-Recreation Superintendent Joe Fedin:

Recreation Superintendent Joe Fedin gave the following report:

- Use permits are coming in. The permit application has been revised to include the new fees and questionnaire.
- Checking into the new pool rules. There is a possibility that lifeguards will be required at all spray decks. Currently, there are no life guards at any of our spray decks. We do require them only at the pools and wading pools. Mr. Fedin said he will continue checking into the new regulations and make any changes to meet the new guidelines.
- Working on budget, SBR's (Supplemental Budget Requests), summer brochure and any updates/changes to website.
- Online registration is going well.
- Working with the Parks and Recreation Foundation to create a PowerPoint presentation.
- Going to the MRPA conference with Recreation Supervisor Kory Thomson on March 8th.
- Have begun planning for this coming summer's kid's concert at Dehler.

B. Park Division-Park Superintendent Jon Thompson:

In addition to his written report, Jon reported that the Skatepark restroom project has been presented to City Council for approval. At the council meeting, several council members questioned the cost of the restroom and requested the department look into other options before making their final decision. Request

options were to not build one at all, look at a purchasing a unisex or vault bathroom, and having a local company design and build one. Mr. Thompson said he is looking into the other options and will be presenting those findings to the council at an upcoming meeting.

C. Park Planning Division-Park Planner Mark Jarvis:

In addition to his written report, Mark updated the board that the Dog Park Committee is moving forward with another fundraising effort. They hope to come up with a fundraising program with PetSmart in May.

D. Cemetery Division-Cemetery Superintendent Lee Stadtmiller:

Cemetery Superintendent Lee Stadtmiller printed report was included in the board packet.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

1:10 pm