

MEETING MINUTES

RECORDED BY:

Melonie Trang

MEETING PURPOSE:

Monthly PRC Board Meeting

MEETING DATE:

November 14, 2007
PRPL Office, Billings Community Center

ATTENDEES:

PRC Board Members:

Denis Pitman, Tom Iverson, Richard Deis, Mary Fitzpatrick,
Rachel Cox, Margy Bonner

PRPL Staff Members:

Mike Whitaker, PRPL Director
Mark Jarvis, Park Planner
Joe Fedin, Recreation Superintendent
Gene Blackwell, Parks Superintendent



I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Chair Denis Pitman called the meeting to order at 11:35 am.

A. INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions include Special Guests: City Forester, Eric Gilsrud and representing PAR 3 Golf Course, Duncan Peete

B. APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 10TH, 2007 MEETING MINUTES

The PRC Board reviewed the minutes. An action was made to accept/decline the October Minutes. *Richard Deis made a motion to approve the October 10th, 2007 meeting minutes. Rachael Cox seconded. All were in favor and the motion carried.*

C. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Discussion on the resignation of PRC Chair Denis Pitman was added to the agenda as Item E.

II. DIRECTORS REPORT – Mike Whitaker

1. Ballpark and Management Agreement:

- Mike reported construction is approximately 3-4 weeks ahead of schedule due to nice weather.
- Margy Bonner reported on the current negotiations standings between the City of Billings and Mustangs on the Management Agreement;
 - 90% of the agreement is complete.
 - The agreement will be for five years with the ability to review after two.

- Two parts in question within the agreement are the rights to all concessions during non-baseball events and the management of scheduling for all non-baseball events.

It was expressed by several PRC Board members that the City of Billings, being owner of the new ballfield, should have rights to all concessions during non-baseball events and handle scheduling of all non-baseball events.

Tom Iverson distributed the Mustangs new seating and pricing arrangements. (Copy of the document is included in the November PRC Board Packet) Prices range from \$3 for seating on the Berm to \$342 for season Club Box seating. Tom expressed that the seating seemed pretty reasonable.

2. Riverfront Park Master Plan Community Survey:

Riverfront Park Master Plan Community Survey is complete. A presentation on the results will be presented at the next PRC Board meeting.

3. Dog Park:

A public meeting will be held Thursday, November 29th at 6pm in the Billings Community Center for city residents to give their comments. Mark commented that people have been calling in expressing their interest and opinions on the park. Dog parks nation wide are hugely popular and Mark expressed that he believes once a dog park is built here in our area that other parks will be created throughout the city. An updated report will be given at the next Board meeting with the results from the public meeting.

4. Briarwood Park Master Plan:

A public meeting will be held Thursday, November 15th for comments and questions from City residents. A report will be given at the next Board meeting with the results from the meeting.

A question was asked on who will be paying for improvements to Briarwood Park. Mark commented the Neighborhood Special Improvement District located in the Heights will be covering costs through assessment costs.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment presented.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

No unfinished business was presented.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. City's Forestry Program - Eric Gilsrud:

Eric gave a verbal update on the City's Forestry Program. His comments are following:

- Forestry Program is spending a lot more time working on city streets and boulevards.
- There is a high rate of Dutch Elm disease on trees located along boulevards. Forestry is taking care of them at no cost. The property owner is responsible in the reseeded or replanting. Currently, there are about 70 trees so far with the disease that have been tagged or been removed.
- Approximately, 641 hours have been spent on parks starting in January 2007 to present. This number is down from last year.
- The Forestry man power is being stretched; there is only one full time staff and two part-time.
- Starting to see the effect of the drought on the pine trees.
- A grant for \$6,000 from the Department of Natural Resources was given to start a tree Nursery. Currently there is about 41 trees in stock. More will be purchased in the spring.

Mike question the amount of resources we have compared to other cities in the state. Eric commented that we are one of the smallest between the two largest; Great Falls and Bozeman.

B. Summer Recreation Program:

Joe Fedin gave an overview on the financial status from the 2007 Summer Recreation Programs. (Copies of the reports are included in the November Board Packet)

Joe's comments on the report findings:

- The 2007 summer programs attendance was a good average.
- South Side Swimming Pool set a record on profit due to the closing of Athletic.
- There was a lose of approximately 9,000 swimmers with the closing of Athletic Pool
- Concessions at Rose have helped boost an increase in revenue.
- The Recreation Department is considering change over of wading pools to spraygrounds to save on operation costs.
- Total attendance was down compared to last year with only two major pools in operation and not three.

C. Proposed Aquatic Fee Adjustments:

Joe presented proposed fee increase charges for City swimming pools to the Board. (A copy of the fee changes is included in the November PRC Board packet) Increases range from \$.50 for daily admission to \$30 for season passes. Last fee increase was in 2001. Operating costs have increased over the last several years and an increase in fees would help in covering those costs.

Denis asked if there was a senior's admission rate. Joe commented there has only been the youth and adult admission. Seniors make up a very small percentage of users. Biggest users are ages 7-17 years.

An action was made to accept/decline the proposed increase in pool fees. *Rachel Cox made a motion to accept the proposed fee increases located on the top chart of the*

increase fee document be presented to the City Council for approval. Margy Bonner seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

D. Par 3 Golf Course Budget for 2008:

Duncan Peete gave an overview on the budget report included in the PRC Board packet. His comments are the following:

Par 3 presented to the City Council work session a proposed fee increase of \$2 to the 18 hole golf fee. A rate increase has not been done in the past five years.

Major expenditures over the next couple years include;

- Temporary solution of running a pipe from a near by fire hydrant to fill the pond, estimated cost is \$7,000. Permanent solution will take a few years to complete and the cost is around \$40,000.
- Enhance irrigation using satellite control; estimated cost is \$70-80,000
- Replace lawn mower, estimated cost is \$4,500

An action was made to accept/decline the presented proposed fee increase for Par 3.

Rachel Cox made a motion to accept the proposed increase of \$2 to the 18 hole green fees. Margy Bonner seconded the motion. All were in favor and motion carried.

Mike made a note of reference that this budget report and fee increase proposal was presented to the City Council work session prior to being presented to the PRC Board due to the fact that it is difficult to get items on the Council agenda and there was a window of opportunity presented that they felt would be beneficial to take. Normally, items like this would first go through the Board before being presented to the Council.

(Denis Pitman made a change order to have Agenda Item E, his resignation be put on next months agenda for discussion and action.)

VI. DIVISION UPDATES

A. Recreation Division:

There was no recreation division report in the Board packet.

B. Park Division:

The Park Division report was included in the November 14th Board packet for review.

- Gene commented that volunteers from Faith Chapel Church have been doing landscape work on 6th and Division Street. They are planning on putting in a perennial bed in the center, sod and an irrigation system.

C. Park Planning Division:

The Park Planning Division report was included in the November 14th Board packet for review.

- Mark commented that information is continuing to be added to the park inventory list. He and Ryan McCannas have begun to visit the undeveloped parks. There are over 300 parks and 100 are developed.

D. Cemetery Division:

The Cemetery Division report was included in the November 14th Board packet for review.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 pm.