

MEETING MINUTES

RECORDED BY:

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MEETING PURPOSE:

Monthly PRC Board Meeting

MEETING DATE:

May 9, 2007

PRPL Office, Billings Community Center



ATTENDEES:

PRC Board Members:

Denis Pitman, Richard Deis, Jim Strecker, Mary Fitzpatrick,
Margy Bonner, Wanda Walker, Rachel Cox

PRPL Staff Members:

Mike Whitaker, PRPL Director
Mark Jarvis, Park Planner
Lee Stadtmiller, Cemetery Superintendent
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

Guests in attendance included; Police Captain St. John and Ed Kemmick from the Billings Gazette.

B. APPROVAL OF APRIL 11, 2007 MEETING MINUTES

The PRC Board reviewed the April 11th minutes. Two corrections were noted on the minutes. Under *V. New Business: B. Mustangs' Management Agreement; the motion was not accepted unanimously*. Margy Bonner objected to the motion stating that the ticket sells from this year go into a fund to pay for maintenance and upkeep of the ballpark. Also under the same heading *December 31, 2001 should read December 31, 2007. Mary Fitzpatrick made a motion to approve the amended April 11th, 2007 meeting minutes. Margy Bonner seconded. All were in favor and the motion carried.*

C. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Veterans Day Parade and Resolution for Advertising for Park Ball Field Fences were added to the agenda.

II. DIRECTORS REPORT – Mike Whitaker

Mike reported the following:

The BBWA is planning on meeting with the PRC Board to answer any questions regarding the liability issues pertaining to water ditches as soon as they have time available.

Harvest Church here in Billings has donated approximately \$60,000 in volunteer work to the Park, Recreation and Cemetery Department.

The Parks department is looking to partner with the Exchange Club in applying for a grant to purchase playground equipment.

The stadium received their new estimate; the ballpark is tight budgeted, we will have to bid several things as an alternate. We are currently on schedule with the project. This will be a four phase project; first phase was the demolition of Athletic Pool, second phase is the excavation where Athletic Pool, third is the demolition of stadium and forth phase is the construction of the new stadium.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was made.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Disc Golf – Mike Whitaker/ Captain St. John

Police Captain St. John gave a brief update in regards to Pioneer Park and Disc Golf.

Current numbers for the amount of calls into the Police department for service around the park; which include speeding and parking are around 80 calls in the past six months. Thirty-seven calls have been for suspicious activities or noise within the park itself. Of the thirty-seven calls seventeen people did not leave any information to contact them back for more questions.

Patrolling in and around the park has been increased and will increase more over the summer months. School officers will be available to assist once school is out and there are plans to have some of the downtown officers extended out from the downtown area to the park.

Questions:

Is there a lot of drug activity in the park? The Police department does not get enough information from callers reporting suspicious activity to know for sure.

Is the Police department receiving specific complaints from people in the park?

That cannot be answered definitively.

Have the Disc Golf and Skate Park facilities detoured problems? Yes, the young people in the community have a place to go and currently the Police department rarely receives calls regarding Skate Park.

Where are we at in regards to Disc Golf? The PRC Board will have to revisit and update the Pioneer Park Master Plan.

Comments: The volume of disc golf use at Pioneer Park is so heavy that it is going to start looking tacky with all wear and tear.

We really need another location set-up for Disc Golf and make that the best facility for use.

A recommendation was made to revisit and update the Pioneer Park Master Plan. Wanda Walker made a motion to accept the recommendation. Rachel Cox seconded. All were in favor. Motion passed.

Gene reported that any complaints that come in regarding vandalism in a park are reported to law enforcement. If the person who has done the vandalism is caught they are prosecuted.

B. Ballpark Project Update

A question was asked on the statues in the ballpark. Mike reported there is one statue of Ed Bayne and two children. This statue has been approved by the City to be placed in the new ballpark. There is talk of another statue for the ballpark but it has not been confirmed yet. Either the one or both statues will be placed at the main entry.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Riverfront Park Master Plan:

The last master plan for Riverfront Park was done in 2002. Peaks to Plains Consultants have joined the Parks and Recreation Department in doing the Master Plan. A town hall meeting will be held May 31st at the Community Center for people to present comments. A public site tour of the park will be held following the May 31st meeting on June 2nd. A community wide survey will be going out in July as part of the plan and the names for that survey will come from the Cities Directory. The survey will be asking for peoples input and opinions in regards to Riverfront Park and also parks in general. We are looking into sending out about 300 surveys.

Question: *Is a dog park on the list of the Riverfront Master Plan?* Yes, along with other things will be looked into for the master plan.

B. Veterans Parade (Memorial Day Parade):

People have contacted Denis Pitman in regards to the Cities liability insurance and the Veterans Day (Memorial Day) Parade. Currently, the City requires any parade or street closure to provide a \$1.5 million liability coverage naming the City as the additional insured. Many insurance companies are charging outrageous prices for that amount of coverage. The Veterans Day (Memorial Day) parade ran into that problem of a high price charge for insurance causing them to consider canceling the parade and/or looking into having them exempt from having coverage.

It was noted that to allow an event to be exempt from coverage would cause the City “to open up a can of worms.” The City has decided instead to offer groups and organizations a special insurance policy for a cheaper price. This insurance would help in situations like the Veterans Day (Memorial Day) parade.

The Veterans Day (Memorial Day) parade was able to purchase this special insurance policy and the parade is set for May 28th.

C. Resolution for Advertising for Park Ball Field Fences

The resolution for advertising for the ballpark field fences will be going before City Council soon. The current resolution has been set-up by one of the Council members to put a one year limit on it. As of the end of May the current resolution expires. Gene made a recommendation for the PRC Board to request to have the current resolution one year limit extended.

Mary Fitzpatrick made a motion to accept the recommendation for the current Advertising for Ballpark Field Fences Resolution one year limit be extended. Margy Bonner seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

VI. DIVISION UPDATES

A. Recreation Division:

The Recreation Division report was included in the May 9th Board packet for review.

A comment was made in regards to the outdoor swimming pools not always having available a lap lane to swim in. A suggestion was made to see something put in the summer brochure for a lap swimming class or make available tickets to purchase for a special time set aside for lap swimming.

B. Park Division:

The Park Division report was included in the May 9th Board packet for review. No comments or questions were made concerning the report.

Gene reported the proposals for playground equipment at Central Park will be going out soon. A selection committee will need to be put together to review the proposals. Gene requested for a PRC Board member(s) to be a part of the committee. Dick Clark and James Strecker accepted.

C. Park Planning Division:

The Park Planning Division report was included in the May 9th Board packet for review. No comments or questions were made concerning the report.

D. Cemetery Division:

The Cemetery Division report was included in the May 9th Board packet for review. No comments or questions were made concerning the report.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:05 pm.