

MEETING MINUTES

RECORDED BY: Melonie Erickson

MEETING PURPOSE: Monthly PRC Board Meeting

MEETING DATE: June 13, 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

Special guests in attendance to the meeting were Bob Michaels, President of the BBWA, and the City Of Billings Deputy City Administrator, Bruce McCandless.

B. APPROVAL OF MAY 9, 2007 MEETING MINUTES

The PRC Board reviewed the May 9th minutes. *Margy Bonner made a motion to approve the May 9th, 2007 meeting minutes. Richard Deis seconded. All were in favor and the motion carried.*

C. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

- Rachael Cox requested a discussion on Tennis be added to the agenda.
- A request was made to move *New Business: BBWA* before the Directors Report

II. DIRECTORS REPORT – Mike Whitaker

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was made.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Ballpark Project Update - Mike Whitaker & Mark Jarvis

1. Bond Issue: Billings Deputy City Administrator Bruce McCandless explained how the bonds for the new ballpark were sold and administered.

\$12.5 million in bonds for the new ballpark were approved and sold in May 2007. \$10.7 million of the \$12.5 will come from property taxes; \$1.8 million will be repaid through donations. To date a total of \$2 million dollars has been donated by First Interstate Bank, Wendy's and Jon Dehler.

2. Management Agreement: The PRC Board discussed appointing a representative to be on the negotiation team for the new ballpark management agreement. Margy Bonner was asked to be the representative on behalf of the PRC Board and Steering Committee; she accepted offer. *Rachel Cox made a motion to have Margy Bonner represent both the PRC Board and Steering Committee on the Negotiation Team for the New Ballpark Management Agreement. Mary Fitzpatrick and Richard Deis seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.*

3. Project Update: The drawings for the construction documents will be out June 14th and will be available for pick up by interested bidders at CTA. Also drawings will be sent to local and area plan rooms in an eight state region. The excavation package is being finalized for award. The demolition documents for Cobb Field are being finalized. They should go out to bid on July 10th.

B. Riverfront Park Master Plan:

Peaks to Plains are working on the Master Plan documents for Riverfront Park. The final plan documents should be complete by the end of the year.

The first Town Hall meeting was held and about 30 people were in attendance. Overall view from the public regarding the park is they like it the way it is now but would like to see minor enhancements like drinking fountains and better bathrooms.

A survey to City residents will be going in August with a Town Hall meeting following. This survey will be asking several questions regarding this park; their overall view of the park and what things should and should not be changed. The survey will also encourage people to give their overall comments/views on the parks throughout the City and their opinion regarding disk golf.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. FY08 Budget:

Mike reviewed the FY08 Budget for the Billings Parks, Recreation and Lands Department. Highlights from the discussion are as follows:

- The City owns 46 parks; 2 outdoor pools; 32 playgrounds; 24 picnic shelters; 3 wading pools; 4 splash pads; 10 miles of hard surface trails; Mountview Cemetery; and Par 3 Golf Course. (We have a management agreement with the Exchange Club for Par 3 golf course.)
- There are four divisions within the department: Administration, Parks, Recreation and Cemetery.

- Proposed Budget for 08: Administration is down \$32,439; Parks budget is up \$221,437; Recreation is down \$79,831; Cemetery up \$16,176. Total change between the 07-08 budgets is \$125,342 Projected Revenue for each department: Administration \$0; Parks negative \$51,976 (due to Park Acquisition and development funds being down, Cash-in-Lieu); Recreation negative \$12,330 (due to the closing of Athletic Pool); Cemetery \$13,105. Total change in the 08 Projected Revenue is a negative \$51,201
- Proposed FY08 Budget is \$3,905,636 with 46% from Fees & Assessments and 54% General Fund. Projected FY08 Revenue is \$ 1,786,262 with 70% from Parks (maintenance agreements with Moss Mansion, Yellowstone Art Museum, Mustangs and Riverside Cemetery), 22% from Recreation (from program fees, rentals, pool fees) and 8% from Cemetery.
- Approved SBRs: Seasonal wage increases for aquatic and cemetery staff (\$14,320); On-line Registration for Recreation Programs and Rentals (\$18,700) (on-line registration will benefit the PRC Department greatly. It will make registration easier and cut back on seasonal help in the office. On-line registration should be up and running by November.); Downtown Aquatic Feasibility Study (\$20,000); Rose/Veterans Park Sidewalk Replacement (\$15, 000)(this has been crossed off the list, Harvest Church has donated the time and supplies to replace the sidewalks) and Amend Park Seasonal Position (\$15,000) (this position is reimbursed back to us by the Soccer Association)

B. BBWA:

Mike introduced Bob Michaels of the BBWA. He discussed various aspects of the BBWA with the PRC Board. The following discussed:

- The BBWA supplies and maintains water through irrigation ditches. These irrigation ditches run throughout the City Of Billings.
- The water for the Big Ditch, located west of town, is not supplied by the BBWA but comes out of Park City.
- The BBWA owns approximately 17,000 acres of irrigation.
- The BBWA has had to close 1-2 irrigation ditches over the years.
- The BBWA does not pay taxes to the City Of Billings due to the fact that the ditches were in place before the city was built.
- Over the next five years the BBWA will experience changes based on the new subdivisions going up that will need irrigations brought to the properties.
- Due to liability issues, the BBWA is currently against any suggestions for a bike path or a walkway along the ditch running by Montana State University or any other ditches.

- For any drowning that might take place in the ditches, the process to retrieve the body is a very timely and costly process that includes shutting down the water flow to the ditch, retrieving the body and then refilling again.

C. KaBoom Playground Proposal:

KaBoom is a grant program working with the Parks Department and the Exchange Club in purchasing playground equipment for Central Park. Currently, the Exchange Club is willing give \$10,000 to match the \$30,000. (Total for the grant is \$40,000 to purchase the equipment.) Also included in the grant is volunteer time to set-up the new equipment. The PRC Board was asked for volunteers to participate. Several members expressed interest.

Rachel Cox made a motion for the PRC Board members to volunteer for the KaBoom Grant Program for the purchase of playground equipment at Central Park. Margy Bonner seconded. All were in favor and motion passed.

D. Tennis (Added to the agenda):

Rachel Cox brought to the attention of the Board the need to create indoor facilities for tennis. The only current indoor tennis facility is closing and due to weather conditions in Montana it is not always possible to use the tennis courts located in our parks. Rachel would like to see the Board start discussing now the possibility of opening an indoor tennis facility with the help and support from schools, grants, Parks & Recreations and the Tennis Association.

E. Faith Chapel In-Kind Volunteers and Donations:

Gene Blackwell requested an action being taken on the In-Kind Volunteers and Donations from Faith Chapel Church for: 1) Paint, materials, and supplies needed for the North Recreation Center outdoor handball/racquetball court walls and restrooms. 2) The restoration of the middle median strip planter on South 27th street. 3) Installation of irrigation and sod on the small triangle located at 6th Avenue North, Grand Avenue, and Division Street. A motion was made to send the agenda for the In-Kind Volunteers and Donations from Faith Chapel Church be presented to the City Council. Motion was seconded. All were in favor and motion passed.

VI. DIVISION UPDATES

A. Recreation Division:

No report from the Recreation Division

B. Park Division:

The Park Division report was included in the June 13th Board packet for review. No comments or questions were made concerning the report.

C. Park Planning Division:

No report from the Park Planning Division

D. Cemetery Division:

The Cemetery Division report was included in the June 13th Board packet for review. No comments or questions were made concerning the report.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:05 pm.