

Park & Recreation Board Meeting
October 14, 2013
Minutes

Members Present: William Ramsey, Michael MacDonald, Patrick Carroll, Russell Motschenbacher, Charlie Bruckner

Members Absent: Shirley Davis, Karen Harant

Other present: Kathy Mora, Mayor Winters

Staff Present: Marty Basta, Patty Rearden, Todd Seymanski, Cindy Stein

Board motioned to approve the minutes from the September Park Board meeting as written, motion seconded and carried.

Director's Report

- Staff will be reviewing all Park and Recreation fees as part of a fee summit which includes swimming pools, Community Recreation Center, park rental, boat launch and golf courses. Staff will present the fees to the City Commission at their November 5th meeting.
- Broadwater Bay boat ramp will be closed until the end of October. We are installing a new launch pad on the ramp. Funds were received from a Missouri-Madison River Fund grant in the amount of \$41,000.

Old Business

There was no old business

New Business

Recent Donations

Park and Recreation has received a generous donation from Janet Haffner, owner of R&R Casino to re-do the existing path in Russell Park. Janet Haffner provided funding to put the original path in 10+ years ago in memory of her husband Bob Haffner. Her donation of \$30,681 will be used to re-do the path through Russell Park along with donations raised through the Neighborhood Council of \$3,000.

Marty received a letter from Barbara Kyle on the Tennis courts at North Kiwanis and how it made such a difference in her life by taking tennis lessons when she was young. Along with the letter was a donation to Park and Recreation's tennis programs in the amount \$1,000.

Neighborhood Council #2 would like to donate \$1,000 that was earned by painting fire hydrants and bollards. They would like to use the money for improvements in West Bank Park or West Kiwanis Park. It was suggested that they purchase trees (6-8) or a drinking fountain.

Russell Park Fundraiser Signs

Gloria Bedker and Marcia Anderson were present to discuss the signs they had made to assist in their fundraising efforts for the trail repaving in Russell Park. They received a \$550 donation to pay for the cost of the signs which were \$478. It was discussed at a previous Board meeting that

Park and Recreation would possibly reimburse the committee for the costs of the four 2'x3' signs.

Board motioned to approve the reimbursement for the cost of the signs to the Neighborhood Council in the amount of \$478. Reimbursement to be paid from the Park and Recreation Trust Fund. Motion seconded and carried.

Little Free Libraries

Kathy Mora, Director Great Falls Public Library was present to discuss Little Free Libraries.

- A “Little Free Library” is a gathering place where neighbors share their favorite literature and stories. A Little Free Library is a box full of books where anyone may stop by and pick up a book (or two) and bring back another book to share. There are over 10,000 Little Free Libraries across the United States and the numbers are still growing.
- Great Falls Public Library is applying for a grant through NeighborWorks Great Falls that would cover the costs of materials for the little libraries. The libraries would be stocked with books that have been donated to the main library.
- They would like to put one in each of the neighborhood councils. There would be a Stewart in each neighborhood to watch over the Little Libraries.
- Cost to construct the little house that will hold the books is \$60 and they will be registered with the National “Free Library” for \$30.
- If someone sees the book they want they take it. The vandalism is pretty low in areas where they have the boxes.

Areas that have interest is Russell Park, and possibly the Community Recreation Center, a total of nine Little Libraries to be put out with initial grant. Councils will suggest the best locations.

Board motioned to approve the idea of allowing the “Little Libraries” to be placed in City Parks. Motion seconded and approved.

Gibson Park Events Center

Doug Oswald and Troy Oswald presented to the board an idea of putting a facility in place of the current Park and Ponder Restaurant. They brought some rough site maps to show the Board. Facility would consist of

- A coffee shop
- Public restrooms
- A kitchen area
- A large area for events such as weddings, Christmas parties, social event, etc.
 - There isn't a nice setting for weddings in Great Falls.
- Doug has been working with Marty and Mayor Winters and is now presenting his idea to the Park Board.
 - Items that needed to be included in the site would be a public restroom and a coffee shop/concession/or restaurant
- Doug Oswald is looking for a long term lease agreement with the City
 - He would own the building and lease the property
 - A long term lease would be the only option

Idea is very preliminary; if the City decides to go forward they would advertise for proposals per City Ordinance first, with final approval from the Commission.

- Both Marty and Mayor Winters are in favor of this project.
- Marty stated that the RFP would be very open for any type of proposal for a new facility in Gibson Park

Doug Oswood would like to have some type of approval or interest from the Board before he moves forward with his proposal.

Concerns:

- Parking. Doug is not looking to add any additional parking
- Noise with Music in the open area as drawn in his site map
- Park rules – open from dusk to dawn
- This is different than Park and Ponder where we owned the building and they leased it, Doug Oswood would own the building and lease the property forever
- Concern with a private company in a City Park
- Russell likes the fact that the building proposed is a nice idea but is struggling with giving away the property with Doug owning the facility and leasing the property

Park and Ponder has been vacant for almost 5 years; Tropicool concessions did not work out and Park and Recreation does not have funding to tear the facility down and rebuild the public bathroom. This would be an opportunity to replace the old building with something good.

This is the first step in the process; next step would be for Marty to meet with City/County Planning to discuss whether a project like this can be done.

Board approves of the concept of a coffee shop/event venue in Gibson Park and allow them to move forward with cost estimates. Motion second and carried 4 to 1

Miscellaneous Reports/Announcements

Marty Basta

Rachael Kaiser is proposing to paint the Box Car on the River's Edge Trail as previously discussed. RTI has voted to not paint the box car since it has historical significance. Instead, they would like her to look at the area under the 1st Avenue North Bridge where the fish painting is and doing something else in that same area.

With no further discussion, meeting adjourned at 3:55pm.