

**PARK AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD**  
**MONDAY, MAY 9, 2016**  
**MINUTES**

Meeting called to order at 3:00pm

Members Present: Patrick Carroll, Lynn Oatman, June Sprout, Lonnie Hill, George Geise, Erin Granger

Members Absent: Shirley Davis

Staff Present: Joseph Petrella, Patty Rearden, Todd Seymanski, Marian Permann

Board motioned to approve the April 2016 meeting minutes as written, motion was seconded and carried.

Marian Permann

The past three months have been stellar at the Natatorium; the cost recovery has been going up each month: 52% in January, 70% in April. The Dive-In Movie, held Friday night (May 6) went well; 188 people attended. The net profit for the event was \$542. People had a great time. We plan to offer a movie once a month and feature the Wibit (aquatics obstacle course) twice a month. Have had over 1,100 children in swimming lessons from July 2015 to now.

**Director's Report**

Sent monthly report to board members. Completed work on River's Edge Trail to stabilize the bank near the caboose and installed a rail fence. Lynn stated that the improvements at the Rainboffolo are great. The Community Recreation Center is doing very well. Marian has been doing a good job at the Natatorium with different ideas and activities. Golf courses are open and fully operational. There were over golf 4,000 rounds played in April. Staff is working with a company from Billings to do movies in the park. They will secure the sponsorships and after expenses are paid, 50% of the revenue will come back to Park and Rec and will go into the Foundation. We have rights to the concessions. The new Vendor Policy is in place but because of insurance requirements and fees, many concessionaires have shied away from the project. We may need to do an RFP for concessions in Gibson Park.

**Old Business**

*West Bank Park – Calumet*

There have been a series of meetings with BNSF and Calumet on the railroad crossing and the road into West Bank Park. Right now the parties are at a standstill on funding. They have started discussions with the City Commission. Calumet thinks the City should be responsible for expenses of utilities, the rail crossing, and the road in to West Bank Park.

*West Bank Park Improvements*

The draft landscaping and irrigation designs are complete and will soon be finalized. The project will go to bid in May with construction expected to begin in July; the bid opening is June 8. The TA (Transportation Alternative) project on the Trail won't begin until August so

there will be some scheduling required to accommodate both projects. Part of the project includes a new monument style entry sign. Staff is working on uniform signs for all parks with the monument style for parks like West Bank and Gibson, and mounted signs for smaller parks. New trash cans and a bench have also been purchased as part of the project. Park and Rec will work toward having the same type of trash cans in other parks as funding allows.

### *Master Plan Update*

Michael Svetz was here on May 3 & 4. He did a great presentation at the City Commission Work Session on May 3<sup>rd</sup> and the Town Meeting on May 4. He provided lots of detail on what the results of the survey were and where we are headed. Facilities were rated on an A-B-C type rating. Michael made it clear that the City's Park system and facilities were well maintained and the lower ratings were a result of deteriorating infrastructure. Some facilities have been well maintained and some had low ratings, many of which are leased to other organizations. Parks overall rated B or B-, but many of the amenities such as covered picnic areas, tennis courts and basketball courts rated lower. Water Park rated lower primarily due to the deteriorating baby pool and Flow Rider issues. Rec Center was a C+ (aging building). We will get a more detailed assessment before the final master plan. Ranking for most important parks and facilities show the top four are walking and biking trails, small neighborhood parks, pools/water parks, and golf courses. The survey shows that people like our facilities and want to use them. Service levels (numbers of parks/facilities/amenities based upon population) are above the national average in almost every category. Recreation Center size is about 1/3 of the national average. We have two golf courses for 58,000; the national average is one per 50,000.

Michael spent a lot of time with staff working on a pricing strategy. He will be back in June to update staff on progress and continue the process.

### **New Business**

#### *Budget Development*

We submitted our budgets for the next fiscal year last Friday. Will meet with the City Manager and Fiscal Control on Thursday. Highlights: The new internal service charges (ISC) have hit Park and Recreation divisions hard. New ISC formulas were developed for Human Resources and Fiscal. Park and Recreation is being assessed almost 40% of the entire Human Resources budget. Fiscal Services went up over \$50,000. Human Resources charges are up \$64,000 for Aquatics. We are disputing the costs and the formulas used to determine the charges. This directly affects our ability to operate and has a negative impact on cost recovery for enterprise funds. Board members asked to be kept posted if there are public hearings or other areas where they can assist. The ISC increases will cause service reductions. We will need to increase fees at Multi Sports just to cover the ISC increases. ISC charges for Golf are equal to the estimated revenue increase with the increase in fees this season.

We have included some increases in the budget requests. Administration: We have requested funds to upgrade Rec Trac, funds to cover workers comp increases for volunteers per new requirement, and to purchase a time clock management system. Natural Resources:

Requested dollars to begin an ERS (Equipment Revolving Fund) savings fund for much needed future replacement of equipment and funds to contract for tree trimming. There will be a reduction in costs for the Christmas tree by decorating an existing tree on the northeast corner of the Civic Center rather than hauling a tree to the front of the Civic Center; a \$7,000 savings (the crane and the truck to haul the tree have been donated); we will purchase LED lights to save on energy bills. Staff will be concentrating on trimming. In 1941 the boulevard assessment was \$11.28 per property; with inflation, it would now be \$162 for a total of \$950,000. We are at \$72; \$600,000 less than 1941 with inflation. Trees were a priority in survey. Parks: Requesting \$50,000 to begin saving for irrigation replacements so we can start chipping away at projects. Purchase a flash cam (security) for a trial in one of the parks. The flash cams may be eligible for future CDBG funding. Trails: Requested \$37,000 for trails maintenance. Multi Sports: Requested funds out of reserves for a utility cart and groomer, and partial funds for a new backstop and dugouts for Field 1 (total cost is \$40,000-\$45,000 per field). We will be down to \$25,000 in reserves. Golf: ERS -- \$75,000 requested, dependent on repayment to General Fund. Aquatics will be focusing on cost recovery at the Natatorium; currently at 45.4% per cent up from July to April 30, up from 39%. The Aquatics budget will be in red because of ISC increases. There is only \$57,000 left in reserves. The next step will be for the City Manager to make budget recommendations; should be finalized in June. We can spend time at the next meeting looking at the budget. The Park Board may draft a statement regarding the budget.

### *Movies in the Park*

We are partnering with a company to provide movies in the parks; they are a sole source provider. Staff looked at purchasing a screen to show movies, but this program will save time and money. The company is currently presenting movies in Billings. Considering Gibson Park for the location.; can move it around to other neighborhood parks such as Lions and Jaycee. Will provide more information when the schedule is put together.

### **Staff Reports**

Todd Seymanski

- Thinking out the box to get more trimming done, have a long ways to go; been keeping Joe and Patty informed of status, they have been good about supporting changes.
- Christmas tree -- talked to the Downtown Association and the Parade of Lights Committee about decorating the tree on the northeast corner of the Civic Center rather than hauling a tree; they are on board. Will purchase LED lights for energy saving and will make an investment to shape the tree. The City Manager is also aware of the plan.
- Been busy with budget stuff.
- Trimming and watering. Even with the recent moisture, things are drying out fast. Watering is critical for the first couple of years after planting a tree.
- Tree planting program: have requested to carryover the tree planting funds to the next year. The water truck is not functioning well, and didn't want to plant a couple of hundred trees and not be able to water. Will get a new water truck next year.
- 80-85% of calls are for tree trimming.
- Trees faired pretty well in the in last storm, just lost a few branches.

- The frost we got in 2009 caused a lot of damage to trees. There is exposed bark, so when we get rain it adds weight, snow adds weight, then the wind causes branches to come down.

Patty Rearden

- Ice Breaker Road Race went very well. There were 3,003 participants (down from 2015, primarily due to weather), plus an estimated 2,000-3,000 spectators. We received lots of positive comments and no complaints on the race. We had \$12,750 in cash sponsorships and \$30,340 in-kind for a total of \$43,090. (The in-kind sponsor total does not include a variety of things that do not have costs assigned to them such as ambulance service, first aid, volunteers, supplies, prizes, etc.)
- The dog park will close May 11 for approximately four weeks to repair the turf damage. During the closure, the park will be aerated, fertilized, over seeded, and irrigated to rehabilitate the turf.
- The large poles have been installed in Gibson Park. When the concrete is set, the shade sails will be installed.
- The bandshell in Gibson Park will be painted before mid-June. The project is being funded by the Paris Gibson Month Celebration Committee out of proceeds from the Waking the Dead event.

There was no public comment.

The meeting adjourned at 4:06 pm