

**PARK AND RECREATION BOARD
MONDAY, May 9, 2011
MINUTES**

MEMBERS PRESENT: William Ramsey, James McCarvel, Bryan Thies, Richard Kavulla, Charlie Bruckner, Russell Motschenbacher

Absent: Karen Harant

Staff present: Marty Basta, Patty Rearden, Todd Seymanski, Becky Hapka

Guests: Mayor Michael Winters, Rachel Kaiser, Mike Parker, Michael Haynes, Jana Cooper

Presentations

Rachel Kaiser of Rachel Kaiser Designs

Discussion of doing a giant mural at Riverside Railyard Skate Park. Getting Community involved to clean up Skate Park and directing kids to help with mural will keep the bad graffiti from appearing. Rachel Kaiser has done a mural at Great Falls High School which was in the Great Falls Tribune on 2/10/2011. She has had great success in designing and incorporating youth to help, which then the kids take pride and protect mural from further graffiti. Marty Basta stated that Rachel would be Coordinator and would recruit volunteers. She has requested that Park and Rec pay for the materials and pay her as coordinator. Charlie stated this is good art; but would someone desecrate artwork? Rachel suggested that if we get the youth involved they would take ownership. Bryan asked if the materials would come from Park and Recreation. Do we have to be careful what kind of paint to use? Marty stated there would be no major hurdles except budget. Jim stated that if we were to be vandalized, what would we do? Rachel aid that she would paint over it and fix it. Rick stated that when they painted the underpass the youth left it alone. Bryan stated Rachel wants to do this; this is what Park Board is looking for. Mayor Winters asked that the Park Board members consider or propose re-establishing a park policeman. Bill stated he liked that idea. There will be a meeting at Skate Park on Thursday the 19th at 5:30 p.m. Everyone is invited to attend to discuss the use of bikes using Skate Park and graffiti and vandalism issues.

Board motioned to have Rachel proceed in determining interest and putting together proposed costs for the mural. Motion seconded and approved.

Mike Parker, State lands, Fox Farm Area

There is 90 acre parcel of land just south of Grizzly Drive in Fox Farm; DNRC owns the state lands which are University of Montana trust property. 2.87 acres of the property is flood plain, which cannot be developed and 5 acres is for parkland. Residents want to keep it natural and preserved. There are approximately 50 different kinds of birds in the area. Mike spoke with Doug Wicks and they are planning to take the trail up to this property at some point in time. The group is looking for advocacy. The property requires very little maintenance. The southwest quadrant of the land could be developed but the cost share of developing the road would be very expensive. A map was distributed at the meeting. Bryan stated that DNRC is paying the County for spraying the weeds. Mike Parker said potential grants would include

Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Northwestern Energy, wildlife societies, and foundations. Bryan asked if any hunting is allowed. Mike states that bow hunting on the islands only.

Mike Haynes, City Planning Director, said Fox Farm Road runs through the property; acquisition would have to include right of way for the roadway. Sewer and water would have to be run the entire length if the south end was developed. Acquisition would have to go to the Commission for approval.

Board motioned to support their efforts towards purchase of the property and exploring potential funding sources. Bryan asked for motion for statement of support. Motion seconded and approved 5-0, with one member abstaining.

Director's Report

Staff is working on budgets; very challenging this year. Marty attended a Rotary meeting and they have decided to adopt the project in West Bank Park for a natural playground. Giles is working on the permit to begin the process for the boat launch in West Bank Park. Park and Recreation purchased a new back hoe. The MusicFest planned in July was postponed until next year.

Gibson Park Lighting Project Update

The Gibson Park Lighting contract was awarded to Liberty Electric. There were 7 bidders. Liberty Electric was \$25,000 less than others. Breaking ground will start next month. Since the cost of the project is less, the match for the grant will be less also.

Hurd and CMR Tennis Court Update

A ceremony was held at the CMR Tennis Courts last Thursday recognizing the City, the School District and the Great Falls Tennis Association for their contributions towards the renovation work completed on the two courts.

Senior Olympics Update

Patty passed out handouts. She stated the kick off of the Olympics will be at Alive @ 5 in Gibson Park on Thursday, June 9. The 5K road race will start at 6:00 p.m., adjacent to Gibson Park. There are 13 sports. We have excellent Commissioners for each sport lined up and they are prepared for the games. Recruiting volunteers is currently being conducted. We have advertised State wide including posters, e-mail blasts including businesses and all of the RSVP's thousands of contacts, press releases and state-wide TV ads. Jim McCarvel stated that Patty should be given a lot of credit for all her hard work.

Paris Gibson Month

Marty stated that Norma Ashby will be giving the 2nd Annual Paris Gibson Award at Alive @ 5 on June 30; the mayor will also read a proclamation. On July 1, there will be a Tree Planting Ceremony in Gibson Park. Marty is coordinating with Todd. Marty is conducting a tour of Gibson Park following the tree planting. "Waking the Dead" is sponsored by the History Museum and Croxfords, and will be held on the evening of July 1st at Highland Cemetery. This is where Paris Gibson is buried.

Playground Structures – Safety Issues

Marty stated that there are 30 structures in our parks that are evaluated annually. There are 6 play structures that have been identified as safety issues. Park and Recreation will request funding for 3 structures during the budget process including Elks Riverside Park, Skyline Park., and Jaycee Park.

Gibson Park Pond

Walls of pond are starting to lean towards the water. We need to empty the pond and repair the wall. John Smith is getting quotes now; we are trying to include it in the new budget. We will keep board informed. Bryan asked if the board can do anything to help with the budget process. Marty stated the budget meeting with the City Manager is May 31 with a meeting with the City Commissioners to follow. Marty will let Board know the outcome of the City Managers meeting. July is National Park Month.

Insurance claim – Ash Trees

In April 2008, we had freeze damage to about 740 Ash trees. Trees were valued at \$1.9 million. We have received about \$550,000 of the insurance money. The balance will be paid as it is expended. In early October 2009, we lost additional trees to freeze damage. Another 532 trees should be covered by insurance; Forestry staff has inventoried the damaged trees, the MMIA adjuster has also inventoried the trees; awaiting a final inspection by the underwriter of MMIA, but these trees should also be covered.

We have been planting trees and trimming and have more diversity of trees. We have approx. 18 different species of trees now. Todd will be re-inventorying trees again. No info back on Australian Pines yet. This is a state wide problem.

Staff Reports

Patty reported the Ice Breaker Road Race had good attendance of 3,273 which was up over last year. Easter Egg Hunt went really well. Steel Etc. donated \$2,000 for expenses and an additional \$1,425 in coins for the eggs. Steel Etc. plans to sponsor the Easter Egg Hunt again next year. Summer program registration for all divisions is going very well. Summer camp registration is at over 960 children already.

Todd stated that they are mulching and trimming trees. Had a compost sale last Friday, May 6th from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Forestry made \$975 from compost and wood chips.

Patty stated that there are no minutes to approve; we will have them on the next meeting.

Board Reports

Rick stated that he wanted to thank Park and Recreation for all they do. The rest of the Board concurred.

Bryan stated that there will be a meeting on use of bikes at the skate park. The Mayor, City Deputy Manager and others will be there. Hope to see you there on May 19th at 5:30 p.m.

With no further business meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.