

Park Board Meeting Minutes January 8, 2019

Park Board Members Present: Ron Brunk, Jim DeHerrera, Ray Boksich, Terri Dunn, Eric Matson and Ryan Hennen

Park Board Members Absent: Susan Schnee and Frank Sweeney

Guest:

City Staff Present: Maria Butts, Mary Blubaugh, Liz Records and Carla Belski

A. Call to Order: 7:15 pm

B. Approval of the January 8, 2019 Agenda- Member Dunn made a motion to approve the agenda. Member Hennen seconded. A vote was taken with all ayes.

C. Approval of the November 13, 2018 Meeting Minutes – Member Hennen made a motion to approve the minutes. Vice President DeHerrera seconded. A vote was taken with all ayes.

D. Public Comments – None

E. Committee Reports

a. Bicycle/Pedestrian Committee – Vice President DeHerrera reported the Committee was catching up on existing projects. The old hospital site was discussed. Jim reported, as a side note, City Council has tabled approval of this development until their next session.

b. Tree Advisory Committee – The Tree Committee attended the work session for the Depot Park Master Plan Final Design where they were presented with the tree plan. At the end of the presentation the Committee approved the plan.

c. WSFF Board – President Brunk reported the Board would meet later. Director Butts said the Department is contracting with SM Roofing for the roof repair. The contractor still needs a city business license which he is slated to purchase once he returns from an extended holiday vacation.

d. WAG Board – Member Boksich said this is their lull time. He does have a few items to mention but he will bring them up later in the meeting.

F. Presentations – Depot Park Master Plan Final Design for Phases II and III – Prior to the regular meeting the Park Board had a work session where they were presented with the final designs. These designs represented the Park Boards' requests from the November 13th work session.

Director Butts told the Park Board the projected costs are in their packet. TIF funds have been approved and we are on budget. Maria is requesting approval for the final design.

President Brunk asked Ian from RPA how firm they feel about these projected costs. Ian said most of the design changes are of the moving kind and should not impact the costs in any significant way.

City Council does not need to approve the Final Master Plan as the TIF funding is already in place.

President Brunk reviewed with the Park Board the earlier work session issues. The Park Board then made the following decisions.

Regarding the bus shelters, the Park Board directed RPA to go with the plan as presented.

Regarding the bike racks, the Park Board directed RPA to go with the plan as presented.

Regarding the recycling and trash can placements, the Park Board directed RPA to go with the plan as presented. More cans can be added as needed.

If an additional electrical panel can be added without having to increase to 320 amp., then the Park Board approves.

Regarding bollards, Craig Workman, Director of Public Works, suggests these bollards be taken out of the Depot Park Master Plan as this is a Public Works and Police issue. Public Works and Police will work on a solution outside of the master plan process.

Regarding the reinforced turf, the Park Board directed RPA to go with the plan as presented.

Member Boksich would like to eliminate the number of city parking signs along Depot Park. Craig Workman said the 15-minute signs can go as they were for the old City building. Ian told Member Boksich the number of signs will be the minimal required, which is less than there are now.

Member Dunn made a motion to approve the Depot Park Master Plan as presented.

Member Matson seconded. A vote was taken with all ayes.

G. Public Hearings - None

H. Old Business – None

I. New Business

a. Consideration to approve Wayfinding Sign Plan – Carla Belski reviewed the Bicycle and Pedestrian Wayfinding Sign Plan found in the Park Board's packet. A Montana Tourism Grant was received for this plan in the amount of \$12,000. The Bicycle/Pedestrian Committee has approved the signs and the plan.

Vice President DeHerrera made a motion to approve the Bicycle and Pedestrian Wayfinding Sign Plan as presented. Member Dunn seconded. A vote was taken with all ayes.

b. Consideration to recommend to Council a new fee schedule for recreation programs – Director Butts reviewed her detailed memo with the Park Board. Several cost analyses were included in the Park Board's packet as well.

The Department was asked to evaluate all program fees. Staff was also asked by the City Manager to provide options for a resident and non-resident fee structure.

Director Butts said they realized through their analyses some fee increases would price some families out of the ability to participate in recreation programs. Director Butts and staff then looked at other fee structure possibilities. They came up with 2 options. The 1st option is a straight fee increase. The 2nd option is a Membership

Fee structure. This is based on the concept of a recreation center membership. Each option holds pros and cons and those are listed and included in the packet.

Director Butts would like the Park Board's thoughts on the definition of "resident" as well as which fee structure plan they prefer. Should a resident be someone who lives within the city limits or within the school district's limits. Maria would also like the Park Board's thoughts on eliminating the early pick up option for After School.

The Park Board is ok with eliminating the early pick up option for After School.

Director Butts recommended that the Membership Fee Structure for the Summer Camp program and the Basic Fee Structure for all other programs be approved. She also recommended the definition of a "resident" be "school district." Many families can't afford to live in Whitefish proper and live just outside of city limits but attend Whitefish schools.

Member Dunn appreciates staff looking at services and the people who need it most and supports Director Butt's recommendation.

There was much discussion regarding the definition of a resident. Member Matson asked if this definition would apply to a resident of Columbia Falls who attends Whitefish schools. Vice President DeHerrera likes the School District idea, but he does not agree that participants who live outside of the Whitefish School District be considered "resident" because they are not paying taxes to the Whitefish School District.

President Brunk asked how scholarships work and who receives them. Director Butts said there is a ranking based on several factors such as the number of children in the home, income, as well as how many days they are requesting (the dollar amount). President Brunk verified there is flexibility and Maria and Liz Records make the decision. Director Butts said, "Yes, the decision is made by staff."

President Brunk motioned to go with Director Butt's recommendation of a combined membership and Basic Fee Schedule.

Member Boksich seconds. A vote was taken with all ayes.

After continued discussion regarding what constitutes a "resident," President Brunk asked for a show of hands in favor of a "resident" being one who lives within the School District.

There were 3 Members in favor.

President Brunk then asked for a show of hands in favor of a Resident being one whose child(ren) attend(s) Whitefish schools.

There were 3 Member in favor.

c. Review of and direction to staff on FY20 CIP and unscheduled priorities – A memo from Director Butts was included in the Park Board packet. Maria reviewed what the Park Board felt, last year, were the top three priorities and their status as of this date. President Brunk told Director Butts he would like the department to look at service organizations for help with some CIP items such as adding baby swings to existing parks.

Director Butts asked the Park Board for a recommendation.

Vice President DeHerrera made a motion to approve the CIP as presented. Member Hennen seconded. A vote was taken with all ayes.

d. Consideration to recommend to Council a proposed Ordinance prohibiting unattended displays in public parks. A memo from Angela Jacobs, the city's attorney, was in the Park Board's packet as well as the proposed ordinance. This memo reviewed the government's right to limit expressive activity in public parks and grounds. The ordinance has an exception for displays or structures erected by the City, or if the City issues a special event permit that authorizes the structures or installations. How other cities have dealt with unattended displays was also presented. The proposed ordinance will be brought before City Council for consideration.

Member Boksich asked how this ordinance affects the lighting of the Christmas trees? Director Butts said this is not affected as it is a City activity.

Member Hennen made a motion to recommend to Council to approve a proposed Ordinance to prohibit unattended displays in public parks as dictated by City Attorney Angela Jacobs.

Member Matson seconds. A vote was taken with all ayes.

J. Other Items – Member Boksich reported the WAG Board would like to expand the dog park. They would like to see a dog training area. The WAG Board would also like to have some lighting in the dog park along the path, similar to the lighting on the cross-country ski trails at the golf course.

Director Butts showed the Park Board the Armory Park Master Plan map from several years ago. This map identifies the previous expansions of the dog park as well as other developments in the park. She also shared with them other options being considered for the existing open space in the park. Maria would like to begin working on completing the bike path portion of the master plan as well as the playground area. She told the Park Board there is a grant for which the department can apply to help fund this project.

The Park Board is on board with the idea of a walking path. Regarding lighting the dog park path, President Brunk suggests WAG talk with neighbors who might be impacted by the lights. Member Boksich said WAG would like to research solar lights.

K. Items from Parks and Recreation Department

- a. Administrative Report – Director Butts has spent most of her time working on budget analysis and preparations for FY20.
- b. Recreation Coordinator – A six-day Winter Break Camp was run at the Armory during school vacation. Both Friday Night Ski and K-4 Basketball start mid-January.
- c. Parks Maintenance – Snow removal equipment has been repaired and maintenance is being performed on vehicles and other equipment.
- d. Community Services Coordinator Report – The Snow Sculpture Showcase does not look good with the minimal snowfall experienced so far this winter. The Parks and Recreation Department was awarded a \$6,500 grant from the DNRC to

support our Urban Forestry program. The annual Arbor Day Grant has been submitted to the DNRC. This grant supports the cost of trees and supplies for the event.

L. Correspondence – Director Butts received plans for the proposed Japanese garden by the retention pond in Riverside Park. This proposal was brought before the Park Board through Public Comment during the July 10th Park Board meeting. The plans were made available if the Park Board wished to review.

M. Items from Park Board:

Terri Dunn – Thank you for all the budget work. There was a lot of effort put into this presentation.

Jim DeHerrera – Thank you for all your work. He liked seeing us plowing the small amount of snow we did receive.

Eric Matson - None

Ray Boksich – Tree branches at Canoe Park were overhanging and hitting his truck as he drove past.

Ron Brunk – He appreciates all the work on the budget.

N. Adjourn: Member Hennen made a motion to adjourn. With a vote of all ayes the meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.