

Park Board Meeting Minutes
March 14, 2023

Park Board Members Present: Ron Brunk, Ray Boksich, Jim DeHerrera, Melissa Hartman, Terri Dunn.

Park Board Members Absent: Antonia Malchik, Frank Sweeney

City Staff Present: Maria Butts, Jennie Bradford, Jen Sybrant, Philip Hodge

Guests: Kerry Drown (WHS), Kevin Slaybaugh (Glacier Twins)

- A. Call to order at 6:02 p.m.
- B. Approval of the February 7, 2023, agenda motioned by member Dunn and seconded by Vice President Hartman. All ayes.
- C. Approval of the February 7, 2023, minutes motioned by member Boksich and seconded by Vice President Hartman. All ayes.
- D. Public Comment: NA
- E. Committee Reports:
 - a. Bicycle/Pedestrian Committee: Member DeHerrera shared the committee met last Monday. An update on the Riverbend condo project is they have issued a contract for survey and design to TD&H Engineering, as approved by Council. With regards to the viaduct, MDT said decorative railings and lighting would not be permitted, as anything bolted into bridge could be damaged to the point access would need to be cut off. As the viaduct is the only direct passage over the tracks, they did not want to permit it. Director Butts shared MDT would allow us to move the jersey barriers and make them more visually appealing. Also, existing jersey barriers may be able to be used in the widening, whereas in past MDT advised if moved they would be compromised. Member DeHerrera shared the other discussion at the meeting was safe routes to schools, which is being presented tonight.
 - b. Tree Advisory Committee: Member Dunn shared that an area in Depot Park has a standing water issue, so the committee discussed how to mitigate this and agreed upon planting 3 new trees. The group also talked about a tree replanting plan going forward, and the committee added more recommendations to the approved tree list. Member Dunn shared during the meeting a City Council rep brought forth the idea to remove all fruit bearing trees on city property as they are a bear attractant. The consensus of the committee is to refrain from further efforts until they can assess the impact of the recently implemented bear resistant cans. To note, removing fruit trees from city property does not eliminate fruit trees altogether. There are an even greater number of fruit trees on public property. Additionally, fruit trees provide valuable benefits such as offsetting erosion. Director Butts added the City has also entered fruit gleaning program with North Valley Food Bank, and fruit from public trees will be gleaned every year. At this point, rather than removing fruit trees, we are going to focus on public outreach to encourage those with fruit trees on public property to partake in FWP's fruit gleaning program. President Brunk sought clarification as to which bear can is being evaluated, residential locking cans or large round cans. Director Butts advised we are gradually replacing all residential cans with locking ones, and the only round ones that will be left in town will be in the alley on Central Ave.

- c. WSFF: President Brunk was absent from the last WSFF meeting. He did share the committee recently dealt with issues of dogs inside the Ice Den and they are working on upholding the City ordinance which does not permit dogs (other than service dogs), inside the facility.
- d. WAG: Member Boksich shared the committee met late February and completed their annual re-election of officers. They did appoint a few new board members. Together the committee has come up with a plan for the community challenge.

F. Presentations: NA

G. Public Hearings: NA

H. Old Business: NA

I. New Business:

- a. Consideration of the Memorial Park sub-lease agreement between Glacier Twins and Whitefish School District: Member Boksich moved to approve as presented. Seconded by member DeHerrera. All ayes. WHS Superintendent Kerry Drown agreed to update Director Butts with the outcome of their board meeting.
- b. Consideration of a Memorial Park Master Plan Revision to include Safe Routes to School Paths and Parking: Director Butts shared this is a very preliminary design. The purpose of this conceptual drawing is to gauge the Park Board's interest in such a plan. If interested, Public Works would apply for a Transportation Alternative grant. The parking spaces on the north half of Fir St in this design will likely not qualify for the grant as it is a parking lot. The City could complete this component as part of their safe routes to school project. The lot would bump into the park. This design involves widening the existing path along Pine St to approximately 10 ft. It was decided to not do anything along E 2nd as there are several mature trees. Director Butts would like feedback on what the Park Board would like to see here at some point, but it wouldn't be part of the grant. This plan also includes angled parking stalls along Pine Ave. The goal is to disperse traffic during drop off and pick up and provide a safer route from Memorial Park to Muldown. We would gain an overall increase in the number of parking spots. Member DeHerrera motioned to move forward with the plan as presented except for the northeast corner parking lot as this would not qualify for the grant anyways. Seconded by member Dunn, with the addition of a sidewalk down 6th St. All ayes.
- c. Consideration of a Depot Park Tree Replacement Plan: City Urban Forester, Jen Sybrant, shared she now has a 4th tree that could be planted as well (another Red Maple). As the Engelmann Spruce is dying, the red maple would take its place. The Urban Forestry division shared they would like to replace trees in Depot Park on a 1:1 basis. Member DeHerrera asked what the net loss of trees has been in Depot Park over the past 2 years. Jen said in 9 years the park has lost approximately 4 trees. Member Dunn motioned to approve the plan as presented and recommended by the tree advisory committee with the addition of a 4th red maple. Seconded by Vice President Hartman. All ayes.

J. Other Items: NA

K. Items from the Parks and Recreation Department

- a. Administrative Report: Director Butts spoke about the City Beach commercial use permits. Current language allows for 6 annual permits. In the past we have issued all 6 permits during the summer months. Director Butts asked the board members for clarification on what they understood and intended "annual" to mean. The Park Board shared by "annual"

they were thinking of summer. As Parks and Recreation was recently asked about a winter commercial guiding permit, Director Butts informed members that FWP has commercial permits for ice fishing access from State Park. Director Butts said, permitting winter commercial use provides the City the ability to control parking while using the lake. The Park Board directed Director Butts to add a revision of language to commercial permitting to the next meeting.

- b. Recreation Coordinator Report: NA
- c. Maintenance Report: NA
- d. Community Services Coordinator Report: NA

L. Correspondences: NA

M. Items from the Park Board: Member Boksich requested a Park Sign Master Plan status update. Director Butts shared all revisions are complete; they have a prototype for how to mount the sign; sponsorship letters for people to sponsor pollinator garden have been sent out. The plan is to work on sign implementation one park at a time, starting with Bakke. Printing should begin in April and installation will start when the snow melts.

Member Dunn requested a status update on Spokane Ave reconstruction. Director Butts shared work will begin in the next few weeks. After the City completes the mill overlay, the state will reconstruct the road a year or so after. The road configuration will remain unchanged.

N. Motion to adjourn made by Vice President Hartman, seconded by member Dunn. All ayes. Adjourned at 7:55 p.m.