

**PARKS & TRAILS COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**January 25, 2016**

The regular meeting of the Baxter Parks and Trails Commission was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Jim Kalkofen, Commissioner Mari Holderness, Gail Brecht and Ken Hasskamp

MEMBERS ABSENT: Melissa Barrick and Council Liaison Quinn Nystrom

STAFF PRESENT: Community Development (CD) Director Josh Doty and Planner Matthew Gindele

OTHERS PRESENT: None

**Approval of the Minutes**

**MOTION** by Commissioner Hasskamp, seconded by Commissioner Brecht to approve the regular meeting minutes of November 23, 2015 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

**OK Park Pavilion-Construction Schedule**

CD Director Doty referred the Commission to the memo and color rendering in the packet. Staff has been working with WSN on the plans for construction and schedule regarding the pavilion. The target date for completion in early July with a music event coordinated with that date. CD Director Doty asked the Commission to review the dates and see if there are any dates that would not work with their schedule. CD Director Doty stated that he has also talked to the school district and there is ball games scheduled at the park. The music event would likely need to take place after 7:00 pm to allow for adequate parking.

Chair Kalkofen asked the Commission for a consensus on the date. Commissioner Hasskamp stated that he liked the later part of the month just to make sure everything is complete. Commissioner Brecht indicated that baseball doesn't always end at 7:00 pm, it usually goes until it's dark. She was also in favor of a week night such as July 20<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup>. The Commission suggested the middle of the week and requested that staff contact the school to request if there could be no athletic events that evening. If there are no issues staff will take it straight to Council for approval.

**Oakwood Trail Update**

**Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Grant-Oakwood Trail**

Planner Gindele explained that the grant is from the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MN Dot) and ranges from \$100,000.00 to \$1 million dollars in grant funding. The funding is proposed for 2020, 4 years from now. He explained that 20% of the eligible costs would have to come from the City through the park dedication fund. This grant application is for trails used as alternate transportation methods and not necessarily for trails serving a purely recreational use such as snow shoeing or roller blading. Planner Gindele explained the grant request is for a trail along Oakwood Drive from the intersection of Cedar Scenic Drive and Oakwood Drive extending all the way to Whipple Beach Recreational Area. This section of trail is in the comprehensive plan. The trail would be 12 feet wide and potentially handicap assessable, if the grade can be met. Staff did include a few alternate areas where trail connections could also be considered for funding in this grant application. Planner Gindele stated that three alternate trail segments could be included in this grant if funding allowed for it; those three alternative segments are 1) from Cedar Scenic Drive extending south along Oakwood Drive to a parcel of Potlatch land 2) From Cedar Scenic and Oakwood Drive intersection extending east along Cedar Scenic to Memorywood Drive and 3) from Oakwood Drive near the Cedar Scenic intersection extending west across county land to connect to the Brownsville Circle trail.

Planner Gindele reviewed the cost breakdown with the Commission and explained the total cost that would come out of the park dedication fund would equal roughly \$110,000.00. Chair Kalkofen asked for a further

explanation of the \$83,939.00. Planner Gindele explained that the City would need to acquire easements for the trail and the engineering of the trail and would not be covered in the grant. Staff is also working with the County to obtain approval for the trail easement and should have an answer from the County at about the time the grant approval/denial is given for this trail (roughly sometime in April). Planner Gindele reviewed the (3) optional trail extensions and the cost associated with each trail segment.

Chair Kalkofen asked where the funding is coming from. Staff indicated that this is a federal grant that comes from the transportation department.

Commissioner Hasskamp complimented staff on how well the grant application was put together. CD Director Doty indicated that Planner Gindele had done the majority of the work on this grant and the credit should go to him for doing a great job.

### **Crow Wing County Submittals**

CD Director Doty indicated that staff did meet with the County and they seemed interested in the trail on Oakwood Dr. Planner Gindele indicated the application to the County was included in the packet. He explained that typically easements can take close to a year for approval; however, the County was willing to work with a shorter timeframe for this project. They are currently going through the process of reviewing the property to flush out any environmental, historical or cultural issues of significance; the County's next step is to solicit public comment on the proposed trail segment.

### **Joint Powers Meeting Update**

CD Director Doty indicated that he did not have much to report on this topic other than the main item of discussion which was the soccer program. The school district requested that the City acquire a cart to carry the nets around when the nets need to be put up and taken down.

Commissioner Brecht, whom also attended, indicated that the budget was on point and the registration numbers were good. Chair Kalkofen asked how often they meet, Commissioner Brecht indicated at least twice a year, before and after summer/winter sports.

Commissioner Brecht indicated that Joe Pohlkamp continues to bring up the need for the additional 4<sup>th</sup> ballfield at OK Park. CD Director Doty indicated at the meeting that the City needs to balance Park Dedication funds to cover all City park and recreational needs. He noted that the City is currently putting money into the baseball programs with the additional safety nets. Commissioner Brecht indicated that the property line through the park is still a lingering issue that hasn't been resolved to date.

### **Berrywood Park Buffer**

CD Director Doty shared with the Commission that the Council looked into the park buffer. Staff had some conversations with the land owner and a few different options were presented to the City Council. Ultimately the Council decided that the additional land was not needed at this time. The Commission held conversation regarding what could be placed on that land in the future if the land was still available.

### **Riverview Park Boardwalk Update**

CD Director Doty noted that the boardwalk hand railing has been installed as an added safety feature. Chair Kalkofen asked if there was any idea of how much that park is being utilized. CD Director Doty stated that he can ask the Parks Department if they have any ideas on usage.

**Parks 5 Year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)**

CD Director Doty indicated that this is the time to incorporate anything that this Commission would like to build into the budget for the next 5 years. He explained that the Commission has looked at this previously and now needs to review the plan to see if there are any changes or updates to the current CIP Park Improvements. CD Director Doty indicated that it is tough to make some determinations since you don't always know how much money will be available. This is a plan that should be reviewed once a year to see if the Commission would like to add or remove items based on the funding available. Currently, there are more projects than funds due to the amount of funds recently spent.

Chair Kalkofen asked if, on the 2016 budget, line items G, H, and I (Picnic tables, garbage/recycling containers and benches) were added or if they have always been there. CD Director Doty indicated that they are in the budget each year. Chair Kalkofen questioned why these items would be coming out of the park dedication fund when they are replacement items. CD Director Doty indicated that the funds are supposed to be for new park benches etc. Commissioner Brecht stated that if an item is over \$10,000.00 then the Commission should receive a breakdown at the end of the year explaining where the money was allocated and how it was spent. CD Director Doty indicated that he will request a list from the Parks Department.

The Commission reviewed the 2017 CIP and discussed the \$60,000.00 study to determine the cost of building a pedestrian bridge over Hwy 371. CD Director Doty indicated that there are varying levels of studies that could be completed to determine the feasibility of a pedestrian bridge over 371. Doty stated that \$60,000 is an approximate cost of a complete study that would show what the costs and consideration of different locations to build the bridge and outline what exactly the plan would be to build the bridge. The Commission discussed various organizations that might be interested in being involved with this project as the bridge would link to other communities and trails. CD Director Doty informed the Commission that the 2016 multi-modal design study has been moved forward of the Hwy. 371 bridge crossing since this study will analyze complete streets are needed, where trails are needed and where no trails are needed. Commissioner Hasskamp stated that he was surprised at how many people today do not have motorized transportation and indicated a need for trails.

Chair Kalkofen indicated that he had seen an article in the paper regarding the Fairview trail but was not sure of the outcome. Commissioner Brecht indicated that the neighborhood had rejected the alternative trail. CD Director Doty indicated that the separated trail was removed and the reconstruction would allow for a 6 foot bike lane on each side of the road. The Commission held conversation regarding how the road and bike lanes would be worked into the reconstruction.

CD Director Doty briefly noted that staff also applied for the Safe Routes to School grant. The funding would be for improvements near Forestview Middle School.

The Commission and staff agreed that the CIP should be reviewed at least once annually and that adjustments to it may be needed depending on the park dedication funds available each year.

Commissioner Brecht asked about the disk golf. CD Director Doty indicated that nothing is currently taking place or being discussed regarding disc golf. It was noted that discussion of this item is listed in the comprehensive plan under the mid-range time frame.

Chair Kalkofen stated that the Commission should look at the plan twice a year, once in January and then again in July to see where the funding stands.

The Commission held a brief conversation regarding a dog park.

**Other Business**

Parks & Trails Meeting 1/25/16

The next scheduled meeting is February 22, 2016 at 4:00 pm.

**Adjournment**

**MOTION** by Commissioner Hasskamp, seconded by Commissioner Holderness to adjourn the meeting at 5:09 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Approved by:

Respectfully submitted,

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Chair Kalkofen

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Shanna Newman, CD Administrative Assistant