

**PARKS & TRAILS COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**February 25, 2013**

Interim Chair Kalkofen called the regular meeting of the Baxter Parks and Recreation Commission to order at 4:00 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Commissioners Gail Brecht, Lori Thramer, Jim Kalkofen and Council Liaison Jim Klein

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**STAFF PRESENT:** City Administrator Gordon Heitke

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Mayor Darrel Olson

Interim Chair Kalkofen asked the Mayor if he would like to address the Commission. Mayor Olson stated that he and the City appreciated each person who serves on this Commission. He gave a brief history of the past few years and the loss of 7 employees in that time frame. The loss of those employees has been felt especially hard this past year with the development that has taken place, Costco, Olive Garden, Westgate Mall redevelopment, Discount Tires, the theater remodel etc. He apologized for the lack of resources that were given to this Commission over the past year. He thanks the Commission for their time and asked that they call should they have any concerns.

Mayor Olson stated that he reviewed the Parks Plan over the weekend and understood the need for an update. He spoke of the "hubs" of the City being the parks and the schools.

**Approval of the Minutes**

Interim Chair Kalkofen asked for a motion to approve the minutes.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Thramer, seconded by Commissioner Brecht to approve the regular meeting minutes of December 17, 2012. Motion carried unanimously.

**Report on City Code Amendments on Commissions and Parks and Trails Commission**

Interim Chair Kalkofen asked if the Commission had any concerns regarding the final ordinance. Administrator Heitke explained that the ordinance has been adopted by City Council on February 5, 2013. He highlighted a few items including who has the authority to cancel a meeting, the Council Liaison's duties within the Commission and the Commission's duties.

Commissioner Brecht asked about the residency portion of the ordinance. In the past Brainerd had an issue with the Library Board and found that there was state law requirements regarding residency. The question is what happens when you can't find a Baxter resident to serve on a commission, would there be a possibility of having someone from unorganized territory? Administrator Heitke stated that it would have to be reviewed by Council, however he did not feel it would be necessary. Mayor Olson stated that there isn't a lack of people that would like to participate in a Commission, there were 3 applicants for the Utilities Commission, it's a matter of advertising and getting the positions filled.

**Review of 2013 Capital Parks & Trail Projects**

Administrator Heitke explained that this is included in the packet. There are a few small items that the Commission did not have discussion on, as they are more maintenance items. In the past, this Commission had discussed trail accesses at several different parks and they are included in the 2013 budget. The other item was Riverview Park and that has all been budgeted as well.

**Riverview Park Improvement Recommendations**

Interim Chair Kalkofen asked that the minutes regarding the gate be reviewed. He felt there was some confusion on if the gate was going to be opened, who was going to man the gate or if there should be a gate at all. He stated the seniors would like to drive and park down there and the gate might hinder that. Administrator Heitke stated that he wasn't sure that there was a formal recommendation to Council.

Administrator Heitke felt the bigger issue was if the Commission intended to allow people to drive down and unload a boat. Interim Chair Kalkofen and Commissioner Brecht agreed that residents liked the idea of unloading their boats (smaller handheld boats such as canoes) in the park at the public hearing. Administrator Heitke stated that if people were allow to park down there, then a hard surface parking area would need to be installed and that could be costly. He further informed the Commission that the DNR has shared some interest in putting a public access at Riverview. This would bring in additional funding. Commissioner Brecht asked what type of landing, Administrator Heitke stated a concrete type ramp. Interim Chair Kalkofen expressed concern regarding the ramp washing out. Commissioner Brecht stated that the park is supposed to be a passive park and this could take that way from the park. Administrator Heitke stated that he had not pursued the DNR, as he was looking for the Commissions input on the topic. The Commission agreed that they were not in favor of pursuing the public access at this time.

The Commission discussed the parking lot and gate installation extensively. The Commission agreed that vehicles should be allowed to enter the park, there should be a drop off zone with signage, and have the vehicles park on the cul-de-sac. Administrator Heitke stated that the Council will have the final say on if there was any deviation on the hard-surfaced road and parking lot requirements.

The Commission discussed directional signage for the roads and launch precaution signage.

**2013 Parks & Trails Commission Goals**

Administrator Heitke informed the Commission that City Council has seen the goals through the minutes they received.

**Comprehensive Plan Update**

Administrator Heitke informed the Commission that the comprehensive plan is being updated and the parks plan will be incorporated into this plan. The process will be that Long Range Planning will be made up of the chair of each commission and they will assist the consultant with the comprehensive plan. When it comes to a specific area, such as parks or water and sewer, that item will go to each commission for a more thorough review. Then it will go back to Long Range Planning Commission and the consultant to get incorporated into the comprehensive plan.

Interim Chair Kalkofen asked the role the Commission regarding the comprehensive plan. Administrator Heitke suggested that the Commission review the comprehensive plan and the park plan and start looking at items that need to be modified to each plan. The Commission discussed some of the items that have been accomplished in the parks plan and the vision for the future. The Commission agreed that the March meeting should be a work shop type setting focused on the comprehensive/parks plan.

**Parks Plan Update Discussions**

Administrator Heitke stated that the Council did not approve a lot of funding for the Parks Plan, only the Comprehensive Plan. He questioned if a stand alone Parks Plan is still needed. Commissioner Brecht asked if there is a place on the website that citizens could be polled regarding the parks. Currently there is not, but it could be set up very easily. The Commission discussed the different types of public survey options.

**Other Business**

None

**Next Commission Meeting**

The next regular meeting will be March 25, 2013 at 4:00 p.m.

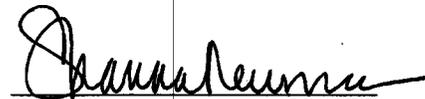
**Adjournment**

**MOTION** by Commissioner Brecht, seconded by Commissioner Thramer to adjourn the meeting at 5:17 p.m.  
Motion carried unanimously.

Approved by:

  
Interim Chair Jim Kalkofen

Respectfully submitted,

  
Shanna Newman-CD Technical Clerk