

PARKS & TRAILS COMMISSION MINUTES
April 22, 2013

Interim Chair Kalkofen called the regular meeting of the Baxter Parks and Trails 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: Ray Griffin; Wade Miller, MnDNR

Approval of the Minutes

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

MOTION by Commissioner Brecht, seconded by Commissioner Thramer to approve the regular meeting minutes of March 25, 2013. Motion carried unanimously.

Trail Development Input From Bicycle Group

Ray Griffin, representing a local bicycle group, discussed bike trails and routes (on roads) preferred by local cycling groups/clubs. Discussions are to continue.

Designation of City Trail as Paul Bunyan Trail

Wade Miller, MnDNR Parks and Trails, was present to discuss the DNR's plan to construct the south segment of the Paul Bunyan Trail this year from the Mississippi River Bridge on TH 371 to the contact station at Crow Wing State Park. This results in two separate segments of the Paul Bunyan Trail with the city's trail connecting the two segments. Mr. Miller identified three options for the Paul Bunyan Trail going through Baxter. Option #1 is to do nothing, having the state trail segments linked by the city trail. Option #2 is to enter into a joint powers agreement to possibly provide for consistent signage and shared trail maintenance. Option #3 would be to turn over the city trail to MnDNR's jurisdiction. The issues discussed with options #2 and #3 centered on winter trail maintenance and use of the city trail segment. If MnDNR was to have jurisdiction, the trails would not be plowed in the winter and could be used by snowmobiles. Under Option #2, the joint powers agreement could be written to allow for consistent signage, shared maintenance, etc. and the City continuing to maintain and use the trails during the winter as they have been. If the City wished to turn the trail over to the MnDNR, the City could propose a restriction which allowed for specific winter maintenance and uses. The MnDNR would have to decide whether such a restriction would be acceptable.

MOTION by Commissioner Brecht, seconded by Commissioner Thramer, carried unanimously, to recommend to the City Council that a Joint Powers Agreement with MnDNR be considered which would allow for the City trail segment to serve as a portion of the Paul Bunyan Trail.

Mr. Miller will continue the discussion of a potential agreement within his agency and will submit a draft for future review, discussion and consideration by the City.

Report on Council Actions

City Administrator Heitke reported the City Council had approved two development projects and collected park fees in the amounts of: Cuyuna Medical Center Baxter Clinic - \$72,901.15; Autumn Glen Apartments - \$108,000.

It was reported that following a lengthy discussion regarding recommended improvements to manage vehicles in Riverview Park, the City Council decided to install a gate at the entrance and not allow vehicles to enter the park at this time. The Council is open to reviewing this situation after the park has been put in use for a period of time.

City Administrator Heitke shared the recent request from Shane's Inspiration regarding a small expansion of the proposed playground area. The request was referred to the City Council for their determination of whether the plan modification is significant enough to change their previous approval. The Council decided to view the site at some time in the future and have invited the Parks and Trails Commission to join them.

Parks and Deer Hunting

Chair Kalkofen referred to the City's Hunting map and suggested that there may be additional areas that could be opened for archery hunting in view of the number of deer in the City. He noted that this issue is not under the purview of the Parks and Trails Commission, but also noted that some of the area that could be opened is city park property. He asked that commissioners think about this issue.

Review of Long Range Planning Commission

Chair Kalkofen reported that the LRPC was holding a meeting immediately following the Parks and Trails Commission meeting to review qualifications of consultants and encourage members to continue thinking about parks and trails needs. Administrator Heitke acknowledged that it will probably be a few months before the consultant will be ready to begin addressing parks and trails.

Continuation of Parks and Trails Plan Update

Administrator Heitke distributed some documents from city files which are the products of past park and trail planning discussions. He encouraged the commissioners to look at the trail system associated with the Cragun's business development for a determination of its value to the City's trails system.

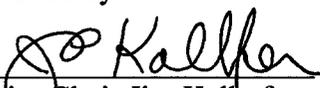
Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting would be May 20, 2013 at 4:00 p.m..

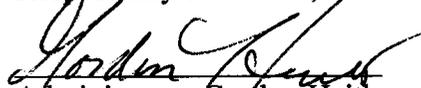
Adjournment

MOTION by Commissioner Brecht, seconded by Commissioner Thramer to adjourn the meeting at 5:45 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Approved by:


Interim Chair Jim Kalkofen

Respectfully submitted,


Administrator Gordon Heitke