

## **PARKS & TRAILS COMMISSION MINUTES**

**May 18, 2015**

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, Ken Hasskamp, Gail Brecht and Council Liaison Quinn Nystrom

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**STAFF PRESENT:** Community Development (CD) Director Josh Doty

**OTHERS PRESENT:** None

### **Approval of the Minutes**

The March 23, 2015 minutes were not approved at this meeting, they will be approved at the June 22, 2015 meeting.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Hasskamp, seconded by Commissioner Holderness to approve the regular meeting minutes of April 27, 2015 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

### **OK Park**

#### **Oscar Kristofferson (OK) Pavilion with Kitchen Facility**

CD Director Doty stated that staff was comfortable with moving forward with one large pavilion with a kitchen facility and the kitchen facing the playground. The next step is to contact contractors to develop a plan for the Commission to review. The other piece is the implementation list and the park dedication balance. The need to plan for the 2016 budget is now, therefore this is a perfect time to start looking at the budget. The Commission needs to decide what big and/or small projects should be budgeted for 2016.

Commissioner Hasskamp would like to know the cost of the new pavilion as soon as possible, with completion this year or next year. Brecht asked if there were any additional projects moving forward in the city that would generate park funds. CD Director Doty indicated there is a \$25,000.00 park fee on one project. Commissioner Brecht stated that she would like to see the public have the ability to donate towards the pavilion. She also wondered if it would be possible to only build one new pavilion and split the rental times into two different times frames. Brecht agreed with the open area towards the playground equipment. Commissioner Holderness agreed with the pavilion but felt Jewelwood needed to stay on the high priority list. Chair Kalkofen stated that there was staff concerns over having two parties at the pavilion at one time, in the past there have been conflict. CD Director Doty stated that both the large and small pavilions are rented at the same time. Chair asked if for the next meeting CD Director Doty could bring the times that the pavilions are rented. Chair stated that it would be nice to see a size and price to determine how big the pavilion could be. CD Director Doty indicated that both ends of the pavilion have been cut off and additional brackets have been ordered to attach to the beams for better support. With the pavilion ends being cut off, it was noted that renters were moving the tables into the sun, past the roof. That is something to consider as well, adding additional concrete for those who want to sit in the sun.

#### **Shed-Baxter Recreation Program Storage Building**

CD Director Doty stated that the shed is located behind City Hall and has been used for storage. Once the shed was taken down at OK park, the recreational program lost a storage area near the ball fields. It was brought to staff's attention that the recreational program needed a shed for storage. CD Director Doty showed on the map where the city's shed would be re-located at OK park and stated that this would be a temporary placement until the 4<sup>th</sup> field is built. Staff is anticipating moving it shortly. Commissioner Brecht asked if it was structurally

sound, CD Director Doty stated that it is sound but is a quick fix for now. CD Director Doty stated that staff did look at other options such as the warming house but decided that some of the mechanical equipment within the storage area should not be exposed to everyone that would come in and out of the space.

### **Ball Field Safety Nets**

CD Director Doty reviewed the map of the fields with the Commission. He noted the anticipated phasing being a four year process. CD Director Doty noted the center area will be covered at a later date when a possible concession stand is built. Commissioner Hasskamp asked what the life expectancy would be, CD Director Doty stated that Public Works Director Walter stated the nets would be taken down in the winter and that would extend the life of the nets, CD Director Doty thought that the life was between 5-10 years.

### **Riverview Park Signage**

CD Director Doty stated that this item was requested to be on the agenda. CD Director Doty explained that staff had looked into this previously and had received quotes for signage. He reviewed the quote for four signs with the Commission. The signage was shown on a map provided in the packet and showed two locations. The Commission reviewed the locations on the map and agreed that two signs should go along County Rd. 48, one where Maryland Ave. starts and one at Riverwood Rd. CD Director Doty spoke with the County to ensure that the County would allow signage in the right-of-way. They did not seem to have concerns but did have requirements that need to be met as part of a permit prior to the install. All four signs would need to be installed in the right-of-way to keep from having to gain private permission from residents. Staff requested that this be a budgeted item for the 2016 projects. The Parks Commission discussed that the signage should be installed this year. Chair Kalkofen suggested the signs being installed in June and then notify the paper to provided coverage.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Hasskamp, seconded by Commissioner Brecht to recommend City Council approve the four signs for immediate purchase and placement for Riverview Park and per Crow Wing County approval as presented by staff. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Potential Park Idea Discussion/Consideration**

Chair Kalkofen provided the Commission with a small packet of information from the Brainerd Baxter Fast Pitch Softball Association (BBFSA) regarding the fast pitch softball program. According to the information provided, there is a need for additional fast pitch softball fields to accommodate all of the programs. Chair Kalkofen recently spoke to Mr. Mike Sullivan of Navillus Land Company, owner of several parcels of land in the City of Baxter. Mr. Sullivan expressed the concern he was having with the comprehensive plan for the area South of Marble Rd., between Jasperwood and Hwy. 371, which is a "future sewered area". That determination is pushing buyers away from that area because they don't want to build a home on a large 5 acre lot and then in the future have to hook up to city water and sewer. Mr. Sullivan and his family are deeply involved in fast pitch softball and have been for some time. Mr. Sullivan is interested in selling the land to the City of Baxter for a fast pitch softball complex combined with a neighborhood/community park. Chair Kalkofen presented a letter explaining some of the issues the program is having. This area has enough room for parking, additional state trail parking, softball field, BMX track, playground equipment etc.. He further stated that there is water and sewer close by for a future pavilion. This would also be an excellent gateway concept for people to see a park with a complex from Hwy 371. The Commission agreed that the price is the main point. The Commission discussed the amount of noise that would come from the highway and agreed it would be a good spot for a park because of the location.

Commissioner Brecht noted that the cost of a new park, parking lots, fields, lights, garbage removal and maintenance throughout the years. CD Director Doty stated that this would need to be looked at closely in regards to maintenance and staffing, the Commission agreed. Chair Kalkofen would like to think that sponsorship would help with some of those cost on an annual basis. Council Liaison Nystrom stated that

dollars and cents are a big concern at this time and if sponsorship could help it would be a “pro” for a project such as this. She noted some of the items that Essentia has donated towards in this area. Commissioner Hasskamp stated that this is a long term Commission and looking down the road is a definite, it’s not something that will pop up overnight. Chair Kalkofen asked Council Liaison Nystrom what she thought the Council would want to know or see regarding this proposal. Council Liaison Nystrom stated that the motivation of the owner to sell and how willing they are to work with the City is a big point. She noted that recently this Commission reviewed other property that was offered to the City and it was determined not to be a great fit. Council Liaison Nystrom thought that the Council would like the location with the gateway theme district, but ultimately it is the cost of an additional facility. Commissioner Brecht noted that the parks department is already spread thin and may have to hire another person and maybe buy another mower to keep up. Chair Kalkofen asked CD Director Doty what is the next step to proceed. CD Director Doty stated that the Commission is on the right track with asking what the cost would be for the land and finding additional funding sources to assist in the purchase. Chair Kalkofen will visit with the Sullivan’s and then have the Sullivan’s contact CD Director Doty and will then report what has been learned at the next meeting.

### **LT Park Pavilion Repair Update**

CD Director Doty stated that the repairs have been approved by Council and will be made after the Memorial Day weekend.

### **Chip Sealing Trails Update**

CD Director Doty reviewed the map that was in the packet indicating the trails that will receive chip sealing this year.

### **Jewelwood Park Update**

CD Director Doty stated that Chair Kalkofen requested an update on Jewelwood Park. CD Director stated that he is aware that the Commission wants to move forward with this park. The Council is looking to adopt the comprehensive plan on May 19, 2015. CD Director Doty noted that since the initial discussions about creating Jewelwood Park, the Council asked that the Commission consider the Clearwater area for a park. Seeing the dollars that would remain in the fund, it is now time to consider what the priorities are for the 2016 budget. CD Director Doty apologized that there was not a better update for this park, however he thought they were as far as they could go before bringing in residents a second time on Jewelwood. Chair Kalkofen asked for a complete list of costs for this park at the next meeting, Commissioner Hasskamp agreed even if it is phased in yearly, it should be high on the list. Commissioner Brecht and Holderness stated that the residents will understand that the pavilions put a looming issue on the funds. The Commission agreed it is still high on the list and does want to continue to move forward even if it is phased. CD Director Doty stated that the question was posed at the Council level if the intent was to build three parks between Winkler, Jewelwood and Clearwater for the same resident area. Hasskamp stated that Jewelwood may cost more, he envisioned more of a passive park setting in Winkler and Clearwater with trails and more nature type setting. Commissioner Hasskamp stated Jewelwood is first, Commissioner Holderness and Brecht agreed. Chair Kalkofen suggested it is looked at as a phased in park. CD Director Doty stated the concern is the size of the playground structure, the bigger the equipment the more people that will be attracted to the park from outside the neighborhood. He added that these additional people would require parking, restrooms, etc. CD Director Doty added that the Commission’s recommendation was to go larger with the equipment and staff’s fear is the lack of parking. Commissioner Hasskamp and Holderness stated it would remain a neighborhood park and that a lot of people will not use the park. Commissioner Brecht disagreed stating that new equipment will draw lots of neighborhood people to the park. CD Director Doty stated they do not want to create an on-street parking problem.

CD Director Doty stated that after the next meeting he would like to bring the consensus of this Commission to City Council to make sure everyone agrees with moving forward.

**Other Business**

Chair stated that the Isle Dr. project has started and on Ironwood Rd. they have crossed the bike path twice in areas and the mud was 4” thick. Lots of activity in that area, he asked that staff look into cleaning it up.

Council Liaison Nystrom noted that the implementation map and the Clearwater park was asked to add this park to the implementation map. She asked if the Commission wanted to add it prior to approval of the Comprehensive Plan so it would not be missed as an additional park in the future. She asked for a clear answer regarding the Clearwater Rd. park. Commissioner Hasskamp stated that it should be put in as a long range park in the future. Commissioner Brecht stated once it is on the list it is expected to be completed. She stated that once it’s on the implementation plan then it snow balls into more. The Commission agreed that at this time it is on the future trail map and is there for discussion but not a priority as it is newer to the Commission. Council Liaison Nystrom stated she will report to the Council that this Commission would like to keep it just shown on the parks map.

Council Liaison Nystrom received an e-mail complaining about the lack of a trail connection on Grand Oaks Dr. This person was forced into a ditch in order to keep from getting hit by a car. They would like to see the trail connection continued all the way to Clearwater and Excelsior Rd. CD Director Doty indicated that there is a proposed trail on the Parks Map for this area and in the study area for the Excelsior Road corridor but not in the trail implementation plan. The Commission discussed the lack of area for a side trail/biking area on the Grand Oaks Drive and Grand Oaks Ct. CD Director Doty stated that there have been some links added with the development of that area but the southerly stretch is short.

The next meeting is scheduled for June 22, 2015 at 4:00 pm.

**Adjournment**

**MOTION** by Commissioner Hasskamp, seconded by Commissioner Holderness to adjourn the meeting at 5:35p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Approved by:

Respectfully submitted,

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Chair Jim Kalkofen

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Shanna Newman CD Clerk