

PARKS & TRAILS COMMISSION MINUTES
June 22, 2013

Interim Chair Kalkofen called the regular meeting of the Baxter Parks and Trails Commission to order at 4:05 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Commissioners Gail Brecht, Lori Thramer, Jim Kalkofen, Ken Hasskamp, Mari Holderness and Council Liaison Jim Klein.

MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

STAFF PRESENT: City Administrator Gordon Heitke and Mayor Darrel Olson.

OTHERS PRESENT: None.

Introduction of new Parks & Trail Commissioners

Mayor Olson thanked Ken Hasskamp and Mari Holderness for stepping forward and being willing to join the Commission. He further thanked all of the Commissioners for serving on the Parks Commission. Interim Chair Kalkofen asked the new commissioners to share a little about themselves. Commissioner Hasskamp indicated that he recently retired and was interested in serving on the Parks & Trail Commission. He had received parks and trails information and plans and indicated there were some new things and some things that were very old and needed updating. Commissioner Holderness stated that she has lived in Baxter for 20 years and was interested in being involved in the parks.

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 May 20, 2013. Motion carried unanimously.

Whipple Beach Disc Golf

Administrator Heitke stated that the proposers are now indicating that they would like to have the City construct the course in addition to maintaining it. That was not what was originally proposed, therefore there are construction costs being compiled to present to the Parks Commission and City Council.

Interim Chair Kalkofen asked what the costs included. Administrator Heitke stated constructing the course, T boxes and placing the equipment. Interim Chair Kalkofen asked when those numbers would be available. Administrator Heitke was not sure, but he will keep the Commission informed.

Inclusive Playground

Administrator Heitke reported he has had much communication with Shane's Inspiration. He gave the new Commissioners a background on the project. The fundraising commitment question has been addressed as well as who is responsible for the construction of which sidewalk segments. The final design is being worked on and then fundraising will begin. All communication regarding the project is to be through Shane's Inspiration. Since the City is not involved in the fundraising, there is no major role for the Commission until funds are raised.

Riverview Park

Administrator Heitke indicated that the boulders are in place and the gate is up. Concrete for the picnic tables is scheduled for next week. Staff found a used portable toilet for 1/3 of the cost of a new one and decided to purchase it since long term accessible rentals are difficult to obtain. Interim Chair Kalkofen asked about directional signs. The wetland signs have been ordered and Administrator Heitke will check on the directional and park rules signs for the park.

Support for Cuyuna Trail Bonding Application

Administrator Heitke stated he was supposed to receive a map showing the location of the trail. The proposers are looking for a letter of support for a 2.7 million dollar bonding request. It is roughly 20 miles of new trail. He also informed the Commission that Baxter is also seeking bonding funds for Isle Dr. Commissioner Hasskamp didn't believe it would be competition being there is money dedicated to roads and money dedicated for trails. Interim Chair Kalkofen suggested that they wait to see more information before deciding to offer a letter of support. The Commission agreed to table this item.

Baxter Drive and Charles Street Intersection Improvements

Administrator Heitke had Public Works Director Trevor Walter join the meeting and describe the two options for the trail related to the Baxter Drive and Charles Street Intersection Improvements. He indicated that the Utilities Commission has reviewed the two options. The recommended design, including the catch basin and curb and gutter, would permanently fix the road and make it easier to plow as well. The additional items increased the price to \$35,000. The Utilities Commission is proposing to take \$10,000 out of the Streets Fund, \$10,000 out of the Storm Water Fund and have the Parks Commission request \$15,000 to be budgeted in 2014, rather than the currently budgeted \$4,000. Administrator Heitke clarified for the Commission that this project would take place in 2014, not 2013 as the Streets & Storm Water Funds have already been allocated to other projects.

Commissioners Thramer and Hasskamp agreed the project should be done correctly the first time. Commissioner Holderness asked if this will save the city money in the long run. Public Works Director Walter indicated that it will save money on plowing, street sweeping and will solve the drainage issue.

Motion by Commissioner Brecht and second by Holderness to request City Council include in the 2014 budget \$15,000 from the Park Dedication Fund to complete the trail improvements at the Baxter Drive and Charles Street intersection as recommended by the Utilities Commission. Motion carried unanimously.

2014 Budget – Parks and Trails Capital Fund

Administrator Heitke explained the Park Dedication Fee to the new Commissioners. He gave the example of the 60 unit Autumn Glen apartments which just contributed \$108,000 in park fees, increasing the Park Dedication Fund balance to approximately \$750,000. These funds can only be used to create new parks or add to existing parks. For the 2014 parks and trails capital projects, he suggested doing as the Commission had done last year, focusing on smaller projects being the Parks Plan is being worked on within the overall Comprehensive Plan.

Administrator Heitke encouraged the Commission to put a list together and start discussing the

proposed projects for the 2014 budget.

Council Liaison Klein suggested taking a tour of the parks and letting the new Commissioners see some of the areas.

The Commission discussed a few past projects such as the concession stand at OK Park and Safe Routes to School. They further discussed the items that will have been completed from the 2013 budget. The Commission will put a list together for the August meeting. Administrator Heitke was asked to reproduce the Safe Routes to School project and minutes.

Interim Chair Kalkofen suggested that maybe they should consider putting a pavilion in at Berrywood Park being there is a new apartment building and possibly at Whipple Beach. Commissioner Thrasher stated that Whipple is the premier park and that is where one should go first. Commissioner Brecht suggested that the pavilion also have a kitchen area if possible. Interim Chair Kalkofen felt that grills and tables would be more feasible.

Discussion of Parks & Trails Plan Component of Comprehensive Plan Update

Interim Chair Kalkofen introduced Phil Carlson and Tina Goodroad of Stantec Planning Consultants to the meeting and gave them the floor. Mr. Carlson explained the Comprehensive Plan to the Commission and how the Parks element will be incorporated. Ms. Goodroad explained the elements of the Park Plan. She provided a few links for the Commission to view examples of other park plans.

Administrator Heitke asked the consultants if there is a simplified way to involve the public. Ms. Goodroad suggested placing a survey on the city website with questions pertaining to the current parks and requested parks. Mr. Carlson suggested a focus group of people that use the parks and trails. Also, each commissioner could pick three neighbors and see what they are thinking as a way of gaining public opinion. He noted that many times residents will not attend a public meeting and thus there is no input.

Interim Chair Kalkofen suggested that the Commission should take the existing outdated Parks Plan and review it to understand what needs to be updated and added. Mr. Carlson suggested looking at the basic inventory of the parks and determine what needs to be added. He also suggested talking to business persons that may have an adult league and not gear everything completely for the children. His past studies have shown that business people tend to utilize parks closer to their work. Location is something that should be considered. The Commission talked about the different age groups and what they like to do.

Administrator Heitke asked the consultants when they were going to need this component of the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Carlson stated inventory should be around late September and goals should be received in October.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for August 26, 2013 at 4:00 p.m.

Adjournment

MOTION by Commissioner Brecht, seconded by Commissioner Thrasher to adjourn the meeting at 5:49 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Approved by:

Respectfully submitted,

Interim Chair Jim Kalkofen

Shanna Newman CD Clerk