

## **PARKS & TRAILS COMMISSION MINUTES**

**July 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, Melissa Barrick, Gail Brecht and Ken Hasskamp

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Council Liaison Quinn Nystrom

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

**OTHERS PRESENT:** None

### **Approval of the Minutes**

A couple of typos were mention prior to the approval of the minutes. Commissioner Holderness stated under the potential park heading that “slop” should have been “slope”. Commissioner Brecht stated that on page two Perch Lake should be changed to Rush Lake.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Hasskamp, seconded by Commissioner Holderness to approve the regular meeting minutes of June 27, 2016 with corrections. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Potential City Park Property on Baxter Lake Across from City Hall**

CD Director Doty indicated that staff did take the conversation from this Commission regarding the property donation forward to a City Council workshop. Chair Kalkofen stated there was an article in the paper regarding this land. Staff explained to the Council the ideas presented from this Commission. The Council was in agreement with the Commission that the donation should be considered; however there was no action taken at the workshop being the property owner has a few things left to do before the donation can take place. Once the property owner is ready then it will go back to Council for final approval.

Chair Kalkofen asked if there was a timeframe, CD Director Doty indicated that there has not been a timeframe given at this point. Chair Kalkofen asked that CD Director Doty place a 90 day reminder on his calendar to check on the status of this issue.

### **Dog Park and Fitness Equipment**

Planner Gindele provided a memo in the packet regarding these two items as requested by the Commission at the last meeting. He went through the memo with the Commission, noting that one acre seems to be the minimal size for an acceptable urban dog park; fencing, parking and shade from trees or a pavilion were among the highlighted items. The Commission discussed the use of existing parking lots at Southdale Park and whether or not some of the roads around the park would allow off-street parking (Wedgewood/Mt. Ash). Planner Gindele reviewed the remaining items needed for the park and estimated a \$50,000.00 starting point for a dog park. Commissioner Barrick asked if this should be done all at once or can it be done in phases. CD Director Doty and Planner Gindele stated that it could be done in phases or all at once. Commissioner Brecht stated that owners that are passionate about their dog may want to donate to the park in the pets honor/name. Planner Gindele stated that a single donation is how Brainerd financed their dog park. Commissioner Hasskamp asked if Planner Gindele received any numbers of usage from the other city dog park that he spoke eith. Planner Gindele stated that he did ask a few cities, however the cities he called do not keep track. He was told that Brainerd is used frequently. CD Director Doty stated that the location of a dog park needs to really be looked at closely. Staff has to enforce the barking dog regulations, therefore location is really important. CD Director Doty stated that a location has not been study in depth to see if there are any other locations within the city. Chair Kalkofen asked Planner Gindele to take pictures of the former water treatment land to see if there is

enough shade and where a fence could be installed. Chair Kalkofen has seen several dog parks with all different types of materials, including artificial turf.

Planner Gindele moved onto the fitness equipment portion of the memo. He reviewed the different types of equipment with the Commission and the price range for the associated equipment. CD Director Doty stated that on the table is an email from the Northland Arboretum indicating that their trail has a great deal of use. Commissioner Holderness stated that she thinks the equipment will enhance the parks and she would like to explore different locations. CD Director Doty asked if the Commission is looking at one piece of equipment or several, are they geared towards one park or several parks? He indicated that any feedback would be helpful in guiding staff. Commissioner Brecht added that a high traffic park might be a better location, or maybe Riverwood Park would be a better spot where more people may drive to that location to use the equipment. The Commission discussed the use and ages that may use the equipment. Commissioner Barrick asked if this type of equipment would raise the insurance costs for the city. CD Director Doty stated that the parks are covered, however he would have to check the cities liability insurance. Commissioner Barrick asked if there was a count of park use for each park. Staff was not aware of daily use of the parks, however OK and Whipple are heavily used in the summer. The Commission talked about different locations and trails that fitness equipment could potentially be placed. CD Director Doty updated the Commission on the Safe Routes to School grant program. Commissioner Holderness stated she would like to see the fitness equipment stay towards the top of the list if funding becomes available, the Commission agreed.

### **Rotary Centennial Project**

CD Director Doty stated that the Rotary Club is celebrating their centennial and would like ideas put forth for consideration with completion in 2021. CD Director Doty reviewed the application and stated that it seems like it maybe a regional project for this area. There was not any funding numbers applied to the presentation and City Council asked if it is a true "Rotary Club" project or a partnership with the City. The Rotary indicated that it is a project that they would like to have their name on in the end. The Commission looked at the CIP in 2020 and the Whipple Beach Perimeter Trail was mentioned by Commission Brecht. She stated that it could even be named the "Rotary Trail". Chair Kalkofen stated that he mentioned this application to the fast pitch community. CD Director Doty stated it can be left on the agenda for future discussion.

### **Draft 5 Year CIP**

CD Director Doty stated that there were a few Council retreats that he attended and the discussion generally revolved around how well the City of Baxter is translating the Comprehensive Plan into the CIP to actually accomplish the goals set forth in the Comprehensive Plan. He noted that the City Council moved the 2016 Multi-Modal Design Study from the end of 2016 (lower priority) to top priority in 2017. With that being said, there will be discussion starting this year with feasibility studies. Public process, location studies, why one site over the other and cost were some of the items discussed. Commissioner Brecht asked who would be involved in the pedestrian bridge, CD Director Doty stated the Parks Commission, Long Range Commission, MNDot, and several other entities will be involved. Commissioner Hasskamp asked for a recap of what multi-modal design is, CD Director Doty explained the differences in potential trails being built.

CD Director Doty stated that if the Commission wants the dog park and fitness equipment in the budget for 2017 they should discuss it now. He stated that the Council is going to be discussing the 2017 budget soon. The Commission and staff discussed the different grant possibilities for a few of the trails that need to be completed and discussed the competitiveness of those grants.

Chair Kalkofen asked how much of the 2016 park budget has been spend currently. CD Director Doty stated all of it that he was aware of; Item D was the only one that he thought may not have been done at this time. CD Director Doty stated that he received the Park Dedication Fund balance of \$209,600.00, per the Finance Department. Commissioner Barrick asked if there is a minimum amount of money that needs to be carried forward each year. CD Director Doty stated that staff does think about that every year and making sure that the

money does not dwindle down too much each year. Commissioner Barrick asked what type of a cushion is needed, is it \$100,000.00 or \$200,000.00? The Commission discussed what amount should stay and what projects should be pushed back a few years. Commissioner Brecht and Holderness suggested moving the Jewelwood Park Trail to 2019 for now and adding the dog park and fitness equipment to 2017; the Commission agreed. Chair Kalkofen suggested leaving the CIP on the agenda for next month. CD Director Doty asked if he was to include the dog park and fitness equipment into the budget. The Commission indicated they would like it added for consideration and to determine where the equipment should go into each park.

Commissioner Barrick stated that she met with a consultant at Whipple Beach regarding the sand going onto the playground. The consultant thought \$5,000.00-\$7,000.00 in vegetative plantings to keep the sand would take care of the problem and still allow parents to be able to see their children playing.

**OK Park Pavilion Event**

CD Director Doty thanked the Commissioners for coming to the grand opening/ribbon cutting ceremony. He stated that it went very well and all of the hot dogs, root beer floats and donated watermelons were consumed.

**Other Business**

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

**Adjournment**

**MOTION** by Commissioner Hasskamp, seconded by Commissioner Brecht to adjourn the meeting at 5:24 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Approved by:

Respectfully submitted,

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Chair Jim Kalkofen

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Shanna Newman, CD Administrative Assistant