

**CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS**  
**BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA**  
**Special Meeting – December 12, 2006**

Pursuant to due call and notice, a special work session of the City Council of the City of Bemidji, Beltrami County, Minnesota, was held on December 12, 2006, at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall, Mayor Lehmann presiding.

Councilmembers Present: Nancy Erickson, Richard Lehmann, Barbara Meuers, Ron Johnson, Jerry Downs, Onen Markeson, Roger Hellquist.

Others Present: Jeff Schoenbauer, Mod Feders, Mary Auger, Brian Grund, Dave Smith, Kelly Larson.

Staff Present: John Chattin, Al Felix, Curt Oakes, Dan Haluptzok, Kay Murphy-Schuett.

Diamond Point Park Plan

Jeff Schoenbauer, Brauer & Associates, reviewed the Diamond Point plan stating that the Task Force has come to a consensus on moving forward with the design. He stated that a great deal of time was spent looking at ways to minimize the tree impact in the park, however, no matter the design there will be tree impacts. The amenities in the design include a road along the BSU side of the 14-acre park, with 89 parking spaces separated from the picnic and swimming areas. He commented that a loop road would bi-sect the park and the current design provides a much safer park.

Mary Auger commented that moving the road will impact trees but we must look to the future and recognize that it will be a healthier and nicer park in 40 years.

Mod Feders, architect with Buetow & Associates, reviewed the plans for an open picnic shelter, educational facility, main meeting building and band shell. He stated that the buildings are secondary to the park but should be user friendly and built as maintenance free as possible.

Downs expressed concerns about the boat ramp and lack of parking for those unloading boats. He further stated he has received several calls from residents that would like to see the loop remain in the park.

Schoenbauer responded that the Task Force looked at the boat ramp and felt it was important to keep it; however, parking of rigs should not be in the park.

Johnson commented that he has received several calls regarding the "loop" road in the park being removed.

Auger stated that she had concerns about giving up the loop but it is only a ¼ of a mile. She commented that the Task Force heard from several people who were in favor of the new road as it provides a safer park.

Erickson commented that she does not want to see more parking in the area of the boat launch. She stated that perhaps the band shell might fit better at another park.

Schoenbauer agreed with Erickson, however, there is an advantage of having the band shell at Diamond Point Park as there is a social synergy with a lot of different diversity and people will want to come to the park. However, that is not to say that the band shell would not work well somewhere else.

Erickson expressed concerns about the "soft" costs in the project. She stated that somebody needs to coordinate the spending so that the Council knows what is being spent. Auger stated that the Parks & Recreation Commission is revisiting the costs, re-prioritizing the spending, considering all issues and will hopefully have better answers for the City Council.

Schoenbauer stated today there is more emphasis on a community park versus a neighborhood park. Neighborhood parks are not used today like they were in the past.

Dave Smith stated that the Task Force agrees that the band shell should be bid. Perhaps this is not the park for the band shell but at least we should look at the concept. Discussion continued on placement of the band shell at Diamond Point or another park.

Markeson commented he would like to encourage everyone to stay on board with this process. He asked that the Parks & Recreation Commission explore selling smaller parks to offset costs.

Brian Grund, Freeberg & Grund, suggested that there be better communication between the City Council and the Parks & Recreation Commission. Council consensus was that the Task Force be expanded to include more Councilmembers.

Hellquist stated that he felt that the plan was done backwards. He felt that the process was flawed and that the architect should have started with \$1.6 million and then said what amenities were available. The amount proposed now is 40% of the money available for parks. He stated that he does not like the plan and felt it is easy to lead people down the primrose path but then it leaves the Council to say it is not right. He asked if any of the "stuff" that the Council said repetitively got considered at all or was it just led one way. He stated that the plan, in his opinion, is a grandiose plan and common sense was thrown out the window.

Schoenbauer responded that the Council approved the cost estimate for the current plan. If councilors had wanted to stick with the \$1.65 million budget, they should have instructed him that those were their wishes. He urged the Councilmembers to trust the process of public input and the task force study. Discussion continued on the Master Plan and the process that was used to arrive at the current Diamond Point Park Master Plan.

Mayor Lehmann commented that the Council had agreed that Diamond Point Park was to be the marquee park and through the process that was used, a very good plan has been developed.

Motion by Erickson, second by Markeson, to accept the Diamond Point Park plan, move forward with plans and specifications, and authorize solicitation of bids. Motion passed with the following vote: Ayes: Meuers, Erickson, Markeson, Lehmann. Nays: Hellquist, Johnson, Downs. Absent: None.

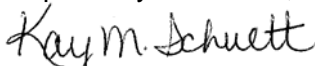
Kelly Larson, Task Force member, stated that the Council should look at the planning process for Diamond Point Park as education they can draw on when they begin planning for improvements to the next park.

City Planner Oakes commented that the City is also collecting money in the form of Parkland Dedication Fees from future developments. Council asked for a projected estimate on these fees.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business, motion by Meuers, second by Johnson, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kay Murphy-Schuett  
City Clerk