

CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS
BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA
Regular Meeting/Work Session – March 12, 2007

Pursuant to due call and notice, a regular meeting/work session of the City Council of the City of Bemidji, Beltrami County, Minnesota, was held on Monday, March 12, 2007, at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall, Mayor Lehmann presiding.

Upon roll call, the following Councilmembers were declared present: Lehmann, Erickson Meuers, Hellquist, Markeson, Johnson. Absent: Downs.

Staff Present: John Chattin, Dan Haluptzok, Rita Albrecht, Curt Oakes, Kay Murphy
Others Present: Jeff Schoenbauer, Dave Smith, Mary Auger

Mayor Lehmann noted that the purpose of the meeting was to consider the Diamond Point Park improvement bid and consider alternatives.

Jeff Schoenbauer, Brauer & Associates, provided an overview of the budget for improvements to Diamond Point Park. He stated that the 2001 plan provided an estimated budget of \$1,650,000, plus 30% for contingency and professional fees. Since that time, city staff and local consultants suggest using an inflation factor of a little over 5%, which is slightly conservative due to significant increases in raw materials. The comparative number in today's dollar is \$2,227,500. Schoenbauer reviewed the recommendations from the Parks & Recreation Commission for alternate bid items.

Johnson asked what percentage of trees will be removed from the Park. Schoenbauer responded that it is 10% of the trees. There are 1,100 trees in the park and approximately 110 trees are being removed. Schoenbauer stated that some of the trees that are removed will be milled and used for benches along the Lake. Commission members, staff, Schoenbauer and Brian Grund walked the site and re-located the road saving a number of trees. Schoenbauer suggested that the City consider a stewardship program and plant trees over the next 10 to 15 years starting in 2008. However, planting should take into consideration drought conditions.

Lehmann asked if the City has a lease yet with BSU for the Outdoor Program Center. Chattin stated that there is a verbal commitment with BSU and he has received a draft lease from Bill Maki. It is anticipated that the City will recover at least \$300,000 over 20 years and possibly more, depending on BSU's gross revenues.

Discussion continued on the proposed budget for improvements to other parks. Erickson asked why Diamond Point Park was increased due to inflation but the other parks remain the same with no consideration of inflation. Dave Smith, Chair of the Parks & Recreation Commission, stated that the needs and usage have changed in some of the parks from 2001 and found the previously estimated amounts to be inaccurate.

Erickson stated that members of the public, who voted for the additional sales tax, did not understand that their neighborhood parks might not get the attention they hoped for with such a large amount of funds being dedicated to Diamond Point Park.

Lehmann noted that Diamond Point Park was chosen by the Council to be improved first as it is our marquee park. He stated that the Council got what it asked for from staff and the consultant. Schoenbauer recommended that the Council do Diamond Point Park right as this is the City's premiere park and he envisions it to be a social center with up to 1,000 people using it on a nice summer day.

Johnson noted that he has heard only negative comments about the proposed improvements to Diamond Point Park and it concerns him as a Councilperson. Meuers stated that she has had just the opposite experience and would like the project to move forward.

Hellquist noted concerns about the numbers quoted for the rest of the parks. He stated that due to the inflation the Council will not be able to do the rest of parks as previously planned and the Council needs to set a budget for the rest of the parks and hold to it. He stated that the Council "blew it" on Diamond Point Park.

Assistant City Planner Rita Albrecht noted the City has been successful in getting funds for trails and will continue to write grants. She stated that the City also has a Parkland Dedication Ordinance and additional funds will be available for parks and trails over time.

Johnson commented that Diamond Point has been popular for its picnicking, playground and swimming beach. Johnson stated concerns about safety and getting emergency vehicles into the Park. Schoenbauer stated that the Police Captain reviewed the plans and seemed satisfied. Schoenbauer noted that in designing a park his first priority is health, safety and welfare of the public. He stated that having a loop road is unacceptable.

A motion was made by Johnson to table until the City Council meeting on March 19 on the decision to award the Diamond Point Project when there would be a full Council. Motion failed due to lack of a second. Johnson asked what the urgency was for deciding on the project.

Motion by Markeson, second by Meuers, accepting the Parks & Recreation Commission’s recommendation to award the Diamond Point Project to the low bidder, Gordon Construction of Mahnomen, Inc., in the amount of \$2,425,880.71 and include the Alternate bid items as listed bringing the total bid to \$2,637,306.71:

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| Alternate #1 – Yes (Landscaping) | Alternate #9 – Yes (Grills) |
| Alternate #2 – No (Air conditioning) | Alternate #10 – No (Piers) |
| Alternate #3 – No (Stone--keep) | Alternate #11 – Yes (Trash receptacles) |
| Alternate #4 – Yes (Picnic shelter) | Alternate #12 – Yes (Curb & Gutter) |
| Alternate #5 – No (Picnic shelter) | Alternate #13 – Yes (Tree removal) |
| Alternate #6 – Yes (Picnic shelter) | Alternate #14 – Yes (Tree removal) |
| Alternate #7 – No (Performance Area) | Alternate #15 – Yes (Tree removal) |
| Alternate #8 – Yes (Planters) | |

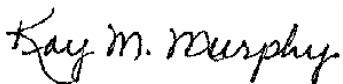
Motion carried with the following vote: Ayes: Meuers, Hellquist, Markeson, Erickson, Lehmann. Nays: Johnson. Absent: Downs.

Erickson recommended that the Council discuss the Park Plan budget at a future Council meeting after the Parks & Recreation Commission has finished reviewing the Park Plan.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, motion by Meuers, second by Markeson, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kay M. Murphy
City Clerk