

MINUTES
PARKS & TRAILS COMMISSION MEETING
FEBRUARY 11, 2020

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tina Kaney, Tim Faver, Tonya Prim, Annette Meyer, and Tom Anderson

MEMBERS ABSENT: Don Heinonen and Wendy Kvale

COUNCIL & BOARD REPRESENTATIVE: Michael Meelhouse

CITY STAFF & OTHERS: Marcia Larson

CALL TO ORDER:

Tom Anderson called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

APPROVAL OF JANUARY 14, 2020 MEETING MINUTES:

Motion by Kaney, seconded by Faver, to approve the January 14, 2020. Motion carried.

ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR FOR 2019:

Nomination by Kaney, seconded by Faver, to nominate Kvale as the Chair. Upon unanimous vote, Kvale was elected Chair for 2020.

Nomination by Meyer, seconded by Kaney, to nominate Prim as the Vice Chair. Anderson accepted. Upon unanimous vote, Prim was elected Vice Chair for 2020.

NORTH COUNTRY PARK

Marcia reported the requests for proposals for consultant services for the full design and construction documents were sent out/posted on-line with a deadline of January 24, 2020. A review/selection committee consisting of a Park and Recreation Commissioner, Rotarian, and City staff members reviewed and rated the proposals and recommended to the City Council on February 3rd hiring Learning Landscapes Designs. Learning Landscapes stood out in their overall natural playground planning and design expertise and experience. Marcia reported that the Council approved the hiring of the consultant and contracts are currently being reviewed, dates for site visits and community workshops are being discussed and the Natural Playground Committee will be meeting on February 13th.

The Council approved the hiring the consultant and we are currently working on a professional services contract and will confirm schedules and dates for a community design workshop. The Natural Playground Committee is scheduled to meet on February 13th

BLUE OX AMATEUR BASEBALL

Marcia provided an update on the Blue Ox Amateur Baseball League's request to use the baseball field at North Country Park. The costs for improvements including lighting, dugouts, field work, and scoreboards is going to cost close to \$300,000. The lighting is the most expensive improvement at a cost of approximately \$250,000. The representatives from Blue Ox are willing to fundraise and have met with the youth baseball associations and teams to start to develop a plan. Local foundations have been contacted and the Parks and Recreation Department continue to meet and assist the group.

Commission discussed the neighborhood, timing, funding and possibility of planning some Saturday games on the field in 2020.

TOURIST INFORMATION CENTER

Marcia reported that the Bemidji Area Chamber of Commerce requested to terminate their lease with the City at the Tourist information Center. The Council approved the request and the Parks and Recreation Department took over the sublease agreement with Visit Bemidji as of February 1st. Discussion continues on the operations of the tourism center, but Josh with Visit Bemidji has been working on ideas and option – one of which is rental – watercraft and bicycles.

DIRECTOR UPDATE

Marcia shared the new sponsorship packet with the commission and requested assistance from Commissioners on fundraising for the Recreation Department.

Warming Houses and Outdoor Rinks continue to be very busy. The Warming Houses and Outdoor Rinks at Nymore Park and City Park have been open since December 19th with over 1400 skaters through January 31, 2020.

The Bemidji Parks and Recreation Department received almost \$900.00 from Beltrami Electric Round-Up for the purchase of 9 sets (adults and youth) of snowshoes.

Carnegie –a tour of the Carnegie Library was held on February 5th for a group of 30-40 from the Senior Citizens Center; the first wedding is scheduled on February 29th.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Kaney, seconded by Meyer, to adjourn the meeting at 6:05 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcia Larson
Parks and Recreation Director