

# **CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS**

## **BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA**

### **Special Work Session – March 25, 2013**

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 Monday, March 25, 2013, at 5:30 p.m. in the Conference Room of City Hall, Mayor Albrecht presiding.

Upon roll call, the following Councilmembers were declared present: Albrecht, Meehlhause (arrived at 5:38 p.m.), Hellquist, Johnson, Olson, Erickson, Thompson

Staff Present: City Manager John Chattin, Parks & Recreation Director Marcia Larson, Finance Director Ron Eischens, Public Works Director Craig Gray, City Clerk Kay Murphy

Mayor Albrecht stated that the purpose of the special work session was to discuss options for improvements to Library Park, Waterfront Park and the south shore.

Chattin stated that staff is looking for direction as to completion of the parks. Does the Council want to consider bonding to finish all the work? There is approximately \$650,000 to \$700,000 remaining in sales tax money.

Parks & Recreation Director Larson stated that the cost to complete the improvements for Library/Paul Bunyan Parks ranges from \$2.9 million to \$3.4 million. The consensus of the Parks & Trails Commission was to redevelop the park at one time and not in phases; however, due to costs exceeding the amount of available sales tax funds, the Commission now recommends a phased approach. She stated that at their March 12, 2013 Parks & Trails Commission meeting, the Commission recommended the Council approve the design of the phase-in proposal which includes focusing on redeveloping the central area of the park and closing the current 3<sup>rd</sup> Street exit. The recommended improvements include:

- Removing 3<sup>rd</sup> Street exit.
- Landscaping area behind Paul & Babe.
- Creating a family area (move the Rotary Pavilion and creating a picnic and children's play area.
- Creating an accessible pathway to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street dock.
- Improvements to the central plaza area.
- Addition of trailhead/wayfinding kiosk and signage.
- Trails connecting the plaza area to the family area and parking lot
- Installation of the base in the fall of 2013 and the Chief Bemidji Statue in the spring of 2014.

Council discussed the following:

- Completing all improvements versus phasing.
- Replacement of the Nymore Beach. Chattin stated that the access will be closed soon to the current Nymore Beach but nothing says that the City has to have another beach open.
- Going to the voters to request GO Bonds to complete the entire project.
- Reasons for closing 3<sup>rd</sup> Street exit – safety and improve landscaping.

Olson suggested one reason for doing a phased approach could be that it would get the ball rolling to entice taxpayers and create interest and support for possible bonding.

Councilor Erickson stated she was not in favor of bonding.

Larson noted that the City has applied for and been rejected twice for Legacy Grants. Mayor Albrecht suggested that a Legacy Grant for the south shore beach cleanup might be successful.

Larson stated that the Parks & Trails Commission also recommended that the Council consider hiring a consultant to determine the cost and process to clean-up the southshore beach area.

Gray reviewed the proposal and the cost of hiring a firm to assist the City in obtaining permits and construction bids for the removal and mitigation of the woodchips/debris from

the south shore of Lake Bemidji. It is estimated that the City would remove debris from an estimated 1,200 lineal feet of shoreline and lake bottom.

Discussion continued regarding cleanup of the South Shore Beach and the cost. It was noted that no significant contaminants were found in the woodchips. Chattin stated that the DNR had no objection to the cleanup but there is no contribution from them either. However, the DNR may be willing to assist with creating a breakwater to stop additional drifting of woodchips.

**Motion by Hellquist, seconded by Meehlhause, to accept Landmark Environmental LLC's proposal in an amount not to exceed \$36,000 for professional services for the preparation of plans and specifications for the removal of the wood product from the south shore beach utilizing the Event Center Contingency Fund. Motion carried unanimously.**

**Motion by Thompson, seconded by Olson, to consider the Parks & Trails Commission first phase as the first step to redevelopment of Waterfront Park.**

**Councilor Hellquist moved to amend the motion by adding the words "to get the cost of the amenities prior to proceeding". Motion seconded by Johnson. Motion carried.**

**Amended Motion by Thompson, seconded by Olson, to get the cost of the amenities prior to proceeding with the Parks & Trails Commission first phase as the first step for redevelopment of Waterfront Park. Motion carried.**

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business, motion by Meehlhause, seconded by Thompson, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Kay M. Murphy  
City Clerk