

CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA

Work Session – June 13, 2011

Pursuant to due call and notice, a work session of the City Council of the City of Bemidji, Beltrami County, Minnesota, was held on Monday, June 13, 2011, at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall, Mayor Larson presiding.

Upon roll call, the following Councilmembers were declared present: Larson, Waldhausen, Hellquist, Johnson, Albrecht, Negard, Thompson

Others Present: Amanda Prosser, Brauer & Associates and Jeff Schoenbauer, Schoenbauer Consulting
Parks Plan Steering Committee: Tony Walzer, Matt Dyrdaahl, Muriel Gilman, Dave Smith

Staff Present: City Manager John Chattin, Parks & Recreation Director Marcia Larson, City Clerk Kay Murphy

Mayor Larson stated that the purpose of the work session was to review work to date on the Bemidji Parks, Open Space & Trail System Plan with Brauer & Associates, Inc.

Jeff Schoenbauer, Sr. Principal with Schoenbauer Consulting stated that they have had a number of meetings with the Steering Committee, interviewed interest groups, held a public open house and they are in the process of completing field work. The Park Plan will be updated to reflect current parks and improvements. The Council will need to confirm the level of service thresholds, especially in neighborhood parks, and reaffirm supply/demand of athletic facilities. Schoenbauer stated that, generally speaking, the needs of user groups are being met. Schoenbauer highlighted the following items:

- Connectivity – City has a robust trail system and suggestions include wayfinding signs and trailhead facilities. Complete Streets Theme/Active Living with pedestrian and bike friendly streets.
- Lakefront Parks (Library Park to Southshore Development) – Support was voiced for improvements to the lakefront parks including a 3-season shelter, canoe and bike rentals, outdoor amphitheater. Although the lakefront could be a nice location for the amphitheater, Council members expressed concerns about traffic noise from TH197.
- Connection to Downtown – The group discussed the creation of a safe and distinct crossing from Waterfront Park to downtown.
- Indoor park/play area – Schoenbauer stated that the public is looking for an indoor park which could be used year round. The indoor park could include a play area with water features, gathering space and/or open turf. Council discussion continued regarding the need for a community center or a YMCA.
- Carnegie Building in Library Park – The Council discussed the need to make a decision on the future of the Carnegie Building. Council consensus was to discuss the Carnegie Building at a work session.

Schoenbauer commented that as they develop the Park Plan they are interfacing with the Central City Plan, Active Living Plan, Greater Bemidji Land Use Plan, Transportation Plan, Complete Streets, and non-Motorized Loop Plan.

Council discussed the following:

- Boat slips/marina – Schoenbauer cautioned the Council on becoming marina operators.
- Identifying park use by kids – Schoenbauer stated that it is part of their consideration when developing parks. Focus on what brings kids together, social, cool places and quality matters.
- Funding - Marcia Larson stated that the maintenance needs for the department have been increasing with the addition of new facilities and parks. Johnson suggested creation of a park authority to get surrounding areas to contribute with financing and maintenance of new and existing parks.

Schoenbauer recommended that the parks plan should be realistic and the Council should consider its goals for neighborhood parks, those parks that are not cornerstone parks such

as Diamond Point, and the waterfront. Schoenbauer stated that a draft Park Plan will be developed and ready for the Council to review in 2-2 ½ months.

Ad Hoc Rental Committee

Mayor Larson stated that the Council at their regular meeting on June 6 asked for the creation of a rental committee consisting of three landlords, three tenants, three council and staff. After discussion, the consensus of the Council was to increase the number of landlords to four and eliminate tenants. The following landlords were appointed to the Ad Hoc Rental Committee: Tad Sonnenman, Laura Straw, Judy David and Harold Aylesworth. Councilmembers are: Hellquist, Waldhausen and Negard.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, motion by Waldhausen, seconded by Johnson, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kay M. Murphy
City Clerk