

MINUTES
PARKS & TRAILS COMMISSION MEETING
SEPTEMBER 11, 2018

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tina Kaney, Don Heinonen, Wendy Kvale, Annette Meyer, and Tonya Prim

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mary Auger, Tom Anderson

COUNCIL & BOARD REPRESENTATIVE: Michael Meehlhause

CITY STAFF & OTHERS: Marcia Larson and Lolly Randall

CALL TO ORDER:

Tina Kaney called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

APPROVAL OF JUNE 12, 2018 MEETING MINUTES:

Motion by Heinonen, seconded by Meyer, to approve the June 12, 2018 Meeting Minutes as written. Motion carried.

PARK TOUR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

The Commissioners took a park tour at their July 2018 meeting. Reviewed a summary of the input and discussion items from that tour. Discussion was held on the following:

- Gordon Falls Park – priority is to develop a plan for park improvements including a new playground, shaded structure, improvements to the basketball court, general amenities and landscaping that would eliminate cars accessing/driving in the park from the alley.
- City Park - will discuss fees for the Neilson Reise Arena at the next meeting along with how to structure softball tournaments.
- Cameron Park – park amenities, such as shade structures near the beach, and walkways. Carnegie Library - renovation will start next week.
- Otto Schmunk Park - park was donated to the city, Marcia will check on the deed restrictions..
- South Shore – suggested adding playground features at the same time the drop off area is developed. Will need to measure square footage to see what will fit. Climbing rocks – similar to diamond point or other natural looking features was discussion.
- Daniel is still working on fundraising for the musical pieces for Paul Bunyan Park. Marcia will contact Daniel to get an update on his progress.

- Discussed the possibility of adding a splash pad in one of the parks. Adequate parking is important consideration in locating the splash pad. Currently the funding is not available for a splash pad and is a challenge to identify the right park to put one in. It was suggested to put one in a park on the lake.
- Algoma Park - pickle ball courts are busy, staff installed a wind screen on the fence to help block the wind.
- Discussed putting a labyrinth in a park.

OVERBEEK'S PARCEL/POLLINATOR GARDEN

Marcia hired Karvakko Engineering to design a plan for the Overbeek parcel and worked with the Sustainability office and Erica Baily-Johnson on a list of pollinator plants that for the area. The goal is to create a green space that includes a pollinator garden, places to sit, turf and yet deter people from parking/driving on the parcel. Birds, bees, and butterflies group is willing to plant the gardens. The long term plan for the parcel is to be used for parking and/or possible expansion of the city owned liquor store.

NORTH COUNTRY PARK

At the Rotary's Club August 2nd meeting, the board asked Marcia to identify any potential park projects they could assist with, either financially or with labor/in-kind. The partnership with the Rotary on the Inclusive Playground at Paul Bunyan Park was very successful so they are interested partnering again at North Country Park and/or Gordon Falls Park on new playgrounds. The Rotary may be open to assisting with the installation, gathering volunteers and donating equipment as well as possible funding.

Marcia showed a power point that she will be presenting to the Rotary on the parks and features of natural play structures. The presentation will provide the Rotary Club information on cost and potential partnership options including fundraising, installation and design.

The Commissioners all agreed that the natural play structure is their preferred choice for North Country Park. The Naturalist Group has maintained the pollinator gardens in the park and is interested in doing some programming at the park.

Marcia asked the Commissioners for input on any programming ideas they had for the park/outdoor classroom. Discussed a solar power group that may be willing to put up a system at the park. Also discussed doing some programming around clean water and partnering with the Science Center and look at doing winter program activities.

Discussed putting a slide on the hill that could be used in the summer and the winter.

Motion by Kvale, seconded by Prim, for Marcia to move forward with the nature playground at North Country Park and partnering with the Rotary Club on this project. Motion carried.

COMMISSIONER UPDATE

Tina rented the South Shore Building for a staff picnic. It was the coldest day of summer but staff had never been there before and really enjoyed it.

Michael reported that the Sustainability Committee at BSU said they would like to see recycle bins at the parks. Marcia has looked into this but there is no one to pick up the recycling. They should discuss this with the County because they have funding for recycling.

There has been less vandalism this year in the parks. The busier the parks are, the less vandalism there is.

DIRECTOR UPDATE

Green Corp Member, Henry Pan, will start October 1st. He will focus on bicycling in Bemidji and will be doing training/programs. He will help with the Bike Bemidji group and Loop the Lake.

Shade Structures were installed at Paul Bunyan Park and staff will look at adding benches under them.

The Monarch Butterfly Festival is September 22nd. There will be speakers, booths and kid's activities.

It was suggested to include a calendar listing the recreational activities in the beginning of the year or monthly so commissioners can plan in advance to volunteer.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Kvale, seconded by Prim, to adjourn the meeting at 6:00 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Lolly Randall
Administrative Assistant