

MINUTES
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING
JANUARY 11, 2022

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tom Anderson, Tim Faver, Gwenia Fiskevold Gould, Don Heinonen, Tonya Prim, and Bethany Wesley

MEMBERS ABSENT:

COUNCIL & BOARD REPRESENTATIVE: Dan Jourdain

CITY STAFF & OTHERS: Brian Grund, Marcia Larson, Aaron Weeks and Lolly Randall

CALL TO ORDER:

Tonya Prim called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA:

No amendments were made.

APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 14 2021 MEETING MINUTES:

Motion by Faver, seconded by Wesley, to approve the December 14, 2021 Meeting Minutes as written. Motion carried.

PAUL BUNAYN PLAZA DISCUSSION/UPDATE

Brian Grund of Freeberg & Grund, was present to discuss the drainage and plaza project at Paul Bunyan Park. Director Larson contacted State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) with inquiries on qualified contractors, process for working on statues on the historic register and options for funding through SHPO. The City does not qualify for SHPO grants, Legacy Grants may be an option. SHPO cannot recommend a particular contractor, but may provide a list of contractors that have worked on historic statues. Grund explained that the City Council voted to raise Babe as the method to address the drainage in the plaza and controlling the water pooling around Babe's hooves. He explained that Babe is approximately 12 to 15 inches lower than Paul causing drainage to pool around Babes feet which contributes to the deteriorating of the hooves as well as increasing the maintenance in and around the statues. In addition, changing the plaza will improve the accessibility in the plaza. Grund stated that the designs he was presenting would assist in solving the drainage issues and provide some green space on the plaza. Any effort in reducing impervious surface will improve drainage. All four alternatives introduce green space along with installing a catch basin but Alternate IV incorporates all designs on Alternate I, II, and III. Grund explained that adding the green space in the designated areas will not affect how the space is used or prohibit vehicles from accessing the area. The design will not impede the visual to Paul and Babe and will not affect the current availability for photographs. The additional green space will also deter the public from driving on the plaza.

Discussed the fire departments recommendations to be able to access the building. Director Larson will discuss the selected Alternative with the fire chief. When asked about the costs for the Alternatives, Grund explained that it will most likely be a cost saving by adding in green space instead of concrete. Discussed sending request for proposals for lifting Babe to contractors who have the specialized experience and qualifications for that type of work.

Motion by Faver, seconded by Anderson, to recommend approval of Alternative IV to the City Council. Motion carried.

Grund stated that the next step is to complete and distribute an RFP for the project.

PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION APPLICATIONS

Director Larson shared the two applications received for the open Parks and Recreation Commission seat. This open commission term expires on 1/31/2024. One is from CT Marhula and one from Kristine Bommersbach.

Motion by Heinonen, seconded by Fiskevold Gould, to appoint Kristine Bommersbach as the new Parks & Recreation Commissioner, seconded by Fiskevold Gould. Motion carried.

DIRECTOR UPDATES

- MOU with Visit Bemidji for the operation of the Tourist Information Center continuing in 2022 was approved by the City Council. The Visitor Experience Representative Lead position will be by posted by the end of January. The city contributes \$30,000 and Marcia is working on raising another \$30,000 from rentals, fund raising.
- The additional Maintenance II position has been posted.
- Warming houses are open as there are three warming house attendants hired. The hours will be varied.
- The sponsorship packets will be mailed tomorrow. Added some special projects that can be sponsored at the community gardens and ball fields.
- MRPA- Director Larson will be receiving the Dorthea Nelson Profession Award and will travel to Apple Valley with Jamie Anderson and Aaron Weeks on January 14th to accept the award.
- Schedule meeting with Joe Czapiewski for Wednesday, January 19th from 4:30 until 6:30 it will be a hybrid meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Fiskevold Gould, seconded by Anderson, to adjourn the meeting at 5:40 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Lolly Randall
Administrative Assistant