

**PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

MONDAY APRIL 26, 2021

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Peterson called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Committee Members present: Scott Creighton, Kristi DeCamillis, Ken Halverson, Scott Marotz, Jack Merwin, Doug Peterson, and Laura Talvitie.

Also present: Recreation and Communication Coordinator Corrie Scott, and Streets, Parks, City Planner Lucinda Meyers, and Fleet Superintendent Norm Michels.

3. ADOPT AGENDA

Committee Member Talvitie motioned to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Committee Member Marotz, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Committee Member Talvitie motioned to accept the March 22, 2021 Parks Advisory Committee minutes as presented. Seconded by Committee Member Merwin, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

5. BUSINESS

5A. HOW TO ADD AN ITEM TO THE PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE AGENDA

Scott reviewed the three ways that Parks Advisory Committee Members can add something to an upcoming meeting agenda.

Peterson commented that the group is passionate and because of this, previous meetings have become quite lengthy. He stated that this process will help to keep the Committee on task.

5B. BROM PARK WETLAND DELINEATION UPDATE

Scott reviewed that the City Council approved a contract with Bolton and Menk, Inc to have a wetland delineation performed at Brom Park in the amount of \$2,400. This project is

expected to take place in May 2021 once plant growth starts, but weather can impact this date. She stated that she will bring updates to the Committee as the project moves forward.

Halverson asked how far the questionnaire went out. Scott stated that the neighborhoods surrounding the City owned Brom Lane parcel were targeted and that over 300 questionnaires were mailed. Peterson asked about the wetland delineation survey and if it will give a boundary for what land is usable. Scott confirmed that once the survey comes back, staff will have an idea of what types of equipment will be feasible to install on the parcel. Halverson stated that the neighboring property owners are currently pumping water from their yards onto City property. He stated that he is interested to hear the City Engineer's thoughts on whether the City should pump water from the City's property to make the land developable.

Peterson asked if runoff calculations will be included in the survey. Marotz stated that this report will only be delineating the wetland area and setting boundaries for what land is developable. He stated that there is generally also a buffer between the wetland area and what can be used. Martoz stated that runoff calculations will likely need to be addressed, but that the first step is determining what amount of land can be manipulated.

Merwin asked if the funding for this project is coming from the parks fund. Scott stated that she will need to research if the project was budgeted for in 2021 or if it will need to be funded by the Park Dedication Fund. She recommended that any questions about the City's budget be directed to the City's Finance Director.

5C. OUTSTANDING CITIZEN JUDGES PANEL

Scott reviewed that the City is hosting its first annual Outstanding Citizen Award with a deadline for nominations on May 1, 2021. She asked if a member from the PAC is interested in participating on the judges panel.

Committee Member Merwin volunteered to be on the judges panel for the 2021 Outstanding Citizen Award.

5D. STAFF UPDATES

Scott reviewed the status of various projects regarding the community's parks, trails, 2021 and programming. She stated that the Chamber Park Challenge had zero entries the first week, one entry the second week, one entry the third week, and 33 entries the fourth week from a total of ten individuals. Thirteen of the City's and Township's parks were identified in the 35 photos that were submitted. There are a total of 66 entries for the grand prize as some of the submissions qualified for a double entry.

Scott recommended that the Parks Committee meet at Bluff Park for the May meeting as it is near the Prairie Meadows Third Addition which will be on the agenda. She stated that the

concept plan for Prairie Meadows Third Addition will be presented by City Planner Lucinda Meyers. Scott recommended that Committee Members bring lawn chairs as seating is limited.

Michels stated that Public Works finished up their park inspections. He stated that Powell Park's equipment is deteriorating and there is an opportunity to use Park Dedication Funds to introduce new park equipment. Michels stated that this park would likely have more room than the parcel on Brom Lane and it would be a good fit for another zip line. Marotz stated that this is one of the older parks in the community and conversation about updating equipment has occurred in the past. Peterson recommended that this conversation be put on the June agenda as May already has several large discussion items. Marotz stated that it would be best to meet at Powell Park during the conversation. Marotz stated that if all new park equipment is being installed, rather than maintenance to existing equipment, that Park Dedication Funds could be used.

Creighton asked if Michels could bring rough costs of potential equipment such as a zip line to the discussion of Powell Park in June. Michels confirmed that he will bring pricing of various equipment to the June meeting. He stated that he isn't planning to take priority away from the potential Brom Park, but that the Brom Park project could take some time, so he would like to start working on Powell Park simultaneously to move them both along. Marotz stated that the timeline makes sense with the street project taking place near Powell Park.

Halverson asked if half of the funding for Powell Park could come from the general fund. He stated that he has a problem with using all Park Dedication funds to replace equipment at an existing park. He stated that when money goes into the Park Dedication Fund from a development, it should go toward creating a park near that specific development. Halverson stated that the City Council should be willing to invest in replacing park equipment at existing parks rather than taking money from the Park Dedication Fund.

Marotz stated that not every development will be able to have a park within it, but that he agrees that funding for replacing existing park equipment should at least partially come from the general fund. He stated that the Parks Advisory Committee can make the recommendation to use general fund dollars, but that the decision is ultimately up to City Council. Halverson stated that he would support the recommendation to use general fund dollars for park equipment replacement. Creighton asked if the PAC has ever approached City Council with a recommendation to use general funds. Marotz stated that in the past they have not approached Council and instead used Park Dedication Fund dollars if they were available. Examples of these parks are Norland and Sanford Select Acres, but they were also newly created parks rather than existing parks needing equipment replacement.

Halverson stated that when a park is built, such as Sanford Select Acres, it draws more development in that area because neighborhood parks are desirable. Creighton asked how the installation of new park equipment will affect the Public Works budget. Michels stated that he doesn't have an issue with asking Council to budget general fund dollars toward

park equipment replacement rather than Park Dedication funds, but that he wanted to make the PAC aware that staff is looking into equipment replacement this year. Marotz stated that the amount of funds in the Park Dedication Fund will help dictate project timelines.

Halverson stated that if the Liquor Store is bringing in an excess of money, it shouldn't be a problem to use some of that to upkeep parks. He stated that the City continually maintains things like squad cars, fire trucks, and computers, and that parks should be considered a part of this annual routine maintenance. Peterson stated that in May the PAC will discuss Brom Park and in June it will discuss Powell Park, giving enough time for staff to research potential options for funding and equipment. Marotz asked if a full park equipment replacement is not possible, what Michels' plan is to maintain Powell Park. He stated the City Council should be able to budget at least the amount needed to maintain the park. Halverson stated that if we spend money to fix equipment knowing it is in need of replacement, it will likely cost the City more in the long run than if they replaced the equipment the first year.

Marotz asked if there is a way to find out how much of the current Park Dedication Fund came from commercial versus residential projects. Scott stated she would research this. Marotz stated that if the PAC knows what portion of the funds came from commercial, then they can use that for existing parks and save the residential project funds for creating new parks in the areas that developments have recently been built. Halverson stated that a development likely will not put enough money in the Park Dedication Fund to produce their own park, so commercial funds are likely needed to supplement the creation of a new park.

Marotz stated that the one of the reasons for commercial funding in the Park Dedication Fund is to put toward regional parks like Lakeside Park rather than smaller neighborhood parks. Halverson stated that there is no reason to use Park Dedication Funds for Lakeside Park as it generates revenue through parking fees. He stated that the revenue from parking fees should not be put in the general fund and instead be placed in a separate budget specifically for Lakeside Park maintenance. Marotz stated that he doesn't believe the parking fees generate more funding than is needed to maintain Lakeside Park currently. He stated that the improvements made to Lakeside Park were supported by the PAC and were significant changes that required significant funding rather than purely maintenance. Marotz stated that every new development that has come into Big Lake currently has a neighborhood park with the exception of Harrison Cove as there wasn't any land available to build a park, which is why the PAC is currently focusing on building a park near Brom Lane.

Talvitie asked if the developer has a choice between dedicating land for a park or donating cash in lieu. Marotz stated that the PAC is able to provide input when this decision is being made. He stated that with Harrison Cove, the land that they were offering to donate for parkland wasn't a good fit, and they decided to go with cash in lieu.

Peterson asked about the Fishing Pier at Lakeside Park. Michels stated that the high winds

this year split the Fishing Pier open. He stated that the streets projects are taking priority, but that in mid-May he will start working on it and hopefully will have it open to the public again in June.

6. COMMITTEE MEMBERS' REPORTS

Marotz stated that the Code Revision Task Force had a meeting in mid-April. He stated that the City Council approved the addition of a fulltime Planning Technician and that it will allow the City Planner, Lucinda Meyers, to make the Code Revision Task Force a priority. Halverson stated that the portion of the City's Code regarding signs is very lengthy and difficult to understand. Marotz stated that because the City's Code is so difficult interpret regarding temporary signs, many businesses aren't applying for the proper permitting. Marotz stated that the Code Revision Task Force's first priority is to simplify the City's Code regarding temporary signage.

Halverson stated that the rebranding project should be wrapping up in the next couple of months. He stated that the logo is coming together and they are starting to show the BLEDA what logos will look like on a water tower and other real life applications, Scott stated that the proposed logo will go to City Council for informal approval at the May 12 Workshop. Creighton asked staff about the welcome sign near Lakeside Park and if it will be replaced when the new logo is introduced. Scott stated that the introduction of the new logo will slowly happen over time and as structures need replacing it will be incorporated on things like signage and the water tower.

7. OTHER – None.

8. ADJOURN

Committee Member Marotz motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:26 p.m. Seconded by Committee Member Creighton, unanimous ayes, meeting adjourned.