

MINUTES
CITY OF WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS, MONTANA
PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
SEPTEMBER 7, 2023

ACTION ITEMS

All:

- Complete your “unfinished business” at McStravick Park. (See detailed list in Task list.)

Jen Frazer

- Speak with Golf Board about formalizing cross country skiing on the Golf Course.
- Request outline of content of pickle ball clinic.

Carol Berg

- Signs installed/secured at Bump Track/ maintenance needs at Bump track?
- Duck Race?

Kelly Huffield

- *Adopt a Spot:* Agreements signed & binder & agreement to City, order recognition tags.
- Follow up with Community Foundation on balance in Beautification fund.
- Work with Stacy Eaton-Menard on the basketball tourney?

Pattie Berg

- Follow up on Committee questions/recommendations/actions
- Confirm scoping meeting with Great West
- Using available materials/information, write draft Recreation Master Plan.

Call to Order and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 4:36 p.m. by Vice Chair Carol Berg.

Members present: Carol Berg, Jen Frazer, Jordan Kibbee.

Proxies: Kelly Huffield had assigned her proxy votes to Carol Berg.

Others Present: Pattie Berg (City Council Liaison).

Approval of 8/8/23 Meeting Minutes

Deferred to September 28, 2023.

Capital Improvement Program Priorities

As part of the City Council's work on the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), the Liaison asked Committee members to recommend their parks and recreation priorities.

Based on its goals, the information in the CORR report, and its FY22 priorities list, the committee identified its capital needs. This included all items with a purchase value of at least \$5,000, and a 5-year life expectancy. Liaison Berg will prepare a formal CIP “wish list” with any necessary explanations. Formal action was deferred until the next meeting, to give committee members time to consider the list, think of other items, and await the Chair Blair’s review, comment, and feedback.

Fy23-24 Budget Update

In its August 10, 2023 budget request, the committee asked for a total of \$51,498.42 in general funds (excluding accessibility work). Of this, \$21,350.26 was for work which had not been completed in fiscal year 22-23. The request also included \$12,500 for matching funds for a CDBG grant to prepare a Parks

Master Plan, and \$12,500 for a construction plan set and PER for Springs Park so the T-Mobile grant could be resubmitted.

Liaison Berg explained that, on Tuesday 9/6/23 the City Council adopted a \$63,000 parks general fund budget for fiscal year 23-24. Subtracting \$21,350.26 outstanding costs, increase the survey costs (see below) and include \$28,255 of estimated FY23-24 operations and maintenance expenses, it leaves roughly \$13,000 in general funds to complete "new" work.

P. Berg noted that the budget she had shared and discussed with the Mayor was the wrong budget. She will track down and place the correct budget on the shared drive and will also follow up with the Mayor regarding her error.

The Mayor's initial recommended budget included no funds for any of the 3 Capital projects accounts (facilities, streets, and parks). However, the final budget allots about \$18,000 to each of these accounts. According to the September 6, 2023 budget, the balance in the Parks capital projects fund is now \$56,921.

It was noted that capital projects funds can be carried over from year to year and can be used to purchase capital items, write a planning grant, and for expenses approved by the Council/Mayor.

Liaison Berg met with Mayor Nelson earlier in the day and asked him his priorities for parks work. He said his priorities were to finish the unfinished work at the parks. He said people are not aware that McStravick is not done, but many have asked about Bair Park. Berg said Apex Landscaping had told the Mayor they would be over this week to look at the project but, as of today, he'd heard nothing.

Berg said the Mayor is also interested in securing the deed at Spike's Happy Trails, which includes getting it fenced. He has arranged for a survey to be completed, which will cost between \$3,000 and \$3,500. They discussed the cost of fencing materials, and the use of volunteer labor to install the fence but the Mayor suggested hiring a company to do this work. The fencing cost would be an eligible capital projects fund cost. The Mayor also suggested speaking with Joni Short, to see what the intended use is of that property going forward, as this may affect the type of fencing materials to be used.

The Committee asked whether the entire property would be surveyed, or just the northern border. Liaison Berg will follow up.

The Mayor and the Liaison also discussed a parks master plan. The Mayor had received information from Great West regarding the Land and Water Conservation Fund but, lacking a master plan, the City will not receive any of these funds. The Mayor agreed that we need to get a master plan in place, and the cost of preparing an application for a planning grant through the CDBG program would be an eligible capital projects expense. The Committee will meet on 9/28/23 with Great West Engineering to scope a master plan. Maximum estimated cost is \$12,500 match plus the cost for Great West to write the grant application.

Jordan Kibbee asked if the request to purchase bins for the Terracycle cigarette butt recycling program had been approved. P. Berg will follow up.

Action Item Updates from Committee Members.

This was mostly deferred to the next meeting. However, the following old business items were discussed.

Master Plan planning - Jen Frazer will be meeting with the City-County Planning Board on September 13th to discuss the work the Committee and the CORR group has completed, and the possibility of a joint City-County Recreation Master Plan. Liaison Berg advised the Mayor of this presentation and encouraged him to attend.

Ground covering cost - The Committee discussed a recent article in the Meagher County News in which it was reported that the school board had received a request to improve the ground covering at the school yard. According to the article, Helen Hanson is the main advocate for this work.

Jen Frazer asked whether this would be something the Committee should follow up on. It was noted that combining resources for efficiency is a goal under the Growth Plan. It was also observed that, if there are two or three big projects available, it may be easier to get contractors willing to bid. Frazer will make contact with Mrs. Hansen and the school to get some perspective and will report back.

Parks Security - The Committee briefly discussed a Facebook post which had alleged attempted vandalism at Bair Park. A long Facebook exchange had followed. While no damage has been reported, it's likely this sent a message that cameras are everywhere.

Liaison Berg said she has some of the security cameras at her house, and there are others at the shops. She noted that the Committee had not assigned anyone to install the cameras. Following discussion, including the fact that these items will be attached to a City structure, Carol Berg made a motion to ask the City to install the cameras and signs. The motion was seconded by Jen Frazer and passed unanimously.

Garbage downtown – Jen Frazer noted that, as recently as this morning, some of the garbage cans on Main Street are still full or overflowing from Labor Day. She asked how this was supposed to work. Liaison Berg said she thought that the sponsors were to pay for any 'extra garbage fees' but said she would follow up with the Mayor. The Committee suggested removing the garbage cans, with the idea being that if no garbage cans are there to get full, they won't overflow, and there's no need to pay to empty them.

It was noted that, earlier, the City proposed place a garbage can from downtown at McStravick Park, but the Committee prefers the Park being a "pack it in pack it out" facility.

Parks Code Discussion with Council - This is scheduled for the 9/19/23 Council Work Session. It will likely be at 6:00, but P. Berg will keep the Committee updated. In the Chair's absence, the Vice Chair will lead the presentation. Jen Frazer also plans to attend. All Committee members are welcome. Liaison Berg said the Mayor had the following questions regarding the application form, which will likely come up at the meeting:

- Application fee: Where does the \$ go? What is the reasoning for it?
- Damage deposit: Currently, there is no inspection after each event. If there are back to back events, how will the City know who is responsible for damage?
- Who will enforce the sanitation requirement for food vendors?
- Can fees be waived?
- Why does the application ask for 501(c) (3) status? Is there something in the Code that requires nonprofit status?

Berg and the Mayor had discussed these questions/concerns, but the Committee should be prepared to answer questions. The Committee will discuss the Council's feedback at a later meeting and make necessary 'tweaks' before asking the Council to take formal action.

Public Comment

None.

Set Next Meeting Date/Time/Location/Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m. The next meeting will be Thursday, 9/28/23 at 4:30 p.m.