



# City of Blaine Anoka County, Minnesota Minutes - Final

10801 Town Square Dr.  
Blaine MN 55449

## Nat'l Resources Conservation Board

*The Natural Resource Conservation Board is an advisory body to the City Council. The Board is charged with recommending acquisition of lands for open space and developing a Natural Resource Plan which includes environmental policy and guidelines for the maintenance and preservation of Blaine's existing and future opens spaces and trail corridors. One of the Board's functions is to hold public meetings and make recommendations to the City Council. For each item, the Board will receive reports prepared by City staff, provide the opportunity for public response, conduct Board discussions and make recommendations. The City Council, however, makes all final decisions on these matters.*

---

Tuesday, September 20, 2011

7:30 PM

Blaine City Hall, Council chamber

---

### Regular Meeting

1. **Call To Order**

*The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.*

2. **Roll Call**

*Also present: Staff Liaison, Jim Hafner; and Recording Secretary, Beth Bostrom.*

**Present:** 5 - Chair McKinley, Schrunk, Kustermann, Castillo, and Truchon

**Absent:** 2 - Garner, and Ochocki

3. **Approval of Minutes**

*Chairman McKinley requested a change on page 4, paragraph 3: "...asphalt trail in the upland wooded area of the Wetland Complex which creates..."*

**Moved by Castillo, seconded by Truchon, that the Minutes of August 16, 2011 be Approved. The Motion was adopted unanimously.**

5. **New Business**

**Moved by Castillo, seconded by Kustermann, that the Agenda be Approved. The Motion was adopted unanimously.**

a. **Boardmember Report - Open Space report**

*Boardmember Kustermann visited Oaks Savannah, the Wetland Complex and the Lexington Avenue trail. He reported that he found all in good condition during his visit. He added that there were not very many people utilizing these spaces during his visit. He stated that the Lexington Avenue trail is understood by many people to*

*only be a sidewalk and they do not recognize that there are dedications along the way. He stated that the sign does not attract a lot of attention as it is all by itself.*

*Chairman McKinley reported that in the Wetland Complex work is being completed by the city. A weir was installed. She explained that she has not heard from Jason Husveth. She recommended that coordinating with him for a tour be shelved for now as he has not been able to provide an update.*

*The Staff Liaison stated that he saw Mr. Husveth who has been out of town and very busy. He relayed that messages were received and hopes to attend some NRCB meetings starting in October. He reported that there has been clearing and herbicide applied. He commented that walking around will be difficult as the area is wet and it will be getting dark earlier.*

*Chairman McKinley stated that she will look forward to his presentation as he does a good job. She reviewed that this is the first year of a five year project. The Staff Liaison stated it would be two years before more significant changes are visible.*

**b. Boardmember Report - Adopt-a-trail**

*Boardmember Schrunk provided an update on Hidden Ponds. She reported having fun with this project and would like to tour more parks. She reviewed that she started out on her bike by the park sign, and went by the thistles and the flowers. She reported that the geese are her favorite. She provided pictures from her walk which showed views from around the pond. She encountered a runner. She interviewed a woman at the park who said she does not use the woodchip trails as it looks too private. She commented that there are a lot of Canadian thistles which are thick. She stated that as the trees mature in 10-15 years the pond will not be visible.*

*The Staff Liaison stated that the trees will be thinned out if there is a reason to do so.*

*Boardmember Truchon asked if grounds staff will be trained on invasive species and how to manage Open Space species with natural ecosystems. She asked if staff internally will know how this is done.*

*The Staff Liaison stated that they have a management plan for Open Spaces which eventually will be for maintenance and not management. He stated that for staffing it is a budget matter. He reviewed that buckthorn and thistle are abundant and time consuming to address. He stated that the Board can make a recommendation that Open Space be maintained.*

*Boardmember Schrunk reported on the Adopt-A-Trail idea. She spoke to a person who recommended having an article in the city newsletter. She stated that at Pleasure Creek people are trimming their own trees which are along the trail. She reported from the newspaper that St. Paul is looking for people to perform functions like the NRCB is looking for from the Friends of Open Space. She suggested that the NRCB submit a newspaper article about cleaning up the trails as a way to communicate with residents.*

*Chairman McKinley recommended talking to the Park and Recreation Director, Jim Kappelhoff, for ideas as they already have an Adopt-A-Tree and an Adopt-A-Bench program.*

*Boardmember Schrunk stated that she did not speak to him as the Blaine World Fest was going on which is a busy time for the Parks Department.*

---

*Chairman McKinley recommended that the Adopt-A-Trail program can be set up similarly to these other programs. She expressed appreciation to Boardmember Schrunk for talking to people about this idea.*

**4. Old Business**

**a. Discussion on Illegal Dumping**

*Chairman McKinley reported that there was a request to discuss the topic of illegal dumping from last month's meeting.*

*Boardmember Castillo stated that he brought this up in his report and asked about a system for fining people for illegal dumping.*

*The Staff Liaison stated that city code section 34-322, under environment, refers to the storage of junk or junk vehicles, and addresses refuse or yard waste. This gives parameters which state there needs to be an enclosed area with specific requirements. He stated that it is illegal to dump yard waste on private property. This is so it does not attract rodents and impose on neighboring properties. He stated that if there is an open area this tends to attract dumping. He stated that he has seen several examples of this around the city. He reviewed that some of the trouble is that the County charges to dispose of yard waste which is a discouragement to people who have to drive there. This is a disincentive for residents participate. He stated that some cities pay the fee for residents to encourage people to participate. He stated that this has been addressed in the newsletter but wonders if it is read because there is so much dumping seen around town. He reviewed that residents have an option to pay \$75 a year to have their yard waste removed in a container. He stated that this can be done curbside without driving to the county.*

*Boardmember Truchon asked where the yard waste is taken. The Staff Liaison stated that it is taken to a yard waster recycling center.*

*Boardmember Truchon recommended creating a policy to eliminate dumping on the trails and in the Open Space areas. She reviewed that attention would be drawn to the issue by making a recommendation to the Council. She reviewed that illegal dumping can cost the city money when they deal with the result. She asked that there be additional communication to the public regarding this issue. Chairman McKinley asked for specific ideas on how to raise awareness on this.*

*Boardmember Truchon recommended that a fine be applied which could be effective if someone where to do an inspection. The Staff Liaison stated that the dumping affects water quality. He stated that long term costs to clean up after dumping will add up for the public to pay for. He stated that by watering and fertilizing the grass grows more and needs more maintenance. He explained that water conservation will eventually be an issue in Minnesota. He reviewed that it has taken several years to promote recycling and now around 75 percent of people participate in this.*

*Boardmember Truchon stated that most cities had a recycling coordinator which is how this grew in popularity and participation. She stated that this is why there needs to be continued education. She recommended that the NRCB could spearhead this. She suggested not fining people but educating them. She stated that this is worth the effort to her.*

*Chairman McKinley suggested addressing this on Earth Day but asked how to*

*address this this topic on a larger scale and more often. She supported the idea of putting this on the electronic billboard.*

*The Staff Liaison stated that the compost breaks down and creates phosphorus. This soaks into the groundwater or washes off in the rain and goes into the lakes and streams. He reported that it costs thousands of dollars to remove phosphorus from the water. He reviewed that the yard waste has a water quality connection. He stated that this could be addressed through stormwater management. He reported that there are educational dollars available for this annually. He recommended creating video spots for local cable, the city website and on YouTube.*

*Boardmember Truchon asked that this be kept on the agenda as they continue to work on this.*

*The Staff Liaison recommended speaking to Roark Haver, City communications technician, about creating a video.*

*Boardmember Castillo recommended speaking to Roark to see where things can go with him before they decide.*

*Boardmember Truchon recommended that Boardmembers also speak to Roark about the project.*

*Chairman McKinley stated that she would work with staff and report back next month.*

*Boardmember Castillo recommended creating a Facebook page for the NRCB.*

*Chairman McKinley stated that they would talk about this topic next month.*

**b. Water Quality Report**

*The Staff Liaison reviewed stormwater regulations. He provided a report done for the Planning Commission in the past which was related to the new stormwater ordinance. He stated that the federal clean water act requires participation at the state level. He reviewed that this covers education, public involvement, overseeing construction sites, long term maintenance, and the city practices of maintaining it. He reviewed there is a baseline pollutant level which must be maintained. He reviewed that the volume of stormwater that runs off of hard surfaces is considered to be a pollutant and needs to be reduced.*

**b-1 City in general**

*The Staff Liaison reported that there is a new law that the water volume leaving each city must be within certain limits. He reviewed that managing on-site runoff is a consideration. He reviewed that in recent years ponding has been used to maintain this but this creates loss of land. He reviewed that the goal is to get the water back into the ground. He explained that the City's local surface water plan has been revised to reflect this need. He stated that stormwater needs to be better managed. He reviewed the impact that construction has on groundwater. He reported that some new practices are pervious concrete, porous asphalt, pervious pavers, rain gardens, and low impact development. He reviewed that two years ago the legislature authorized development of standards that would lead to the use of minimal impact designs.*

*Boardmember Kustermann asked if there is a difference in cost for the new surfaces.*

*The Staff Liaison stated that there can be an increased cost initially but over time by using this system the costs even out. He indicated that there are cost savings by not installing traditional infrastructure when using alternative practices. He reviewed that rain gardens are effective even in the winter at removing surface runoff. He commented that a goal is not to pipe the water away from the city. He added that a goal is to have the water mimic the natural hydrology of the site. He added that stormwater is a pollutant as it transports pollutants. He reviewed that there are incentives for businesses to participate through reduced stormwater utility fee credits. He added that there are grants through state and federal programs for the city to use in implementing their projects. He stated that advanced planning is important if grants are to be considered.*

**b-2      Lakeside Commons Beach**

*The Staff Liaison reviewed that the area was monitored for four years before the beach was in operation. He stated that they monitored phosphorus, chlorophyll a, and looked for E. coli bacteria to be sure the water is safe. He reviewed that all results have been well within standards. He stated that these man made basins will show the impacts faster than natural lakes. He provided a water quality slide presentation.*

**c.      Discussion on 2012 NRCB Capital Improvement Program (CIP)**

*Chair McKinley stated that this topic will be moved to next month as it is getting late. She reviewed that they should have a plan in November for Council. She asked for a printout of projects completed at this point which will help guide future project recommendations. She reviewed that for next year Aquatore Park buckthorn removal will be done in the spring. She reviewed that this fall some work remains to be done and replanting has yet to be done. She asked for management ideas to use as a guide for how to spend their funds.*

*The Staff Liaison stated that there are parts of the city which are building and will add revenues.*

**Moved by Boardmember Truchon, seconded by Boardmember Kustermann, to table Item C, Discussion on 2012 NRCB Capital Improvement Program (CIP), for next month. The motion carried unanimously.**

**6.      Other Business**

**7.      Adjournment**

**Moved by Castillo, seconded by Kustermann, that this meeting be Adjourned. The Motion was adopted unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m.**