



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, March 20, 2012

7:30 PM

Council Chambers

1. **Call To Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 p.m.

2. **Roll Call**

Others Present: Staff Liaison, Jim Hafner; Recording Secretary, Beth Bostrom; Boardmember Elect, Gene Rafferty.

Present: 5 - Chair McKinley, Rafferty, Schrunck, Truchon, and Gunter

Absent: 4 - Kustermann, Castillo, Garner, and Ochocki

3. **Approval of Minutes**

Moved by Schrunck, seconded by Truchon, that the Minutes be Approved. The Motion was adopted unanimously.

4. **Open Forum for Citizen Input**

There was none.

5. **New Business**

5.a **Board select 2012 assignmnets**

Chairman McKinley asked Boardmembers to select an open space or special use park that is covered in the management pamphlet to visit. She reported that Boardmember Castillo will visit Hidden Ponds Park Open Space, Boardmember Schrunck will visit Lochness Park and Boardmember Truchon will visit Laddie Lake Park. Areas still available for assignment are Pioneer Park, Kane Meadows Park Open Space, Wetland Complex, Oak Savannah of the Lakes, Lexington Avenue, and

the two parcels which are the Lever Street Open Space and 131st Avenue Open Space. Boardmember Gunter selected Pioneer Park.

Boardmember Elect Rafferty will visit Kane Meadows Park Open Space and trail. Chairman McKinley will take the Wetland Complex. She chose Boardmember Kustermann to take the Northeast quadrant parcels. She requested that Boardmembers visit the area and present a report at the July meeting. She asked that they walk the trails, visit the area, take pictures, pick a nice weather day so they can speak to other people visiting the area, report on maintenance or vandalism issues and bring a report back for the Board. Boardmember Schrunk suggested scouting the area first and going back for pictures on an overcast day or early in the day.

Chairman McKinley suggested looking at the management plan for information on what should be carried out for that area.

5.b Report from web site committee

Chairman McKinley reported that Boardmember Truchon met on March 3 with Mada Tautges who offered to help with the website. She reported that they talked about a lot of things. She stated that a listing of proposals was provided by Ms. Tautges. Boardmember Truchon thanked The Staff Liaison for updating and adding information to the NRCB website as it is much appreciated.

Chairman McKinley stated that their listing included what was not included on the website and how to make their web page more eye catching. They decided that photos would be helpful. They would like a Blaine map with trails shown in addition to the current map that shows open spaces. They would like photographs of Boardmembers on the website. There is a natural resources inventory, which was done some years back, that could be included. They discussed having a history tab showing presettlement era information. This information can be found in the Boardmembers books. This shows what the area looked like before and in the current day. She reviewed that they could have an accomplishment tab showing what they have completed. She reviewed that the Board started with an environmental movement and the NRCB was started from this. There is history of bond fund purchases and many open spaces were purchased with this. She asked that this be written up for the site by someone who is familiar. She stated that an open space and trails fund was set up under the Resource Board. She suggested attempting to get the Natural Plant Societies inventory of natural plants. She suggested using social media for activities and meetings. She asked Mada to come forward and speak.

Mada Tautges stated that she met with Chairman McKinley and Boardmember Truchon regarding the website. She explained that they discussed having an open space photo on the NRCB page. She reported that they will work on selecting this photo. Boardmember Schrunk suggested that the photo have an identifying "anchor" so people can name the location.

Ms. Tautges suggested a trail map as another idea. The Staff Liaison stated that the trails are shown under the "maps" tab on the city web site. He stated that the sidewalk and trails map is overlaid on the trails and open spaces. He indicated that the blue lines are sidewalks and the red lines are trails. He noted that it is printable. He suggested having it linked to the NRCB page.

Ms. Tautges suggested adding photographs of individual Boardmembers or a group

picture. She stated that Boardmember Truchon suggested a natural resources inventory. Boardmember Truchon stated that the natural resources inventory was from 10 years ago. She commented that there was a suggested trails list as well which was done 13 years ago. She stated that purchases were based on these reports. She explained that the city paid for these reports. She recommended reviewing these reports in the future and that consideration be given to updating them. She stated that the report may not be complete as some people did not allow access to their land.

The Staff Liaison stated that there is a Minnesota Land Cover Classification System that is done by the DNR. He stated that the watershed districts may have access to this and it would be more recent.

Boardmember Truchon stated that the natural resources inventory was a biological survey. She stated that it established what was in the open space and natural habitat and aided them in deciding what to purchase. She stated that with GIS information they would like to put this on the website.

Ms. Tautges stated that the website would be a user friendly handbook to help people access information on the NRCB. Chairman McKinley requested that additional Boardmembers participate in the website committee. She asked staff to check on the MLCCS Inventory for the committee to use.

Boardmember Schrunk requested that an aerial map of Blaine be brought to a future meeting. The Staff Liaison showed an aerial map of Blaine that is available on the website. He demonstrated how land parcels and residential areas could be reviewed. He reviewed that city parks, trails, and sidewalks can be displayed on the map.

Chairman McKinley requested a map that shows the area before it was developed as well. She asked that wildflowers and grasses be listed.

Ms. Tautges reviewed that a wildflower link has been put on the website by staff. She confirmed that this is the same as the Natural Plant Society site. Chairman McKinley expressed appreciation that this is linked on the site.

Chairman McKinley confirmed that Boardmember Truchon, Boardmember Gunter, Boardmember Elect Rafferty, and Mada Tautges will continue to work on the website. The Staff Liaison offered to plan a meeting time and location at City Hall.

Ms. Tautges offered to speak on social media. She stated that Facebook and Twitter has information on NRCB. She stated that it advertises the place and time of meetings and she noted that Earth Day is mentioned there as well. The Staff Liaison stated that any calendar items from the newsletter are automatically posted on social media.

Ms. Tautges stated that social media is best used when it is promoted. She suggested using a variety of mediums to reach the public.

The Board expressed appreciation to the Staff Liaison for his work on the website.

5.c Report on joint workshop with Park & Rec Board

Chairman McKinley reported that the minutes for this meeting will be reviewed next month. She reviewed that all items on the agenda except for one were discussed. She explained that they discussed signage in open spaces and parks. She stated

that it was suggested they decide on a sign design and what to put on it so it can move forward. She reviewed that Lochness Park signage will be considered for updating as it is not adequate. She reviewed that there was a suggestion of solar lighting and brochure access. She stated that the kite flying on ice idea was decided against.

Boardmember Truchon stated that the Art Council has discussed having a kite flying event for a few years although not on ice.

Chairman McKinley reported that for the trillium they are to work out details and get back to the Park Board. She suggested contacting Great River Greening for advice on this project. She asked the Staff Liaison for assistance in contacting them. She reviewed that there are community groups such as Target and Minnesota School of Business who would help volunteer for this project. She asked if the power line is actually on park property. The trillium are under the power line. She reviewed that Pioneer Park and Kane Meadows overgrowth were mentioned and well received. She reviewed that the Adopt-A-Trail idea was brought up. She mentioned that there is an Adopt-A-Park policy, which was handed out for review.

The Staff Liaison stated that forms are available on the website for the Adopt-A-Trial, which includes the liability policy, instructions and a certificate of recognition. Chairman McKinley stated that she will promote Adopt-A-Trail on Earth Day.

Boardmember Truchon stated that in June there will be an Art and Music Fair in front of City Hall, which could be another opportunity to promote the NRCB.

Chairman McKinley reviewed that it was suggested to have a booth at World Fest, which will be September 15th. She reviewed that there were presentations by Stormwater Manager Hafner and management programs that are being worked on now. She reviewed that he covered conceptual trail planning and the wetland. She reported that Park and Recreation Director Kappelhoff reviewed the proposed athletic complex off Lexington Avenue. She commented that a Park Commissioner suggested a road crossing to the Open Space parcel. She reviewed that the Park Board showed plans for the new ball field by Fogerty Arena. She stated that a proposed park in Legacy Creek was discussed which will be across the street from Savannah Grove Park. She stated that this will include trails, sidewalks and possibly a trail up to the 131st Avenue Open Space Parcel. She commented that there were announcements of a May 5th ball field dedication for Harmon Killebrew at the Baseball Complex. She reviewed that the Park and Rec Department has been given another SHIP grant for \$18,000. She stated that there is an Eagle Scout project installing bat houses in several parks.

Boardmember Schrunk stated that at Little League North, she did not see a No Smoking sign but she saw a lot of cigarette butts.

Chairman McKinley stated that the Environmental Policy was not discussed at the meeting because she did not know how to present it.

5.d Discussion on offer of land for purchase

The Staff Liaison stated that at Hidden Ponds Park, immediately to the east, is an open space that has work to be done this year. He reviewed that Jim Sotanski owns property in the area and he is offering it to the city for sale. He reviewed that there is a specific half-acre that he is asking \$53,000 for. He stated that he has spoken to Park and Recreation Director Kappelhoff who is not interested in the property. He

stated he does not think the Council would approve a purchase at this time. He stated that staff recommends not purchasing the property. Chairman McKinley stated that this topic was discussed at the joint meeting. She reported that the county has a taxable market value for this half-acre of \$8,000. She stated that the asking price is considerably more than the value. She added that as Boardmember Ochocki's last action with the Board he provided a motion to be read. She read his motion. MOVED by Boardmember Ochocki, seconded by Boardmember Truchon, that the Natural Resources Conservation Board recommend to Council that the city wait for now to respond to any overtures by Mr. Sołanski.

Motion carried unanimously.

6. Other Business

Chairman McKinley announced that on April 21st, Earth Day will be held at Hidden Ponds Park from 10-12 a.m.

Boardmember Truchon expressed appreciation for work done by outgoing Boardmembers Garner and Ochocki. The Staff Liaison stated that on April 5 at 7:30 the Council Meeting will present plaques for outgoing Boardmembers Ochocki and Garner.

7. Adjournment

Moved by Schrunk, seconded by Truchon, that this meeting be Adjourned. The Motion was adopted unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:52 p.m.