



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, May 15, 2012

7:30 PM

Council Chambers

1. Call To Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:34 p.m.

2. Roll Call

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

Absent: 2 - Kustermann, and Castillo

3. Approval of Minutes

Chairman McKinley requested a correction on page 2, 5a, first sentence:
"...contacted Great River Greening...".

Boardmember Truchon arrived at 7:36.

Moved by Rafferty, seconded by Gunter, that the minutes of the April 17, 2012 Board Meeting as amended be Approved. The Motion was adopted unanimously.

4. Open Forum for Citizen Input

There was none.

5. New Business

5.a Report on Earth Day activity

Chairman McKinley reported that the Earth Day activity was on April 21 at Hidden Ponds Park. Participants included four or five volunteer groups, the neighborhood and other interested parties. Planned activities included buckthorn and tree pruning and tree planting. Pictures of the event were taken by Boardmember Schrunk. Chairman McKinley explained that it began raining toward the end of the event so the buckthorn removal example was not completed. She commented that Adopt-A-Park was promoted. She reported that a few people took handouts on this topic and a few asked questions regarding it. She added that Boardmember Truchon completed calligraphy for the certificates. She thanked Boardmember Schrunk and Boardmember Truchon for their involvement.

5.b Discussion on NRCB booth at Blaine Blazin' Festival

Chairman McKinley stated that this is on June 23-24 and she has submitted an application for a booth. She will have the booth on all day on Saturday and Sunday until 2:00. She commented that buckthorn busting, Adopt-A-Space, trails, and promotion of recycling done by the city will be topics on display. She asked for suggestions on other topics. Boardmember Truchon suggested having a map that displays the open spaces and where the trails are in comparison to resident's homes.

Chairman McKinley asked if anyone could help out with the booth on Saturday specifically. Boardmember Truchon offered to help on Sunday as she has a Saturday commitment.

Chairman McKinley asked for volunteers to help with the booth. She stated that it will be open Saturday until 6:00. She stated that it is self-explanatory and there are handouts. Boardmember Gunter stated that she has a work commitment.

Boardmember Truchon asked if staff has any suggestions on issues to represent in the booth. She asked if environmental policies, the well program or stormwater program could be available. Chairman McKinley thanked her for the ideas.

5.c Report from Environmental Policy committee

Chairman McKinley stated that on April 30th three of the Board members met to discuss the environmental policy. She distributed a handwritten policy that was prepared by Boardmember Gunther. She recommended that this could be put on the web site to explain the NRCB position on this topic. She asked

that Boardmembers review both the environmental policy and statement to consider combining them.

Boardmember Truchon commented that she was on the environmental committee that began the NRCB. She explained that a referendum was passed for the NRCB to be established and it was decided that an environmental policy should be created. She stated that it was during this time that the policy was initiated but it was not completed. She suggested deciding on an environmental policy. She recommended that they work together to create this. She explained that Blaine's environmental policy is expanded beyond the NRCB policy. She stated that the open space area and trails is about 2 percent of the space in Blaine. She reported that clean air, clean land and invasive species are included in the policy. She added that emerald ash borer is a current issue. She stated that topics like this could be addressed. She commented that clean water is valued and the protection of ground water and surface water could be included. She stated that a set of good principles is something the broader community looks to Blaine for as other cities ask Blaine for their policy wording.

Chairman McKinley stated that the environmental policy subcommittee needs to meet again to discuss this further. She asked for dates to consider. She reported that on Monday, June 11, they will meet at 6:30 p.m. She asked for an item to be written up for the next Board meeting. Boardmember Truchon offered to write up the suggestions.

5.d Report from Web Site Update committee

Chairman McKinley asked for a report. Boardmember Rafferty commented that there was no meeting last month. He suggested posting the meeting.

Chairman McKinley stated that she will work with staff to post the committee meetings. She asked when the next meeting will take place. She confirmed that Boardmember Truchon and Boardmember Rafferty are on this committee. She confirmed that they continue to work on the content for the web site. Boardmember Truchon commented that they are working on details and will have staff review the content.

The Staff Liaison stated that he has a previous task list for the web site that was prepared by Mada. He commented that a few items have been added like the Natural Resource Inventory. He commented that an eye catching photograph was to be added. He stated that there are pictures in a plant inventory that could have titles added to it. He suggested doing these at the same time. He noted that an accomplishments tab was suggested and he offered to create this as he has information for this. He commented that the committee is working on the NRCB history and a picture of the Board needs

to be taken for the web site. Chairman McKinley suggested deciding on a time to take an outdoor group picture. She recommended meeting at 7:00 near a park sign.

The Staff Liaison suggested meeting at Hidden Ponds. Chairman McKinley offered to work on making sure people will be there. She asked Boardmember Schrunk to bring her camera and for the Staff Liaison to take the picture. This will be just prior to the next meeting in June at 7:00 p.m.

5.e Discussion on activities to promote Open Spaces

Chairman McKinley stated that last month the open space of the month idea was presented. She stated that ideas were presented but a person needs to take the responsibility for putting the articles together for the web site to promote it. Boardmember Truchon offered to handle the write up. She commented that with announcing the open space of the month the location could be given along with trails. She suggested using social media to ask people to report what they saw when visiting the areas. She asked to work with staff to coordinate the listing on social media.

Boardmember Gunter asked if the web site has an area where people can contact the NRCB. The Staff Liaison stated that the city web page has an area where people can send in comments.

Boardmember Gunter gave a suggestion of featuring an area and identifying the birds that are found there as an example. Then people can be encouraged to report back on what they see. The Staff Liaison suggested that a tab can be added on the page so people can post a comment. He offered to check on this.

Chairman McKinley confirmed that Boardmember Truchon will be writing the content for the newsletter and web site. The Staff Liaison stated that he likely needs something for the newsletter by the end of next week.

Boardmember Truchon offered to write up a list of June, July and August events. The Staff Liaison stated that the next newsletter will be for July and August.

Boardmember Truchon commented that the Arts Council is being interviewed for their recent exhibit for channel 14. She suggested having a program done featuring open space for future use on North Metro TV. She offered to check on this.

Boardmember Truchon suggested writing down attributes for each park so there is a list to work from to identify each park's unique features. She commented that in July at Pioneer Park there will be a photo walk, in August

they will feature East Lake Park with the big open space and for September there will be a bird walk in Kane Meadows. She offered to write up an article for these three. The Staff Liaison stated that after last month's meeting where these ideas were presented he spoke with Parks Director Jim Kappelhoff. He stated that an idea would be to have people register ahead of time online for a minimal cost, maybe \$5, which would be how to pay for expenses like a bird guide. He stated that this open space activity would be promoted under Parks as they have an established process for programming. He commended that this would need to be planned far enough ahead to be on their brochure and to create the online registration

6. Other Business

Chairman McKinley reported on the trillium recovery project. She commented that she visited Laddie Lake to observe the area under the power line. She reported that the power company told her that two years ago mowing was done and herbicides were applied. She commented that the ground is brown and the trillium is struggling to grow there. She stated that to the west of the power line there is trillium growing in the woods, which look healthy. She recommended moving the trillium that is under the power lines into the wooded area. She commented that she is asking her garden club members to participate in this project. She asked that other volunteers and the neighborhood participate in this project. She commented that this will take place over the summer. She reported speaking with former Boardmember Ochocki who will mark the area where the trillium is blooming. The DNR requires that the plants not be moved until flowering is completed and the foliage has wilted down. Boardmember Truchon suggested putting this in the newsletter, which has a deadline next week. She confirmed that this can be promoted through the Parks Department and be identified as a NRCB project.

Chairman McKinley stated that she is thinking of doing this project in late August. These are nodding trillium, which have a later bloom date. She commented that this will be a NRCB project.

Chairman McKinley stated that there was a complaint about the number of fallen trees in Aquatore Park. She commented that she passed this on to Marc Shippee of Public Works. She commented that in the newsletter there is an expanded recycling list. She will present this at the booth.

Chairman McKinley reminded Boardmembers to allow time to visit their open space areas to write up and present reports. These are to be presented at the July meeting.

The Staff Liaison stated that Hidden Ponds was identified in the Capital

Improvement Plan to restore the grassy area as a prairie. He commented that the contractor mowed the area in preparation for that work. He has found out that trees which are left over from the city tree sale are being planted by public works. He stated that this was at the direction of the city forester. He stated that there are a few rows of trees planted at the north end. He stated that the rest of the restoration will be continued although it will not be completely restored prairie. He stated that there is a row of pine trees on the south end that were planted by the previous owner and some are in bad shape. He stated that maintenance will be done on these to clean them up. He commented that they will be left in. Boardmember Truchon stated that when the prairie is planted it needs to be watered for around 3 years but after this water will only need to be applied to the trees as it will not be good maintenance to over water the prairie.

7. Adjournment

Moved by Schrunk, seconded by Rafferty, that this meeting be Adjourned. The Motion was adopted unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.