



City of Blaine Anoka County, Minnesota Minutes - Final

Blaine City Hall
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, November 17, 2015

7:00 PM

Council Chambers

1. Call To Order

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Others Present: Staff Liaison, Jim Hafner; Recording Secretary,
Debbie Wolfe

Present: 8 - Chair McKinley, Villella, Rafferty, Perkins, Truchon, Gunter, Castillo, and
Comissioner Anderson

Absent: 1 - Ruth

3. Approval of Minutes

**MOVED by Boardmember Rafferty, seconded by Boardmember Truchon to
approve the minutes of the October 20, 2015 Board Meeting as presented.**

Motion carried unanimously.

4. Approval of Agenda

Discussion of the December meeting was added to the Agenda under
Other Business.

**MOVED by Boardmember Perkins, seconded by Boardmember Gunter, to
approve the November 17, 2015 Board Agenda as revised.**

Motion carried unanimously.

Aye: 8 - Chair McKinley, Villella, Rafferty, Perkins, Truchon, Gunter, Castillo, and
Comissioner Anderson

5. Open Forum for Citizen Input

There was none.

6. New Business

6.a Update on Blaine Wetland Sanctuary Project

Mr. Hafner provided an update on the project. Stantec organized some meetings with local educators of environmental classes. Two meetings were held with a total of 6 teachers attending. The discussion was to obtain input on how they use a nature center and what facilities are useful. The biggest challenge to the teachers would be transportation. Minutes of the meetings were taken and will be shared with the NRCB when available. A proposed trail footprint for the east/west trail from East Lake Park to Lexington Ave. has been determined and recorded using GPS. Stantec is determining a cost estimate for the trail.

Commissioner Villella arrived at the meeting at 7:08 p.m.

Mr. Hafner stated those costs should be available for the January meeting of the NRCB. Stantec has been asked for a 90% design to take to potential sponsors. The wetland restoration project is still moving through the Army Corps of Engineers process. Everyone agrees it is a good project but there is a question as to the amount of credits that can be obtained. There are 180 acres and the expectation is to receive 50% credit; could be as low as 25 % or between those two numbers.

Chair McKinley asked if there would be another meeting with MSR. Mr. Hafner stated the 90% plan was supposed to be completed in time for that meeting. Mr. Hafner will follow-up and advise the Board. It appears the cost of the project will be more than the first concept plans.

Discussed.

6.b Further Discussion on the 2016 NRCB CIP

Mr. Hafner reviewed the handouts are similar to those distributed at the last meeting. He has not added any additional revenue. The available funds are \$1,038,864.00. There may be some additional revenue coming in from some park dedication fees. Boardmember

Truchon stated she understood there was to be an increase in the park dedication fees. Mr. Hafner explained the Park Board has proposed increasing the park dedication fees but the proposal needs to be reviewed and approved by the City Council.

Mr. Hafner provided the Open Space Management Tasks that Prairie Restoration was doing over 3 years 2013 - 2015. Mr. Hafner will be meeting with Prairie Restorations tomorrow. There is hope the funding can be stretched until the wetland banking funds will come in. The biggest two areas for restoration are at Hidden Ponds and Laddie Lake. Hidden Ponds has a lot more peat than was anticipated and what should be done is being researched. Tamarack trees may be planted as an option.

Mr. Hafner reviewed the Estimated Revenue and Expenditures 2014 - 2020 report. Some smaller projects may need to be postponed to allow for the bigger projects. Credits will not be available for sale until 2017 at the earliest. Some adjustments will need to be made to bring the negative balance to the positive. The first phase trail in the BWS is estimated to be about \$1M. Any hard paths through the wetland area would not earn credits and other credits would need to be used to compensate. There are a number of types of decking that can be used for a boardwalk. If wood were used for the boardwalk it would last well and when it needed to be replaced composite could be looked at as funding is available. The hope is to receive Corporate Sponsors.

Commissioner Villella asked if any particular sponsors were being considered and Mr. Hafner stated Aveda, Infinite Campus, Medtronic and possibly Target Corporation are on a list to be contacted. There is not a lot of grant monies available for this type of project. The Mayor and City Manager will be calling on the companies.

Commissioner Gunter asked if the Bureau of Land Management has any grants available. Mr. Hafner stated he has not researched that organization. Grants have been received from U. S. Fish and Wildlife in the past. Funding is not available when credits are being banked for resale. There may be some DNR funding available but it would not apply to this phase of the project. In the southern portion of the BWS (109th) there is a parcel that has high quality plant communities. The Rice Creek Watershed District has approached Blaine for a wetland bank. City Staff is open to that request because Blaine would retain ownership and RCWD would pay for the restoration work and they would get the credit. That restoration would require an easement to be placed on the parcel.

RCWD would be asked to maintain it in the future as they would be

receiving the credits. Mr. Hafner stated it seems this would be beneficial to both parties.

Commissioner Truchon stated the boardwalk at Springbrook is near completion.

Discussed.

6.c Recap of 2015

Chair McKinley provided a summary of 2015 Goals:

- Give attention to development of the Blaine Wetland Sanctuary (BWS)
- Continue to utilize the Open Space Management Plan for guidance and setting priorities.
- Continue to explore ideas for enhancing public awareness and use of our open spaces and trails. Stantec Open House held in March.

List of ideas/suggestions for NRCB members to choose and pursue this year:

Blaine Wetland Sanctuary Kickoff - May 30
North Metro Home & Garden Show - Feb 28 - no display
Green Expo - April 25
Earth Day - May 2
World Fest - May 16 - no display
Blazing Festival - June 26-28

NRCB History - research has been done
Adopt-a-Park program
Write a column for the city newsletter - Kickoff announced
Continue work on trail maps/info brochures
Website updating
Name more trails this year - will continue next year
Conduct Open Space tours this year - which places

Chair McKinley thanked the Commissioners for their participations in the events.

Informational; no action required.

7. Other Business

A discussion was held as to whether to hold a meeting in December. The consensus of the Board was to not hold a meeting. The next meeting will be held on January 19, 2016.

MOVED by Boardmember Gunter seconded by Boardmember Perkins, to not hold a Board Meeting in December 2015. The motion carried unanimously.

Aye: 8 - Chair McKinley, Villella, Rafferty, Perkins, Truchon, Gunter, Castillo, and Comissioner Anderson

Adjournment

MOVED by Boardmember Castillo seconded by Boardmember Villella, to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Aye: 8 - Chair McKinley, Villella, Rafferty, Perkins, Truchon, Gunter, Castillo, and Comissioner Anderson