



# City of Blaine Anoka County, Minnesota Minutes - Final

Blaine City Hall  
10801 Town Sq Dr NE  
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.*

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Tuesday, April 19, 2016

7:00 PM

Council Chambers

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### 1. Call To Order

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

### 2. Roll Call

Roll Call - Staff Liaison Hafner called the roll call. Those present include: Boardmembers Castillo, Gunter, Rafferty, Ruth, Truchon, Villella and Chair McKinley

Absent - Boardmember Perkins

Others Present: City Clerk Cathy Sorensen, Stormwater Manager Jim Hafner, Stuart Krahn - Stantec, and Recording Secretary Debbie Wolfe

**Present:** 7 - Chair McKinley, Villella, Truchon, Rafferty, Ruth, Gunter, and Castillo

**Absent:** 1 - Perkins

### 3. Approval of Minutes

**MOVED by Boardmember Rafferty, seconded by Boardmember Castillo to approve the minutes of the March 15, 2016 Board Meeting as presented.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**Aye:** 7 - Chair McKinley, Villella, Truchon, Rafferty, Ruth, Gunter, and Castillo

### 4. 2015-16 Natural Resources Conservation Board Adjourns Sine Die

**5. Administration of Oath of Office for New Board Members**

City Clerk Cathy Sorensen administered the Oath of Office to Boardmembers Tony Castillo, Gene Rafferty, Kim Gunter, Ben Ruth, Tonya Lizakowski and Anthony Wilder.

**6. Meeting Resumes: Roll Call of 2016-17 Natural Resources Conservation Board**

Call to Order - 7:07 p.m.

6. Roll Call - Staff Liaison Hafner called the roll call. Those present include: Boardmembers Castillo, Gunter, Lizakowski, Rafferty, Ruth, Truchon, Villella, Wilder and Chair McKinley

Absent - Boardmember Perkins

Others Present: Stormwater Manager Jim Hafner, City Manager Cathy Sorensen, Stuart Krahn - Stantec, and Recording Secretary Debbie Wolfe

**Present:** 9 - Chair McKinley, Villella, Truchon, Rafferty, Ruth, Gunter, Castillo, Wilder, and Lizakowski

**Absent:** 1 - Perkins

**7. Approval of Agenda**

**MOVED by Boardmember Gunter, seconded by Boardmember Castillo, to approve the April 19, 2016 Board Agenda as presented.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**Aye:** 7 - Chair McKinley, Villella, Truchon, Rafferty, Ruth, Gunter, and Castillo

**8. Open Forum for Citizen Input**

There was none.

**9. New Business**

**9.a Update on Blaine Wetland Sanctuary Project**

Staff Liaison Hafner and Stuart Krahn from Stantec provided an update on the Blaine Wetland Sanctuary Project. Staff Liaison reviewed the permit to Rice Creek Watershed District (RCWD) has been approved. The Corp of Engineers has not acted on the permit request however a permit may not be needed. A response should be

coming soon. The bid for the project would like to be sent out in June with award in July.

Jason Husveth (CCES) and Staff Liaison Hafner are meeting next week with RCWD and the Army Corps to get more specifics on what is needed for the monitoring plan for the wetland banking project. This project should be able to be started in December.

Mr. Hafner stated the hope to have the parking lot on the nature center site completed this year. There are four scenarios for the future nature center that will be presented tonight. Board input is requested on the building location.

Mr. Krahn provided an update on Phase 1. The bid documents are being finalized. The first phase is the northern trail connection between existing paved trail loop on the West to the existing paved trail along Lexington Avenue. One third will be a paved trail with the balance in boardwalk. There will be two viewing platforms which are close to where they were shown on the master plan. He indicated the area on the site map.

Mr. Krahn reviewed the City the proposed use of the ten acre parcel to the east of and adjacent to the BWS. Mr. Krahn reviewed four building siting considerations such as upland versus wetland areas, close versus far from Lexington Avenue, Gateway versus Immersive experience.

**Gateway One** - The wetland areas are indicated in blue on the map with the upland areas being shown in green. The brown indicate the building(s). The grey area coming off Lexington Avenue is the parking lot. There is one small wetland near the parking lot. The trail system coming onto the site was indicated on the map.

Boardmember Castillo asked if the entrance would be a one-way and Mr. Krahn stated it would be two way traffic. If buses were present they would use it as a one way. There would be 30 parking spaces. The black lines on the drawing indicate the sidewalk connections along with handling stormwater runoff in that area. Mr. Hafner stated the County would most likely not allow more than one entrance off Lexington Avenue off the site. Significant trees were indicated on the map that would be preserved.

**Gateway Two** - would reorient the buildings. The same size parking lot is included on all options. Visitors would enter through the buildings to the site.

**Gateway Immersive** - There would be one building close to Lexington Avenue with another building more in the center of the site. One building would have the majority of the amenities with the smaller building containing remote classroom or lab spaces. Boardmember Castillo asked how construction materials would be brought onto the smaller building site. Mr. Krahn stated the haul route for moving materials would be larger than the finished trail. Mr. Hafner noted any of the scenarios could have a remote building in the upland area. Boardmember Truchon asked if Gateway Two would have a trail connecting and Mr. Krahn stated the draft did not include that but that would be added. Boardmember Wilder asked if the boardwalk would be as close to the wetland as indicated in the picture and Mr. Krahn stated it would be very close and only a couple feet above the ground.

**Fully Immersive** - Both buildings would be tucked back into the upland areas. The depth of this site is ¼ mile from Lexington Ave. to the rear of the site.

Boardmember Truchon noted there are really only two choices for parking lot location. Mr. Krahn stated the hope was to avoid the small wetland off of Lexington. The relationship between the parking lot and the buildings is important. From a traffic safety standpoint there is no preference for one over the other. Boardmember Lizakowski asked if there would be access to the trails without going through the building and Mr. Krahn stated they could be accessed around the buildings.

Boardmember Ruth asked if the buildings would be open year round and Mr. Hafner stated that would depend on programming and staffing. Boardmember Ruth asked if there is a concern about maintaining the trails between the parking lot and the building to make sure people would have access to the building during the winter. Mr. Hafner stated the trails would need to be cleared for winter use. A smaller piece of equipment would need to be used to clear the boardwalk.

Boardmember Truchon stated the fully immersive plan would be further from Lexington. She feels Gateway Two has more advantages. It would be easier to get to the building from the parking lot. The configuration of the parking lot is helping to maintain the small wetland. It has practical advantage.

Boardmember Villella stated he prefers the angle of the parking lot in

Gateway Two but also likes the Immersive plan. Mr. Hafner noted all four concepts would have no effect on the wetland. The concepts would be in compliance with buffer averaging. The existing wetland would be improved.

Boardmember Castillo asked what the cost difference is between the four concepts. Mr. Krahn stated the options that include building on the islands would be more but nothing specific. The parking lot cost would be very close with a ballpark difference of \$10,000.

Chair McKinley asked what the broken lines indicate on the drawing and Mr. Krahn stated that indicates a soft surface trail. She prefers the Gateway Immersive.

Boardmember Gunter asked if the parking lot from Gateway Two could be combined with the Gateway Immersive building location.

Boardmember Lizakowski suggested the building be closer to the parking lot for ease of getting the students into the building easier and making it more accessible.

Boardmember Ruth asked if on Gateway Immersive was the plan to have three buildings and Mr. Krahn stated it would be a deck area or another building.

The consensus of the Board was a combination of Gateway Two and Gateway Immersive as suggested by Boardmember Gunter. Mr. Hafner stated the trail will be completed first and second the parking lot. Mr. Krahn will come up with a revised concept and some cost estimates. The building locations can be decided later.

Chair McKinley stated she is happy to hear a rain garden is being considered. She is glad tree conservation is being considered.

Boardmember Wilder asked if there would be windows to look out from the building onto the BWS. Mr. Hafner stated there would be a connection between the inside of the building to the outside. Mr. Hafner stated the project will not go out for bids until the letter is received from the Corp of Engineers.

Boardmember Gunter left the meeting at 7:55 p.m.

Mr. Hafner and Mr. Krahn left the meeting at 7:56 p.m.

**Discussed; direction given to staff.**

**9.b     Reminder: Green Expo April 23, 2016**

Chair McKinley stated if any questions come up regarding the BWS she will relay them to Mr. Hafner. The NRCB will have a table. It will be held at the National Sports Center from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Chair McKinley asked other Boardmembers if they are able to stop by and give her a break so she can see what the other tables are offering.

**Informational; no action required.**

**9.c     Discussion: Event for Wetland Month in May**

Chair McKinley announced May 7 will be the event at East Lake Park. She asked the Boardmembers participate if they can. She has written an article for the City Newsletter and provided a draft for Board review. Jason Husveth is not available to participate. This will be an informational event. This will be held from 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

**Informational; no action required.**

**9.d     Discuss Other Upcoming Events in 2016**

A tour of the wetland with the Park Board could be planned for June - July with Jason providing the tour. Chair McKinley will work with Chair Jeff Bird of the Park Board to set a date. The tour could start at North Oaks West Park.

Earth Day is open to all City Parks and groups are encouraged to participate with 29 of the 64 parks being worked in. Earth Day can be celebrated between April 15 and May 15. Two parks have already hosted previous Earth Day events.

The Blaine Festival will be held June 24-26 at Aquatore Park. The NCRB will have a table in the civic tent.

**Informational; no action required.**

**10.    Other Business**

A contact list was distributed for Boardmembers. Any changes should be noted to Staff Liaison Hafner.

Boardmember Truchon stated a proclamation was forwarded to the City Council to make the City pollinator friendly. Andover and Anoka have both passed similar proclamations. Mr. Hafner is

requested to provide an update on the status of the Blaine proclamation.

**Informational; no action required.**

**11. Adjournment**

**MOVED by Boardmember Castillo, seconded by Boardmember Truchon, to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m.**

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**Aye: 7 - Chair McKinley, Villella, Truchon, Rafferty, Ruth, Gunter, and Castillo**