



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.

Tuesday, April 18, 2017

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: Recreation Manager Shari Kunza, and Recording Secretary Debbie Wolfe.

Present: 10 - Chair McKinley, Villella, Rafferty, Ruth, Perkins, Truchon, Castillo, Lizakowski, Genet, and Theisen

3. [MIN 17-13](#)

APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 21, 2017 MEETING MINUTES

Boardmember Castillo noted in the minutes he was shown as absent however he was present.

Chair McKinley noted Recreation Manager Kunza actually called the roll instead of Chair McKinley as indicated in the minutes.

It was noted on page three paragraph three of the minutes Laddie Lake was misspelled.

Boardmembers Villella and Genet arrived at the meeting at 7:07 p.m.

MOVED by Boardmember Perkins, seconded by Boardmember Truchon, to approve the minutes of the March 21, 2017 Board Meeting as amended.

Motion carried unanimously.

Aye: 8 - Chair McKinley, Villella, Rafferty, Ruth, Perkins, Truchon, Castillo, and Lizakowski

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOVED by Boardmember Truchon, seconded by Boardmember Castillo, to approve the April 18, 2017 Board Agenda as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

Aye: 8 - Chair McKinley, Villella, Rafferty, Ruth, Perkins, Truchon, Castillo, and Lizakowski

4. Open Forum for Citizen Input

No one appeared to address the Commission.

5. [Com 17-07](#)

BLAINE WETLAND SANCTUARY UPDATE

Chair McKinley provided information from Stefan Higgins, Assistant City Engineer, who has taken over the project from Jim Hafner. He stated the boardwalk project is on hold pending the arrival of the boards on April 21, 2017. The boardwalk will be completed from East Lake Park to the small island. They expect to start work on April 25 and have the entire boardwalk completed by mid-May. There should not be any added to the cost due to changes in the original plan. The parking lot is scheduled to be installed later this year as planned.

Informational; no action required.

6. [Com 17-08](#)

2017 ON-GOING MANAGEMENT PROJECTS

Chair McKinley stated there are still some management projects under contract.

Hidden Ponds - the recommendation was to plant Tamaracks and prairie Restoration is doing that project.

Laddie Lake - There will be a controlled burn to create the savannah. Chair McKinley is not aware if the thorny brush has been removed.

Pioneer Park - Jason Husveth will be doing some cleanup of buckthorn and underbrush.

Monies are included in the budget for these projects. Rebecca Haug, Water Resource Manager will be taking over Jim Hafner's work on the management projects. Chair McKinley will be meeting with her to discuss

the management projects.

Boardmember Perkins asked if there will be communications regarding the controlled burn to the nearby residents. Ms. Kunza stated notification will be sent out to the neighbors.

Boardmember Theisen asked how many Tamaracks will be planted and Chair McKinley stated forty will be planted.

Boardmember Genet asked about the work in Pioneer Park and when it will be done and Chair McKinley did not know when the work would be done. Chair McKinley will get an answer and report at the next meeting.

Discussed.

7. [Com 17-09](#)

BWS NEIGHBORHOOD COMMITTEE

Recreation Manager Kunza reviewed the City Council, at its April 6th meeting, formally created the Blaine Wetland Sanctuary Neighborhood Committee for which you volunteered to serve on. The first meeting of this group will be on April 19, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary Room located on the 2nd floor of City Hall. At this meeting, the discussion will include:

- The need for maintenance access and possible locations.
- How the maintenance access will be used and why.
- Maintenance required for the BWS and types of vehicles/equipment that will be entering the area.
- A buffer plan for the Blaine Wetland Sanctuary project.
- Landscaping plan for the maintenance access area.

The members of the Committee are: Mayor Tom Ryan, Councilmember Dave Clark, Councilmember Julie Jeppson, NRCB Commissioner Mary Jo Truchon, and NRCB Commissioner Kristen Genet.

Neighborhood representatives are: Peggy Kunkle, Don Karas, Emily Bross, Shannon Krause, Lyla Courtemanche, and Janice Dunstan.

Staff representatives are: Bob Therres, Jean Keely, Rebecca Haug, and Shari Kunza.

Chair McKinley thanked Boardmembers Truchon and Genet for volunteering to participate in the Committee. Chair McKinley distributed a list of items she would like to have discussed at the meeting. There is

concern about where the monies will come from. Boardmembers Truchon and Genet will provide an update after the Committee meeting at the next Board Meeting. The Committee will meet once a month for approximately 6 months.

The list of items includes - Regarding Access Issues:

Using East Lake Park's paved trail could damage the surface, but more importantly, that trail is heavily used by families for walking and biking.

Access from Lexington Ave is not feasible due to the presence of wetlands on both sides of the boardwalk.

Access from Naples Circle area has always been part of the Open Space acreage and planned for that purpose. It will be gated to prevent unwanted access and would be used only a few times each year for management/maintenance work in the wetlands.

Regarding the Buffer Plans:

Hopefully the decisions for replacing trees/shrubs will be done under our City Forester's (Marc Shippee) input and direction. Not all species do well in wet soils. Maybe a row of evergreens right along the open areas of the paved trail on the west side would provide a sight barrier from the trail to their houses beyond.

Regarding the Ongoing Resentment of the Residents:

Try to get a commitment from them to attend an in-depth presentation by Jason Husveth to help them understand the background and the importance and value of this unique natural resource to our city. Our hopes of creating a "Destination Landmark" with a future Nature/Interpretive Center at Lexington Avenue to enhance public education and wildlife enjoyment.

Point out that the boardwalk will take visitors away from their houses as it transverses east to Lexington Avenue. Point out that eventually they will have easy access to this great asset just beyond their backyards.

Try to find out if our Open Space/Trails Fund will be used to pay for the gate and tree installations at the access point, and will it be used to pay for the tree/shrub plantings demanded by the residents too.

Discussed.

8. [Com 17-10](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Chair McKinley reviewed:

Green Expo - April 22 at National Sports Center - the NRCB will have a

table at the Expo with handouts and a display. Boardmember Truchon suggested a map be available to indicate the location of the trails and open spaces within the City. Boardmember Truchon stated the Green Expo is a good resource for sustainability. Boardmember Ruth will work with Chair McKinley at the Green Expo. Any other Boardmembers are invited to participate/attend.

Frog Walk - 7:00 p.m. May 6 at East Lake Park - Flyers will be handed out at the Green Expo. This has been posted on Facebook and can be shared with anyone. Chair McKinley plans to attend. Boardmember Theisen asked how long the Frog Walk will last and what is the likelihood frogs will be seen. Boardmember Genet stated it is dependent on the weather. She is hoping to capture some prior to the event. The program should run about 7-8 p.m. This is a very family friendly event.

Earth Day - Ms. Kunza reported 16 parks are scheduled to be cleaned. There is still time for residents to submit applications. A complete listing of the cleanup can be found at blaineevents.com.earthday. The cleanup runs between April 15 and May 15.

Discussed.

9. [Com 17-11](#)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Recreation Manager Kunza announced Rebecca Haug began on April 10 as the Water Resource Manager and will take on the environmental issues associated with the BWS. Stefan Higgins will continue to manage the construction projects related to the BWS. Ms. Kunza stated Rebecca Haug will be taking over all the previous responsibilities of Jim Hafner.

Chair McKinley announced May is Wetland Month. Ms. Kunza stated she will try to get it in the newsletter and if not put it on the website.

Ms. Kunza stated the NRCB has been invited to take part in the Comprehensive Plan Update - May 16 at 6:00pm there will be a presentation by the Consultant.

Boardmember Truchon stated April 19, 2017 is Water Day at the State Capitol. This will be an opportunity for residents to voice their concerns about how monies are spent.

Boardmember Genet mentioned the brochure for the BWS that was discussed at the last meeting. She asked the Board what the audience was for the brochure and what the purpose is of the brochure. Boardmember Truchon stated whenever she has visited another nature area center a handout is given. She suggested some of the

animals and plants found in the wetland could be highlighted in the brochure. Any boardmember suggestions should be emailed to Boardmember Genet. Chair McKinley stated she thought a brochure would be drafted and brought to the Board for review/comment.

Discussed.

Adjournment

MOVED by Boardmember Perkins, seconded by Boardmember Truchon, to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

The motion carried unanimously.

Aye: 8 - Chair McKinley, Villella, Rafferty, Ruth, Perkins, Truchon, Castillo, and Lizakowski