



City of Blaine Anoka County, Minnesota Minutes

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, July 18, 2017

5:30 PM

Blaine Wetland Sanctuary Parking Lot

Wetland Sanctuary Tour From 5:30-7:00 - Regular Meeting to Follow in Council Chambers

****Wetland Sanctuary Tour****

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 Rebecca Haug, Co-Liaison.

Present: 6 - Chair McKinley, Villella, Rafferty, Truchon, Genet, and Theisen

Absent: 4 - Ruth, Perkins, Castillo, and Lizakowski

3.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chair McKinley suggested tabling Open Space Reports for this month. Boardmember Genet noted she had noticed some things at Lochness and has mentioned them to Ms. Haug. Boardmember Truchon requested adding item #10 a Map that would be visible to the audience during meetings. Chair McKinley suggested it be included in item #7.

MOVED by Boardmember Rafferty, seconded by Boardmember Truchon, to approve the July 18, 2017 Board Agenda as revised.

Motion carried unanimously.

Aye: 6 - Chair McKinley, Villella, Rafferty, Truchon, Genet, and Theisen

4.

APPROVAL OF THE MAY 16, 2017 MINUTES

Attachments: [05-16-17nrcb.doc](#)

Boardmember Truchon mentioned on page 2 paragraph 1 the wording be changed to "It was suggested by the neighborhood that the access be moved to Lexington Avenue and they asked what it would cost to cross the ditch and were told it would be \$60,000." The requests in the 2nd paragraph were requests from the neighborhood. Boardmember Truchon asked that the NRCB act upon the suggestion of creating a list of recommendations.

MOVED by Boardmember Genet, seconded by Boardmember Theisen, to approve the minutes of the May 16, 2017 Board Meeting as amended.

Motion carried unanimously.

Aye: 6 - Chair McKinley, Villella, Rafferty, Truchon, Genet, and Theisen

5. **Open Forum for Citizen Input**

No one appeared to address the Commission.

6.

INTRODUCTION OF REBECCA HAUG, CO-LIAISON

Ms. Kunza introduced Rebecca Haug, Water Resource Manager, will be the co-liaison to the NRCB. Rebecca will provide an update on projects and ideas for board actions. The board will discuss options for education and programming.

Ms. Haug provided a brief history of her background. She has many years of water resource work experience. She stated the NRCB has been invited to be part of the 25 by 25 initiative. On August 29, 7 - 9 p.m., the group would like to have representatives from the NRCB at Anoka Ramsey Community College for an event. Ms. Haug provided a description of Governor Dayton's 25 by 25 initiative. More information will be provided.

Informational; no action required.

7.

BLAINE WETLAND SANTUARY UPDATES

Chair McKinley noted prior to the meeting, the NRCB participated in a walking tour of the Blaine Wetland Sanctuary with Jason Husveth. Some posts have been constructed on both ends of the trails to restrict vehicles. Walkers and bikers have not been restricted. She encouraged people to walk the boardwalk. The BWS sign had been moved during construction.

Chair McKinley will ask Steve from Public Works to move the sign to a better spot so it is more noticeable.

Trail and Parking Lot Update

Brochure Update - Boardmember Genet provided some copies of the draft brochure. The map included could be replaced with a higher resolution map. She asked the Board to give her feedback on the draft brochure. A picture she wants to use requires a photo release and Ms. Kunza stated if the person registered there is a blanket photo release as part of the registration. The picture can be included. Boardmember Truchon suggested the finished parking lot be featured and only the completed trail should be included. Boardmember Genet asked if the map should include the entire Blaine Wetland Sanctuary and Chair McKinley suggested it all be included so people are aware of the size of the project. Boardmember Genet requested a map be provided to her. Ms. Kunza stated the City's GIS department will create a map. Boardmember Truchon suggested the brochure be available on the website to be downloaded. She suggested just the reality be shown rather than the concept plans. She suggested the parking lot, East Lake Park, the streets be included on the map. Boardmember Genet stated she can email this to the Board. Boardmember Truchon suggested sending it to the City Council. Ms. Kunza stated no motion is needed as there will not be a large cost. It will be digital with a few printed. Boardmember Theisen suggested a weather-proof box have some of the brochures available for people passing through the park.

Trail and BWS Usage Discussion - Chair McKinley stated people are already using the boardwalk. Behavior of young people riding their bikes off of the boardwalk into the wetland cannot be tolerated. Proper behavior needs to come from the NRCB. Boardmember Truchon suggested some signage be done with Parks. Ms. Haug suggested it may make sense to follow the same rules for the other open space areas and there are templates for signage available. Boardmember Truchon asked if there are any insurance considerations for people on the property. She asked Staff to research that also as far as liability for the City. Ms. Kunza stated the information posted at Pioneer Park will be provided to the Board. Boardmember Truchon stated she and her husband walked the boardwalk and noted there were no benches. She suggested putting benches on the list of items to be requested for the future. Chair McKinley had requested benches be put along the paved loop trail through East Lake Park. There are two spots that would be ideal for benches. Ms. Kunza stated she agreed benches be put in the three viewing areas. Boardmember Truchon also suggested some educational signage be added to help people

appreciate what is present. Boardmember Genet suggested looking at other areas to help determine what is done in other areas. Ms. Haug stated she and Jason Husveth have already discussed educational materials. The plan is to work with Boardmember Genet and her students to put together the educational information. Boardmember Genet suggested numbered posts, podcasts, QRG codes, etc. Boardmembers Genet, Truchon, and Ms. Haug will work on these items. Boardmember Genet stated another item that has come up during discussions with public is the question of whether a porta-potty would be available in the parking lot. There was one there for the contractors and when construction was done it was removed. Ms. Kunza stated a porta-potty can be added along with trash cans at the head of the trail. She noted trash cans and recycling cans will both be provided. Boardmember Truchon suggested doggie bags be provided and a sign all dogs need to be leashed. Boardmember Villella suggested the discussion of a permanent sign be held. Chair McKinley stated a permanent sign is definitely in the plan. Boardmember Truchon suggested the budget be reviewed for the BWS and the other open space areas.

Chair McKinley stated she hopes the Council is aware of how the project is going and asked if there is any event planned to acknowledge the boardwalk is open. Ms. Kunza stated that would be planned by the NRCB and Staff and Council would be invited. Ms. Kunza suggested late August. Ms. Kunza suggested it be held on the August meeting date (August 15). It would be advertised as a meeting and Grand Opening. Staff would work with the NRCB on inviting the Council and residents. Boardmember Villella asked where overflow parking would be for the event. Ms. Kunza stated East Lake Park would be an option and it could be suggested for residents to walk or bike to the event. Ms. Kunza stated a crossing across Lexington is included in the Comprehensive Plan. Boardmember Theisen suggested carpooling from City Hall. Chair McKinley noted the City has a van. Boardmember Villella suggested Jim Hafner and Jason Husveth be invited to the event. Ms. Kunza stated staff will create a list of those involved and invite them. There could be lemonade provided along with the ribbon cutting ceremony. A draft email invitation will be sent to the NRCB. Potential investors should also be invited. Chair McKinley suggested the Mayor be contacted to see if he has reached out to any potential investors. The event could start at 6:30 p.m. Boardmember Truchon asked if music would be desired.

Chair McKinley stated the construction company has a drone that takes video of their construction projects. She has requested a copy of the video.

Ms. Haug stated there has been discussions regarding programming to get

visitors to the BWS. She would like to change the perception of what a wetland is. There are a number of groups that provide educational programs. She suggested this be worked on in the Fall and Winter and have programs start next Spring and Summer through Parks and Rec. Boardmember Genet suggested some educational materials be available on the website. She also suggested an on-line log book.

Discussed.

8.

OPEN SPACE REPORTS

This item was tabled.

None.

9.

FUTURE MEETING PROPOSAL

Staff is recommending that the Natural Resource Conservation Board alter the pattern of their meeting schedule. Odd months would be official board business and televised on cable. Even months would be discussion only and not be televised. All meetings would need to be publicly announced and the board would have to take their own brief meeting notes on the even months. Staff would be present on odd months and as needed on even months.

Boardmember Villella stated this is a big decision and he would want the boardmembers to be able to think about it and to include all boardmembers. Boardmember Truchon stated she serves on other boards and when they went to an every other month meeting, attendance and interest of boardmembers went down. A suggestion would be to have a workshop prior to each meeting or cancel meetings when necessary. No voting could occur during the informal meetings. Boardmember Truchon stated she would like to hear the opinions of the other members. Ms. Kunza stated it can be back on the agenda in September.

Chair McKinley asked if a financial update could be provided for the September or October meeting. The NRCB is also responsible for Open Space Management projects. This does not include maintenance. Ms. Haug stated she will provide a report at the September meeting.

Chair McKinley asked if there would be any more 2040 meetings with the NRCB. The consultants will come back before the Boards/Commissions but the timeline has not yet been determined. Chair McKinley noted she was contacted about a former NRCB member about a tax forfeit heavily wooded lot. It is on Bataan Street near the airport between 90th and 95th Avenue. Chair McKinley suggested Boardmembers drive past it if they

would like to. There is a large sign on the property. She noted there are no funds for land purchases.

Chair McKinley asked Ms. Kunza to make copies of the information provided by Jason Husveth and provide to the NRCB. Digital copies will be sent out.

Discussed.

Adjournment

MOVED by Boardmember Villella, seconded by Boardmember Theisen, to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

The motion carried unanimously.

Aye: 6 - Chair McKinley, Villella, Rafferty, Truchon, Genet, and Theisen