



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 open 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, December 19, 2017

7:00 PM

Council Chambers

1. Call To Order

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, Water Resources Manager.

Present: 8 - Chair McKinley, Villella, Rafferty, Perkins, Truchon, Castillo, Lizakowski, and Theisen

Absent: 2 - Ruth, and Genet

3.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOVED by Boardmember Villella, seconded by Boardmember Truchon, to approve the December 19, 2017 Board Agenda as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

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

4.

APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 21, 2017 MINUTES

Attachments: [11-21-17nrcb.doc](#)

Chair McKinley clarified on page four, paragraph two she meant to say "Chair McKinley suggested the interpretive signs be constructed of

materials able to withstand vandalism.”

MOVED by Boardmember Rafferty, seconded by Boardmember Castillo, to approve the minutes of the November 21, 2017 Board Meeting as amended.

Motion carried unanimously.

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

5. Open Forum for Citizen Input

No one appeared to address the Commission.

6. GROWING GREEN HEARTS PROGRAM UPDATE

Attachments: [growing green hearts.pdf](#)

Ms. Haug reviewed the City has entered into a contract with Growing Green Hearts to develop curriculum and provide professional services for the Blaine Wetland Sanctuary. Ms. Heidi Farris, Owner Growing Green Hearts, LLC, provided a letter dated October 11, 2017. Ms. Haug reviewed the content of the letter. A kickoff meeting was held last week with Boardmembers Villella and Truchon attending.

Multiple meetings were held with the City of Blaine Staff and the NRCB centered around the Blaine Wetland Sanctuary. Ms. Harris recommends for Strategic planning the following be considered:

- Fun hands-on educational programming specific to BWS.
- Engaging community outreach connecting citizens of Blaine to water running through and stored at BWS and the yards, parks, businesses, schools of Blaine.
- Expanding science literacy specific to water, climate, biodiversity, ecology and human impact education.

GGH is recommending a three-phase approach. These phases will allow for community input, development of programming and outreach based on community input, and opportunities for project growth based on funding secured.

The Phases were reviewed along with their timeframes indicating Phase I: Next 4 months; Phase II: Next 4-18 months; and Phase III: 18 months - 5-year implementation of vision.

GGH's service fees vary depending on the type of service being provided. Some services are provided at a flat rate, while others are computed based

on the time GGH spends providing the service, multiplied by its hourly service rate. The current flat rates are: Consulting \$75/hour; Teacher Trainings/Workshops \$150/hour per 30 attendees, Field trips/Site Visits \$250/2 hrs./30 students per classroom, and project based services for your site may also be provided on a flat rate basis.

Ms. Haug reviewed some details of the various proposed programs. Another follow-up meeting will be held on Thursday, December 21, 2017.

Other aspects of the letter/contract were provided for Board review. The letter/contract was agreed to and accepted by City Manager Clark Arneson on December 6, 2017. Invoice #454 was provided for Board review totaling \$4850.00.

Chair McKinley asked about World Wetlands being celebrated in February and noted American Wetlands are celebrated in May and she is hoping something will be done to celebrate.

Boardmember Truchon stated she was very excited by Heidi's ideas. The whole session encouraged her. Heidi shared ways to use the boardwalk until a Nature Center is constructed.

Boardmember Villella had thought the BWS wouldn't be usable until the building was constructed and Heidi has shown that the BWS is 100% usable now with the boardwalk. Her intergenerational ideas were appreciated. He stated this is a great investment of resources.

Chair McKinley summarized the City is getting their money's work and Boardmember Villella added it is a great allocation of resources.

Boardmember Truchon suggested the NRCB can meet at the BWS on February 2. Boardmember Villella requested staff let Heidi know about May being Wetland Month and Ms. Haug stated she will mention it at the next meeting.

Chair McKinley asked if NRCC was actually NRCB in the letter/contract.

Boardmember Truchon stated the Park and Recreation Department in Blaine is very good and she is glad they are working with GGH on this. She thanked Boardmember Genet's work with her students on the signage.

Discussed.

7.

OPEN SPACE UPDATES

Hidden Ponds - Ms. Haug stated she heard back from Prairie Restorations and found 25 Tamaracks were planted there but they are not doing well in that area. Other options for plants needs to be discussed. Prairie Restorations will make suggestions as to what would grow better in that peat area. Mr. Haug suggested some trials be done and further work with Prairie Restorations will be done.

Chair McKinley stated that area is very messy and she would like to see the woodchip trail put back in and the large tree trimmed.

Boardmember Truchon suggested Ms. Haug work with Prairie Restorations to bring a planting plan back for NRCB review.

Kane Meadows - Ms. Haug stated there were discussions about the buffer around the pond and the vegetation. While she was visiting the area, she met with the park maintenance person for that area. They discussed clear cutting and the reasons they do not want clear cutting done. The gulley currently there is on park maintenance's work list to repair that.

Discussed.

8.

BLAINE WETLAND SANCTUARY INTERPRETIVE SIGN UPDATE

Ms. Haug stated Boardmember Kristen Genet attended the December 7 City Council Meeting and presented the BWS signs. Comments were emailed to the NRCB from Boardmember Genet. Staff will request Boardmember Genet continue work on the signs with her students. Boardmember Genet had asked Staff about obtaining some grants to offset the cost of the interpretive signs and Ms. Haug stated that would be a good idea. In order for her to do that she needs a motion from the NRCB authorizing Boardmember Genet to pursue the grants and once the grants are approved, the NRCB will need to make a recommendation to the City Council to accept them.

MOVED by Boardmember Villella, seconded by Boardmember Theisen to authorize Boardmember Genet to write the grant applications.

Motion carried unanimously.

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

9.

GENERAL COMMUNICATION

Board Re-appointments - Boardmembers Lizakowski and Rafferty have applied for re-appointment to the NRCB. Boardmember Castillo will remain on the Board until his term is complete in March 2018. Ms. Kunza

stated Boardmember Ruth will not be applying for re-appointment either so there will be two board openings. Ms. Kunza stated all Boardmembers are appointed with a term and will remain on the Board until they choose to no longer participate.

Upcoming Training at the Blaine Wetland Sanctuary - Ms. Haug stated the State of Minnesota has requested to use the BWS for a 2-day wetland training in August 2018. They are trying to get Jason Husveth to participate in the training and there will be 60 people involved in the training.

Boardmember Villella asked what department in the State of Minnesota and Ms. Haug stated the Board of Water and Soil Resources.

Chair McKinley asked for the January meeting to review the Open Space Management Plan, as it has been ten years, and updates should be considered. The Management Plan has been followed but not completely. She requested the NRCB review and acknowledge what has been done.

Boardmember Villella suggested the update be done professionally and where would the funds come from to do that.

Boardmember Perkins asked if Chair McKinley was looking for a review and self-audit of the plan and Chair McKinley agreed and thought it would be helpful to the newer NRCB members.

Chair McKinley also would like to review the goals from 2017 and start developing the goals for 2018.

The current plan is available on the City's website. Ms. Kunza stated staff will print off and bind some copies for the new members.

Boardmember Villella requested to review the Comprehensive Plan for 2040. The NRCB will be providing more feedback but he would like to see an early version before it is released to the public.

Boardmember Theisen asked if when the 2040 Comprehensive Plan is completed is there an update given to the NRCB. Annual steps would be needed to meet the end goals. Chair McKinley suggested that be discussed at the January NRCB Meeting.

10. Adjournment

MOVED by Boardmember Villella, seconded by Boardmember Truchon, to

adjourn the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

The motion carried unanimously.

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