



City of Blaine
Anoka County, Minnesota
Minutes

10801 Town Square Drive
Blaine, MN 55449

Park Advisory Board

*Chair Jeffrey Bird, Prad Das, Jeff Lester, Tonya Lizakowski,
Rex Markle, Kristofer Paulseth and Tom Walsdorf*

The Park Board is an advisory body to the city council. 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, August 20, 2019

7:00 PM

BLAINE CITY HALL CLOVERLEAF ROOM

1. Call To Order

The Blaine Park Advisory Board and the Natural Resource Conservation Board met in the Cloverleaf Room of Blaine City Hall on Tuesday, August 20, 2019.

1. Chair Bird called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

NRCB

Members Present: Boardmembers Genet, McKinley, Panning, Rafferty, Syed, Theisen, Truchon, Varian, and Villella.

NRCB

Members Absent: Chair Perkins and Vedi

Others Present: Adjunct Member Drew Brown

Staff Present: Nate Monahan, Recreation Manager and Rebecca Haug, Water Resources Manager.

Present: 5 - Chair Bird, Commissioner Lester, Commissioner Das, Commissioner Markle, and Commissioner Walsdorf

Absent: 2 - Commissioner Lizakowski, and Commissioner Paulseth

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA - Joint Meeting Park Board & NRCB

Motion by Boardmember Rafferty to approve the agenda of the August 20, 2019 meeting as presented. Motion seconded by Boardmember McKinley. Motion approved unanimously.

Aye: 5 - Chair Bird, Commissioner Lester, Commissioner Das, Commissioner Markle, and Commissioner Walsdorf

4. Open Forum for Citizen Input

Chair Bird opened the Open Forum at 7:04 p.m.

No one appeared to address the Commission.

Chair Bird closed Open Forum at 7:05 p.m.

None.

5. New Business**5.-1****BLAINE WETLAND SANCTUARY SUCCESS &
SOUTHERN PORTION**

Ms. Haug reviewed the successes for the Blaine Wetland Sanctuary. There have been a number of successful programs with Growing Green Hearts and the Wargo Nature Center. There have been 400 participants in the programs. There have been a number of field trips at the BWS. Ms. Haug reviewed some of the programs held. This year the BWS was the host site for a conference. The MN Watershed Partners also visited last week. Through Great River Greening a grant for restoration work for the Anoka Sand Plain has been received. The grant money for Blaine will be for restoration on the southern portion of the BWS. The future plan to extend the boardwalk is part of the future plan for the area. Ms. Haug described the wetland bank process. Branch 3 has credits for bringing development into the City. The southern portion does not have the qualities to become a wetland bank. A subcommittee of the NRCB is working with staff to plan the restoration of the southern portion of the Blaine Wetland Sanctuary.

Boardmember Truchon stated there is a great opportunity to get the community onboard in the beginning of the restoration. There could be neighborhood gatherings at the trailheads to attract the neighbors on future restoration.

Boardmember Das asked about the invasive species and Ms. Haug stated there will be another burn to keep the area restored. Boardmember Das asked about the endangered plant species and Ms. Haug named a few. The pollinator and bird species have exploded. Work is done with Anoka Ramsey Community College to install interpretative signs. Boardmember Das suggested a sign with a glass cover show the types of birds in the area.

Chair Bird asked what aspen girdling is and Boardmember Panning

described the process. This stops the spread of the aspens.

Discussed

5.-2

PARKS MASTER PLAN REVIEW

Mr. Monahan reviewed the Park and Recreation System Master Plan. There are only two more parks to develop within the City. This is a vision plan for the next 10-15 years. Public feedback was gathered at various City events. Deep dives were taken into Aquatore and Happy Acres Parks. Mr. Monahan reviewed the activities residents would like to see in their parks and their favorite parks. Feedback was also gathered from various groups and entities.

Mr. Monahan reviewed information on each park showing Broken Oaks as an example. An assessment and recommendations are listed for each park. This is a 200-page document and it will be available on the City's website.

Major trail gaps are listed along with approximate length of segment and approximate cost of segment. This will be discussed later in the meeting. The concept plans were provided for review. The Aquatore plan is proposed at \$6M and Happy Acres is \$9M. A bandshell, updated shelters, restrooms, additional parking, and splash pad are part of the Aquatore Park plan.

Chair Bird asked it is still being considered one way in one way out and Mr. Monahan stated that has been removed from the plan.

Mr. Monahan explained the proposed plan for Happy Acres and would be \$9M if everything was included. Parking is the first concern that needs to be addressed. Some other additions are a sledding hill, wheel baseball fields, replace playground, two refrigerated rinks, and replace the warming house making it more central in the park.

Boardmember Walsdorf asked if they were softball or baseball fields and Mr. Monahan stated they are baseball fields.

Boardmember Genet asked about the playground and Mr. Monahan stated which playground equipment would be replaced. An additional entrance off 118th Avenue NE would be added with additional parking spaces. The hopes are to get a funding plan in place.

Discussed.

5.-3

POTENTIAL WETLAND BANK AT PIONEER PARK

Ms. Haug showed a map of the area. A plug would be put in the ditch so the hydrology could go back into the area. This would do the hydrology restoration. This would be an easy bank to do. North of Main Street all the water flows north and South of Main Street all the water flows south. Staff is working on a feasibility study that would go to the permitting agencies (Coon Creek Watershed, Board of Soil and Water Resources, Army Corp of Engineers are main permitting agencies). This is very early in the process.

Boardmember Markle asked which on the map shows city owned property and Ms. Haug stated the green color indicates the city owned property. A cooperation with Jason Husveth who owns the other portion would combine the wetland bank and the credits for sale would be distributed accordingly. Boardmember Markle asked how long the bank lasts and Ms. Haug stated it is in perpetuity. Last night, the EDA approved a five-year management plan and that cost is approximately \$40,000. Ms. Haug described the process timing from permitting to be available for selling the wetland credits.

Boardmember Das asked who benefits from the credits and Ms. Haug stated this is a funding source for the city to maintain its parks and trails. It is expensive with upfront costs. There is a risk the credits would not be sold quickly. Once the land goes into a wetland bank it cannot be developed.

Boardmember Markle asked what the challenges are for extending the boardwalks, etc. for these spaces. Ms. Haug stated the city needs to identify where they plan to have a trail system up front. The same amount of credit is not received where boardwalks go through the property. The credit sale monies go back into the Open Space fund.

Ms. Haug stated excluding the boardwalk and the parking lot the contract for site 7 of the Blaine Wetland Sanctuary is a little less than \$800,000. The parking lot and boardwalk were \$1,250,000. There is a purchase going through with the State of Minnesota that will bring in close to \$900,000.

Discussed.

5.-4

FUTURE PARK NEAR LEVER STREET OPEN SPACE

Mr. Monahan reviewed park #66 which would be developed near Lever Street Open space. A developer has come to the city asking to develop the portion north of the open space area. Mr. Monahan indicated the proposed trails. In lieu of park dedication \$4000 per lot would be paid once the development plan was approved. The plan would be to develop

the park in 2020 - 2021. This proposal has been made to the developer who is considering the development. The size of the park would be ½ acre. The school is putting in a playground which would not be accessible to residents in the area during the school days.

Boardmember Truchon asked if there was a plan to connect the school to the open space area. Mr. Monahan stated there will be sidewalk on both sides of the street.

Boardmember McKinley asked if there will be access to the park off of Lever Street and Mr. Monahan stated 131st will loop up to Lever for access.

Discussed.

5.-5

FUTURE TRAIL GAP CONNECTIONS

The Trail Gap Priorities list was provided for the Boardmembers to review. This is page 172 of the Parks Master Plan. Mr. Monahan indicated the area on a map showing the trail gap priorities identified by WSB. Mr. Monahan indicated the path segments on the map. The hope is to partner with the county on some of these projects.

Boardmember Varian asked that the map be sent to the boardmembers. Mr. Monahan stated he will send it in the morning. Mr. Monahan asked if Boardmembers have any other gaps they would like to see completed, please let him know.

Boardmember Genet questioned Path Segment F and asked if that would be expanded to Lexington Ave. Ms. Haug stated this is not in the County's next five-year plan.

Boardmember Markle asked what the discussion has been for crossing Highway 65. Mr. Monahan stated it goes back to MNDOT and the Highway 65 Coalition.

Boardmember Villella stated he is on the Highway 65 Committee and they came up with four crossings. He will email to all Boardmembers. The goal is to improve flow of traffic and pedestrians.

Boardmember McKinley asked if she could get a copy of the map. She will come into the City to pick it up.

Boardmember Villella asked how this meeting came about and Chair Bird stated it was done in the past. Many of the same resources are shared and

these joint meetings will be done in the future. Boardmember Villella asked that these meetings be held going forward.

Boardmember McKinley stated this is great to have this meeting.

Boardmember Varian asked for a copy of the complete plan and Mr. Monahan stated he will send it but keep in mind it is not final.

Discussed.

Adjournment

Boardmember Panning motioned to adjourn the meeting. Boardmember McKinley seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

Aye: 5 - Chair Bird, Commissioner Lester, Commissioner Das, Commissioner Markle, and Commissioner Walsdorf

Chair Bird adjourned the meeting 8:10 p.m.