

**WORKING MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS, MONTANA
PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING W/ CITY STAFF
JANUARY 5, 2023**

ACTION ITEMS

Parks Committee Tasks:

- Create a draft annual task list for the Parks (do not include day-to-day tasks). To be turned into Mayor and Marc Pryor to aid in coordinating volunteer, contracted, and possibly public service tasks.
- Create draft recommendation agreement for Baseball User Group (use City of Shasta example as a start with Mayor's notes and highlights).
- Determine if the committee wants to make recommendations for renting facilities.

Mayor Rick Nelson:

- Meet with the City Judge regarding the Community Service program and eligible projects.

Chair Frazer called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. at City Hall.

Committee Members Present: Jen Frazer, Jordan Kibbee, and Carol Berg

Others present: Mayor Rick Nelson, Marc Pryor (City Staff), Great West Employees: Craig Erickson and Lisa Mosely. Pattie Berg at 12:35 (City Council Liaison).

CORR Process

Jen communicated that the goal is to have the Recreation plan, an output product from the CORR process, later this year. She wanted to inquire how that would work with the Capital Improvement Plan and its timeline; as well as how those would be incorporated.

Mayor Rick Nelson stated that Jerry (Great West Engineering) is the POC on this work. The Committee can coordinate through the City Council Liaison on that process.

Craig of Great West and Mayor Nelson added some insight into the process. Craig asked if the CORR process would include cost estimates for the top Recreation needs from the plan, Jen stated that there were going to be no cost estimates. Craig suggested that this was a task that Great West could do.

Final decision on whether the Great West would provide cost estimates to the top recreation projects identified through the CORR process was not decided on during this meeting.

T-Mobile Grant Process

- Started out by introducing all members at the meeting. Formally met Lisa Mosely, who was hired by Great West last year. She has a background in Grant writing and administration, recreation planning and Park Development. Craig had to step out during this discussion, Lisa stayed on.
- Discussed current vision for the playground area (partial poured in place rubber and EWF). Explained we do not have the budget to do rubber in the whole area nor all the playground equipment to install at this time. Craig discussed the Cherry Street Park in Helena that has a very good design of partial ground cover installations.
- Lisa asked if we had a theme. We do not. She also asked questions regarding what structures we had and don't have, what work we have done.
- Lisa said her review of the T-Mobile grant: Scope of work would be needed/advised in order to present a strong budget. Lisa was going to clarify, after tying in with Craig, if the T-Mobile Grant allowed planning.

- Future Planning Grant opportunities: CBDG- due March for the next round.
- Lisa and Craig task: Shoot us the costs for task items: cost for grant writing, cost for engineering design

No promise or commitment of funds on the part of the City was given.

Discussion of Parks User Agreements

- Discussion regarding renting the Rotary Shelter at Springs Park.
- Discussed various uses: 1) individuals; 2) 'commercial' use (e.g., use McStravick to provide tennis for profit lessons); 3) user groups which have long term access to a facility. Each of these need to be treated appropriately, based on their impact on the parks.
- Reminded that the City allows renting City Equipment (trucks, dozer, etc.).
- Jen communicated that charging fees for recreation areas lead to better treatment of the facilities. Marc Pryor commented his support for charging a fee.
- Liaison Berg said the Committee's intent is for fees collected to be used for parks maintenance/improvements.
- Mayor Nelson communicated that no fee would reciprocate the funds used to maintain the facility. ????
- Committee feels that reasonable fees can be charged which, collectively, will assist in maintenance and improvements. (Very few users will cause damage, but everyone will contribute.)
- City ordinances communicate the need for insurance for events, but there is no definition of 'event'.
- Mayor Nelson said will need to address these concerns if it proposes fees and changes to the Rental User Agreement.
- Baseball User group Agreement. Mayor Nelson recommended starting with the City of Shasta example; nix the floodlights language, clarify the City's and User groups' responsibilities. Jen communicated that the committee would present a draft in the future.

Maintenance Plans

- City has implemented a daily log tracking of City Park employee tasks. The tracking sheet has been a great tool to record the record of work for the City Park employee. This record sheet will document that parks were serviced, giving the city a record of reviewing its facilities, etc.
- The Mayor expressed surprise why the Committee's old plans were brought up again (from Feb 2022). Jen communicated that planning the annual and bi-annual tasks were missing in planning materials. Discussion followed of a need for a separate list to aid in planning these tasks.
- The Mayor said he plans to meet with City Judge regarding Community Service program and eligible projects.
- The Mayor said the City does not plan to hire a second Parks employee.

'How can we do better'

City Liaison Pattie Berg started the conversation by saying that past setbacks such as

- The costly change in plan for McStravick court prep;
- The last minute change in the design of Springs Park; and
- The Mayor's @ 6 month delay in letting the Committee know that he was getting complaints about 'wood chips'.

is creating morale issues within the Parks Committee.

Berg said the Advisory committee is a new thing in WSS, and we're all learning how it's going to work in a city this size. Berg said she thought meetings like this were really valuable, but part of the problem is that while the Parks Committee is an Advisory Committee, because of staff limitations, it is constantly getting involved in executive functions.

Berg proposed that, once the Committee has agreed to make a given project a priority:

- The Committee submits a written project concept to the Mayor. This would include (but isn't limited to) a project description, the Committee's approach to it, and possible funding strategies.

- The Mayor reviews the concept paper and either sends it back to the Committee for further review, or schedules a project work session.
 - The Concept may take several rounds to ‘hash out.’
- Once the Concept is complete, a work session is scheduled. Attendees to include the Mayor, Mr. Pryor, the Parks Committee (or the project’s subcommittee). The outcome of the work session (which may take a few meetings) will be a project plan which will include the steps to be followed, what resources are available, what resources are needed, who’s responsible for getting the needed resources in place (e.g., staff, the Committee, the City’s engineering firm), and estimated costs.
- Once the project plan is in place, it is submitted to the City Council for approval.
- Upon Council approval, the executive branch needs to take over the project, with the Committee’s assistance.

Mayor Nelson suggested that, once the Committee aids in creating bids, the project becomes the City’s responsibility.

Mayor Nelson pointed out that the EWF is being blown around, and will likely mold before it can be used. He asked about the status of the Bair ground covering project. Chair Frazer and Liaison Berg said the Committee believed it had a person who was going to bid on the work early last summer, but this person didn’t follow through, and they believed the Mayor had taken over the project. When asked, the Mayor said he had talked to someone who will likely bid this spring to do this work.

The Mayor suggested not purchasing any materials until the bids have been let and contracts signed. The Committee said this is an executive decision.

Discussion/Agenda Item NOT covered:

Spike’s Happy Trails

Committee membership (5th Seat)

Set Next Meeting Date/Time/Location/Adjourn
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The next committee meeting will be January 12th, 2023.

Meeting was adjourned at 1:50 p.m.