

MINUTES
CITY OF WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS, MONTANA
PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
JANUARY 14, 2025

ACTION ITEMS

- All:**
- Do Outreach for Master Plan activities (see page 3)
 - **Recruit to fill 3rd Committee seat.**
- Jen Frazer**
- Speak with the Golf Board about formalizing cross country skiing on the Golf Course.
 - Send Pattie T-Mobile contact info.
- Jordan Kibbee**
- Smoke Stations placed at Radar and Springs Parks
Plans for grand opening celebration.
- Kelly Huffield**
- Explore the costs to repair/replace the sign at Joanna's Park.
 - *Adopt a Spot:* Finish getting agreements signed for next year. Get binder & agreements with the City, place recognition signs.
- Pattie Berg**
- Follow up with City as required.
 - Review City Attorney's email regarding Committee Ethics rules; update Handbook as necessary.

Call to Order, Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Jordan Kibbee at 5:05 p.m.

Members present: Chair Blair (via zoom arrived at 5:15), Jen Frazer, Jordan Kibbee, Kelly Huffield (arrived at 5:20).

Also present: Kienna Quinta, Great West Engineering (via zoom) Pattie Berg, City Council Liaison.

Additional agenda items: Jen Frazer would like to talk about trees.

Recreation Master Plan:

- **Great Western/Committee discussion re: Survey Results, Master Planning documents.**

Ms. Quinta said 182 members of the public responded to the survey, which is a fantastic response rate, and the results can be considered statistically significant. Some responders didn't complete the entire questionnaire, but the responses they provided were still included in the results.

According to the survey, the public expressed the most interest in a dog park, trails, restrooms, summer activities (possibly a splash pad, as they require less maintenance and staffing), and winter activities. One of the Committee members noted that one community group was told to make sure they respond to the survey, and to ask for a splash pad. As a result, some of the results may be exaggerated.

Liaison Berg noted that the Committee had recently met with some people who were requesting a dog park. Because of the amount of maintenance required, and the fact that the recommended location was not ideal (one of the baseball diamonds), and based on feedback received from the City crew, the Committee consensus is that the City doesn't have the resources to develop and maintain a dog park. She also noted that the Committee recommended that the individuals speak with the Rodeo Club to see if any part of their facility may be available for a dog park. Finally, she noted that the newspaper had reported that the Rodeo Club had outgrown its location and had asked the County if they had any interest in purchasing that property.

Berg asked how Master Plans treat requests which have been recently reviewed and 'rejected'. Ms. Quinta said that, in cases like this, the Master Plan may acknowledge the result, and suggest that interested individuals could facility create a group, find an appropriate location, charge a membership fee which pays for maintenance, and establish bylaws (e.g., require that dogs be vaccinated, etc.)

A discussion was held whether the survey results indicated an interest in having the City offer summer and winter recreation programs (e.g., ice skating lessons), or events (e.g., an ice skating rink). Ms. Quinta said she interpreted the results to mean that the City should consider making itself available as an umbrella for groups interested in offering programs. For example, the City could offer to provide umbrella insurance coverage rather than requiring the user groups to provide their own coverage. She also suggested that the City review its policies and practices to make sure they are not unnecessarily complicated.

Ms. Quinta also reported:

- Great West appreciated the Committee's comments from the last meeting, and had made the requested changes.
- Great West is working on a draft final draft, which will include a funding plan. The draft final plan will be tailored to White Sulphur, but may contain some language from other reports, just 'to get the wheels turning'. The plan may also 'taper in' with the CORR report.

Opportunities/Goals Worksheet discussion –

The Committee felt that the goals worksheet is too 'pre-dispositional' and wanted to wait to hear from the public before recommending any goals. A brief discussion followed regarding some potential ways to address the survey results:

- Springs Park is heavily used, and there is not 'plan' for the full development of the park – Ms. Quinta suggested that goals could include a preliminary engineering report for Spike' Happy Trails.
- Walking Trails/paths – Ms. Quinta said Great West GIS personnel are looking at the City's streets, roads and sidewalks, and the Master Plan will include a map with a potential route to improve walkability in the City. Liaison Berg noted that, in order to save money, the City (Committee) had committed to using Jen Frazer's skills to prepare any maps needed for the survey. If the GIS folks are doing the work, the possibility is that the costs will exceed budget will, and the City has no extra funds for this work. Frazer said this offer is still open. Quinta was encouraged to review the grant, and contact the City with any needs.
- Tournaments – Ms. Quinta asked whether any tournaments are held at City facilities. It was noted that most baseball tournament use more fields, so the baseball group (and the parents) travel. There have been no pickle ball tournaments held, even though the members of the Helena Pickle Ball Club indicated would be a possibility.

Next Steps

- The draft final report will be ready for Committee review at its next meeting.
- Upon completion of this review, public comment is collected. The Committee will be in charge of the public comment process, which it is usually done via open house(s) where the public can view and comment on the survey results and report recommendations.
- The liaison will send Ms. Quinta the user agreements(s), fee schedule, parks ordinance, quit claims for Spike's and McStravick, and any parks surveys.

There being no further business, Ms. Quinta left the meeting.

Committee members shared concerns regarding the quality of the Master Plan materials and service. In general, the Committee feels like the quality is similar to that you'd receive from a college intern. It questioned whether White Sulphur was getting the best that Great West had to offer. Liaison Berg encouraged the Committee to share their concerns with the Mayor and/or Council.

Approval of Minutes

On a motion made by Jen Frazer and seconded by Kelly Huffield, the Minutes of the December 11, 2024 Committee meeting were unanimously approved.

Springs & Bair Park Renovations Update

See Liaison Report at the end of these Minutes. All the equipment has been placed at Springs Park, and the installers have ordered another load of engineered wood fiber, and will return to finish the work at Springs Park when the order has been delivered.

The Committee looked at a couple options for a new structure at Bair Park. A purchase decision will be made as soon as possible, so the equipment can be ordered and onsite when Steve's installs returns to finish Springs Park and do the work at Bair Park. The Mayor is working on a contract for the work Bair at Park.

Other information:

- It is not clear if Steve's Installs will agree to install playground structure purchased from Pro Playgrounds. Following discussion, the Committee consensus was that, if Steve's will not do the installation, the Committee will arrange for volunteers to do the work. Cost savings would then be applied to be a "very little's" structure for one of the parks. It was further agreed that, if volunteers are used, it would be good to hire someone to oversee the project.
- Liaison Berg is preparing a T-Mobile project update, which is due on January 31st. She may be contacting Committee members for help/input.

Liaison Report - See end of Minutes

Public Comment Committee 'good of the order' comments

Jen Frazer has applied for a \$2,000 community urban forestry grant which will benefit the school, the courthouse, sheriff's office and the cemetery. The Liaison will check with the City regarding the status of the Tree Ordinance.

A Committee member recently noticed people camping overnight at Radar Park. The Liaison said the Sheriff has the Parks Ordinance, and encouraged Committee members to call the Sheriff's non-emergency number and ask for people to be moved on, as necessary.

Adjournment and set next meeting date

The next meeting will be held Tuesday, February 11, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. The Committee directed the Liaison to ask Great West to send the draft final report by January 31, 2025 to give time to review and consider the draft.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Parks Advisory Committee
Liaison Report –November/December 2024
As of 1/9/24

Funding Update

- **HB355 Funds** – No change. Still on track.
- **T-Mobile Grant** – On 1/9/25, I emailed all the T-Mobile folks who were included in the invite to the May Grant Announcement call. I asked for info regarding the 6 month check in. (Daniel Hodgson never responded to PB's 12/1/24 email.)

See T-Mobile Progress report form. We can discuss in-kind donations, jobs created volunteer hours, etc. at our 1/14 meeting.

Project Updates

- Parks Master Plan
 - Great West is joining our 1/14/25 meeting to work on this plan.
- Springs Park Work:
 - All the new equipment has been installed at Springs Park.
 - Engineered wood fiber was delivered to Springs Park, but they didn't get enough, and are waiting for Marks Lumber to reopen production so they can get enough to finish the work.
 - All mats and park signs are here (until we order a 'toy' for Bair Park).
 - Need to discuss installation of the other signs.
 - End of project celebration - Are not sure of project completion date, so further discussion until February or March's meeting.
- Bair Park Work:
 - Please see the 'Bair Park New Equipment' folder on the shared drive. At this point, I think we need to assume Steve Burgener will not install equipment purchased from ProPlaygrounds and discuss our options.
 - We need to be strategic about how we approach this with Steve: we need to get him under contract to do Bair Park before we push too hard on this. The Mayor will be back next week, and will be working on that contract.
 - Something to think about: If we could round up qualified volunteers to do the build/install, we would save 35% of the cost, and could afford a small playhouse or something similar for the very littles.
- ADA Access Work
 - The Mayor is working with a concrete contractor from Harlowton, and has, or will soon have, a signed contract in place for all the concrete work (paths, ADA parking spot at McStravick Court). The work will be completed in the spring.
 - I need to order disabled parking spot sign(s).
- Radar Park Vault toilet – Contract has been signed. Cost is \$27,000, installed. The time frame is next fiscal year, in the summer. Funded by HB355.
- Other:
 - Joanna's Park - \$700 in budget for rails.
 - I left the smoking stations with a note on them for Jordan near the Parks booth at the Christmas Stroll.
 - Capital Fund for Spike's Happy Trails - Until now, the City Clerk has been tracking the funds raised for Spike's on a spreadsheet. The general public was not able to see the available funds, or any expenses paid from that money. At its last meeting, the Council instructed the Clerk to open a Capital project fund for Spike's Happy Trails. The seed money is the funds raised by the "Name the Park" contest, but other donations can also be deposited into this account. This will make tracking this fund easier