

**MINUTES OF THE CITY OF WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS, MONTANA**  
**PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**MAY 19, 2021 – 4:00 P.M.**

All:

- Bring names of people to be invited to 3 hour CORR envisioning process.

Carol Berg:

- Review Minutes and have budget discussion with Mayor
- Scan Get Master Plan documents from Mark McDanel
- Call Nick Bard about Master Plan diagram.
- With Maggie Johnston-Roatch, develop proposed bid language and meet with the Mayor about a plan to get some bids in.

Kelly Huffield:

- Request list of businesses that will be needed by Tintina.
- Bring in or share via email of Chamber of Commerce Survey of Visitor expenditures

Jen Frazer:

- Finalize McStravick Park landscaping/irrigation plan/bid paperwork.

Maggie Johnston-Roatch:

- Speak with Sheriff Lopp about parks vandalism and the City's options to control/monitor this.
- Talk with City about setting up a program and create Adopt a Spot program volunteer agreement form

Pattie Berg:

- Locate supervisor for tennis court installation.
- Post draft master plan introductory/background sections on shared drive.
- Obtain Council approval for City to coordinate with CORR project on a master plan, to devote the entire Bair grant to Phase II work, and to and to request \$2,000 from the Community Foundation Beautification Fund for Phase III work.
- Ensure funds set aside during current fiscal year for McStravick Park are re-appropriated for the next fiscal year.
- Follow up with Planning Board on participation in CORR project

**Call to Order**

Chair Berg Called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

Committee Members Present: Chair Berg, Jen Frazer, Kelly Huffield, Maggie Johnston-Roatch.

Others Present: Councilperson Lee Blanchard, Mary Joyce, Pattie Berg/City Council Liaison.

**Discussion with University of Montana**

As an introduction, Council Liaison Berg explained that, at the Committee's last meeting, she had offered to try to find low or no cost assistance in preparing a parks master plan. Since the University of Montana's geology department offers planning degrees, she sent an email asking if there was a grad student who would be interested in helping WSS write a master plan. Assistant Professor Libby Metcalf responded, and told Pattie about the Community Outdoor Recreation Realization (CORR) Program which is a grant program whose goal is to develop a simple process that will help the smaller communities prepare and implement outdoor recreation plans. The CORR project was looking for communities interested in becoming pilot communities. Berg asked if Ms. Metcalf and her team would be available to have a discussion with the Parks Committee about this project. P. Berg then turned the meeting over to Ms. Metcalf.

Dr. Libby Metcalf is an Associate Professor of Recreation & Natural Resource Management in the Human Dimensions Lab in the W.A. Franke College of Forestry and Conservation. She has a dual Ph.D. at the Pennsylvania State University in Recreation, Parks, and Tourism Management and the Human Dimensions of Natural Resources and the Environment.

Ms. Metcalf introduced:

- Diane Conradi, the founder of the Montana Access Project and an attorney specializing in creating, protecting and enhancing front-country outdoor recreation opportunities on public and private land; and
- Rachael Shouse, a 2019 graduate of the U of M with a B.S. in parks, tourism and recreation management. She joined the Human Dimensions lab to assist with the creation of the 2020-2024 Montana Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP).

CORR originated as tool to help communities plan; inspired by Montana's successful programs which aid communities to protect themselves against wildfires. During this process, it became clear Montana's small towns / rural areas needed a simple, cost efficient way to identify and implement their recreational goals, and a plan to fund those goals. This would be a Montana focused toolbox and process - rather than tiering off other tools friendly available (such as the Urban focused University of Delaware's). Some of the cities that are currently involved in the CORR process include Libby-Troy community, Columbia Falls and Whitefish.

The CORR project is still in its prototype and development stage, but currently includes an 8 (or 9) step process:

- Step Zero: The community decides whether to participate as a pilot program
- Steps 1 through 8 (See CORR Brochure, provided as a separate document.)

The CORR process will take between 3 and 6 months. The process is very different than other planning processes in 3 key ways:

- #1 CORR is community driven. The project begins with community input. Most planning processes seek community input after a plan has been drafted.
- #2 CORR is a "do it yourself" process which can be used to envision/implement and fund a single project, or an entire recreation master plan. This saves communities tens of thousands of dollars in planning costs.
- #3 CORR uses a 'keep it simple' approach to come up with priorities, get information of possible funding, and for gaining cooperation with all stakeholders to implement the project or plan. The plan can be as few as 8 pages, where most master plans exceed 50 pages. The community decides the level and scope of detail needed through a recreation plan developed with CORR.

Ms. Conradi said that now is a good time for the City to write a master plan. Funds are available through *The Great American Outdoors Act*, land and water conservation funds, and other State and federal funding sources. In addition, Montana's legislature just set aside some of the funds raised through taxes on marijuana products for parks and trails.

A discussion was held about the lack of available metrics showing the economic benefits of recreation programs. It is generally understood that recreation assets bring people to communities which, in turn, creates economic development opportunities. However, the Institute of Tourism and Recreation Research in Helena is working on a trails system study, and one study done by Headwaters Economics indicated that Trail visitors in Whitefish contributed \$6.4 million in spending. The Meagher County Chamber of Commerce may also have materials which could be of importance to this effort. When people understand how the economy benefits from recreation programs, they are more likely to support those programs.

Chair Berg asked what the CORR process would cost. Ms. Metcalf said it was available to White Sulphur Springs at no charge. However, any additional costs, (e.g., the costs to develop a map of recreation sites) would be the City's responsibility, but the City may be able to find in-kind contributions for some of these costs. Ms. Metcalf said the product will be a 6 to 8 page (or longer, depending on how the process goes) recreation master plan. Having a master plan sets priorities, but increases community support for parks projects, and helps in qualifying for grant opportunities. Like other community plans, the master recreational plan is a fluid document that needs reviewed from time to time.

There being no further discussion, the CORR group left the meeting.

## Approval of Minutes

Kelly Huffield made a motion to approve the Committee Meeting Minutes of April 7, April 15, and April 21, 2021. The motion was seconded by Maggie Johnston-Roatch and passed unanimously.

## Committee Member Additional Items for Discussion/ Reports on Assignments

Jen Frazer asked to add a discussion of the condition of Joanna's Park.

Reports on Assignments:

Carol Berg:

- Received some parks planning documents from Mark McDanel. The plan was from sometime around 2005 and included a place for a pool and skate park. She either put these documents on the shared drive or get them to Pattie Berg. She will also call Nick Bard to see if he has the drawings from the earlier plan.

Kelly Huffield:

- On Thursday the 20th, The Race for This Place group will interview 3 groups to receive this years' funding.
- She will get the list of Tintina "support businesses" to the Committee.

Jen Frazer:

- She and her children cleaned out the gardens at the Senior Center. This led to a discussion about getting the *Adopt a Spot Program* formalized and sites adopted.
- She will be meeting with FWP via Zoom at 1:00 on June 3<sup>rd</sup> to discuss the Short parkland donation. All committee members have been invited to this meeting.

Maggie Johnston-Roatch:

- Has been texting with the Sheriff but hasn't had a conversation with him yet about the vandalism.
- She will speak with City Hall staff about the *Adopt a Spot* program, including drafting an agreement form.

Pattie Berg:

- The Parks budget status as of 4/30/21 is provided at the end of these Minutes.
- The Mayor agreed to release the current funds appropriated to Phase I work. Additional funding available, if any, is subject to budget review.
- Lloyd Studer submitted a \$250 bid to address gophers in Bair Park. We are waiting to hear whether he will also fill in the holes so it won't be quite as easy for gophers to return.
- McStravick Park - Adding Basketball feasibility: The area from the serve line to the fence on the east side is 25' wide; on the west side the area is only 18'. Josh Charles said you need to have at least 21' for a basketball hoop. The Committee continues to feel that priority should be given to completing the tennis court work before adding any other costs to the project. There is also a concern that the addition of a basketball hoop may be dangerous to a tennis player running backwards to return a ball and/or may be contrary to the quit claim deed. In addition, while a moveable hoop may be an option, the Committee felt these would be easily damaged by wind or misuse.
- She stopped drafting the Recreation Master Plan introductory and background sections when she spoke with Libby Metcalf. She will post the current (very rough) working draft on the shared drive.

## Skateboard Users Group Presentation

Marc McDanel and Angelia McDanel entered the meeting at 5:30 p.m. They came to ask the Committee to support the Skateboard Users Group's request to have a 100' x 100' piece of property near set aside City Hall for a

skateboard park. Suggested locations included near the horseshoe pits, and west of baseball field and east of “swamp area”. A skateboard park can also be used as a bump bike track and by rollerbladers.

The Skateboard User’s Group Board of Directors held one meeting. The Board needs to know the City will support the efforts of the Users Group. One way the City can show this support is to set aside a piece of property for the park.

Other updates from the Group:

- It has been in contact with the Montana Skatepark Association (MSA) and has learned that Pearl Jam’s Jeff Ament doesn’t run the skate park, but works with the MSA and others to build these parks.
- There is no design plan yet. The MSA has a booklet that describes the planning/building process, but it is very difficult to get a hold of.
- A skateboard park pour is very specialized and cannot be done by most concrete contractors/companies.
- Costs: The cost to build a park, and any matching requirements, is not yet known, but they are estimating about \$49 per square foot. (Ms. McDanel clarified that the structure will not be 100’ x 100’: the area is being requested to allow for future expansion, so the budget won’t be \$490k.) Marc McDanel estimates that a skateboard park will increase the City’s annual liability insurance premium by about \$25.00. In addition, the concrete will need to be sealed every one to two years, at a cost of about \$1,200.

Maggie Johnston-Roatch asked the McDanels if the proposed location was appropriate for a skateboard park. She said there is a lot of fill in that area, and expressed a concern that the ground may not be stable enough to support the weight of a concrete skateboard structure, or may settle, which would damage the structure. The Group will look into this.

Jen Frazer reminded the Group that their budget needs to include the cost of meeting ADA accessibility requirements.

At about 5:55 p.m., the McDanels and Mr. Blanchard left the meeting and the Committee took a brief recess to grab some dinner, which was potlucked by the Committee members.

The meeting was called back to order at about 6:05.

## McStravick Park

### Status of Bids for Surface prep and fencing

No bids were submitted for any surface prep. The deadline for fencing bids is June 7<sup>th</sup>.

One contractor indicated that the bonding/security requirements were excessive given the anticipated bid price. The Committee wants an open bid process that meets, but does not exceed, legal requirements. P.Berg said the Mayor was waiting to hear from the City Attorney on the bonding/security requirements, and that she (Berg) had sent the Mayor language from MCA 18-2-201 that appears to allow the City to set its own requirements for projects which are less than \$50,000. Chair Berg and Maggie Johnston-Roatch will work on some proposed language for the surface prep bids, and will meet with the Mayor when he returns from Great Falls to come up with a plan to get some bids so the work can begin. The plan may include directly contacting potential bidders, but should also include posting on the City’s website, on local community Facebook pages, and on the City’s Facebook page, which Jen Frazer currently administers. The Committee agreed that committee members should avoid using their personal Facebook accounts to solicit bids.

At its last meeting, the Committee asked P. Berg to get a commitment from City to set aside the following money for Phase I work:

- Unappropriated concrete line item: \$5,600; and
- Unappropriated Personal services line item: \$5,000. This Committee requested this because the City crew will not be replacing the spalled areas as was originally planned; and
- Any additional funds available in Salaries of Extra help?

The Mayor has agreed to release the funds already approved for Phase I work but, as far as extra funds, they would need to look at the budget.

McStravick Park Budget Discussion in light of Bair Grant Award

Phase II Budget:

In the City report memo, P. Berg reminded the Committee that, in October of 2021, the City Council voted to set aside up to \$20,000 to match funds raised for Phase II work. The Committee assumes the maximum match includes the cost of purchasing the panelized surface (\$10,000), which is the only documented cost to date.

The Bair Foundation has awarded the City \$12,500 to renovate McStravick Park. P. Berg said that since the Bair Grant Award was non-specific in nature the Committee needed to recommend to the Council how these funds should be spent.

The money requested from the Foundation was to fund Phase II and III work. The Phase II budget submitted to the Bair Foundation totaled \$27,259, funded as follows:

Bair Grant:	\$13,859
City:	\$13,250
In-Kind Labor, donated materials, donations	\$ 150
	\$27,259

The Committee reviewed the proposed Phase II budget in light of the grant award and information learned since the grant was submitted, and made the following changes:

- Reduce Contracted Services by a net of \$5,250:
  - Reduce contracted services by \$7,000: The Committee has not been able to find a company to install the panelized system. This is usually done by the retailer but, since the City purchased a used system, the service is not available. A detailed diagram was prepared by a Bozeman Parks employee when the Court was pulled from Bogert Park, so the Committee is confident the system can be placed without issue. However, it would be nice to have someone who has installed a court on site just in case. P. Berg will continue to look for a person to oversee this, but this will not cost \$7,000.
  - Increase contracted services by \$1,250: This is the amount that was set aside in City wages for the fence repair. City staff will not be doing this work. (Note: The Committee did not discuss this change: P. Berg discovered the need for this change while preparing these Minutes.)
- Add a line item for employer contributions – Every dollar the City spends on wages results in an 8.67% (.0867) retirement cost. The Committee set aside \$80.94 for this purpose in Phase II.
- Reduce Supplies by \$100 - Under the law, parking lots with 4 or fewer spots do not have to designate a spot for ADA purposes. (There must be an accessible spot, but it does not need to be signed/reserved for accessibility.) The cost of the sign was estimated at \$100.00.
- Increase repair and maintenance supplies by \$376.88 to reflect the increased cost to purchase adjustable posts.
- Increase transportation and communication by \$390.00 to reflect the cost to drop ship the posts.

With these changes, the Phase II budget becomes:

City costs to date:	\$10,000.00
Bair Grant funds for Phase II work:	\$ 7,525.88
In-Kind Labor:	<u>\$ 150.00</u>
	\$17,675.88

Given the City's agreement to match funds, Jen Frazer made a motion to devote the entire Bair Grant award to Phase II work. The motion was seconded by Maggie Johnston-Roatch and passed unanimously.

With this, the Phase II contributions are as follows:

City costs to date:	\$10,000
Bair Grant:	\$12,250
In-Kind Labor, donated materials, donations*	<u>\$ 350</u>
	\$22,600

\* The City received a \$200.00 donation for the tennis court project.

Total match raised for Phase II:	\$12,600
Amount of match in excess of current expenses:	\$ 2,600

\$2,600 in excess match equates to \$5,200 in funds for additional costs the City may incur during Phase II. If the additional costs do not materialize, these funds set aside to match the City's contributions can be used for Phase III work.

Phase III Budget:

The Committee discussed the reasons for including floodlights (cost: \$1,500) in the project, and decided this needs further vetting with the neighbors and with the donors of the property. Marcy Joyce said that, as a neighbor, she prefers the court not be lighted. The Committee reduced this budget by \$1,500 and will see if floodlights become a 'wish list' item during the CORR process.

Phase III Landscaping/Irrigation Bids

The Bair Grant will not be sufficient to fund all the Phase III work that was desired. The priority is to get an irrigation system in place so the trees being provided under the Urban Forestry Grant can be watered. Jen Frazer made a motion to ask the City to request \$2,000 of the \$5,000 available in the Meagher County Community Foundation's Parks Beautification Fund to be used for irrigation system work. Carol Berg seconded and the motion passed unanimously. P. Berg will make this request.

Given the lack of bids for concrete work, Jen Frazer asked whether it would be to approach companies who do irrigation system work and ask them for a project quote. The Committee agreed with this approach. Jen will use the draft request for proposals (for concrete by Maggie and Carol) to prepare a project description to provide to potential bidders.

Other Project Funds:

The Committee discussed the status of City funds which have not been spent, but were allocated to the McStravick Park project. Most of these are related to Phase I work. The current fiscal year ends on June 30<sup>th</sup> and, with the delay in getting bids, the work is not likely to be completed by fiscal year end. Given this, Jen Frazer made a motion to request the following funds be made available in FY 21-22:

- Unappropriated concrete line item: \$5,600; and
- Unappropriated Personal services line item: \$5,000; and
- Any additional funds available in Salaries of Extra help

Carol Berg seconded this motion and it passed on a unanimous vote. At one point during the meeting, the Committee noted the difficulty of discussing budget needs given the lack of bids.

The Committee also discussed other potential sources of grants and in-kind donations to complete this project.

**Work Session: Master Plan**

The Committee discussed the CORR presentation:

- The Growth Policy includes a recreation/tourism component related to economic development. Jen Frazer asked whether the City/County Planning Board, as the author of the Growth Policy, would be a likely partner in the recreation master planning process, either through appointing a recreation subcommittee or by participating in the CORR process. P. Berg will follow up with Nancy Schleppe before the next meeting.
- Committee members discussed, but did not come to any conclusions about, whether the CORR process should encompass more than the City limits, and whether a County Master Plan may be a better way to go.
- Committee members directed P. Berg to request City Council approval to work with the University of Montana and start the 8 Step CORR process.
- Committee members will come to the next meeting with a list of persons to be invited to the 3 hour envisioning process.

**Public Comment**

Marcy Joyce said that, as a neighbor of the tennis court, she would prefer it not be lit. No concerns on sound since the site would be managed within the City's quiet hours. She also requested a copy of the quit claim deed transferring the McStravick property to the City. Chair Berg will send this document.

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on June 2, 2021 at 4:00 p.m. Topics will include Joanna's Park, Phase 1 prep, bids, the CORR partnership with U of M, and project timelines.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m. on a motion made by Maggie Johnston-Roatch, seconded by Kelly Huffield and unanimously passed.

Enc.: Budget Status Report 4/30/21

Attached: CORR Description

## Budget Status Report

<b>Parks Budget</b>					
<b>FY 20-21 (7/1/20 - 6/30/21)</b>					
<b>Report as of 4/30/2021</b>					
<b>GENERAL FUND</b>	<b>Committed Year to Date</b>	<b>Current Appropriation</b>	<b>Available Appropriation</b>	<b>% of Budget Committed (83% of year has passed)</b>	<b>4 year avg (less 20-21)</b>
Personal Services	-	5,000.00	5,000.00	0%	-
Salaries Extra Help	8,452.96	15,500.00	7,047.04	55%	7,241.00
Employer Contributions	814.13	2,000.00	1,185.87	41%	741.00
Supplies	797.34	5,000.00	4,202.66	16%	875.00
Repair & Maintenance Supplies	1,898.62	1,422.00	(476.62)	134%	1,367.00
Gas, Oil, Diesel, Tires	789.62	607.00	(182.62)	130%	584.00
Communication & Transportation	-	100.00	100.00	0%	381.00
Publicity, Subscriptions & Dues	211.65	100.00	(111.65)	212%	40.00
Memberships & Registration Fees	100.00	-	(100.00)	n/a	n/a
Repair & Maintenance Services	952.17	1,948.00	995.83	49%	1,873.00
Travel	-	700.00	700.00	0%	
Training Services	-	1,000.00	1,000.00	0%	
Concrete	-	5,600.00	5,600.00	0%	
Machinery & Equipment	-	2,415.00	2,415.00	0%	9,290.00
<b>General Fund Totals</b>	<b>\$ 14,016.49</b>	<b>\$ 41,392.00</b>	<b>\$ 27,375.51</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>\$ 22,392.00</b>
<b>CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND*</b>					
Repair & Maintenance Services	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 30,358.00	\$ 20,358.00	33%	n/a

\* Unused funds may carry over from year to year.