

**MINUTES OF THE PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
OCTOBER 28, 2020
YOKED PARISH – 411 E. JEFFERSON– 6:30 P.M.**

ACTION ITEMS

All: Keep an eye out for grant opportunities.

Carol Berg: Contact Committee members and set next meeting date/time/location

Kelly Huffield:

- Send draft newspaper article to Committee for review. Include language answering taxpayer questions about the amount of taxes to be used/money to be raised, and what it will be used for.
- Research pea gravel as a safe ground covering.

Jen Frazer:

- Submit grant by 11/14/20.
- Figure out what type of activity a teeter totter is.

Pattie Berg:

- Fix the spelling of Jen Frazer’s last name in all documents.
- Let the City Council know Jen Frazer is going to submit an urban forestry grant.
- Let the City know about concerns related to the upcoming land donation and find out what the Committee’s role is in the development of this Park.
- Find out from the City if:
 - It ordered the items needed to build a climbing activity to replace the broken plastic steps at Bair Park.
 - The steering wheel from the structure at Bair Park is being stored someplace and, if so, if it can be fixed and/or returned to the structure.
 - The Committee can use the City’s Zoom subscription for its meetings.
- Speak with Superintendent Markuson about the (lack of a?) 20-21 tennis program.

Call to Order

Vice Chair Kelly Huffield called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

Committee Members Present: Jennifer Frazer, Kelly Huffield.

Also present: Tom Tasic, Pattie Berg (City Liaison to the Parks Advisory Committee.)

Approval of Minutes.

Deferred due to lack of quorum needed to take action. However, Ms. Frazer asked that the Minutes reflect the proper spelling of her last name.

Additional Committee Discussion

Kelly Huffield expressed her appreciation to the Short family for the donation of land to the City, which will provide access to the Smith River. She said this has been on many people’s wish lists for years. The Committee reviewed a rough drawing of the land to be donated. Committee members expressed concerns about the potential for misuse (vandalism) and how a lack of a constant in-town law enforcement may affect the new park. For example, one of the Committee members mentioned that it was not too long ago that a bag of methamphetamine was found not too far from that site. The Committee asked what, if any, role it is to have in this park going forward. P. Berg will follow up with the City on these items.

Public Comment

None at this time, but see later discussion re: Phase II of Tennis Court project.

Committee Member Reports on Work Assignments

P. Berg provided Carol Berg's report on the Tennis Court Project:

- Phase I work - Given the recent weather, this work may not happen until next spring.
- 3D Model of McStravick Park: She made contact with Steve Ferrity about 2 weeks previous. He was going to begin working on the model.
- USTA Application - She has not heard back from the Association.
- Second Fundraising Article Revisions - She did not make any revisions, but did email the article to Committee members today.
- She spoke with Alisha at Tintina. If the City defines need(s), Tintina may contribute some funds to the tennis court project.

Kelly Huffield:

Ms. Huffield reported that some confusion exists among taxpayers regarding the funds to be used to rehab McStravick Park. The Committee agreed it needs to clarify the plans and funding in the fundraising article.

Jen Frazer:

1. Forestry Grant:

She has "run with" information received from Lacey Rasmussen about a Montana Urban Community Forestry Association Grant. Because it recently lost several trees, she contacted the School to see if it wanted to join in on, and commit funds for, a community grant application. She is preparing an application for these funds under the City's name, making the match \$3 for every dollar the City spends.

The total grant budget is \$5,000. It is not likely the City would get the full grant, but it is hoped that what is received can be used to match Arbor Day grant funds (and visa versa). The Community Foundation also has about \$5,000 in a parks account that could be used for matching funds. Any funds received will be used to purchase a variety of trees, so there is a good mix of species.

2. Research on "Types of Activities "

Ms. Frazer researched the 'types of activities' at Springs and Bair Parks. See attached. She needs to determine what type of activity the teeter totter is. "Type of activity" information is needed because the ADA requires an accessible path to "one of each type of activity" in a playground. Under the Access Board Guidelines, "types of activities include, but are not limited to, experiences such as rocking, swinging, climbing, spinning, and sliding."

The Committee if, assuming the teeter totter is a balancing activity, an accessible path at Springs Park might include:

- Parking lot to play area
- Inside play area: From teeter totter to swing set to composite structure and back to teeter totter.

Ms. Frazer's chart also identifies a few areas where the City might want to prioritize future equipment purchases. For example, at some point, the City may want to add a spinning activity for younger children at Springs Park.

Ms. Frazer said the structure at Bair Park used to have a steering wheel-type activity. She wondered if the City removed it and is storing it at the Shop. P. Berg will follow up with the City.

Work Session on Master List

Update on City actions taken in response Memo to the Mayor

Most of the needed replacement parts have been ordered. The City was having problems speaking with a sales person for the accessible seat. The parts will be installed as soon as possible after they are received. P. Berg is to check whether the City ordered the climbing wall replacement parts for the plastic rock wall at Bair Park.

Tennis Court Phase I update (Carol Berg): See above.

Tennis Court Phase II Fundraising

- Review 2nd Fundraising Newspaper Article – (Carol Berg and Kelly Huffield)

Kelly Huffield made some additions to the Fundraising article and has some more changes to make. She will send it to all Committee members for their review/comment.

P.Berg mentioned that the Jeremy West family had posted its basketball hoop as a free item on Facebook, and asked that whoever picked it up make a donation to the tennis court. This was nice of the West family.

Ms. Huffield said the Meagher County Community Foundation Treasurer Judy Berg is researching the proper way to receive and account for donations made to a 501(c)(3) for a project on City property.

- Discussion/Public Comment:

Tom Tasic entered the meeting at approximately 6:55 p.m. Mr. Tasic is a long time tennis player who recently relocated to White Sulphur from Big Sky. He has been teaching some basic tennis skills to local children. He is interested in having a tennis program in White Sulphur Springs. The Committee updated Mr. Tasic on the plans for Phases I-III of McStravick Park, the funds available and funds needed. The Committee also discussed the status of the school's tennis program: it is the Committee's understanding there are no plans to add tennis as a sport in the 20-21 school year, but P.Berg will confirm this with Superintendent Markuson.

Mr. Tasic had driven by the tennis court, but hadn't walked it yet. He will do that. When asked, he suggested including a backboard on the new court, and adding a wooden bench inside the court area for bags, water bottles, etc. He also suggested that the City purchase a ball machine as a practice aide. He thought having a set of bleachers outside the fence for parents, etc., would increase interest in the sport. Committee members commented that they want this to be a facility that youth, adults, and seniors will use and enjoy.

Flood lights were briefly discussed, with Mr. Tasic saying he did not think this was a necessary addition to the project.

In regard to fundraising, Mr. Tasic suggested:

- A demonstration day: Close off a road and let people hit a tennis ball to a target such as a window frame. A donation could be placed near the practice area or people could pay for the chance to play the game. The Committee talked about doing this during the All School Reunion or a similar event that brings a lot of people to town.
- Making sure the 3D model created by Mr. Ferrity is displayed at volleyball games, basketball games, etc., and that a donation box or donation instructions are provided.
- A parade float.
- Using the Meagher County News and social media to inform people on the progress of fundraising. The Committee agreed it should assign someone to write something to post on the City's Facebook page, to be shared with the other community Facebook pages.
- Seeking donations for tennis balls and rackets.

The Committee and Mr. Tasic also discussed offering a tennis camp to increase interest in the sport. If the Court is not available/safe, possibly a camp could be held in the school gym. The Committee thanked Mr. Tasic for his input, and Mr. Tasic gave the Committee his contact information before he left the meeting.

Playground Accessibility and Safety/ Arrive at a Vision:

P. Berg reminded the Committee that, at an earlier meeting, the Committee discussed collecting ADA accessibility and safety information, and then arriving at a "vision" for the use of this information. As first discussed, the vision statement would advise the City Council on the recommended path to ADA compliance in City parks.

In addition to an accessible path to each type of activity, both parks need proper ground covering. The challenge is that the Committee has received some mixed messages. The School recently replaced some equipment, and re-installed pea gravel, but the specialist at the Access Board specifically told Pattie Berg that pea gravel is not an acceptable ground covering because it does not pass ASTM standards at any fall height. Kelly Huffield will use her contacts to see if she can find anyone who can certify that pea gravel is a safe ground covering.

The Committee said everyone needs to be on the lookout for parks-related grants, such as money that might become available under the *Great American Outdoors Act*, or other infrastructure programs which are likely to be funded regardless of who wins next months' elections. This may help fund what could become expensive accessibility projects, but may also allow the City to provide a wider range of equipment for existing playgrounds, and some benches, etc., for the parkland that is to be donated.

Further discussion and the vision statement were deferred to the next meeting.

Set Next Meeting Date/Time/Location
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Since 2 members were absent, the Committee decided that Chair Carol Berg should set the next meeting date/time/location. With the local increase in cases of COVID-19, the Committee asked P.Berg to explore options for remote meetings. She is to see if the Committee can use the City's zoom subscription.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at about 7:58 p.m. on a motion made by Kelly Huffield, seconded by Jen Frazer, and unanimously passed.