

MINUTES
CITY OF WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS, MONTANA
PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
JULY 11, 2023

ACTION ITEMS

All:

- Complete your “unfinished business” at McStravick Park. (See detailed list in Task list.)
- Let Carol Berg know if you have any items you plan to donate for McStravick Park equipment shed.

Jen Frazer

- Speak with the Golf Board about formalizing cross country skiing on the Golf Course.
- Request outline of content of pickleball clinic.

Carol Berg

- Signs installed/secured at Bump Track/ maintenance needs at Bump track?
- Work with P. Berg on deck box.
- Duck Race?

Kelly Huffield

- *Adopt a Spot*: Agreements signed & binder & agreement to City, order recognition tags.
- Follow up with the Community Foundation on balance in the Beautification fund.
- Work with Stacy Eaton-Menard on the basketball tourney?

Pattie Berg

- Work with Carol Berg on deck box.
- Follow up with Mayor on Resolution, placing draft Code on agenda,
- Request Parks meeting with City/County Planning meeting

Call to Order and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 4:35 p.m. by Vice Chair Carol Berg.

Members present: Carol Berg, Jen Frazer, Jordan Kibbee, Kelly Huffield

Others Present: Craig Erickson, Jerry Grebenc, Great West Engineering (via zoom); Pattie Berg (City Council Liaison).

Approval of Minutes

Carol Berg made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 15, 2023 Minutes, as presented. The motion was seconded by Jen Frazer and passed unanimously.

Urgent Action Item Discussion

Carol Berg

- Will meet with Mark Pryor when he returns from vacation to affix the benches and nets to the surface
- The deck box is here, but Pryor said the Committee needs to put it together. Carol Berg and Pattie Berg will do that next week.

Kelly Huffield

- The *Adopt a Spot* signs are being picked up this week.
- The plants for City Hall are at her house. Maddie Adams had offered to do that garden, but she hasn't been able to get a hold of her. She may need to find another sponsor for City Hall.

Pattie Berg

Met with the City on Committee projects. Updates:

- Porta potties have been ordered and should be here within a couple weeks.
- Security measures are being reviewed and may have been ordered.
- On June 11, 2023, she sent the draft Parks Code and application form to the Mayor, the Clerk, and Mark Pryor. Had not heard anything so, on July 5th, she sent another request for that review. The Committee directed Liaison Berg to ask that the drafts be placed on the City Council's agenda for the first meeting in August.

Discussion with Great West Engineering

- **Master Plan**
- **Capital Improvements Plan Process**

The Committee had the following discussion with Jerry Grebenc and Craig Erickson of Great West Engineering.

Erickson: Currently there is a \$40,000 coal endowment fund available for a planning grant. With the required 20% match, this would fund a \$50,000 Master Plan. There is also CDBG money available, which would increase the potential resources to \$90,000. The CDBG money can be used as the match for the coal money (and vice versa).

Grebenc:

- Even though the two funds can match each other, the City should contribute at least partial funding because funders prefer to see "skin in the game".
- Described a six-step master plan planning process:
 1. Kickoff meeting where the stakeholders get together to discuss the process, do some preliminary mapping talk about budgets etc. and Great West comes up with a recommended project scope.
 2. Stakeholders get together and discuss opportunities, issues and needs.
 3. Public outreach where the previously identified needs are validated and the public provides new information and new data. This may involve community surveys, open houses and other activities.
 4. The parties analyze the data.
 5. Goals, objectives, priorities, and projects are identified. If a potential project is especially complex, additional workshops maybe held. There may be priority lists for trails, a priority list for parks, and a priority list for parks maintenance activities.
 - Because you never know what funding might become available, Grebenc recommended including all projects that may come up in the next 5-10 years. This is because, if a project is listed in the Master Plan, it has a much better chance of being funded.
 6. Master plan is drafted. This plan is at the 50,000 foot level which distills all the available information and includes a vision, goals and objectives, high-level cost estimates, and action plans of sufficient detail to request grant funding.
 - When a project rises to the surface (through the planning process, or because of a new funding opportunity), a detailed plan is created which would include the Preliminary Engineering Report, detailed cost estimates, etc.
 - Grebenc recommended against trying to design projects in the Master Plan, partially because of the cost, and partially because costs are so volatile that cost projections become invalid fairly quickly.
 - According to Erickson, in order to document "demonstrated need", the City needs to be able to show a logical connection between a project, public input, and other plans, including the growth policy and the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

Discussion:

- Jen Frazer noted that a lot of the work Grebenc described had been done through the CORR process, but we are lacking complete action plans with detailed cost information.
- Great West had received the draft CORR report. Mr. Erickson said the report had some really good information.
- P. Berg had asked CORR for a final (as opposed to 'draft) report from another pilot site. In response, Rachel Shouse said:

The CORR process serves as a starting point and provides a foundation to build from and is not intended to serve as a standalone plan. The intent of the process is to provide communities with the building blocks to get started if they don't have the organizational capacity or financial ability to begin a robust master planning process. However, the CORR process provides MANY foundational elements that would be needed in a master planning process.

For example:

- A community vision provides direction for the goals and objectives of the master plan (already done in CORR).
 - Many plans contain an inventory of recreation assets (already done in CORR).
 - Project prioritization (already done in CORR).
 - Action planning is arguably the trickiest step, and from CORR you have several action plans started for your prioritized projects.
- Grebenc commented that Master Plans can be simple or complex, depending on the amount of money available. Frazer said she wasn't interested in a Lamborghini plan: she just wanted something with four wheels that can get us moving forward.
 - Grebenc said Master Plans with fancy charts are nice, but are not necessary to obtain funding. He also noted that the cost of the plan could be reduced depending on the amount of work the Committee was willing to do. For example if the Committee was willing to write "clear goals and objectives tied to specific projects", it would cost less than if Great West did that work.
 - In regard to the scope of the plan, P. Berg observed that the City has numerous "pocket parks", and Springs Park (including Spike's Happy Trails, and the potential skateboarding park), which has been identified as being a potential recreation complex. She asked the degree to which the pocket parks should be addressed when Springs Park is potentially such a large project. Grebenc said that sometimes funds become available for those small parks, so the work needed should be included in the Master Plan.
 - Grebenc explained that the Master Plan would include ballpark estimates for each element of a larger recreation complex.

P. Berg asked about the timelines for completing the Master Plan document, considering funding cycles of grant agencies. Erickson estimated that work would begin on the Master Plan in fall of 2023 or early 2024, and the Master Plan and the City's CIP will be completed at about the same time. Erickson also said that, assuming we have a Master Plan in hand by the summer of 2024, we should be able to start applying for funds in the fall of 2024.

Erickson said the Montanan Commerce Department is talking about issuing new income data, which may improve the City's eligibility for CDBG funds, in 2023.

Jen Frazer noted that, during the CORR process and in the CORR report, it was recognized/acknowledged that Meagher County has rich recreational resources. She asked whether the Master Plan could encompass the area outside the City limits, and if so, how far out. Grebenc noted that Great West had written a City-County Growth Policy, so a City-County Recreation Master Plan didn't seem out of the question. Mr.

Erickson suggested that Meagher County would be willing to apply for the CDBG grant which would, in turn, allow a larger scope (geographically) Master Plan.

P. Berg commented that it was unlikely the Council would agree to apply for \$90,000 in grants, with or without a countywide Recreation Master Plan as, during a discussion about the capital improvement program, at least one Council member expressed a preference to fund streets work. Mr. Erickson noted that, when the City of Minneapolis was in its infancy, it set a goal to have a park in each neighborhood. Over the years, that decision has made Minneapolis one of the most livable places in the country. This provides City wide economic benefits. Erickson also noted that funding for streets and funding for parks are not usually from the same funding sources.

P, Berg noted that any projects outside of the City would not be City projects, and would be outside the Committee's jurisdiction, so, there would have to be other agencies/parties willing to run those projects.

Following discussion, and at the recommendation of Mr. Grebenc, the Committee directed P. Berg to ask to have a Parks discussion placed on a City-County planning board agenda.

Carol Berg asked whether a PER for Springs Park could be included in a Master Plan. Grebenc commented that almost anything is possible, depending on available funds. However, he reiterated that cost data quickly becomes obsolete.

When asked, Great West said:

- The proposed resolution meets current needs in that it allows the Mayor to apply for funds, gives the Mayor responsibility over the program, and requires that any other funds received for that project, including matching funds, are included in the budget.
- Once the grant request gets submitted, the next step would be to have a meeting to identify the scope of the Master Plan.

Great West left the meeting.

Following discussion, the Committee directed Liaison Berg to ask that the Resolution requesting the coal funds be placed on the next available city council agenda.

Public Comment

None.

Set Next Meeting Date/Time/Location/Adjourn
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The meeting adjourned at 6:07 p.m. The committee agreed to have Chair Blair establish the next meeting date, and/or future meeting schedule.