

## **REGULAR PARKS BOARD MEETING**

**January 9, 2013**

**Regular Board Meeting**

**2:30 – 4:00 pm**

**600 Cregg Lane**

**Headwaters**

### **AGENDA - 2:30- 4:00 pm**

#### **Attended by:**

**Park Board:** Susan Ridgeway, Norma Nickerson, John O'Connor, Johnna Eisenmann, Chris Ryan, Ross Mollenhauer

**Staff:** Jackie Corday, Donna Gaukler, Shirley Kinsey, Morgan Valliant, David Selvage

**Others:** Ross Best, John Pierce, Ellen Buchanan, Dan Lambros

#### **Approval of minutes of meeting from December 2012 –**

It was moved to approve the minutes of the meeting with changes as submitted by John O'Connor. The motion carried.

**Announcements**—Gaukler invited the Park Board members to the public announcement of the donation received by the Silvers Foundation for Project Playground at McCormick Park. The event will be on January 17<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 pm at McCormick Park.

#### **Public/Guest comments**

##### **Action Items:**

Use Permits on Conservation Lands—Appoint subcommittee to further develop CLAC recommendations it was moved to approve Dale Harris, Ross Mollenhauer and Chris Ryan to a subcommittee to draft a more detailed recreation permit on conservation lands. The Conservation Advisory Committee had sent their

Recommendation for a use permit to the Park Board last month. It was decided by the Park Board in December to appoint this subcommittee to further develop those recommendations.

All members voted in favor of the motion.

Madison Street Pedestrian Bridge Lighting MOA (referral)

Dan Lambros and Tom Boone are the chairs of the Light our Bridge Committee (LOB) and started the process to light bridges in Missoula. They first approached the Montana Department of Transportation to get lights on the Higgins Street Bridge. However due to what will be a long process with the State, they decided to also start on other bridges, specifically the Van Buren Bridge and the walkway under the Madison Street Bridge. In consultations with the University it was agreed to light the Van Buren Bridge for safety reasons. The LOB is now concentrating their fund raising efforts on these two projects.

Buchanan - the Parks Department requested having a Memorandum of Agreement with LOB for the lights on the Madison Street Pedestrian Bridges. The Van Buren Bridge project is not part of the MOA. LOB is committed to raising the funds for the project and the system will replace the old lights with new LED lights, which will save the City money in maintenance.

Lambros – the goal is to have a better product which is simple and in good taste, as well as provide a safer walkway. The project will also include the capability to change out the color of the lights for events.

Buchanan – the biggest challenge to the project is to have a vandal proof design. The project will comply with all ordinances and LOB will obtain all the necessary permits.

Ryan asked if there had been any discussion with the neighbors in this area.

Buchanan – not any direct discussion but there have been two public meetings and only one negative comment.

Gaukler – it is the staff recommendation for a motion to support the LOB project and recommend that City Council approve the MOA between the City and LOB for lighting the Madison Street Bridge.

The agreement has been reviewed by Administration including the City Attorney. The agreement allows Parks to actively participate in design and review of the project. Even though both bridges are currently lit, the Van Buren is too dark now due to light direction and levels. The new lights will help with vandalism issue and the budget indicated a saving on electricity. The agreement allows Parks to charge a fee to change light colors which will generate revenue for maintenance.

O'Connor - I had originally had concerns about increased maintenance costs, but given all the information this seems like a net savings and with the ability to charge fees there could be additional gain. I would agree this is a good project and improves the aesthetics of the city.

O'Connor moved to have the Parks Board support the LOB project and recommend City Council approve the MOA between the City and LOB for lighting the Madison Street Pedestrian Bridge.

Ridgeway – I am not sure that it is clear that City and Parks have final approval on the final design see C3, section 2, I would like to see additional language added to the MOA with a sentence at the end of that section stating the final design is subject to approval by the Parks and Recreation Department.

It was moved and seconded to amend original motion to include this language to the motion.

Public comment:

Ross Best lives close to the footbridge and uses it and agreed there is a serious issue with inadequate lights, the area is dangerous, unpleasant and invitation for crime there. He voiced his reservations about the proposal with his biggest concern is not having a final design for the light project, and the general public does not know about this consideration. The matter will go to Council, but he did not see a reason for action until there was an actual design. Members of the public have a right to know what is being proposed. He felt the MOA did not give the Parks and Recreation Department the ability to reject a design and the agreement should be to explicitly approve the design. What will happen in the future with multiple designs? He did not want to walk on a spectacular art form but rather wants a well lit bridge. Mr. Best voiced his opinion that the City did not have an option to terminate the agreement and the project should have more public discussion before moving forward.

The motion to amend the original motion was voted on and the motion passed unanimously.

Discussion:

Staff and Board members recognized before the final vote on the motion, that Mr. Best did not have a copy of the most recent version of the MOA being discussed. One of the Board members (Ryan) handed her copy to Mr. Best. Open discussion continued and public comment was invited on the document and discussion.

Nickerson – I am ok moving forward knowing that city Code will be enforced for this project. Safety is an important and Dark Skies are important as well. It will also be good to have the Parks Department approve the final design.

O'Connor - we have addressed Mr. Best's concern by including the statement to have the final design approved by Parks Department. I appreciate all his concerns but feel they have been addressed and I will support the project.

Ryan – I think the message has been given to the designer by the LOB that no one wants a Vegas type of lights project. It will also be good for an opportunity for public to see the final draft design.

Mr. Best stated the Board was not taking this seriously or knew what they were approving, and they were in a rush to approve this agreement without a design. He stated the agreement doesn't spell it out that the public

doesn't get final approval on design. He stated again as there was no final agreement or design it was premature to vote in favor of the project.

**A final vote was taken on the motion to have the Missoula Parks Board support the Light our Bridge Project and recommend Council approve the Memorandum of Agreement and also recommended the Council include additional language in C3, Section 2 to state the Missoula Parks Department will have final approval of the design. All members voted in favor of the motion. The motion carried.**

Additional discussion regarding the MOA: Because the MOA included references to budgetary items and the overall project is well in excess of \$10K it is necessary for the Council to approve the MOA. As the Park Board is Advisory to the Mayor and Council, it is the Park Board's role to provide review, comment and recommendation to the Council.

Adoption of Greenough Park Advisory Committee (GPAC) recommendations for merger with Conservation Lands Advisory Committee (CLAC)

Valliant – The GPAC has compiled a list of recommendations for merging GPAC into the Conservation Lands Advisory Committee (CLAC). This list was compiled to ensure that the responsibilities historically assumed by GPAC are effectively transferred to CLAC and to maintain continuity regarding the management of Greenough Park. The dissolution of GPAC will require action by the City Council but a merger of GPAC into CLAC will require the Park Board to edit the CLAC's by-laws. The Parks Board created CLAC which had involved the dissolution of Conservation Lands Technical Working Group and Mount Jumbo Advisory Group. As GPAC is appointed by City Council per the decree it was decided at that time to hold off dissolving GPAC. Now at the last GPAC meeting the group decided to pursue the merger with CLAC and came up with criteria for dissolution. GPA is recommending that the Parks Board accept the GPAC recommendation and then forward this recommendation to Council for final approval.

O'Connor – does there need to be any language added to deal with the Greenough Park Decree?

Valliant - the compliance with the decree is in the CLAC bylaws.

It was moved that the City Council is to merge the Greenough Park Advisory Committee (GPAC) into the Conservation Lands Advisory Committee (CLAC), and thereby dissolve GPAC. This motion is subject to and contingent upon City Council's commitment, to be made before dissolution of GPAC, to ensure compliance with the following criteria:

respect for and compliance with the grant of park lands from the Greenough family  
high priority of replacing the picnic shelter and adjacent restrooms along with updating the play structure with more environmental/educational-friendly infrastructure and developing a master plan for the park

the Parks and Recreation Department will consolidate and maintain materials and documents recording history of the park and its structures and the management of the park

- CLAC will oversee the development of a master plan for Greenough Park
- CLAC will conduct an annual field trip to monitor Greenough Park and compliance with the thirteen points
- transfer of current chairperson (John Pierce) to CLAC membership for a three-year term along with amendment of CLAC bylaws to accommodate an additional voting member
- CLAC will advise the City on management of Greenough Park in its entirety
- any monies in the GPAC bank account at the time of dissolution will be dedicated to the park brochure

All members voted in favor of the motion.

**Master Park Plan update:**

A Master Park Plan action item recommends the preparation of an annual report that describes the progress made toward achieving the MPP and Open Space Plan goals over the past year. This report is in response to that action item. Corday pointed out a few highlights from the plan.

**Goal 1.3 “Ensure that future demands are met through the development of new facilities/services as well as the upgrade of existing facilities.”**

Highlights from the list of the many construction projects completed in 2012:

White Pine Playground–

Milwaukee Trail Lighting

**Goal 1.5 “Provide recreational opportunities and facilities for people of all ages and abilities, including meeting ADA requirements.”**

All Abilities Playground

Other Recreation Division Highlights:

National Public Lands Day

Partners In Parks

**Goal 6.3 “Coordinate between the City and County on review of subdivisions and other planning issues within the Urban Area.”**

In early 2012, Parks worked with OPG staff to help update and strengthen the subdivision requirements related to non-motorized facilities – sidewalks, trails, and bike lanes. Council adopted the improved regulations in June 2012 that will require all future development to provide well-planned connective non-motorized facilities.

This section of the meeting Adjourned at 4:00 pm.

The strategic planning session of the meeting reconvened at Finn and Porter at 4:25 pm.