

MINUTES
BERTRAM CHAIN OF LAKES REGIONAL PARK ADVISORY COUNCIL
Friday, April 2, 2021, 8:00 a.m.
Virtual Zoom Meeting

Members Present: Lynn Anderson, Mark Daleiden, Jim Davidson, Dawn Larson, Jeremiah Mack, Sam Murdoff, Wes Olson, Darek Vetsch

Members Absent: Martyn Dibben, Tom Jahnke, Jim Lindberg, Scott Peterson

Staff Present: Eric Fallon (YMCA), Beth Green, Brad Harrington, Marc Mattice, Rachel Leonard, Tom Pawelk, Angela Schumann, Josh Thompson

Others: Friends, Christina, Wendy, Graham

1. Call to Order.

Vice-Chair Lynn Anderson called the meeting to order at 8:01 a.m.

2. Consideration of adding to and approving the agenda.

DAREK VETSCH MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS WRITTEN. MOTION SECONDED BY MARK DALEIDEN. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY, 8-0.

3. Consideration of approving minutes from February 5, 2021.

MARK DALEIDEN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE FEBRUARY 5, 2021, REGULAR MEETING. MOTION SECONDED BY DAREK VETSCH. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY, 8-0.

4. Review changes to agreements between County and City.

- a. Joint Powers Agreement: Marc Mattice reviewed changes to the agreement as highlighted and included in the agenda packet. Pawelk talked about shared use of the maintenance facility to be included. Mattice said he thinks it should be in the operating agreement and this should be added.

MARK DALEIDEN MOVED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE JOINT POWERS AGREEMENT AS AMENDED. MOTION SECONDED BY DAREK VETSCH. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY, 8-0.

- b. Operating Memorandum: Mattice reviewed changes as highlighted and included in the agenda packet. Will include the shared use of the maintenance facility with the city, this is the maintenance shed near the chalet. Question came up regarding insurance coverage of the shared facility. Mattice clarified that the building would fall under the county umbrella policy on the park, but the contents of the city's property/equipment would be covered by the city.

WES OLSON MOVED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE JOINT POWERS AGREEMENT AS AMENDED. MOTION SECONDED BY DAWN LARSON. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY, 8-0.

- c. Advisory Council Bylaws. Mattice reviewed the changes to the bylaws as included in the agenda packet.

MARK DALEIDEN MOVED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE ADVISORY COUNCIL BYLAWS AS AMENDED. MOTION SECONDED BY DAREK VETSCH. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY, 8-0.

5. Wright County - Status Reports on Regional Park Operations and 2021 Work Plans.

- a. Staffing Report: Introduction of Josh Thompson, Park Services Coordinator
- b. Campground Tentative Opening: Trying to get turf established prior to opening, goal is right around Monday, July 5, 2021, Reservations June 21, 2021. Don't want to open up without a good solid base for turf. Some punch list items still outstanding but should be complete in the next few months. Campground playground is scheduled to be in before Memorial Day.
- c. South Trailhead Parking Expansion: The contracted excavator will come in after the spring road restrictions are lifted. Clearing began last fall and aggregate materials are being stockpiled this week. The trailhead expansion is needed due to the high use of the mountain bike and hiking trails.
- d. Trail Improvements and Connections: The trail builder will be back in May to work on sustainable trail construction and some additional trail connections are being planned. MORC donated funds to finish the return loop on the west side of Mud Lake and this summer that should be close to completion. A priority will be to get the trail connection made around the campground by the Long Lake Overlook.
- e. Programs and Events: The Bertram Blast is scheduled for June 20th. While the race has new leadership, the race proceeds will still go to fund programs or improvements in the park. The race is capped at 250 participants, according to CDC guidelines. Brad Harrington said he is talking with Dave Wik about the Lavallee run in September and the Cross Country Meet in fall. In April, Carson Law, the Rec Specialist, is starting a hiking series which will be no charge and will run from April and thru the end of the summer. Bringing back Fungus Among Us in May to be led by Martyn Dibben. The Raptor Center is also planned to come out in May at a cost of \$10/person. The summer will be busy, working with MnTrout doing fishing clinics June 9th & 19th. A paddle series will be starting in July. There is also a new module being set up so will be able to take online registrations for programming too.

A non-match grant of \$60,000 was approved for the purchase of equipment at Bertram. The funds will be available later this summer. Bikes, skis, snowshoes, paddleboards, kayaks, etc. will be purchased for the campground so the public will be able to rent that equipment.

6. Annual Financial Report on Fund Balance Dedicated Bertram Park Funds – Balance \$28,199.98.

Mattice said that in 2008 when the project was started, started getting a few random donations started with Family Fun Day. An account was created as a way to collect those funds and Wright County maintains the fund balance. If there are any joint projects that the city/county want to do and we need extra funding, then those dollars can be requested from the fund through the Advisory Council for approval.

7. City of Monticello – Planning and Impacts of the State Soccer Tournament.

Tom Pawelk said that they are in the planning process of creating a map for the users that will be coming into the facility. The city is working with WSB to GPS and lay out the 22 fields. The goal is to have an interactive map for users that will be shared with the Chamber and the ballfield associations. Developing how many fields and what makes the most sense for the existing space we have out there. Not all fields are irrigated but there is various turf so figuring out field uses. June is the first kickoff of a local tournament the 24-26 of June. They are also letting restaurants, hotels and businesses in the community know that the event is going on and providing as much information as possible to the soccer association so that it is a seamless event. Will be laying out fields next week and will see a change in the landscape and will be moving all the soccer goals up. The State Tournament will run July 15-18. There is a lot behind the scenes to get everything set up. The biggest event so far has been the regional meet for Cross Country with 1,500 runners. Mattice talked about blocking off rentals for that weekend so there's not too much overwhelming traffic of people on the passive use side of the park. Proposed attendance is 5,000-6,000.

8. Monticello School District – Nature Based Education 2021/2022 expansion and agreements.

Jeremiah Mack said that next year the goal is to maintain the nature-based option and to have the students all at one location and expand to two classrooms per day. Plus, they also are looking at adding additional 4th & 5th grade students to the YMCA for next year, expanding by another 10 students. The district is trying to find a solution of how to expand and concerns about wear and tear, such as helping with facility upgrades, turf maintenance, school could help to offset those costs. The district is interested in continuing the program long-term. Working on possibly having a new facility built adjacent to Bertram or trying to figure out how to get all the kids on site by doing some small improvements to the YMCA, which will make it easier for transportation, programming, and safety. The YMCA has a sub-lease with the school district that is signed each year. Dawn Larson said she sees a lot of value in this, but she thinks if it continues that the school district should help out financially, so the lines don't become blurred. The details really need to get defined.

The district is offering some summer programs for ages 4 to first grade 3 days/week as a nature-based option. There will be an outdoor wilderness class out there and a geocaching event, as well as a few other summer programs.

Harrington said YMCA is taking reservations for summer camp. Some of the 4th & 5th grade

teachers have asked about those programs. The teachers said there are a lot of kids that would like to do camp out there this summer so could draw in some local kids to the camp as well.

Mattice said they need to start their registration process for next school year to expand the classroom and staff could work on redefining the agreement and bringing back to another meeting for recommended approval. Mattice said there is an opportunity to expand the one classroom and would be in the red shed, in the city's maintenance section. Will have to figure out storage of some of the city's equipment. There have been things that have come up that were challenges but we have been able to work through those. The school district has invested in the chalet and put in a storage room in the basement. All parties have come to the table and participated very well. Daleiden said that he has seen school districts bring in trailers for classroom space. Mack noted that there are issues with those as you still have to hook up to electric and other utilities and it would be more cost effective to do improvements on the existing facilities that are there instead of a short-term fix. The long-term benefit would be investing in the park.

MARK DALEIDEN MOVED TO RECOMMEND THE EXPANSION OF THE NATURE BASED EDUCATION PROGRAM, AND AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY/COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT FOR THE 2021/22 SCHOOL YEAR. MOTION SECONDED BY WES OLSON. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY, 8-0.

Darek Vetsch said he wants to clarify that we are not actually agreeing to this but that we want to see how it looks we are agreeing to bringing some more numbers to go forward with the expansion to make sure it is agreed upon. Both the City and County Boards will also have to approve the funding agreement with the School District.

9. Directional signing needs (brown signs on the roads).

Marc Mattice said the directional signs on the roads leading to Bertram are outdated and need to be replaced. This includes signs on County Road 39 and 90th Street. The signs need to be larger and more descriptive. They don't identify the athletic complex or the campground. It would be beneficial to get the old signs down and new ones in place before the soccer tournament. Mattice said he would like to develop the signage needs and get the budget and there may need to be a three-way split between the City/County/dedicated funds. There are exorbitant fees if signs are put on state highways. The new signage would cost approximately \$3-4,000 total plus another \$1,500 if put on State Highway 25.

WES OLSON MOVED TO ALLOCATE APPROXIMATELY \$1,000 FROM THE DEDICATED FUNDS FOR DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE. MOTION SECONDED BY DAREK VETSCH. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY, 8-0.

10. Regional Park and Athletic Complex Branding Discussion (staff notes attached).

The city and county met regarding the branding for the park. The consensus is to continue using the mother nature tree logo and ask the Friends of Bertram to discontinue using the logo. Further the County wishes to take over the Friends of Bertram Facebook page to be the official Bertram Chain of Lakes Regional Park Facebook page.

Mattice said that with the addition of Josh Thompson at the campground, he will be a great liaison for the Friends group and help to develop that relationship further. Questions about whether to continue to brand the park as one entity or not are being discussed, and how to incorporate the Friends group in there. Some of the issues being noted are the public going to the Friends group about questions at the park and the Friends appearing like the owner/operator of the park. It really comes down to how the public is communicated to and how the Friends group is used.

Harrington said that he would like to have Josh Thompson take over the Facebook page, so the messaging is consistent and manage that content better. Lastly it comes down to the logo as there is one logo between the Friends/City/County. The logo was developed by the Friends group so do we continue to use that logo or do we modify it, has been the question. It's also extremely important to maintain the partnership with the Friends.

Friends Chair Graham Sones thanked Advisory Council inviting them Friends to the meeting. Sones said that the Friends group has met together to discuss this, as well as with the Parks & Trails Council about how other Friends groups help to assist at other parks. Regarding the Facebook page, Sones noted that there have only been about 6-8 questions over the last year regarding the park. The Friends FB page can provide links on where to go for more information on where to go in the park. The groups intend to keep the FB page and want to support the City and County to work cooperatively. Furthermore, the Friends will keep the logo with the City and County using it on the park signs but then including an "operated by" section at the bottom of the sign to denote which government entity is in charge of certain areas. Schumann noted that the signs also need to include the partnerships as a requirement of the grants received.

MEETING TABLED AT 9:49 A.M.

Recorder:

Beth Green

Administrative Assistant

Approval Date:

July 9, 2021

Attest:



Martyn Dibben, BCOLAC Chairman