



CITY OF COEUR D'ALENE

PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

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PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES

November 18, 2019 – 5:30 p.m.

COMMUNITY ROOM - LIBRARY

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Scott Cranston, Chair
Mike McDowell
Jim Lien
Christie Wood
Bridget Hill
Parker Drechsel, Student Rep (*sat in audience*)
Grace Couture-Ishihara, Alt Student Rep

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Ginny Tate
Ron Edinger

STAFF PRESENT:

Bill Greenwood, Parks & Recreation Director
Nick Goodwin, Urban Forester
Mike Kempton, Lead Worker
Monte McCully, Trail Coordinator

GUESTS:

Rob McCayless, Verizon Representative

CALL TO ORDER: Commissioner Cranston called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

1. ROLL CALL

Six members present, resulting in a quorum.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Hill led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – *Action Item*

Commissioner McDowell made a motion to approve the minutes of August 19, 2019. Commissioner Wood seconded the motion, there being no discussion and all being in favor, motion passed unanimously.

5. STAFF COMMENTS

Director Greenwood: Along Northwest Blvd enhancements from River to Hubbard, the work is completed with help from the Street Department including installation of a path that ties in with the trail there, everything is done except the seeding that will be done in the spring. The City manages and we work with NIC's maintenance crew to make sure the piece is easy to maintain. This area will be part of our snow removal, they will maintain the grass and trimming. Grandstands are moving along, weather has been good this week they are installing a drywell at the home dugout, the roof is being worked on off site. They will continue to work through the winter, the painter will do some of the painting inside and put the sheeting back on after painting. Atlas site work

has started, started to find some savings, sifted out some of the soils that can be used that will help save some money by using materials already on site. There are meetings every week to go over the project as it comes along.

Commissioner Wood: Thank you Bill and your staff for your work on the BLM piece along River to Hubbard, financially supported by NIC as well, an incredible gateway, a wonderful partnership. That area will be part of an educational component at NIC.

Regarding the grandstands, we know there would be no restroom put there, do we know what will happen in the future with restrooms? Greenwood: We are working to get a CXT building there and will be bringing the drawings forward. These buildings can be worked on during the winter at their factory, we hope to get this opened and onsite by spring when NIC starts their ball programs. We may have to do sole source provider for the building. The funding for the restroom has been set aside.

Commissioner Wood: Very familiar with CXT, they do good work, concerned if they can meet budget. Commissioner Greenwood: You can now customize the building and we are working with NIC to customize their need for changing rooms.

Commissioner Cranston: How is the winterization process going? We have buttoned everything up, pretty much completed by the end of September, into mid-October.

Commissioner Hill: Amazing work the city does picking up leaves. The street department does great work. Not many city's offer this service.

6. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

None.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

8. WELCOME STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES – *Information Item*

Parker Drechsel and Grace Couture-Ishihara were introduced at the meeting as the Student Representative and Alternate Student Representative.

9. DEMO OF BATTERY OPERATED EQUIPMENT – *Information Item*

Greenwood: Robert Cooper who runs our cemetery is going to demonstrate the equipment. At a conference we learned of this equipment and how quiet they are and how we could start as early as 6 a.m., because the equipment is so quiet. We also have golf carts purchased that are quiet, don't use diesel or gas, no fumes, no noise, can be used at events with little impact to public. Cooper: The mowers are very quiet, the mower and blower uses the same batteries, they run 3 hours for the mower and about an hour for the backpack blower. We are using two different brands, of blowers and weed eaters. We are front loading our purchase with batteries, but reducing our fuel expenses. We can also purchase hedge trimmers, tillers, brooms, etc., as add-ons. This equipment is easier on our staff with reduced vibration, light weight, and the public will enjoy less noise.

Commissioner Wood: Where do you purchase these? Cooper: Stihl we purchased from Ragan Equipment and the Greenworks equipment was purchased at FMI in Spokane.

Greenwood: This technology has increased and was the idea to look into it by Jeff Erickson our superintendent specifically because of McEuen and the noise factor for our neighbors. We have checked into the equipment to ensure we are getting the most powerful for the money spent.

Commissioner Cranston: Have you been using this equipment now? Commissioner Cooper: We picked up the trimmer set and blower last spring and have put 200 hours on them both.

Commissioner McDowell: Very impressive, nice equipment. Any idea of the life expectancy for this equipment compared to gas? Cooper: This equipment has a 3-year warranty and should last at least until then. About the same expectancy as some of our fuel operated equipment.

10. FINALE VERSUS ROUNDUP – Information Item

Greenwood: Mike Kempton will give a presentation on what we are doing, chemical-wise, in the parks. Recently Monsanto has been in the news for lawsuit settlements regarding Round-Up chemicals. All our staff are certified applicators, they know how to apply the chemicals safely. We have had the public ask about what we are using concerned about this chemical. Mike puts together our chemical and fertilizer orders each season. Kempton: We have been working on a new Parks Department Master Plan, while doing this work, we have adding verbiage for using greener products to ensure public safety and use safer alternatives. The comparison with Roundup. Roundup has been on the market since 1974, it is very effective, works very well, and it is controversial regarding the main ingredient. It remains in the soil for many years after use. We have switched to a product called Finale. The main ingredient is safe, been on the market since 1984, much safer, quick results, application window is wider in any season, breaks down quickly and doesn't stay in the soil. It is more expensive. We are on track to use it in all the parks. We are looking for safer chemicals. There is a product out there called Agriculture Vinegar, organic compound, inexpensive and ineffective, no long-term effect, and it is much more hazardous to the applicator. Greenwood: We were pretty excited about this product until we looked into it and found it to be very hazardous. Kempton: We will be using a low phosphorus fertilizer in all our waterfront locations, lower phosphorus means the grass may look yellow quicker than traditional fertilizer, but the turf will adjust and be healthier for the waterfront.

Commissioner Wood: Are we going to put something out to the public to let them know how the City is going green? Greenwood: Yes, we probably will, my thought was this presentation would help get the work out and if City Council would like a presentation we can attend one of their meetings to educate the public.

Commissioner Couture-Ishihara: Include something on Instagram to reach teenagers who are interested in green issues.

11. CEMETERY NICHE WALL – Information Item

Greenwood: Robert Cooper will talk to this item as well. Robert will show you the process of the installation of the last niche wall and how we are going to continue to add niche walls. Cooper: We use pre-cast forms from Wilbert out of Spokane. Staff set the foundation and completed all the site-prep, the wall was able to be set quickly. We will be adding up to approximately 10 walls over the next 20 years. This new wall has 100-unit niches and is the same size of the one that was placed 2-3 years ago. That wall was 60% purchased when we started the purchase process on this wall and that wall is now at 85% and the new wall

already has sold niches and people interred. Everyone wants to be in Forest Cemetery. That is also why we have dropped the rates on the niches available at Riverview.

Commissioner Cranston: When we held our workshop at the cemetery last summer this is a paved road that had been closed off due to little use. Cooper: Yes, this is a good location there is lighting for the public. Greenwood: There is still a road for public use, we closed this access road for two years with signage to make sure the public was aware of the change. We have only had one comment in those two years and have permanently closed the road. This gives us a future for Forest Cemetery. Cranston: This development will be ongoing? Greenwood: Yes, as each wall is sold out, we will have another built to continue the perpetual care fund. Cranston: Any other projects? Cooper: We are looking at replacing some fencing near the Old Post area with black chain link with privacy slats, will be easy to maintain and blends well with the nice fencing we have in place. In Riverview we are planting a lot of trees, we planted 6 this summer and will add more in the easement.

12. NAME CHANGE – Action Item

Commissioner Cranston read the staff report for the record.

Greenwood: Ron has dedicated 50 years to the City of Coeur d'Alene and at his recent retirement from council party there were more than 250 people in attendance. He has provided contributions to the parks system and to me personally. We want to say thank you to him for his many years of service.

Commissioner Wood: The service he has brought to this community this recognition is well deserved. How long has he been a part of this commission? Cranston: Cumulative it has to be 25 or 26 years. Greenwood: We have kept this from Ron so it would be a surprise and it won't be a secret anymore as this will go on to City Council.

Commissioner McDowell: Have always admired him and he has always had the best interests of the citizens, very generous and very giving. He will be missed.

Commissioner Wood made a motion to recommend to General Services the naming of an area within Person Field as Ron Edinger Park, Commissioner Hill seconded the motion, there being no further discussion and all being in favor, motion passed unanimously.

13. URBAN FORESTRY CODE CHANGES – Action Item

Commissioner Cranston read the staff report for the record.

Commissioner Cranston: The Parks & Recreation Commission is not a quasi-judicial committee. As far as the ultimate appeal process for a citizen, what is the legality of it ending at the Parks & Recreation Commission? Greenwood: Our city attorney says this commission does have the authority. You can be the final authority.

Commissioner Hill: Would this be the only item we have authority over? Greenwood: We are trying to streamline this process, and we are okay with this authority.

Commissioner Cranston: If a citizen's appeal is denied by the Parks & Recreation Commission, their avenue ends there. Greenwood: Yes, if it doesn't stop here, it would drag

the process out further. Goodwin: The code change would go to Council, which would make this commission the final decision on an appeal.

Commissioner Lien: How often do these appeals come forward? Goodwin: Not very common, maybe one out of every 10 are appealed. On average we do about three removal requests at each of our Urban Forestry meetings. One to three per year may get appealed.

Commissioner Cranston: Is there a common theme for removal requests? Goodwin: Most of the requests are for older trees downtown that are pushing up sidewalks. Sometimes these requests come along with a sidewalk reconstruction. If a sidewalk requires removal, that goes under a different guideline than code and wouldn't need review.

Commissioner Wood: Will you provide us with the code so we are familiar? Greenwood: The code is pretty clear just removes Council as final authority for decision and gives this commission that authority. The Urban Forestry Committee goes through these requests and weighs the criteria, code requirement would be stated at the time of an appeal process as to how their request falls in line. Goodwin: Should we have an appeal, a staff report with all the pertinent information regarding the request, inspection information, and the reason for denial will be provided to the commission.

Commissioner Cranston: Have any Council members weighed in on this? Greenwood: It is my understanding they are in support of this change.

Commissioner Hill: What other decisions do we make that are final? We are an advisory commission, this feels different, I appreciate the effort to streamline, need more clarification. Greenwood: It is a different circumstance, the question about authority or quasi-judicial is this is why we are talking about changing the code. This gives this commission authority. Years past we had legal representation present at our meetings, that has changed, the commissions' processes may change more down the road due to growth and necessity.

Commissioner Wood: City Council has the authority to delegate their authority. Greenwood: Yes, that is correct. The current code does not give you the authority, but with this one change, authority is being given to the commission.

Goodwin: Urban Forestry came up with this change as the best way to streamline the process. The other option we discussed was to form a hearing board, and realized the best hearing board we could have would be this commission who is already involved in parks and recreation issues. The Urban Forestry Committee supports this change.

Commissioner Wood made a motion that the Parks & Recreation Commission is in favor of changing city code to make the Parks & Recreation Commission the authority on hearing tree removal request decision appeals, Commissioner Lien seconded the motion. No further discussion. Commissioners Lien, McDowell, Wood, and Couture-Ishihara were in favor, Commissioner Hill opposed. The recommendation will move forward to General Services.

14. RIVIERA WALK MOU – Action Item

Commissioner Cranston read the staff report for the record.

McCully: We have a lot of property on either side of the Centennial Trail and here it would be the Prairie Trail and Centennial Trail area. Some areas are 100 feet wide some are 5 feet wide. We mow these areas once a month during summer. The HOA approached us, and it

was indicated in the annexation agreement, to install irrigation and plant fescue grass, lower maintenance and they would maintain. This area is near Riverstone Park and would have planting from their fence to the trail with irrigation and landscaping.

Commissioner Wood: That will be a wonderful addition, glad the HOA wants to do it and partnership with the City. Understand their motivation.

Commissioner Lien made a motion to recommend to General Services the approval of a Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Coeur d'Alene and the Riviera Walk at Riverstone Home Owner's Association for the purpose of installing irrigation lines and maintaining a beautification area in city property, Commissioner McDowell seconded the motion, there being no further discussion, and all being in favor, motion passed unanimously.

15. CELL TOWER – Action Item

Commissioner Cranston read the staff report for the record.

Greenwood: This location is just east of the Junior Tackle building in the northwest corner. The area isn't being used for any programs, just a piece of green on the outside edge of the track.

Commissioner Cranston: The tower is disguised as a tree? Greenwood: Yes, it blends in very well.

Greenwood: There is one along the shooting range along Atlas, it blends in nicely. This will go to Planning Commission instead of City Council, there will be a hearing, and they want the commissions' agreement with this idea. The revenue will be nice, it's a piece of property that won't interfere with any programs. Rod from Verizon is here to answer any questions you may have. Rod McCayless, independent contractor in the industry for 24 years. Verizon is interested in this area because cell phone use and people working at home will use it for uploading and downloading, demand is increasing significantly to provide coverage in residential areas. This location fits very well. At first glance it will look like a tree, antennas are inside the branches. Equipment would be outdoor cabinets and would be up against the building. No fencing if there is a fence near a playfield, balls and frisbees get inside the fencing area, leaving it open is best so they aren't climbing the fences and hurting themselves. Climbing pegs start 15 feet up.

Commissioner Lien: Will the residents have an opportunity to give input? McCayless: Yes, they will be given an opportunity to give input.

Commissioner Cranston: Any emergency equipment on this site? McCayless: No, an emergency generator could be brought in if there is a long outage.

Commissioner Hill: What are the concerns most residents have? McCayless: Some people may not like the way it looks. Others feel it will hurt their property values, generally that is not the case. The money that is raised from this will go to the greater good. The last item would be health concerns. Verizon takes matters regarding RF safety and operates well within the safety limits. CTIA is an organization by the wireless industry that promotes safety and standards for building and climbing towers and RF safety. FCC has more information as well. The towers are considered safe.

Commissioner Hill: Are there other towers in residential areas? Commissioner Wood: Yes, there is one near my house. Commissioner Lien: There is one being built on Sherman.

Commissioner Wood: We are being asked to approve the concept, correct? Greenwood: Yes, there will be a public hearing with the public having an opportunity to voice how they feel about the tower. May not be for another month or two.

Commissioner Cranston: We are asking to weigh in on the park location and the activities that occur there. Greenwood: Yes. Commissioner Cranston: Any other stakeholders weigh in? Greenwood: No, I have not reached out to them, will do so.

Commissioner Wood made a motion to approve the concept of the location of a Verizon cell tower in the northwest portion of Person Field, Commissioner McDowell seconded the motion with the comment that this will be moved to public hearing for final approval, there being no further discussion, and all being in favor, motion passed unanimously.

16. MEETINGS / ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Cranston asked for any additional comments.

Commissioner Lien: Thank you to your staff for their presentations and sticking it out to the end.

Upcoming meeting dates:

- Tuesday, December 3, 2019: 11:30 a.m., Workshop; Caruso's Deli, Coeur d'Alene
- Monday, December 16, 2019: 5:30 p.m., Meeting; Library Community Room

Commissioner Wood made a motion to adjourn the meeting with Commissioner McDowell seconding the motion. There being no further discussion, motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7 pm.