



CITY-COUNTY PARKS ADVISORY BOARD SUMMARY

Wednesday, December 4, 2019



City Members

- Pat Doyle
- Ross Johnson
- Steve Baiamonte

County Members

- Branden Watts
- Leah Norberg
- ~~Ernie Lundberg (Lincoln Parks Board)~~

Joint Member

- School District Representative

Commission Representatives

- Heather O’Loughlin, City Commissioner
- Andy Hunthausen, County Commissioner

Staff Contact

- Spencer Starke, Lewis and Clark County Representative
- Kristi Ponozzo, Parks, Recreation, and Open Lands Director
- Craig Marr, Parks Superintendent
- Kait Perrodin, Recreation and Aquatics Program Manager
- Jennifer Schade, Recorder

LOCATION: City-County Building, Room 426

TIME: 11:30 am – 1:00 pm

Visitor(s): John Dayton, Chuck Ball, Alex Tommerup, Patrick Marron, Berkley Conrad

• Call to Order

- Chairman Pat Doyle called the December 4, 2019 City-County Parks Board meeting to order.

• Establish Quorum/Introductions/Review Agenda/Approval of Minutes

- A quorum was present.
- Ross asked to include a report on the consolidation of advisory boards to this agenda.
- With no noted corrections, Ross moved to approve the November 2019 Minutes as presented. Steve seconded. Motion carried.

• Comments from Persons Present

The board will accept brief comments from the public for items that are not on the agenda at this time.

- None.

• Unfinished Business

- None.

• Presentations/Discussion Items

Last Chance Pickleball Club Presentation: Chuck Ball, John Dayton, and Alex

“The City - County Parks Board’s mission is to promote investment in the development and maintenance of parks, recreation, trails and open space.”

- On behalf of the entire Helena Pickleball community, John Dayton first thanked the City of Helena Parks and Recreation for our partnership. The first Helena pickleball court was built in Barney Park in 2011.
- The representatives are here today to have an open discussion forming a public/private relationship with the parks board in a joint venture to build more pickleball courts. What is Pickleball?
 - **Pickleball** is a paddleball sport (similar to a racquet ball) that combines elements of tennis, badminton, and table tennis. Two or four players use solid paddles made of wood or composite materials to hit a perforated polymer ball, similar to a wiffle ball, over a net. The sport shares features of other racquet sports: the dimensions and layout of a badminton court, and a net and rules somewhat similar to tennis, with several modifications. The court is smaller than a tennis court and the net is 2 inches lower than a tennis court. Players use paddles and plastic balls during play.
- John distributed a copy of what a pickleball court looks like. The city currently has courts located in Barney Park and Mountain View Meadow Park. The pickleball courts are striped over the tennis courts. At Barney Park, we were able to get multiple courts per tennis court. Barney currently has 6 pickleball courts. The pickleball community has portable nets that they set up and take down each day.
- While pickleball was invented in the mid-1960s as a children's backyard game; however, it has rapidly grown to include multigenerational people. While many people are unable to play tennis due to injury or age, everyone can play pickleball. A 16-year old played in the nationals in California. It is a sport that can also be played during the winter.
- It has been noted that pickleball is one of the favorite activities in school gyms throughout the nation. It is one of the fastest growing sports in the world.
- Missoula has 8 dedicated pickleball courts. In 2016, it was reported there are 2.8 million pickleball players in the United States. As of today, that number is 3.1 million. Helena has experienced 25% growth in 2018. Year to date is 69%. Our community has many people are looking for pickleball venues.
- Today, the Helena Pickleball community would like to have discussion of forming a working relationship with the city/county board (i.e., working committee) in an effort locate property (preferably within the city/county area) for pickleball courts. Their idea includes 8 pickleball courts, with the possibility of enclosing 4 courts for winter play.
- Craig then asked if pickleball courts have asphalt and surfacing as you would with a tennis court. This is one of our parks maintenance largest expenses. Replacing that surfacing is very expensive. Chuck stated they would have to have a hard surface. Concrete would be acceptable, but would need some type of texture to protect from injury. Pat added that currently we are on a 7-year rotation with our courts with an estimated cost of \$14,000 per 2 courts.
- The Helena Pickleball community plans to form a 501c3 to help fund this. They intend for this to be a public facility. The group plans to raise money and are looking at property that perhaps could be gifted to them to build the facility. They can raise the money to build the facility, but not purchase and maintain the property/ Chuck stated the goal is to build the facility on city property and give that facility back to the city to maintain (much like Mountain View Meadows). There won't be memberships involved in this. This will be a public facility.
- Craig asked if they have looked at the maintenance costs. The group has not yet looked into this.

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- Kristi asked if there is a property in mind. John mentioned Ryan Fields (which is county property). They also looked at Brady Street to the Red Alter Development area. There is some remediation going on at Brady Street and there is a section of that area where the group is unsure of the plans.
- Chuck looked at a city-owned property just north of where the golf carts are located. There is a natural spot there for pickleball courts. Chuck is pretty sure there is natural drainage near that property where we would be unable to build.
- John stated they are also looking at Barney Park.
- The group would also need parking spots area. Daily, we would probably need 20 spots; for tournaments, we may need up to 50.
- Alex add that if we locate a potential site, he can look at it and create a masterplan to see what the possibility for a maximum sized project. We would start with the outdoor courts and then review the possibility of indoor courts.
- The site would require a concrete slab, flat, with 1 % slope. It will also require gritty service for good traction. Ideally would could enclose a portion of the building to include a heated roof, air conditioning, and garage doors for use in the summer. This would be accessible to anyone.
- Craig reminded the representatives from this group to evaluate maintenance costs as they relate to power, water, etc.
- Pat Doyle offered a background of this board. This board is made up of city and county members and we address issues within the county and the city. The county does not have dedicated park staff like the city does. However, the county does have dedicated park land. The vast majority of the land is undeveloped. He is unsure how this would work in a county park. Spencer stated the county is not in a place to even look at an opportunity such as this.
- Chuck added their goal is to grow the sport and have a dedicated facility. Their desired timeline is sooner than later. Chuck is looking at a 3-year timeline.
- They hope to have a capital campaign to begin construction within a year. John stated they anticipate they will need \$220,000 for 4 outdoor courts which includes the land.
- Kristi offered to work with the Helena Pickleball community on evaluating potential properties within the city. County representative agreed to organize a meeting as well.

2020 Proposed Fee Schedule: Kristi Ponozzo

- Kristi provided an update of the draft park use fees for 2020 which is anticipated to go before the commission in January. Commissioners asked for resident and non-resident fees. In looking at other municipalities throughout Montana, non-resident fees are about 12% higher than resident fees. They are not final yet. The fees are created in an effort to cover our operating costs.
- Golf fees are evaluated every year. We are also introducing open lands fees.
- Please send comments and/or suggestions to Kristi via email (kponozzo@helenamt.gov).

Consolidation of Boards

- Kristi was instructed to hold a listening session to discuss board efficiencies in the city. This process included a public survey which was posted to the web.
- There were several recommendations and opportunities for potential collaboration of boards.

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- She was given a direction from the commission to create a resolution to dissolve the Civic Center Board. That resolution will go to the commission at the December 16 commission meeting.

- **Action Item(s)**

- None.

- **Reports**

City Parks and Recreation Director Report	Kristi Ponozzo, Director
City Parks and Recreation Maintenance Report	Craig Marr, Parks Superintendent
County Report	Spencer Starke (or Representative)
Helena School District	Neal Murray (or Representative)
Helena Police Department	Berkley Conrad (or Representative)
BOARDS REPORTS	
Fair Board	Leah Norberg
HOLMAC	Ross Johnson
Lincoln Parks Board	Ernie Lundberg / Nyle Howsmon

Parks Maintenance - Craig

- We have received a final engineering report on the Fire Tower. We do have a list of engineers that can work on this type of structure. We will also work with the Preservation Alliance in looking at grant opportunities to defray some of the costs to repair.
- The new pool liner contract has been approved through the commission and we will begin redoing that in the spring.

Recreation Report - Kait

- The Memorial Park Ice Rink is ready to open. We will be opening on December 19. Kait added some small changes to make it more festive (lights have been added as have tables).
- We have our Parks and Recreation Winter Guide out.

Parks Report - Pat

- Crews have started flooding the ice rinks.
- We are wrapping up irrigation and dirt work.
- We have the well plumbed in at Hill park.
- Ell house has been painted and roof on
- There is a new swing set (the expression swing set) at Clinton Park.
- We installed an ADA wheelchair swing at Memorial Park.

County Report - Spencer

- They are currently doing some research on what a preliminary county commission parks board will look like.

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Police Report - Berkley

- Berkley provide a calls for service report.
- Last month we had 33 calls for service. 11 calls were to Centennial Park. There were 3 calls to Memorial Park, 3 calls to Cruise Park, 2 calls to Hill Park, 1 call at Lincoln Park, 4 at Sherron Park, 2 at Bill Roberts Golf Course, 1 at Women’s Park, 1 at Waukesha Park and 1 at Batch.
- Most of the calls were animal complaints, lost property, controlled substance, walk trough’s, and abandoned vehicles.
- Berkley reminded everyone of the raised intersection at Neill and Fuller.
- Parade of Lights was held last Friday. HPD had a float.

Fair Board

- None.
- The Fair Board meets the 4th Wednesday of every month from 11:30 am – 1:00 pm.

HOLMAC

- There is much discussion of new trails.
- The Chapter 7 of the Open Lands Work Plan has been drafted. It seems to be very general.

• Communications and Future Agenda Items (Board Members)

- Future: Board Consolidation/Efficiencies Updates

• Next Meeting Date

- Move to 8th January 8, 2020 (January 1 is New Year’s)

• Other

• Adjournment

- With no further business, the City-County Parks Board adjourned at 1:00 pm.

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