



City of Helena

CITY-COUNTY PARKS ADVISORY BOARD SUMMARY Wednesday, February 7, 2018



City Members

- Pat Doyle
- Ross Johnson
- Steve Baiamonte

County Members

- Dave Payne
- Ken Wallace
- Nyle Howsmon (Lincoln Parks Board)
- Ernie Lundberg (Lincoln Parks Board)

Joint Member

- Kalli Kind, School District Representative

Commission Representatives

- Heather O'Loughlin, City Commissioner
- Susan Good-Geise, County Commissioner

Staff Contact

- Lewis and Clark County Representative
- Amy Teegarden, Parks and Recreation Director
- Craig Marr, Parks Superintendent
- Recreation and Aquatics Program Manager
- Jennifer Schade, Recorder

LOCATION: City-County Building, Room 426

TIME: 11:30 am – 1:00 pm

Visitor(s): **Stacy Sommer, Dave Smith, Jayson Zander, David Tortora, Mary Hollow, Evan Kulesa, Jim Utterback, Heather DeGeest, Randy Robinson, QC Soccer, James Johnson, QC Football Club, Peggy Stringer**

1. Call to Order

Chairman Pat Doyle called the City-County Parks Board Meeting to order at 11:37 am.

2. Establish Quorum/Introductions/Review Agenda/Approval of Minutes

- Chairman Pat Doyle established a quorum. There were no noted changes to the agenda.
- With no noted correction, Dave moved to approve the January minutes as presented. Steve seconded. Motion carried.

3. Comments from Persons Present

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

Randy Robinson from Queen City Soccer, and James Johnson, Queen City Football presented.

- Randy and James were asking for clarification in the use of the City of Helena sports fields.
- The city of Helena continues to receive a high demand of field use requests each year. Amy stated that in November of 2017, the city parks office contacted all potential teams regarding

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some clarified and expanded policies and procedures for field reservations. The following priority classifications were noted:

Priority A: All Helena P&R programs and classes for youth and adults.

Priority B: Helena P&R partners and user groups with current and signed use agreements.

***Scheduled use will not exceed “historic” levels. Historic levels are defined by 2017 #'s.**

Priority C: Sanctioned Helena School District practice, games, and tournaments.

Priority D: Citizens, non-profits, and private organizations who reside inside the city limits. *(Verification of residency must be submitted with each field and/or court request to qualify.)*

***Leagues and teams must provide copies of organizational by-laws to determine residency. *Beginning in 2019, leagues and teams will be required to provide rosters. Priority will be given to those with over 75% participants residing in the city of Helena.**

***“High school” and “Youth” is defined as a person under the age of 18 or a person eligible to participate in high-school or school sponsored events.**

Priority E: Other organizations, non-profits, groups, and individuals who reside outside the city limits.

***New teams and organizations are not guaranteed field use space.**

- It is also important to note that these are “Sports fields” not just soccer fields. We are accommodating not only soccer, but lacrosse, rugby, flag football, etc.
- Randy made note that there were exceptions made last year and he is inquiring about the change.
- The city recommends these two soccer programs visit with Helena Youth Soccer Association about utilizing the fields at Seibel.
- When asked about the potential use at Sierra Park, Randy and James were informed that park is county property. Randy then stated they will help fund improvements to turn this park into a soccer complex.
- Amy added that this issue is one we will address when looking at our parks plan. With more continuance of increase in organized teams forming, the city cannot meet the demand. Some of the exceptions referenced were made for Queen City because they formed a new league and had no place to play. We did tell them that this was a one-time-only exception. Seibel fields are available to use, but not everyone wants to pay their fees. When asked about the city involvement in Seibel Fields, Amy stated the only reason the city was involved in the building of that complex was to provide open space bond money for improvements. Our only association now is to potentially help with scheduling but there has not been a demand for that. We do know that the school district uses those fields for competitions.
- Many of our parks have open field spaces and we have been directing users to those fields as well (i.e., Waukesha, Barney).

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- Sierra Park is county property, it has its own parks board, and was done in partnership with Rossiter School. Randy and James stated they have been unable to contact anyone. Susan recommended they contact Roger Baltz, Chief Administrative Officer of Lewis and Clark County. His direct telephone is 406.447.8304. Perhaps he can facilitate a meeting with the Sierra Park Board to discuss this issue. Susan would like to participate in this meeting.
- Through our comprehensive planning effort, Amy hopes to rectify some of these issues.
- Dave agreed that as much as possible we need to coordinate with the county parks to provide additional opportunities.
- Susan – when county does subdivision, we require a certain amount of parkland or cash in lieu payment. Maybe we need to look rules and policies to take some of the cash in lieu and put that money in a larger pool to help all subdivisions for the county at large. We also may want to look at reinvigorating the Sierra Parks Board.
- Stacy recommended the soccer clubs look at LaCasa Grande in East Helena.

4. Unfinished Business

None.

5. Presentations/Discussion Items

Update on comprehensive Parks Plan / GreenPlay, LLC – Amy

- The city has negotiated our part of the parks plan with GreenPlay. The county has their contract in review. Once contracts have been signed, we will begin the process of our park planning effort. Today's discussion is very timely as this is why we decided to approach the update of our city plan and county plan into a parallel effort as we really do live in play as a regional area. In reviewing our planning efforts, we can begin to look at shared issues, challenges, and opportunities.
- Timing is right and we will be reaching out to our stakeholders. We are hoping for a kick off planning effort in March.
- Session is coming up. If there is a statute change, we need to be thinking about this now.

6. Action Items

Helena-Area Regional Trails System / Steering Committee Discussion – Amy

- Amy presented a memo to the board for review.
- Trails in the Helena region lie in a jurisdictional mix of private, city, county, state, and federal lands that provides a mix of recreational experiences and opportunities. Trail development has evolved from individual trail activities and experiences into an informal interconnected trail "system".
- With the support from partner representatives (Prickly Pear Land Trust and the US Forest Service), city staff is recommending the organization of a steering committee through a joint resolution of the City and County Commissions. The steering committee will provide a collective vision and strategic management direction while being a liaison for and between land managers and the Helena Area Trails Committee.
- Why a formal resolution? Amy said it brings formality to the partners working together who then work with the people on the ground.
- Mary – PPLT is a primary and private partner to this effort. PPLT has since developed a trails committee that now has broader membership that would be the implementation arm of the

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steering committee. People have volunteered a lot of time. The key role and need we have seen over the last few years is more cross-boundary and collaborative communication between the primary stakeholder entities so management strategies are better implemented and coordinated. The planning from the steering committee will provide great direction for all the volunteers and those on the ground. It is clear that better coordination at the top tier is one outcome we are collectively looking forward to. Mary also thanked commissioner Geise. It really is time to look more comprehensively in a regional direction.

- In reviewing the memo, Susan stated this is a good idea. She did recommend that we have some of the property owners who abut some of the current trails serve on this committee to get their point of view as well. Mary stated that PPLT membership is largely comprised of homeowners living adjacent to the trails system. However, we want that feedback at some level later in the process.
- Pat – how does HOLMAC fit into this process? Amy stated that HOLMAC will continue to be a city advisory group. They also look at other things beyond trails such as vegetation management needs other recreational needs and amenities, etc.
- The trails committee is co-chaired with the forest service trails person, the city’s open lands manager and Evan with PPLT (trails coordinator).
- Ross – what organizations would be represented on this committee? Is this related more to recreation trails or also transportation trails? Amy stated some of the stakeholders discussed would include:
 1. Land managers from the city, county, BLM, the forest service and potentially state parks.
 2. PPLT – representing the land trust and non-profit organizations.
 3. Medical community representative
 4. Business representative – from the economic standpoint
 5. County representative
- Mary added they tried to be as encompassing in their thoughts as possible.
- In answer to Ross’ second question, this will include all trails, whether recreational, transportation, and even back country trails as well as open lands and urban trails.
- Ross stated he feels it is useful when they are interconnected.
- Ernie added that he is part of a group called Envision Lincoln. Part of this group is developing some sort of interconnected trail system around Lincoln. Sounds like we are doing this on a larger scale than just Helena. Amy agreed and said that we could even work with the folks in Lincoln to see what opportunities are there. Are there places on the national forest that may have opportunities as well? We may even work with the Montana City Trails committee. It’s our effort for better planning and management.
- This is an action item and there is a recommended motion. Recommended motion is as follows:

Motion made to recommend to the Helena City Commission and the L&C County Commission that a joint resolution is considered that recognizes the value of creating a collective vision for managing trails as a multi-jurisdictional regional system; and establishing a Helena-Area Regional Trails Steering Committee comprised of representatives of land managers, trail users and community organization representatives.

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- Susan wants the abutters included in the motion. She would like to amend the motion to include adjoining property owners are part of the steering committee. Pat asked if that would have to be included in today’s motion. Ross asked how property owners would be identified.
- Amy stated that the resolution would identify the following stakeholders:
 - ✚ Forest Service Representative (no name)
 - ✚ City Representative (no name)
 - ✚ County Representative (no name)
 - ✚ PPLT Representative (no name), and
 - ✚ Adjacent Property Owner (no name)
- As the resolution is passed, it would be up to city and county staff to populate those representatives.
- Amy added that we could even advertise through a public process for a representative in the adjacent property owner category.
- There would be consultation between the city and county.
- Amy stated the adjacent property owner will be drafted into the resolution.
- Based on this discussion, Ross moved to adopt the motion as presented Steve seconded. Motion carried.

7. Reports

City	Amy Teegarden	Parks	Craig Marr
County	County representative	Fair Board	Pat Doyle
HOLMAC	Dave Payne	Playgrounds	Stacy Sommer
Lincoln Parks Board	Nyle Howsmon	School District	Kalli Kind
Recreation	Vacant	HRSA	Deb Grebenc

City – Amy

- Amy welcomed David Tortora to our department. David is a VISTA Volunteer and will be working on our 6th Ward Garden Park Project. He comes to us from Connecticut. He will periodically provide updates to this board.
- We are in the process of working on our FY19 budgets.
- Amy mentioned that we have discontinued calls for service counts at this point unless there is further direction from this board. We may begin this process again should we see a need.
- There has been a request to change our open container ordinance in the downtown area. More information will be forthcoming. Ross is hopeful that our comprehensive plan may advise us our best management practices. Amy stated this will definitely be a part of that discussion. Our planning effort will only be as good as what we tell GreenPlay.
- Steve stated he still believes that we can close hours and define the parameters. This will all be addressed in the planning efforts.

County – No representative present

- None.

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HOLMAC – Dave

- HOLMAC is in the process of reviewing online comments for the Open Lands Work Plan.
Action Item: Jennifer will send out the comments for the board to review.

Lincoln Parks Board

- The board is moving forward with legal action against the company that was awarded the restroom contract. This contract was awarded a year ago and there still has been no progress.
- To date, Ernie has recorded 34 inches of snow on the ground in his yard. Snowmobilers are enjoying the weather.

Recreation - Amy

- We are in the process of reviewing applications for the Recreation / Aquatics Manager. 12 applicants met our minimum qualifications. We hope to begin interviews next week.

Parks – Craig

- The parks maintenance department is still working on snow removal. We plan to keep the ice rink open as long as the ice is skate-able.
- There will be a Fleur de Fat Chance Fatbike Race at Centennial Park on February 10th. This is the first event held in Helena.
- Parks has been helping out code enforcement with sidewalk complaints/compliance.
- The maintenance department is helping with trailhead maintenance. The person designated to help with this is funded by the open lands budget.
- The Urban Forestry employees are attending TRAQ (Tree Risk Assessment Qualification) courses out at the fairgrounds. The qualification consists of a 2-day educational course followed by a ½ day assessment that includes both a written and field component.
- Pat Marron is attending Maintenance School with NRPA. Once completed, he will begin working on maintenance standards for different aspects of the parks.
- Field maintenance will be a top priority as there has been a lot of field use in the past years. We receive complaints if the fields are not in good condition, but they are used so much that we have difficulty scheduling rest time. We came up with some signage (closed for rest and rotation, closed due to weather) that helps with the rest period of the fields. There has already been a lot of field scheduling this year. As mentioned earlier, this is a problem in Helena that needs addressed.
- Steve asked if the city does maintenance projects outside of the city parks (i.e., the walking mall). Technically, the walking mall is considered a closed street. The parks department is partially funded by the streets department for that maintenance. Most things outside of parks are reimbursed through other designations.
- Amy announced that Max Pigman from Lewis and Clark Brewery wants to put on a Bikes Brews and Blues event at Memorial park with camping in Centennial Park.
- The Big Sky Pride March is scheduled for June. We anticipate 7,000 in attendance.
- There have been a lot of cross country skiers this year.

Playable playgrounds

- Stacy stated fundraising efforts have begun.

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- The Princess Tea Party is scheduled for March 4th from 2pm – 5pm at the Helena Civic Center. Tickets are available at <http://www.helenasplayableplayground.com/>.

HRSA - Peggy

- HRSA is looking for board members.
- They are doing a capital campaign for Helena. The “Quarter Million Dollar Club” hopes to raise money from citizens. You can be on front lines of supporting this initiative by giving \$200 towards the project. We will have more information next month.

8. Communications and Future Agenda Items (Board Members)

9. Next Meeting Date: April 4, 2018

10. Adjournment

With no further business, the City-County Parks Board meeting adjourned at 12:57 pm.

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Persons with disabilities requiring accommodations to participate in the County's meetings, services, programs, or activities should contact Aaron Douglas, as soon as possible to allow sufficient time to arrange for the requested accommodation, at any of the following: (406) 447-8316, 316 North Park Avenue, Room 303, Helena, MT 59623; ; TTY Relay Service [1-800-253-4091](tel:1-800-253-4091) or 711, adouglas@lccountymt.gov.

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