

**MINUTES  
CITY OF PLAINWELL  
PARKS & TREES COMMISSION  
September 15, 2016**

1. Marcus Taylor called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.
2. Roll Call: Present: Marcus Taylor, Matthew Bradley, Marsha Keeler, Sandy Lamorandier, Justin Burchett, Bunny LaDuke. Absent: Todd Overhuel. Also attending: Public Works Superintendent Rick Updike.

Commissioners welcomed Matthew to the Parks & Trees Commission.

3. Approval of Minutes:

***Bunny LaDuke moved to accept and place on file the minutes and summary of the regular monthly meeting of August 11, 2016 as presented. Sandy Lamorandier supported the motion. On voice vote, motion carried unanimously.***

4. Parks:

Sherwood

A: Park Maintenance Report - Marsha Keeler

Marsha reported that the park looks good but that the portables affect the park's aspect. Rick noted that there is no budget for construction at this time, he gave a brief overview of the city budgeting process.

Pell

A: Park Maintenance Report - Bunny LaDuke

Bunny reported that the plants in the sculpture bed are stunted; the rest of the park is nice.

Hicks

A: Park Maintenance Report - Todd Overhuel

Todd was not present. Rick noted that the DPW fixed another irrigation problem; he believes the irrigation system is starting to go.

Cook

A: Park Maintenance Report - Justin Burchett

Justin reported that the park looks good.

Kenyon

A: Park Maintenance Report – Matthew Bradley

Matthew drove out to Cook Park, as well as the others. He noted a lot of use in all the parks. Rick noted that the dugout fence is breaking down from players climbing over it; it needs to be replaced with a fence having a 4x4-in frame to withstand the abuse. A local softball league uses the softball fields and maintains the infield and the striping. The park is irrigated but recently had a 12-station controller break. The DPW installed the spare controller but has not been able to find parts to repair the broken one. Hydraulic control systems are no longer used, so at some point we will have to upgrade to an electrically-operated system. Marcus noted that this is the biggest park in the city, extending into the woods on the north side.

Darrow

A: Park Maintenance Report - Sandy Lamorandier

Sandy reported that the park looks fine, although the seedling planted last spring by a neighbor looks 'iffy'.

Riverwalk Park \ Band Shell \ CBD

A: Park Maintenance Report - Marcus Taylor

Marcus reported that the flowers are so large that it is hard to see the pots, although you can tell we are approaching the end of summer.

Rick noted that the bridge baskets are about done. Commissioner consensus was to remove them, and to let Rick and Sandy decide when the rest of the baskets and planters should be removed. Sheryl noted that the irrigation time was shortened on the bridges, as the bridge planters were remaining soggy and they felt this was causing the issue with the biden; they were still run twice daily. Bunny asked DPW to find out if the liner used is coco.

5. Other Business

A. Agenda Creation

Justin noted that the Commissioners want to participate in agenda creation for their meetings. Commissioners discussed having the Chair or a Commissioner take over agenda creation. It was decided to jointly highlight items at the end of each monthly meeting, that they want to see return to the agenda for the next regular monthly meeting.

B. New Commissioner Information Packets

Sandy distributed information she feels should become part of a standardized New Parks & Trees Commissioner Information Packet, and asked for input on other items that might be appropriate. She add information on the Open Meeting Acts and its impact on email, and an explanation of the budgeting process. Sandy and Marcus will work together to gather information and put together a final Commissioner Information Packet.

C. Parks Commissioner to City Commissioner Liaison Updates

Justin noted that Todd has not attended meetings for several months. He asked if it would be possible to designate a Commissioner to act as Council Liaison, as he feels it is important that someone attend the Council meetings and keep Council aware of the plans and concerns of the Parks & Trees Commission. Sandy noted Todd has a job conflict with meeting schedules that has kept him from attending; she will look into options.

6. Open Business

A. Dog Park Update

The funding committee has met. They visited Cook Park and felt the initial layout was too small. They drafted a new layout that encompasses part of the parking lot and circle driveway. It is larger by about 30%. The funding committee is meeting every two weeks and events are being planned for spring.

Bunny reported that Bernie Pitcher of Michiana Stone will carve the bricks for \$12 each; he will supply them for \$1 each or we can buy them for \$0.75 each and deliver them to him.

Marcus reported that the grant application to DeLano has not yet been awarded funding. Bunny suggested that Denise call and ask for their criteria in judging the applications; this is a common practice. Marcus reported that the application to the community center was denied.

B. Park Reservation Rules, Signage

Justin reported that he loosely drafted a list of amenities and fees for each of the parks. Commissioners discussed resident vs non-resident rental, keying fees to the size of the group, for-profit vs non-profit events, key and clean up deposits, and events that partner with the city.. Consensus was that it is reasonable to expect to have a program in place by spring.

C. Schedule 2017 Flower Planning Workshops

Bunny, Marsha, Sandy and Sarah Taylor will all work on planning the flowers for 2017. Matthew's wife would enjoy participating but is unable to meet during the day. Sandy will coordinate meeting days and times.

D. Dog Park Grant & Funding Committee Update

Discussed above.

E. Pickle Ball Courts in Cook Park (Tony Gless)

Tony was not present; Bunny asked if he was contacted, Sandy left voice mails. Rick noted that the contractor Tony found has been difficult to contact.

F. Plainwell Auto Tree Removal Update

Sandy feels that the trees look bad and suggested Commissioners consider removing the trees and replacing them with a concrete slab, bike rack, and flower pots, with perhaps a mural on the building wall. Commissioners suggested we could leave one section on cemented and put in a small tree. Matthew volunteered to provide concept drawings of both plans. Commissioners suggested approaching the owner of Plainwell Auto about buying a bike rack customized to NAPA.

G. Bike Rack Locations – Downtown, Pell Park, Plainwell  
Tabled.

H. Hicks Park Input from Chula Vista

Bunny reported that Chula Vista suggested installing edging and ground cover in the barren area in Hicks Park that has become too shady for the grass to grow. They visualize a curving edge and pachysandra or something similar. She did not have a cost estimate.

7. Public Comments  
None.

8. Staff Comments  
Rick reported that the debt crew weeded the concrete barriers in M-89.

9. Chairman's Report  
None.

10. Commissioners' Comments  
None.

11. Next Meeting  
The next meeting will be Thursday, October 13, 2016 at 5 PM.

12. Adjournment  
Commissioners noted several item to return to the next agenda.

***Marsha Keeler moved to adjourn the meeting. Marcus Taylor supported the motion. On voice vote, motion carried unanimously.***

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:43 PM.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted,  
Sheryl Gluchowski  
Deputy Clerk