

City of Hastings
Parks and Recreation Commission Minutes
City Hall Council Chambers
September 11, 2012 – 6:00 PM UNAPPROVED

- 1) **Roll Call at 6 pm:** Commissioners Hawkins, Hedin, Miller, Schossow, Polehna, Smith and Juntunen, Parks & Recreation Director Bernstein, PRC Secretary Behrens
Absent: Commissioner Kimmen
- 2) **March Minutes:** Motion to approve June minutes as presented by Miller. Seconded by Smith. Passed unanimously.
- 3) **Setting Agenda:** No additions to agenda.
- 4) **Departmental Updates:** Department updates were reviewed with the commissioners. Bernstein also mentioned that the County Road 46/47 Trail Dedication Ceremony was held at 5:00 PM and was well attended by the PRC, City Council and Representative Denny McNamara, along with some City staff and residents. People are grateful for the new trail connection and are enjoying its natural beauty.
Miller asked about the status of the training facility that the Hastings Hockey Boosters had been working on. The City received a letter from the HHB that due to a lack of funding, the project is not being pursued at this time.
- 5) **Crestview Park Playground Update:** The installation of the new playground equipment is complete. Since this wasn't a traditional tower set, there was a lot more pipe to fit together, but the installation went well. The swings are set to be placed on Wednesday and the wood fiber fall protection will be placed. Hedin asked if we were able to include a piece similar to the "Sit and Spin" that was presented by the other manufacturer. Bernstein checked on the equipment, but unfortunately MN/WI Playground didn't offer anything similar that would fit into the budget at this time. Miller stated that he had seen the playground and that it looks great and is very unique.
- 6) **Tennis Court Repair Update:** Bernstein showed the commissioners some photos of the tennis court repairs. The large bird bath areas were cut out and removed by our staff in order to maximize the amount of work the contractor can do. Some subsoil corrections were made in these areas and then a tamper was used. The contractor made cement patches which take 2-3 weeks to cure. Bernstein also mentioned that we chose to do the project in the fall rather than next spring so that we can ensure the price doesn't increase and also because the usage is less in the fall so there is less disruption for players.
- 7) **Hastings Mississippi Boat Launch:** On Thursday, all bituminous material will be reclaimed and used as base material. The parking lots are all being repaved. Also, rip rap is being added to the river side of the hill down by the turn around at the east end of the parking lot. A cofferdam will be built so that the ramp can be removed and replaced with a new 2 lane ramp. The bollards will be removed and new curb installed.
Bernstein mentioned that the bridge project has complicated this project. The contractor wants to come in as scheduled. Staff is working with MnDOT and Hastings Police to find ways to get the contractor in on schedule so that we don't get any penalties.
- 8) **Mississippi River Boat Dock Dredging:** Staff has been working since spring to get the permit for the dredging around the public boat dock. We just found out that there is no mussel relocation necessary and were issued the permit and all permissions needed to proceed with the project. The City is planning to have the dredge spoils placed in the same spot the Corps has been placing their dredge spoils. We are looking at an October time frame because Portable Barge will be in Hastings for the other projects. The public dock will again be stored at Hub's for the winter.
- 9) **Birding Guide:** Thanks were given to Kevin Smith and the HEP members who worked on the Hastings Birding Guide. Bernstein shared that birding is the #1 leisure activity for people over 50, so this new guide should be popular. A tri-fold brochure was developed that includes much of the information on birding in Hastings and points people to the city website for even more information.
Smith thanked Kristin and Kevin for all their hard work on the guide, which turned out very well. This is another way to get tourists into Hastings.
- 10) **Maintenance Strategy:** Bernstein shared that the Parks & Recreation Department had a challenging summer. In the past, our maintenance staff consisted of 7 full-time employees, 8 seasonal employees, and assistance from two Dakota County programs. This year, we were down to 6 full-time employees and 3 seasonal employees. The County programs have been cut due to budget issues, so we were unable to avail ourselves of those services. The department's maintenance practices are still geared for a larger staff. There is a need to look at what we are able to accomplish and what needs to be reduced or eliminated. This winter, staff would like to list out all the maintenance tasks that are completed and then get the PRC's assistance in prioritizing those tasks.
Polehna agreed that this should be done and likes the idea of taking initiative instead of being reactionary. Miller feels that the government needs to be lean and efficient and unfortunately, some things won't get done. He agreed that this is a good strategy. Bernstein will probably get the tasks listed by staff in December/January and then will bring it to the PRC to prioritize. We would like to have this figured out before the 2013 spring season starts.

Schossow asked if other cities are dealing with similar issues and if we might be able to get some ideas from them. Bernstein has been in contact with other cities and some are struggling like we are – others are doing well. He will continue to network with other directors and get their thoughts.

11) **New Business:**

- The Great Rivers Confluence Symposium is being held at the River Falls Library on October 12th. All PRC members are invited to attend and are encouraged to contact Kristin if they would like to register.

12) **Old Business:**

- Polehna asked about the status of the dredging agreement with the Corps. The agreement has not been signed yet and will be brought forward at a future meeting.

MOTION to adjourn.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, October 9, 2012; 6:00 PM; City Hall Council Chambers

Adjourned at 6:51 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Kristin Behrens