



City of Sidney, MT
Park and Recreation Committee Meeting 3-20-24
March 20, 2024 5:00 PM
115 2nd Street SE | Sidney, MT 59270

The City Council meetings are open to the public attending in person, with masks encouraged when social distancing cannot be accomplished. If the public does not wish to participate in person, they are also invited to participate via a Zoom meeting. You can participate via phone:

Meeting ID: 713 080 5898 Passcode: 4332809 Call: 1-346-248-7799

Alderman Present: DiFonzo, Stevenson, Godfrey

Others Present: Mayor Norby, Clerk/Treasurer Chamberlin, PWD Hintz, Parks Superintendent Ridl, Pool Manager Tonya Garsjo, Scotty Sturgis (RC Baseball), Ryan Payne, Ross Rosaaen, Travis Bower (RC Baseball), Dianna Hammond

1. New Business

a. Richland County Baseball Moose Park Request

1. Change locks at park facilities
2. Lock the park down when not in use
3. Lease the park

1. Mr. Sturgis stated there has been issues with keys for them to get into the buildings and so they asked for a quote to replace the locks and keys, with baseball paying for those. He stated keys have been misplaced so new locks would be necessary. Alderwoman Godfrey asked if a code option would be more efficient and Mr. Bower stated it would be so different organizations would have different codes that could be removed instead of returning keys. Alderman Stevenson asked if the badge would be better, so codes are not floating around. Mr. Bower stated either system would be great but there are keys they give back at the end of the season, but others because of year-round maintenance they retain. Mayor Norby agreed the keypad option would be the best option. Mr. Bower stated there would be 2-3 different locks that would need to be replaced.

Motion was made to approve moving forward with getting the locks replaced working with PWD Hintz by Alderwoman Godfrey and seconded by Alderman Stevenson. All present voted aye.

2. Mr. Sturgis stated with HS Baseball and Legion baseball seasons coming, there has been vandalism in the previous years so they were hoping to paddle lock the park to keep this from happening. He stated RC Baseball is a non-profit that put around \$20,000 in field product that

was put into the field last year and it is being torn up by non-baseball actions, such as dogs coming into the park. He stated by locking it, it would help with this. Alderman DiFonzo stated many years ago there was a paddle lock on the gate except when it is being in use. Parks Superintendent Ridl stated she does not feel this will stop the vandalism, especially since there will still be access in the outfields. She stated she does not have an issue with it being locked but it could create more opportunities for vandalism since cops could not get into the gates. Mr. Bower stated they have also looked into putting up a perimeter around the infield during the off season to stop issues with the infield. Mr. Rosaaen stated he would discuss it with law enforcement and he feels the lock would deter some of the issues. Mrs. Garsjo stated as a neighbor of the park there is a lot of people coming and going from the park all hours and in order to stop people from getting into the park the gate would need to be replaced. Mr. Bower stated a low-cost security system to monitor the park might be the best option. Alderman DiFonzo stated he feels doing a perimeter fence for the infield is a good idea for protecting their investment, but they need to work with Parks Superintendent Ridl on placement for the irrigation system. Mrs. Garsjo stated motion lights would also help. Mr. Bower asked to be able to take these new ideas back to the board and come back to the Park and Recreation Committee.

3. Mr. Sturgis stated they had the idea for leasing in order to keep it locked up to prevent the vandalism. Mr. Bower stated with the previous discussion on how to prevent vandalism they do not need to pursue the lease. He stated he feels the current agreement is working very well. Mr. Sturgis asked if the outfield fences could be locked and PWD Hintz stated the public works does not need access so that would be fine. Mr. Bower stated RC Baseball just purchased a bus and they were wondering the thoughts on them building a cover for the bus at Moose Park. Alderman DiFonzo asked for them to get a plan in place and come back for the Council to review and then they would need to get a building permit. PWD Hintz stated they could also store the bus in the building the City is attempting to purchase by the City shop.

b. Lyndale Park Retrofit/Reno (Ross Rosaaen)

Mr. Bower stated they were attempting to get the lights fixed in Lyndale Park last year, but ran into issues and PWD Hintz stated there was issues with the ballasts that we will look into the costs of and share that information with RC Baseball.

Mr. Rosaaen stated the back-stop fence at Lyndale Park and dug-out benches are in need of repair. He stated the outfield fence is also in need of replacement/maintenance as it does not even touch the ground in several locations from the ground sinking. Parks Superintendent Ridl stated the fence was taken down to be sand blasted and rushed to be put back up without the sand blasting being done and when it was re-installed it was not done well. Mr. Rosaaen stated these improvements will help reinvigorate the baseball program. Alderman DiFonzo asked if Mr. Rosaaen could go to the park and look at everything with PWD Hintz and Parks Superintendent Ridl and he stated he would gladly do so.

Mr. Rosaaen stated if the City would be willing to purchase the supplies for the benches he would be willing to donate the labor and help however he can. Alderwoman Godfrey stated the RC Fairgrounds has excess benches available.

c. Svarre Pool 2024-Lap Swimming and Interior Seating

Alderman DiFonzo asked if these are things that the City council would need to give approval on or if these fall under the management of the pool and running of the pool. He stated the rules of the pool are managed by the Pool Manager. He stated Clerk/Treasurer Chamberlin has contacted MMIA on if there is a liability issue for non-swimmers to be on the pool deck and she has not heard back from them.

PWD Hintz stated DPHHS controls the rules for the pools and pertaining to the non-swimmers being on the pool deck the rule was rescinded and amended. PWD Hintz stated excess people on the deck can be a distraction to the lifeguards and so it has continued as a pool rule. Alderman DiFonzo stated he feels the more on deck there is an increase in liability for the City. Pool Manager Garsjo stated she agrees that non-swimmers should not be in the pool, but the pool can become a more friendly environment by adding seating to the deck with sunbathing chairs and umbrellas. She stated they would also still not be allowed on deck during swim lessons and the chairs would be easy maintenance and care for the lifeguards. Alderman Stevenson stated the liability of kids on deck would be the same for any park with the parking lots.

Pool Manager Garsjo stated they could get sponsorships for the chairs to pay for them and it would make it a more family friendly pool. Alderman DiFonzo stated he has no problems with chairs being added but does feel the deck should not be open to everyone. PWD Hintz stated a shade canopy should be put over the bench seating outside the fence also. Clerk/Treasurer Chamberlin stated regardless they would have to pay to access the pool, whether they have intentions to swim or not. She further stated they could look into the purchase of the chairs in the budget process and Pool Manager Garsjo stated fundraising to have the chairs sponsored would bring the community in for investment into the pool.

Mr. Payne stated he has requested to have designated lap swimming during the adult swimming portion of the pool schedule. He stated without lane lines there would be a liability for the City. He stated by having 2 lanes going 50-meters would give the opportunity for up to 10 lap-swimmers. Pool Manager Garsjo stated adult swim is 5:30pm to 6:30pm and there is up to 14 swimmers doing aerobics in the shallow end of the pool and this could interfere with that. She stated there are also lap swimmers that prefer the shorter distance and the most lap swimmers in one session she has had was 5. She stated the pool does not have lap ropes for the 50-meter. Mr. Payne stated he feels more people would lap swim if these changes happened. He stated by moving the aerobics to the side in the rest of the pool there would be room. PWD Hintz stated to install the lane lines every day would be a lot of work for the lifeguards to do. Pool Manager Garsjo stated the handicap ladder could hinder the the lanes for lap swimming. Mr. Payne stated by circle swimming 5 plus people can be in one lane and the lap swimmers could assist in the putting the lines out with two 25-meter lines being combined. Pool Manager Garsjo stated the cross ropes would have to stay out. Mr. Payne stated maybe fundraising could happen to purchase the ropes.

The Park and Recreation Committee further discussed the designated lap swimming, which included interfering with water aerobics, no other time available at the pool than with adult swim, the responsibility of fundraising for, storage and installing the ropes each day, the possibility of a poll being done for gauging interest, and the impacts of trying it for one year.

Motion was made to recommend doing 1-lane of lap swimming for for the 2024 season, tracking the use and to revisit it at the end of the year with the 50-meter of lap-swimming rope and storage being fundraised for and the user being responsible for putting them in and taking them out during the 1-hour adult swim time slot.

Motion made by DiFonzo, Seconded by Godfrey.
Voting Yea: DiFonzo, Godfrey, Stevenson