

REGULAR MEETING OF THE WEST BRANCH PLANNING COMMISSION HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER OF CITY HALL, 121 NORTH FOURTH STREET, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2016.

Chairman Tim Schaiberger called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Present: Members: Bob David, Kara Fachting, Heather Grace, Jan Hasty, Mike Jackson, June Longstreet, Shirley McClenahen, Tim Schaiberger, and Dan Weiler.

Absent: None

Others officers in attendance: John Dantzer, City Clerk/Treasurer

All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

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MOTION BY FACHTING, SECOND BY MCCLENAHEN, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE REGULAR MEETING HELD JANUARY 12, 2016

Motion carried

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At 6:02 p.m. Chairman Schaiberger opened the public hearing to accept public comment regarding the 5-Year Recreation Plan.

Member McClenahen asked if there was a priority list established yet for the plan. Manager Grace noted that currently the top three things on the list which were voted on after several meetings by the Recreation Committee were a splash pad at the park, an amphitheater/pavilion at the park, and extensions to the River Walk.

Manager Grace noted that they also had some requests to add a dog park. Member Jackson raised his concerns over the liability of the dog park. Manager Grace noted that she does have a meeting scheduled with the City’s liability insurance provider to go over any issues with either the dog park or the splash pad.

Member Jackson noted that he would like to make sure the list is small enough that they can focus on completing what is on the list rather than just put a bunch of things on it that they can’t accomplish within the next five years.

Members McClenahen, David, and Longstreet noted the need for additional parking around the park. Member Fachting noted that there are additional parking areas closer to downtown that if were advertised more could be utilized and is only a short walk to the park by using the Riverwalk. Manager Grace noted that they did have requests for additional wayfinding signage on the Riverwalk and that maybe they could incorporate additional parking locations into that same signage.

Member David asked about the possibility of adding a separate Pickleball court because it seemed to be popular and would free up the tennis courts and not require them to take nets up and down all of the time.

Manager Grace asked about for opinions on adding an ice skating/hockey rink to the park. It was the consensus of the Commission that it was used in the past and that they think it would be used if we had one. There were questions raised on how much it cost to put up and maintain and Manager Grace noted that she would reach out to some other municipalities and see if anyone else did this and if so how much it cost to purchase and maintain.

Member David noted that if the recreation center does go through then he would like to see the Riverwalk extension to extend it from the park to the location of the center become the main priority. He noted that if someone is willing to invest in the helping the City with a recreation center then we should be doing whatever we can to help him.

Chairman Schaiberger asked to have everyone submit their top three to Manager Grace to get an idea on what they think should be the focus of the Recreation Committee. The results were as follows:

1. Riverwalk extension
2. Amphitheater/pavilion
3. 3-way tie – Wayfinding Signage
 - Splashpad
 - Ice/hockey rink

MOTION BY SCHAIBERGER, SECOND BY JACKSON, TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING ON THE 5-YEAR RECREATION PLAN.

Motion carried

Manager Grace noted that she would be taking the input from the meeting to the Recreation Committee and then have them come up with a final 5- Year Plan. She would then like to schedule a second February Planning Commission meeting to approve the final draft of the Plan. It was the consensus of the Commission to hold the second meeting on Tuesday February 23 at 6:00.

Manager Grace noted that the meeting scheduled for March 8th would have to be rescheduled due to that being the same day as the Presidential Primary,

MOTION BY WEILER, SECOND BY FACHTING, TO RESCHEDULE THE MARCH PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING FOR WEDNESDAY MARCH 9 AT 6:00.

Motion carried

Member Fachting asked about the status of A&R Power Sports and their sign. It was noted that the sign that was not approved was taken down.

Member McClenahen commended the DPW for their work on keeping the roads clear.

Member David commended Manager Grace for having her cut down on the huge snow piles on the corner of roads that were creating safety hazards.

Member Longstreet voiced her approval of the decision by the City Council to not close any of the railroad crossings that were presented to the City from the State.

Manager Grace noted that the City did receive a call inquiring on ordinances within the City for medical marijuana dispensaries. She did note that those are still considered not allowable by the State. She further noted that other areas are starting to look into zoning issues with medical marijuana caregivers because in some cases they can grow excessive amounts. Member Jackson noted that it has been talked about in the past and that their stance was as long as the State recognized it as illegal then they would follow the States recommendations and guidelines. Manager Grace noted that with more states moving towards legalizing marijuana, that they would have to decide if they want to take a proactive approach to the zoning of these types of businesses. Member Jackson stated that he would like to be proactive.

Member McClenahen asked if the brew pub/distilleries were passed by the Council and Manager Grace noted that they have been approved.

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Meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.