

**CITY OF BIG RAPIDS  
PARK AND RECREATION BOARD  
APPROVED MINUTES  
March 10, 2016**

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Richard Spedowske at 6:30 p.m.

Present: Richard Spedowske, Mark Brejcha, Karen Simmon, Caryn Schonert,  
Megan Eppley, Deborah Chipman, Stacy Pedigo

Absent: Jason Kostecki

Other: Heather Bowman, Park & Recreation Director  
Mark Gifford, Assistant City Manager  
Paula Weipert, Board Secretary

**MINUTES:**

*Motion by Deborah Chipman, seconded by Karen Simmon to approve the January 14, 2016 minutes as presented. Motion Passed.*

*Motion by Deborah Chipman, seconded by Karen Simmon to approve the February 11, 2016 minutes as presented. Motion Passed.*

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

None.

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

None.

**GENERAL BUSINESS:**

**Clay Cliffs:**

Mark Gifford introduced Marlies Manning of Manning Design, Landscape Architecture, LLC. Marlies has been hired by the City to prepare the Master Plan for the Clay Cliffs Nature Area.

Marlies spoke on her experiences with exploring Clay Cliffs. Included within the board packets are copies of the Plans that she has drafted. Marlies presented her Phasing Plan for the area. The highlighted locations on these plans indicate specific points of interest along with existing foot trails and suggestions for improvements like adding benches, signs, bridges and additional plantings.

A public hearing was held in mid-February and a good amount of feedback was received from those in attendance. Most would like the area to be left in its natural state.

Richard Spedowske asked about the ability for emergency access in case of an injury. Marlies pointed out a few areas for possible access points.

Megan Eppley suggested that there be a garden area added at the south end for the students at Brookside School to utilize.

There are plans this Spring to plant Prairie Grass and work on the trail. Megan suggested using volunteers to plant the grass.

Members thanked Marlies for her work, applauded her presentation and are excited to move forward with her ideas.

### **Disc Golf:**

Heather introduced Foster Neill, President of Big Rapids Disc Golf Club. Foster spoke on the groups plans to add additional holes at the course in Northend Riverside Park. They would like to do a fundraiser to raise money to go towards the purchase of cement, signs and baskets.

They are requesting that the money collected would come to the City and be placed in an account.

Board members had many suggestions with regards to sponsorship signage. Richard suggested that the signs be kept equal in size no matter the amount received. Stacy felt that for the most part, businesses appreciate the low costs in trade for sponsor advertising.

Heather explained that there would be a line item set up in the City's budget to accommodate the current and future funds received for this fundraiser.

*Motion by Mark Brejcha, seconded by Stacy Pedigo to recommend the City Commission approve the fundraising efforts of the Big Rapids Disc Golf Group for the purchase of cement, signage and baskets for the additional holes being added to the current course at Northend Riverside Park and to allow for a line item to be added within the City budget to accommodate the monies received from this fundraiser. Motion passed.*

### **Holland Park:**

Heather introduced Jean Bennett, Co-Chair of the Holland Park Veterans & Homefront Heroes Memorial. Jean spoke to the group and updated them on the progress of their fundraising efforts and what has and still needs to be done in the park. There is a camera in place but it does not function yet. There will be 2 additional flowerbeds added. The pillars and benches are done. The lights are going in and the bricks, approximately 400, have been ordered. They will be shipped here in April.

Jean presented a replica of the statue that is currently being constructed by students at the MOISD Career Center, and will be placed in Holland Park. This statue is of a family walking together and symbolizes the Homefront Heroes. The father figure in the statue would be normal male height of 5'7" and all other figures would represent lifelike sizes as well. The entire piece would be approximately 12 feet long. This statue will be placed along the southern sidewalk that leads to the Memorial area. This figure is an addition to the original plan drafted by Manning Deign in the beginning. There was much discussion regarding the size of this statue.

There is enough money raised now to allow for an endowment fund to be set up. The Blue Star Highway will hold a dedication in August. The Grand Opening will be in September.

**Mitchell Creek Grant:**

Mark spoke on the work that is intended to be done in the park this year. The City would like to apply for a Passport Grant to assist in completing some of the improvements in the park. Items for the application include the parking lot, trail replacement/relocation, conversion to LED lights, seating, walkway repairs and stormwater improvements. The City would need to match 55% of the total project cost of approximately \$100,000 or \$55,000. Portions of the pavilion roof are finished and are visible on campus.

*Motion by Megan Eppley, seconded by Deborah Chipman to recommend to the City Commission to approve the Passport Grant Application. Motion passed.*

**Win Kellum update:**

Heather spoke on correspondence she has had with the Flint Job Corps group. They held a meeting with them here to discuss the dugout project that the City would like them to do. They provided a list of supplies that will be needed for the project. The City will look to pay for lodging and food.

The bricks have been donated by Bay Aggregate, Inc from Bay City. They will be hauled here by LC Materials once the frost laws come off the roads.

Mark Brejcha suggested that the City host a reception for the workers once the project is finished.

**Park Master Plan:**

Mark advised the Board that the Master Plan we currently have expires in 2017 and thus we will need a new one. Mark Sweppenheiser, Neighborhood Services Director, will be working on this. When it is ready for review, a copy will be forwarded to the Board members.

**Ice Rink:**

The ice rink has thawed and is slowly draining at this time. The plan to level the field this fall may not happen as there would be too much ground that would need work.

The rink has been in use for 3 years now. May need a new liner next year.

**Vendors in Park:**

Included in the Board packets are copies of 2 map areas. These areas depict where a vendor has been given permission by the City Manager to set up his stand for selling food items. One area is near Wolverine World Wide, and will be set up to sell during lunch or other breaks there. The second location is near the Industrial Park ballfield. The vendor will be set up during all ball games this season.

Heather spoke about there being no policies or rules in place that speak about vendors in the parks. There was discussion at an earlier meeting with no resolution. There is a need

for a policy to be written. The Police Committee needs to meet and start working on this as soon as they can. She will contact Committee members to set up a date.

**SPECIAL EVENTS:**

Copies of current and upcoming Special Events are included in the Board packets.

**STAFF REPORTS: Recreation**

Heather updated the Board members on her current programs that she is offering. There will be a 4-H cooking program offered at the Armory.

She is working on the Girls on the Run program. There are approximately 100 less girls signed up as 2 schools, Morley Stanwood and Chippewa Hills, do not have teams this year.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS/BUSINESS:**

None.

**UNSCHEDULED BUSINESS:**

Deb inquired about the decision on the building of a shelter at the Dog Park. Heather would like to discuss this at the next meeting.

Heather will make a note for next winter regarding the snowmobiles that are utilizing the soccer field area at Industrial Park.

There is a section of fencing missing above Mitchell Creek Park north of the parking lot behind Chemical Bank. This will be addressed with the Street Superintendent.

**The next meeting of the Park and Recreation Board will be April 14, 2016 at 6:30 pm in the City Commission Room.**

Meeting Adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Paula Weipert