

**CITY OF BIG RAPIDS
PARK AND RECREATION BOARD
APPROVED MINUTES
January 12, 2017**

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

Present: Richard Spedowske, Megan Eppley, Caryn Schonert, Deb Chipman,
Karen Simmon

Absent: Mark Brejcha, Jason Kostecki

Other: Mark Gifford, City Manager
Heather Bowman, Public Works Director
Paula Weipert, Board Secretary

MINUTES:

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None.

COMMUNICATIONS:

None.

GENERAL BUSINESS:

Dog Park:

Heather spoke on the previous meeting where a request was made to make changes to the current rules in place at the Dog Park. The request is to add the requirement for all dogs to have been spayed or neutered prior to being allowed into the fenced in areas of the Park.

Heather directed the Board to an email that she received from Mark Brejcha regarding his stance on this requested change. A copy of this email is within all member's packets.

Eric Williams, City Attorney, was present to address the concerns brought out at the November meeting with regards to liability. He found that there had been no police reports filed on any incidents at the park. Eric spoke on there being no liability on the City whether there were rules posted or not. He spoke on municipalities, in general, having immunity. Eric spoke about making a certain rule to get an end-result may not cover other situations which will achieve the same end-result.

There was discussion from Board members present. The general discussion was to have a self-policed park, as is currently. The decision was to maintain current rules as currently posted.

Motion by Megan Eppley, seconded by Richard Spedowske to maintain the Brutus Dog Park Rules as currently posted.

Yeas: Caryn Schonert, Deborah Chipman, Karen Simmon, Megan Eppley, Richard Spedowske

Nays: None

Park & Recreation Master Plan:

Mark spoke on the draft copy within each Board member's packets. There was some discussion.

Motion by Richard Spedowske, seconded by Karen Simmon to recommend the City Commission approve the Parks and Recreation Master Plan for 2017-2021.

Staff Changes:

Mark spoke on the changes that are taking place with staff at the City upon the retirement of Steve Sobers. Mark will become the new City Manager and Heather will become the new Public Works Director. The City will be hiring a part time Recreation Program Coordinator to replace Heather. This job has been posted. Heather will be taking the parks side of her current job with her as Director.

SPECIAL EVENTS:

None

STAFF REPORTS: Recreation

None

COMMITTEE REPORTS/BUSINESS:

None.

UNSCHEDULED BUSINESS:

Mark spoke on the City staff currently busy working on budgets and CIP's for the upcoming new fiscal year.

The Chamber will be moving to their new location once that building is complete. There will be discussion regarding the future of the current building.

Richard spoke on the snowmobile problem at the Industrial soccer field. He suggested installing a split rail fence in hopes to prevent access to the field.

Deb stated that she will not be available to attend the upcoming February Park & Recreation meeting.

The next meeting of the Park and Recreation Board will be February 9, 2017 at 6:30 pm in the City Commission Room.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Paula Weipert