

PARKS BOARD MEETING
March 13, 2012
Regular Board Meeting
12:00 – 2:00 pm
Currents @ 600 Cregg Lane

Attended by:

Park Board members: John O'Connor, Janet Sproull, Johann Eisenmann, Susan Ridgeway (12:30), Ross Mollenhauer, Dale Harris, Chair

Park Board members absent: Norma Nickerson

Staff: Donna Gaukler, Jackie Corday, Morgan Valliant, Greg Howe, Bob Worthen, David Selvage

Others: Jim Habeck

Approval of minutes of meeting from February 14, 2012 - HELD

Announcements - None

Public/Guest comments

Jim Habeck said the Parks Department is in partnership with all.

Presentations:

Open Space Update with Beth Hahn postponed until April 2012.

Action Items:

Park Enterprise Request – Shirley Kinsey (Presented by Donna Gaukler)

This is a request from Rod Harsell, President of Missoula Softball Association for funds from the Park Enterprise account to fund the chain link fencing project to improve softball dugouts by closing the gap between the top of the current fencing and the roofs at McCormick and Fort Missoula Parks (possibly Northside after additional inspection of dugout design). The estimate cost of the fencing is \$2,925.00 or \$325/field and the current fund balance is @ \$54,648.

Although there are no specific design standards for softball dugouts that would require this work to be done, the current design has been identified as a safety hazard on a number of Missoula Softball Association, Christian Softball League, and MPR seasonal inspections.

Staff has reviewed the request and agrees this project will provide additional safety for hundreds of softball players. This design modification has also been approved by both Parks Operations Manager (Bob Worthen) and Shirley Kinsey (Recreation Manager).

MOTION: It was moved and seconded to approve the expenditure of up to \$3,000 from the Softball Enterprise Fund to make chain link fencing modifications to the softball dugouts at McCormick, Fort Missoula and Northside Parks. All park board members present voted in favor of the motion.

Discussion items:

Review Draft "Mobility Assisting Devices on City Trails Policy" that addresses the new Dept of Justice Rules regarding ADA trail access for "Other Power-Driven Mobility Devices" – Jackie Corday

Jackie - The major changes to last page, in line and tandem that don't exceed max 36 inches, allows for devices, but due to 5% grade, not safe for these devices, recommends contact the department as a disclaimer. On page 2 it outlines that no gas powered mobility devices can be used, however electric can if the device meets the criteria, does not exceed 15 mph and must stay on the trail.

The policy was derived from a review by staff of other similar mobility policies including Orange County in California. The following excerpts are taken from the policy and reviewed by the Board.

1. Paved Bike/Pedestrian Trails 8-10' wide with shoulder (examples include the Milwaukee Trail & the Bitterroot Branch Trail). Paved trails are shown on the City of Missoula Parks, Open Space & Trails Map as "Paved Multi-Use."

OPDMD type allowed: In-line & Tandem Devices that meet the following standards:

- Motors on electric devices are 250 watts or less;
- Device weighs less than 150 pounds;
- Device is no more than three feet wide;
- Device is not powered by an internal combustion engine; and
- No device shall be capable of being operated at a speed greater than 15 miles-per-hour.

Justification: § 35.137 Mobility Devices Assessment Factors (i, ii and iii). Characteristics of the device could affect other trail users, based on the volume of pedestrian traffic and operational characteristics of the trail. These trails are high capacity two-way traffic areas, where a width restriction allows for safe passing of OPDMD devices, bicycles and pedestrians. The City's network of riverfront, greenway, and park system pathways are designed and constructed for bicycling, walking, and skating, and in some instances cross-country skiing. The popularity of the pathway system is verified by heavy volume of local, regional, national, and international visitors. Pathway users have come to expect a safe, pedestrian-friendly, and exclusive environment without the concerns related to automobile centric spaces and the hustle and bustle of an urban environment.

Missoula's pathway system users range in age from infants to young children, adults and seniors. Walkers use the pathway system singly and in company with others. Families walk or bicycle together including parents with baby strollers and seniors. Outdoor enthusiasts' regularly use the pathway system to cycle, hike, jog, and roller blade. The pathway system has become a part of the fabric of the City, its neighborhoods, and its public open spaces. To preserve the safety and pathway experience of all users, the City is obligated to limit the sound, potential emissions, size, weight, power and speed of pathway use devices.

2. Multiuse Unpaved Road generally 10-12' wide (examples include unimproved fire and ranch roads on Mt. Jumbo, & Mt. Sentinel and the Kim Williams Trail).

OPDMD type allowed: In-line & Tandem Devices not to exceed 36" inch maximum width with the same standards as set forth above for paved bike/pedestrian trails. Although this policy allows the use of OPDMD devices due to the width of the multiuse roads, there are many sections of such roads that are over 5% grade, of a rocky substrate, and have uneven surfaces with deep ruts and potholes, and thus are not safe for OPDMD devices. It is thus recommended that trail users who need to employ such devices for mobility and are otherwise unfamiliar with the trail, first contact the Missoula Parks Department Conservation Land Manager for local trail conditions.

Justification: § 35.137 Mobility Devices Assessment Factors (i and v) Characteristics of the device create a substantial risk of substantial harm to the environment or natural resources. These trails are typically wide enough for one-way vehicle traffic, and this width restriction allows for safe passing of OPDMD devices, bicycles and pedestrians on unpaved roads.

3. Multiuse Trail dirt or gravel generally 2-5' wide - narrow gauge trail, suitable for multiple activities, including hiking, mountain biking or equestrian riding. These trails are shown on the City of Missoula Parks, Open Space & Trails Map as "Natural Surface Multi-Use."

OPDMD type allowed: In-line Devices not to exceed 24" inch maximum width and a maximum wheel width of 6". Motors on electric devices must be 250 watts or less, the device weighs less than 150 pounds, and no device shall be capable of being operated at a speed greater than 15 miles-per- hour. Again, due to the steepness and rough condition of many segments of these trails, potential trail users who need to use an in-line device should first contact the Missoula Parks Department Conservation Land Manager for local trail conditions. Justification: § 35.137 Mobility Devices Assessment Factors (i and v) Characteristics of the device create a substantial risk of substantial harm to the environment or natural resources. These are narrow trails where two-way traffic would require pedestrians to step off the trail and harm natural resources when allowing passage of OPDMD devices larger than 26" wide.

4. Pedestrian Single Track Trail dirt or gravel generally 18"-3' wide - narrow gauge trail suitable for hiking only.

OPDMD type allowed: No OPDMD devices are permitted on these trails.

Justification: § 35.137 Mobility Devices Assessment Factors (i, ii, iii, iv, v). This type of trail is located in natural areas and steep terrain where environmental or topographic constraints require no user impact to natural

resources. Trail users are required to stay within the authorized trail footprint to avoid harm to natural or cultural resources.

Discussion:

Janet Sproull – The policy was reviewed during the Conservation Lands Advisory Committee meeting on March 12 and recommend the Park Board approve the policy with some additional language changes to include dog walking as one of the users, and the committee suggested addition language to slow devices down when passing. It was also questioned as to what is necessary to indicate a need for a mobility device and maybe a definition section would be helpful.

Jackie - definitions are in reference to the Federal guidelines. This is a draft document which will be discussed as an action item at the Board meeting in April.

Park Board Liaison, Sub-committees, Updates and Staff Reports

(Director, Recreation, Projects, Open Space, Operations, Urban Forestry, Greenways & Horticulture, Parks & Trail Design & Development, Conservation Lands Management, Administration

- Fort Missoula Regional Park (FMRP - John O'Connor)
- Tree Board & Trees for Missoula (TFM) (Janet Sproull, Susan Ridgeway, Ross Mollenhauer)
- Extraordinary Events – (EEC - Bruce Micklus – Liaison) – No Report – the EEC meets annually in March, with this year's meeting scheduled for March 29, 2012.
- Conservation Lands Advisory Committee (CLAC - Janet Sproull)
- Friends of Missoula Parks, Inc – (FMP - John O'Connor)

Staff Report - David Selvage Budget/CIP presentation

David provided power point on the Parks Department's Budget and Capital Improvement program requests.

Top FY 12 accomplishments included

- Completion of GPs units in 52 vehicles
- Completion of the Milwaukee Trail Russell to Reserve
- Planted 200 trees, treated over 600

FY 13 Performance Measures:

- Turn No Child away from aquatics
- Construct White Pine playground
- Plant 200 new trees and treat 600 exiting trees
- Utilize Accela program to develop an up to date inventory of fixed assets in developed parks, primary trails and medians

The Department submitted 11 service modifications requests for a total of \$ and a \$ total in General Fund requests for Capital Improvements

The Mayor will present Administrations recommendations later this month with the intent to have the FY13 budget adopted by June, 2012.

The meeting adjourned at 2:00 pm.