



City of Blaine Anoka County, Minnesota Minutes

Blaine City Hall
10801 Town Sq Dr NE
Blaine MN 55449

Nat'l Resources Conservation Board

The Natural Resource Conservation Board is an advisory body to the City Council. The Board is charged with recommending acquisition of lands for open space and developing a Natural Resource Plan which includes environmental policy and guidelines for the maintenance and preservation of Blaine's existing and future open spaces and trail corridors. One of the Board's functions is to hold public meetings and make recommendations to the City Council. For each item, the Board will receive reports prepared by City staff, provide the opportunity for public response, conduct Board discussions and make recommendations. The City Council, however, makes all final decisions on these matters.

Tuesday, June 15, 2021

7:00 PM

Council Chambers

1. Call To Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00PM. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic this hybrid meeting was held both virtually and in person.

2. Roll Call

Roll Call - Chair Perkins, Boardmembers Filipi, McKinley, Panning, Rafferty, Trippler, Truchon.

Absent - Boardmember Genet and Vedi.

Others Present: Water Resources Manager Rebecca Haug, Recreation Manager Nate Monahan, Interim Senior Recreation Manager Jerome Krieger, and Adjunct Members Drew Brown.

Present: 6 - Chair McKinley, Rafferty, Perkins, Truchon, Panning, and Trippler

Absent: 1 - Vedi

3. Approval of Minutes

3.-1

Approval of the April 20, 2021 NRCB Minutes

Attachments: [04-20-21 nrcb](#)

Boardmember Truchon explained Councilmember Swanson, Jim Peterson, and Jim Hafner should be mentioned in her comments regarding the Conservation District Award the city earned.

MOVED by Boardmember Filipi, seconded by Boardmember McKinley to approve the minutes of the April 20, 2021 Board Meeting as amended.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried unanimously.

Aye: 6 - McKinley, Rafferty, Perkins, Truchon, Panning, and Trippler

4. Approval of Agenda

Chair Perkins requested Item 6B be added under New Business for Recognition of Rebecca Haug.

Mr. Monahan requested Item 6C be added under New Business to discuss the July NRCB meeting.

MOVED by Boardmember Rafferty, seconded by Boardmember Truchon to approve the June 15, 2021 Board Agenda as amended adding Items 6B and 6C.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried unanimously.

Aye: 6 - McKinley, Rafferty, Perkins, Truchon, Panning, and Trippler

5. Open Forum for Citizen Input

No one appeared to address the NRCB.

6. New Business

6A

NRCB Updates

Mr. Monahan provided the Commission with updates on the following:

BWS Structure and Concept Trail System Update

Mr. Monahan stated in May, staff reviewed options with the City Council for a structure at the Blaine Wetland Sanctuary (BWS) parking lot located at 11980 Lexington Avenue. The City Council gave staff direction to move forward with hiring a consultant to design a pavilion with restrooms. Staff also reviewed the 2014 BWS Master Plan trail system concept and discussed the possibility of updating the plan to be more cost effective. The updates would maximize uplands, limit boardwalks, utilize city property in neighborhoods for trail connections, and reduce trails behind homes.

Mr. Monahan reported the City Council gave staff direction to move forward with updating the BWS Trail System Plan. Staff will begin this work once the regulatory agencies approve the trail through the Central and Northern Portion of the BWS.

Boardmember McKinley asked if the trail system would be coordinated to preserve all wetlands. Mr. Monahan reported staff was working with regulatory agencies while updating the proposed trail system within the BWS. He stated the upland areas would be maximized to preserve as much wetlands as possible.

Volunteer rescue of State endangered Rubus Stipulates at BWS

Ms. Haug provided an update on the plant rescue event that was held at the BWS on June 10. She reported volunteers were needed to water the replanted plants.

BWS Appreciation Tour with Anoka Conservation District, CCES, and City of Blaine

Ms. Haug discussed the BWS Appreciation Tour with the Anoka Conservation District and noted this event was scheduled for August 10 from 5-7PM with a backup date of August 12. She stated more information was to come.

BWS Ongoing Maintenance

Ms. Haug explained the spring burn scheduled at the BWS has been delayed due to weather conditions until the fall. The large upland island in the north portion was the only area burned this spring. Additional maintenance throughout the summer will include; spot herbicide treatments, interseeding, and potential threatened and endangered plantings.

BWS Entrance Sign

Mr. Monahan stated the city's consultant, SRF, will be putting a bid out late June or early July for the BWS entrance sign. It was noted construction would follow later this fall.

Boardmember McKinley commented on the plans she had created for the existing BWS entrance sign. She asked that she be allowed to keep the existing sign once the new sign was in place.

MOVED by Boardmember Panning, seconded by Boardmember Truchon to allow Boardmember McKinley to keep the existing BWS sign once the new entrance sign was in place.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried unanimously.

BWS Summer Programs

Mr. Monahan explained Parks and Recreation staff is collaborating with Growing Green Hearts and the Wargo Nature Center to provide summer programs at the BWS this summer. Staff reviewed the upcoming programs that were being offered by the City.

Sunrise Ponds Trail

Mr. Monahan reported staff is currently working with the consultant, SRF, on design and permitting for the Sunrise Ponds Trail with hopes of getting the bid out in July.

Boardmember Truchon thanked staff for working to save natural open spaces in Blaine. She asked if a trail would be put in place to the Sunrise School. Mr. Krieger stated this was being discussed with the school. Mr. Monahan discussed the sidewalk that was currently in place at Sunrise Ponds that could be accessed by students.

Pioneer Park Update

Ms. Haug commented on the discussion staff had with the City Council regarding the Pioneer Park wetland banking from the June 14 City Council Workshop. She indicated the Council would like to have more education and outreach with the public regarding what this project entails.

Boardmember Truchon questioned what would be the best way to advertise the actions that would be taken at Pioneer Park to the public. Ms. Haug stated the extensive tree study could be reviewed with the public and noted staff could also provide tours of the space.

Boardmember Filipi supported the City providing tours of the space. She believed this would provide a great visual for the neighbors to the Pioneer Park area.

Boardmember Truchon recommended the City consider creating a video to be placed on the website for educational purposes.

Mr. Monahan explained the City was proposing to restore 43 of the 100 acres within Pioneer Park. He noted the 43 acres have always been wet and he understood it would be good to get these facts to the public. He discussed how the proposed work would clean up the dead and dying trees.

Chair Perkins suggested flyers be passed out to residents in this neighborhood on Night to Unite. Ms. Haug reported there was a lot of information already available on the City's website regarding this project.

Jason Husveth, SRF, commented on the Pioneer Park project. He explained this park was being considered as a wetland bank and commented on the rare species that had been located within the wetland. He discussed how headwater wetlands have a great potential for being fully restored. He noted this project has been conceptual in nature due to COVID and explained the next phase was the draft mitigation banking instrument. He reported this phase takes approximately one year to complete. He encouraged the City to engage the public and move this project forward.

Chair Perkins thanked Mr. Husveth for his comments.

MOVED by Boardmember Truchon, seconded by Boardmember McKinley to recommend the City Council move forward with the Pioneer Park wetland banking project by pursuing the draft mitigation banking instrument.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried unanimously.

Aye: 6 - McKinley, Rafferty, Perkins, Truchon, Panning, and Trippler

6B Recognition of Rebecca Haug

Chair Perkins recognized Water Resources Manager Rebecca Haug for her tremendous service to the City of Blaine and wished her well in her new position.

Boardmember Truchon thanked Ms. Haug for offering the Board hope and getting things done. She wished Ms. Haug all the best and stated she would be dearly missed by the City of Blaine.

Boardmember McKinley stated Ms. Haug was truly a star. The Board offered her a round of applause.

Mr. Krieger thanked Ms. Haug for all of her efforts on behalf of the Parks and Recreation Department and wished her all the best in the future.

Ms. Haug thanked the Board for their kind words and stated she was proud to call Blaine her home. She explained she appreciated the sincerity of this group and all of the great work they have done over the years.

Mr. Monahan stated he has appreciated all of the knowledge he has

gained from Ms. Haug and noted she would be sorely missed. He wished Ms. Haug all the best in her new position.

6C July NRCB Meeting

Mr. Monahan reported he would like to conduct a park tour for the July NRCB meeting. He recommended Pioneer Park and Sunrise Ponds be toured in July. The Board supported this recommendation.

Boardmember McKinley requested Hidden Ponds also be toured in July.

7 Other Business

None.

8 Adjournment

MOVED by Boardmember Truchon, seconded by Boardmember McKinley to adjourn the meeting at 8:07PM.

A roll call vote was taken. The motion carried unanimously.