



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, April 20, 2021

7:00 PM Council Chambers and due to the COVID-19 pandemic, city meetings will also be held as virtual meetings

1. Call To Order

1. 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.

Administration Oaths of Office: Chair Perkins, Vice Chair McKinley, Board Members: Genet, Truchon, Filipi

City Clerk Sorensen administered the Oath of Office to Chair Perkins, Vice Chair McKinley, and board Members Genet, Truchon and Filipi.

2. Roll Call

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

Others Present: Water Resources Manager Rebecca Haug, Recreation Manager Nate Monahan, City Clerk Cathy Sorensen and Adjunct Members Drew Brown and Isabel Hobot.

Present: 9 - Vice Chair McKinley, Rafferty, Chair Perkins, Truchon, Genet, Vedi, Panning, Trippler, and Filipi

3. Approval of Minutes

3.-1

Approval of the January 19, 2021 NRCB Minutes

Attachments: [01-19-21 nrcb](#)

MOVED by Boardmember Rafferty, seconded by Boardmember Genet to approve the minutes of the January 19, 2021 board Meeting as presented.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried 8-0-1 (Boardmember McKinley abstained).

Aye: 7 - Rafferty, Perkins, Truchon, Vedi, Panning, Trippler, and Filipi

Abstain: 1 - McKinley

Approval of Agenda

Ms. Haug stated she had several additions to the agenda which included: South Oaks Neighborhood Recognition, Open Space Checklist and Assignments, Threatened and Endangered Species Rescue Event, Garlic Mustard Pull, Troop #16063 Blaine Wetland Sanctuary Parking Lot Clean Up Event.

Boardmember McKinley explained she would like to have a continued discussion regarding tours of the open spaces in Blaine.

MOVED by Boardmember Rafferty, seconded by Boardmember McKinley to approve the April 20, 2021 board Agenda as amended.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried unanimously.

Aye: 8 - McKinley, Rafferty, Perkins, Truchon, Vedi, Panning, Trippler, and Filipi

4. Open Forum for Citizen Input

No one appeared to address the NRCB.

5. New Business

5.-1

NRCB Updates

Attachments:

[Southern Portion](#)

[2014 BWS Development Master Plan](#)

[BWS Existing Trailheads and Trails](#)

[0002_1_Sign Concepts](#)

Ms. Haug provided the board with an update. She discussed the progress that was made on the southern portion of the BWS wetland restoration. She explained there were 13 acres on the southwest side that have yet to be restored. She noted this work would be completed next winter. She commented on the recent wetland credit sales and noted \$2.50 per square foot has been charged for the recent sales. She commented on the activity that occurred at the BWS this winter and noted there were a number of

people going off trail. The impact of these actions was further discussed.

Chair Perkins noted the sign in the North Oaks West Park had been torn down. He reported he put the sign back up today. He recommended cement footings be used to permanently place this sign.

Boardmember Truchon questioned if having a police presence at the BWS would help. She stated she wanted to see visitors respecting the BWS. She suggested the board consider ideas on how to better educate the public regarding the proper use of the BWS. Mr. Monahan stated he hoped that people would be less likely to go off trail once the southern portion of the BWS was completed. He anticipated that mother nature would take care of those trying to go off trail in the summer months. He noted metal signs stating "Please Stay on Trail" would be posted at the parking lot.

Mr. Monahan provided the board with an update on the BWS structure and concept trail plan. He noted on May 3, 2021 staff was scheduled to review options for a structure at the BWS located at 11980 Lexington Avenue. He reported the options include a pavilion, a pavilion with a restroom and a nature center. He indicated the NRCB board recommended the pavilion with a restroom option. The potential trail loops within the BWS were reviewed with the Board. He reviewed the location of a parking lot and trailhead that would be constructed this year on the edge of the North Meadows development. The location of several other trailheads was noted for the record.

Mr. Monahan reported staff was finalizing plans for the BWS entry sign. He noted this sign would go out for bid soon, along with the Pheasant Ridge and Lexington Athletic Complex signs. The proposed sign concept was reviewed with the board. It was noted the BWS sign would be lit at night on both sides.

Ms. Haug reported Chris Lord with the Anoka Conservation District and Mary Jo Truchon had an award to present at this time.

Boardmember Truchon stated she was very proud to report the city of Blaine was chosen as the 2020 Conservationist of the Year by the Anoka Conservation District. She reported a plaque was presented for this award to the city council last week. She thanked the city of Blaine, the boardmembers and city staff members for

their outstanding efforts towards conservation.

Chris Lord, Anoka Conservation District, congratulated the city of Blaine on their efforts. He noted most cities in the state of Minnesota don't have a Natural Resources Board or dedicated staff members to address water quality and wetlands. He thanked Blaine for being an outstanding partner with Anoka County. He then discussed the projects that were completed in 2020 and thanked the city for being a leader when it comes to open space protection. He commended the city for participating in the Adopt a Drain program and rare plant species programs.

Boardmember Truchon thanked former Mayor Ryan and former Councilmembers Ryan and Kolb for being instrumental in their support of open space preservation. She thanked Jim Hafner, Council Member Swanson, Jim Peterson for their efforts as well.

Ms. Haug reported there would be a BWS tour on August 3, 2021 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. She explained the tour would educate residents about the unique qualities of the wetland sanctuary, discuss wetland restoration, what trees belong in this ecosystem, and to discuss the rare plants and birds that were coming back to this area. She noted more information would be sent out regarding this event.

Boardmember Vedi reported National Night Out was scheduled for August 3, 2021. He encouraged staff to consider rescheduling the BWS tour for another night. Ms. Haug thanked Boardmember Vedi for bringing this to her attention. She explained she would speak with the conservation district to find an alternative date for this event.

Mr. Monahan reviewed the summer program line up for the BWS. He noted registrations were coming in very nicely. He stated people were looking forward to getting outside to enjoy the BWS. He thanked the Wargo Nature Center and Growing Green Hearts for offering programming at the BWS.

6B. South Oaks Neighborhood Recognition

Ms. Haug reported the South Oaks neighborhood, which is off of 109th and Flanders Street, worked with the Anoka Conservation District on a cost-share grant. She noted the conservation district received grant funding to help with offsetting costs to remove buckthorn from their property. She explained almost every

homeowner in that neighborhood worked with Minnesota Native Landscaping to remove buckthorn this winter. She suggested the NRCB recognize the efforts of this neighborhood stating she really appreciated how this neighborhood has come along to understand the importance and value of the restoration work the city was completing.

Boardmember Panning stated it was fantastic these residents pursued grant funding to assist with this work. She thanked staff for bringing this item before the board.

Boardmember Truchon supported the neighborhood being recognized by planting a tree at their local park or some other way. She indicated the neighbors could be offered native pollinator plantings. She recommended the recognition be completed in the fall so the board could meet with the neighborhood in person.

Boardmember Genet anticipated the adjacent neighborhoods could also take advantage of cost-share grants and recognizing the South Oaks neighborhood would educate them on this possibility. She supported the city recognizing the South Oaks neighborhood. She recommended a thank you note be sent to each of the homeowners in this neighborhood.

Boardmember Filipi supported the city planting a tree in honor of this neighborhood for their efforts.

Chair Perkins agreed this neighborhood should be recognized. He suggested the boardmembers provide staff with ideas on how this neighborhood should be recognized and that this be discussed at the next NRCB meeting.

6C. Threatened and Endangered Species Rescue Event

Ms. Haug reported a rescue event was being planned to save endangered species on Thursday, April 29, 2021 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. She encouraged members interested in participating in this event to RSVP with the Anoka Conservation District.

6D. Garlic Mustard Pull

Ms. Haug stated a garlic mustard pull would be held at Pioneer Park on May 8, 2021 from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. She reported the Blaine-Ham Lake Rotary was volunteering to host this event.

6E. Troop #16063 Blaine Wetland Sanctuary Parking Lot Clean Up Event

Ms. Haug stated Thursday, April 22, 2021 was Earth Day. She indicated the city had an overwhelming number of residents who are adopting city parks, city rain gardens, etc. She reported Girl Scout Troop #16063 would be cleaning up the BWS parking lot and trash along the boardwalk. She explained she would be assisting the Girl Scouts Troop on Thursday with their clean up event.

Boardmember Genet asked how residents could learn more about how to adopt a park. Mr. Monahan stated the city has had over 20 parks adopted. He noted further information on adopting a park was available on the city's website.

Boardmember Truchon commented further on the adopt a drain program and encouraged residents to consider participating in this program as well. Ms. Haug reported the city of Blaine was participating in the adopt a drain program and noted this program was being sponsored by the Metro Watershed Partners.

6F. Open Space Checklist and Assignments

Ms. Haug discussed the Open Space checklist noting staff had forwarded this information to the boardmembers. She reported in the past Boardmember Rafferty had the Legacy Woods Park. She indicated the BWS was visited by the entire Natural Resource Board. She commented Hidden Ponds was shared by Boardmembers McKinley and Panning. She stated Kane Meadows was shared by Boardmembers Truchon and Theisen. She noted Laddie Lake was assigned to Boardmember Vedi. She stated Loch Ness was assigned to Boardmember Genet. She indicated Sunrise Ponds and Oak Savannah were not assigned to any Boardmember.

Boardmember Panning encouraged the new NRCB members to do a walk with Boardmember McKinley as she was very knowledgeable.

Boardmember Filipi stated she would be interested in joining Boardmember Genet for a tour at Loch Ness. She noted she would also be interested in being assigned to Oak Savannah.

Boardmember Truchon requested the board be provided with information regarding which boardmembers were assigned to what parks. Mr. Monahan stated he would provide the board with this information.

Ms. Haug stated in the past staff has been assigned to the BWS and noted staff would be willing to continue with this appointment. She noted May is wetlands month which meant the watershed district, conservation district and libraries would be promoting May as wetland month.

Adjournment

MOVED by Boardmember Panning, seconded by Boardmember Rafferty to adjourn the meeting at 8:03PM.

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