



City of Blaine Anoka County, Minnesota Minutes

Blaine City Hall
10801 Town Sq Dr NE
Blaine MN 55449

Nat'l Resources Conservation Board

This meeting will be a hybrid of Zoom and in-person. The Mayor has signed a declaration allowing members of the commission, staff, and the public to attend the meeting remotely via Zoom as has been done during the COVID-19 pandemic. The council chambers will have limited seating, with audience chairs being set up at least six feet apart. There will be an overflow area where the meeting can be watched in the Cloverleaf Farms Room, also with chairs set up at least six feet apart. Please note that all visitors to city hall are required to wear a face mask while inside the building.

Public comment options prior to the meeting must be received by noon on Tuesday, July 21. Email comments to: nmonahan@BlaineMN.gov or phone 763-785-6151.

Zoom is for members of the public who want to comment remotely during the meeting on an agenda item. Join Zoom Webinar at <https://blainemn.zoom.us/j/98923023063>

Ways to watch if not commenting on an agenda item: [BlaineMN.gov/Video](https://blainemn.gov/Video) or North Metro TV on Comcast, Apple TV, or Roku

Questions? Email - Communications@BlaineMN.gov

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 opens 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, March 24, 2020

7:00 PM

Virtual Meeting

1. Call To Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Others Present: Water Resources Manager Rebecca Haug, Recreation Manager

Nate Monahan, Communications Coordinator Ben Hayle, City Clerk Cathy Sorensen.

Present: 9 - Villella, Chair McKinley, Rafferty, Perkins, Truchon, Genet, Theisen, Vedi, and Syed

Absent: 1 - Panning

3. Approval of Minutes

3.-1

APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 21, 2020 NRCB MINUTES

Attachments: [01-21-20 nrcb](#)

MOVED by Boardmember McKinley, seconded by Boardmember Truchon to approve the minutes of the January 21, 2020 Board Meeting as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

Aye: 9 - Villella, Chair McKinley, Rafferty, Perkins, Truchon, Genet, Theisen, Vedi, and Syed

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOVED by Boardmember Genet, seconded by Boardmember McKinley to approve the March 24, 2020 Board Agenda.

Motion carried unanimously.

4. Open Forum for Citizen Input

Dale Tripper introduced himself to the Board and stated he would be serving on the NRCB beginning in April. He explained he was joining the meeting via his iPad.

Chair Perkins welcomed Mr. Tripper to the meeting and stated he looked forward to working with him in the future.

5. New Business

5.-1

UPDATES

Attachments: [Open Space Presentation](#)

Ms. Haug presented the Commission with updates on the Blaine Wetland Sanctuary Southern Restoration Project and interpretive signs. She explained the crew was done with wetland restoration work for this year. She reviewed a map of the work that was completed this past winter. She

indicated interpretive signs were being created and would hopefully be installed later this spring. She thanked Boardmember Genet for her assistance on this project. Mr. Monahan explained the City received several sponsorships that would assist with paying for the interpretive signs.

Mr. Monahan reviewed several slides regarding the 10 open spaces within the wetland sanctuary and reviewed a concept plan for the Blaine Wetland Sanctuary monument sign. It was noted the sign would be solar powered and would be lit at night.

Vice Chair McKinley stated she supported the proposed monument sign design.

Boardmember Truchon indicated she approved of the monument sign design but asked if the sign should have the words "Blaine Wetland Sanctuary". Mr. Monahan reported the City's logo would be to the left of the "Wetland Sanctuary" which would match other signs throughout the community at the entrance of the BWS.

Boardmember Truchon questioned where the message board sign would be located. Mr. Monahan stated the message board would be placed at the Lexington Sports Complex across the street from the BWS.

Boardmember Truchon recommended the message board be used for advertisement of activities occurring at the BWS. Mr. Monahan reported this would be done, along with advertising other City functions.

Boardmember Villella indicated he supported the proposed Wetland Sanctuary monument sign design and commended staff for the great work. He stated he was glad the sign would be lit by solar power at night.

Mr. Monahan requested feedback from the Board regarding a building or shelter at the parking lot adjacent to Lexington Avenue. He discussed the pros and cons of having a building versus a shelter at this location. It was noted it would be difficult to get water to this property so portable restrooms would have to be brought in. He indicated winter use would be weather dependent. He reviewed several photos of the shelter that were constructed at the Anoka County Dam.

Boardmember Truchon suggested staff keep in mind this shelter would serve as an interpretive center and should also serve as a gathering space for residents. She recommended fire rings be included around the building for use during the winter months. She also recommended the shelter have

electricity. She thanked staff for their work on this item. Mr. Monahan indicated the shelter would have electricity and noted fire pits were being considered.

Vice Chair McKinley indicated she was very impressed by the design and function of the shelter at the Anoka County Dam.

Boardmember Rafferty stated he supported the shelter concept versus a building.

Boardmember Villella agreed stating he has used the shelter at the Anoka County Dam in the past. He believed this would be a great amenity for the City.

Boardmember Theisen commented he supported the shelter concept versus the building. He expressed concern about the shelter having firepits as this could introduce invasive species into the wetland sanctuary. He suggested natural gas heaters be considered instead.

Boardmember Genet agreed the shelter was the better option. She asked if there were firepits anywhere else in the City within a City park. Mr. Monahan stated there were no firepits anywhere else in a City park.

Boardmember Genet recommended the City not consider firepits at the BWS shelter. Mr. Monahan explained the dog park had a timed heater and this could be considered for the BWS shelter.

Boardmember Syed stated he supported the shelter concept. He did not believe firepits were necessary.

Boardmember Varian indicated she liked the shelter design and commented the firepits were not necessary. She suggested heaters like the one at the dog park be considered instead. Mr. Monahan reported the heaters could be included in the shelter design plans and noted the heaters at the BWS would have to be larger than the ones at the dog park.

Boardmember Truchon explained the fire rings could be beneficial for nature presentations and that was the reason she suggested the shelter have fire rings. She noted fire rings would be low maintenance and free of charge compared to electric or gas heaters.

Chair Perkins stated at this time the Board had to decide on a building or shelter for the BWS and the final design would be decided at a later date.

Mr. Monahan reported this was the case.

Boardmember Vedi indicated he supported the shelter concept.

Adjunct Member Brown stated he supported the shelter concept as well.

Chair Perkins indicated he supported the building concept, but could lean towards the shelter if this was the direction the Board wanted to move forward with.

MOVED by Boardmember McKinley, seconded by Boardmember Genet to recommend to the City Council a shelter be designed and constructed at the Blaine Wetland Sanctuary, unless a generous donor were to provide funding for a building

Motion carried unanimously.

Aye: 9 - Villella, Chair McKinley, Rafferty, Perkins, Truchon, Genet, Theisen, Vedi, and Syed

5.-2

BLAINE WETLAND SANCTUARY SUMMER PROGRAMS

Attachments: [BWS Summer Programs](#)
 [STEMFlyer-20200226](#)

Mr. Monahan reviewed the summer programs that would be held at the Blaine Wetland Sanctuary. He noted the STEM class scheduled in April has been rescheduled to August.

Ms. Haug provided the Board with an update on recent wetland credit sales.

Mr. Monahan reviewed the trail projects that were planned for 2020. He was pleased to report the City was already ahead for revenues from credit sales. He explained he was not certain which projects would move forward given the crisis the City was facing at this time.

Boardmember Truchon supported the City using Open Space dollars to complete trail connections to parks and schools. She wanted to see Blaine become a more walkable community. She recommended the Board further review the Open Space Plan.

Boardmember Genet supported connecting parks and open spaces in the City as well. Mr. Monahan explained corridors were being identified for trail connections.

5.-3

**MAIN STREET WETLAND MITIGATION BANK
(PIONEER PARK) PROSPECTUS DOCUMENT
SUBMITTAL**

Attachments: [Pioneer Park wetland bank](#)

Ms. Haug discussed the Main Street Wetland Mitigation Bank (Pioneer Park) with the Board. She explained the City has submitted a draft document to a number of different agencies for consideration of the Pioneer Park Wetland. She noted this wetland has been deemed a viable project. She reviewed a map noting the location of the Pioneer Park Wetland. She indicated the City was at a point where a recommendation should be made to the City Council regarding the permitting process for the Pioneer Park Wetland.

Vice Chair McKinley stated she supported the City pursuing the Pioneer Park Wetland.

Boardmember Rafferty was also in support of the new wetland project.

Boardmember Villella agreed and recommended the City Council move forward with the wetland project.

Boardmember Theisen concurred.

Boardmember Truchon wanted to see this area turned into a wetland with the area being fully restored.

Boardmember Genet supported the wetland project.

Boardmember Vedi agreed.

Chair Perkins stated he fully supported the project as well.

Dawn Doering asked if parkland would be used as part of the wetland bank and the endangered species bank. Ms. Haug reported park land would be part of the wetland bank, along with the threatened and endangered species area.

MOVED by Boardmember Rafferty, seconded by Boardmember Truchon, to recommend to the City Council the prospectus document for the Main Street Wetland Mitigation Bank (Pioneer Park) be submitted to the Coon Creek Watershed District Board of Water and Soil Resources and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Motion carried unanimously.

Aye: 9 - Villella, Chair McKinley, Rafferty, Perkins, Truchon, Genet, Theisen, Vedi, and Syed

Ms. Haug reported Oaths of Office information would be sent to the Boardmembers from staff. She explained any questions regarding the new process should be directed to the City Clerk's office.

Adjournment

MOVED by Boardmember Truchon, seconded by Boardmember Villella to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

The motion carried unanimously.

Aye: 9 - Villella, Chair McKinley, Rafferty, Perkins, Truchon, Genet, Theisen, Vedi, and Syed