



# 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.*

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Tuesday, February 19, 2019

7:00 PM

Council Chambers

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### 1. Call To Order

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

### 2. Roll Call

Absent - None

Others Present: Rebecca Haug, Co-Liaison, Water Resource Manager

**Present:** 10 - Villella, Chair McKinley, Rafferty, Perkins, Truchon, Genet, Theisen, Varian, Vedi, and Panning

### 3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM JANUARY 15, 2019

Attachments: [01-15-19 nrcb.doc](#)

Chair McKinley noted the following changes:

Page 4, paragraph 5, add in the blank Taylor.

Page 5, paragraph 8, correct Ms. to Mr. Husveth.

Page 7, paragraph 6, complete sentence "Chair McKinley decided not to add the two other agenda items as she previously stated she would be adding during approval of the agenda."

**MOVED by Boardmember Theisen, seconded by Boardmember Rafferty, to approve the January 15, 2019 Minutes as amended.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**Aye:** 10 - Villella, Chair McKinley, Rafferty, Perkins, Truchon, Genet, Theisen, Varian, Vedi, and Panning

#### 4. Approval of the Agenda

**MOVED by Boardmember Perkins, seconded by Boardmember Villella, to approve the agenda as presented.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**Aye:** 10 - Villella, Chair McKinley, Rafferty, Perkins, Truchon, Genet, Theisen, Varian, Vedi, and Panning

#### 5. Open Forum for Citizen Input

Unidentified resident stated he is attending the meeting to receive updates on the Blaine Wetland Sanctuary. Chair McKinley asked the resident for his name and address. Mr. Pushkar Vaidya, 3906 112th Circle NE. He asked about the plans for the BWS. He has seen documents online showing the trails and boardwalks. He recalls these things were to be built last year and he is interested in getting involved. Ms. Haug stated the BWS opened in the fall of 2018. The boardwalk was completed along with wetland restoration to establish wetland credits and obtain additional funds to complete the trails. She is not sure when the next phase will happen. More information is available on the website.

Mr. Vaidya asked if the wetland credits are available and sold. Ms. Haug explained how that works by the City doing restoration a portion of the credits are received. As of now only a small amount of credits are available but they have not been sold. The other goal is to construct an interpretive center from the sale of the wetland credits being sold.

Boardmember Villella stated all monies from the sale of credits goes toward the BWS.

Ms. Haug explained the permitting process and monitoring required for the site. The vegetation restoration is critical to the ecosystem of the BWS.

Mr. Vaidya asked how interested residents can get involved. Ms. Haug stated there will be volunteer events where the public can participate. She suggested he look for volunteer opportunities on the website.

Chair McKinley stated there will be an event at the BWS in May during Wetland Month.

Boardmember Genet suggested Mr. Vaidya submit an application to serve on the NRCB. Mr. Vaidya stated he is part of Springbrook Nature Center Board.

**Discussed.**

## **New Business**

**6.**

### **OPEN SPACE SITE REVIEW ASSIGNMENTS**

**Attachments:**     [Open Space 11x17 overview.pdf](#)

Ms. Haug reviewed each year, members of the NRCB visit an open space location to conduct a status review. Members identify completed improvements, conditions that need attention and report to the board regarding the condition of the open space location.

The assignments to each Boardmember is as follows:

Boardmember Truchon arrived at the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

131st Avenue - Boardmember Rafferty

Blaine Wetland Sanctuary - Chair McKinley requested the entire Board visit and walk the boardwalk.

Hidden Ponds - Chair McKinley/Boardmember Panning

Kane Meadows - Boardmember Truchon/Boardmember Theisen

Laddie Lake - Boardmember Vedi

Lever Street - Group Tour in June 2019. Ms. Haug presented a drawing of the area indicating the easement.

Lochness Park - Boardmember Genet

Oak Savannah - Boardmember Villella

Pioneer Park - Boardmember Varian

Boardmembers are requested to report back on the open space at the July NRCB Meeting. Boardmember Truchon asked that copies of the brochures on each open space from last year to the next meeting and also provide copies to the City Council. Boardmember Genet asked if that

information could be put on the website. Ms. Haug stated there is information on the website and she will look for copies of the previous brochures. Ms. Haug asked each Boardmember to include in their report the condition of the kiosks in the open spaces.

**Discussed.**

7.

## **QUARTERLY SPEAKER EVENTS**

Ms. Haug stated the NRCB has included quarterly speaker events in their 2019 goal plan. Staff has identified May, August, November, and February (2020) to host these events. Staff, along with input from NRCB members has created a list of potential speakers:

- a. Carrie Taylor, Restoration Ecologist, Anoka Conservation District; Topic: Invasive Species.
- b. Emily Johnson, Outreach Education Coordinator, Anoka Conservation District; Topic: Anoka County Environmental Issues
- c. Jason Husveth, Ecologist at Critical Connections; Topic: History of the Anoka Sandplain
- d. Carrol Henderson, Retired Director, MN DNR Non-game Wildlife Department
- e. Siah St. Clair, Retired Director, Springbrook Nature Center.
- f. Brianna Gotte, U of M Extension, Master Gardener - Pollinator Plants.
- g. Xerxes Society - Pollinators
- h. Great River Greening

Chair McKinley asked if Growing Green Hearts and Wargo will be involved this year and Ms. Haug stated they will continue to work with the NRCB.

Boardmember Panning stated Ms. Haug and she recently met with people from Great River Greening about volunteer opportunities.

The NRCB is requested to recommend staff schedule speaker events for 2019 and 2020.

**MOVED by Boardmember Perkins, seconded by Boardmember Truchon, to recommend staff schedule the speaker events for 2019 and 2020 from the list of potential speakers.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**Aye:** 10 - Vilella, Chair McKinley, Rafferty, Perkins, Truchon, Genet, Theisen, Varian, Vedi, and Panning

8.

## **REVIEW OF 2019 GOALS**

**Attachments:**     [Prospect Heights NRC](#)

Ms. Haug reviewed at the January meeting the NRCB identified goals for 2019. Staff has updated the list of goals, including dates of events. At this time, the NRCB is encouraged to review the goals, adding and deleting as necessary.

Chair McKinley requested the Boardmembers do activities outside of the Board Meetings. Boardmember Truchon stated in the interview process City Council requested the NRCB provide updates. She suggested the NRCB prepare a quarterly report and provide to the City Council and the Park Board. Boardmember Varian suggested the goals be shared with the City Council and the Park Board.

- Continue to focus on plans for development of the Blaine Wetland Sanctuary (BWS)
- Continue to utilize the Open Space Management Plan for guidance and setting priorities.
- Continue to explore ideas for enhancing public awareness & use of our open spaces & trails.
- Continue programming with Growing Green Hearts (GGH) & Wargo Nature Center at Blaine Wetland Sanctuary (BWS).
- Begin Southern restoration work of the BWS.
- Provide Quarterly Reports of NRCB Activities to the City Council and the Park Board.

**Suggestions for Activities/Events**

- Partner with local businesses.
- Purchase and install entrance sign for BWS and Interpretive signs.
- Open Space Tour and Community Dialogue.
- Continue Pioneer Park Wetland Bank process.
- Sell credits in Site 7
- Work with Anoka conservation District or other to collect seeds to be replanted in open spaces.
- Community Outreach Program
- Website
- Monthly journal about activities, plants, wildlife, ecology and nature
- Workday notices
  - Prescribed burn, tree removals, cancellations of programs, etc.
- Library Programs
  - GGH working with library on story walks
  - Quarterly speakers on various natural resource topics

- Video series
  - Focus on management of open spaces, best practices, plants and plant ID, prescribed burns and sight tours.
- Open Space assignments
- Earth Day Events, April 15 - May 15, 2019
- American Wetlands Month promotion
- World Fest booth - May 18, 2019
- Blaine Open House booth - September 25, 2019

**Informational; no action required.**

**9.**

**COMMUNICATIONS**

1. Upcoming Events
2. Member Reports

Upcoming Events

Ms. Haug stated the Educator Open House is scheduled for March 6, 3-5pm in the Cloverleaf Farm Room. This will be conducted by Growing Green Hearts.

Winter Ecology Workshop - March 9, 1-3pm BWS.

Fat Tire Biking will be held at Lochness Park rather than the BWS.

Bird Hike, May 9, 9-11am at BWS.

May - American Wetland Month.

Tuesday, May 7, 8:30-10am - Jason Husveth will be giving a tour at the BWS.

Saturday, May 18 World Fest 1-4pm Town Square Park. Let Ms. Haug know if anything is needed for World Fest. Ms. Haug will see if a display can be borrowed. Boardmember Truchon will see what is available from Hamline University.

Joint NRCB/Park Board Joint Meeting - August 20 7pm at City Hall.

Laddie Lake and the BWS would be great places for some focused Pollinator Plantings. Some seed collections could be done.

Thursday, February 21 7:30 p.m. Ms. Haug will request from Council that Critical Connections be hired to take the next step for the wetland bank in

Pioneer Park as well as the impoundments and remove the remaining trees at the BWS.

Boardmember Truchon stated at the Board Meeting she attended they are in favor of getting volunteers for seed collections. Ms. Haug will get more information.

Boardmember Truchon stated she saw a public notice that the Planning Commission was having a public hearing on the bank building by the old city hall site. The bank owner was interested in taking some of the dog park for the bank parking lot. Chair McKinley stated that is park land not open space. Boardmember Truchon stated that forest was restored at the cost of \$7500. The Planning Commission denied the request. Ms. Haug stated that will go to the City Council on March 7.

Boardmember Theisen stated he has had a meeting at the lodge and there is an organics recycling drop-off for citizens near the parking lot of the BWS. Ms. Haug stated Anoka County is trying to get more areas for organics recycling. Boardmember Genet stated Lino Lakes has curbside organics recycling.

#### Member Reports

Chair McKinley stated Boardmember Varian had asked about the Adopt-A-Park program which is a park program. Chair McKinley adopted it for open spaces.

Chair McKinley stated Andover got the idea of purchasing of open space land from Blaine.

Chair McKinley stated Boardmember Panning had asked about open space management plan and stated it is included in the manual provided to Boardmembers last year. Boardmember Perkins stated all of that information is also on the website.

Chair McKinley suggested Boardmember Theisen get more information from the school district on the planting of trees near schools.

**Discussed.**

#### **Adjournment**

**MOVED by Boardmember Perkins, seconded by Boardmember Genet, to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m.**

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**Aye:** 10 - Villella, Chair McKinley, Rafferty, Perkins, Truchon, Genet, Theisen, Varian, Vedi, and Panning