



City of Blaine

Natural Resource Conservation Board

June 20, 2023 | 6:00 PM
Blaine City Hall
10801 Town Square Drive NE
Blaine, MN 55449

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.

AGENDA

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Roll Call**
- 3. Approval of Minutes**
 - 3.1.** 2023-243 Approval of April and May 2023 NRCB Minutes
Sponsors: Megan Hedstrom, Stormwater Coordinator
- 4. Open Forum for Citizen Input**
- 5. New Business**
 - 5.1.** 2023-244 Recommendation of RFP for Consulting Services for BWS Wetland Bank and Trail System
Sponsors: Megan Hedstrom, Stormwater Coordinator
 - 5.2.** 2023-245 Open Space Inspections
Sponsors: Megan Hedstrom, Stormwater Coordinator
 - 5.3.** 2023-246 Open Space Tour: Starts at 6:45pm
Sponsors: Megan Hedstrom, Stormwater Coordinator
- 6. Adjournment**



City of Blaine

Natural Resource Conservation Board

May 16, 2023 | 7:00 PM
Blaine City Hall
10801 Town Square Drive NE
Blaine, MN 55449

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00PM.

2. Roll Call

Roll Call – Chair Rafferty, Boardmembers Anderson, Genet, Panning, Truchon.

Absent – Boardmember McKinley.

Others Present: Stormwater Coordinator Megan Hedstrom.

3. Approval of Minutes

- 3.1.** 2023-184 Approval of the April 18, 2023 NRCB Meeting Minutes
Sponsors: Megan Hedstrom, Stormwater Coordinator

Boardmember Panning reported Boardmember Filipi should be removed from the roll call. She stated on Page 6 under Item 6B she recommended the endangered grass, _____, be spelled out within the minutes. The Board asked that Justin's last name be filled in on Page 6.

Boardmember Panning expressed concern with the fact the discussion regarding the RFP lapsing was not expanded upon within the minutes.

Chair Rafferty stated he did not believe it was necessary to have this information detailed in the minutes.

Stormwater Coordinator Hedstrom reported the Board could postpone approval of

the minutes in order to have more detail added.

MOVED by Boardmember Anderson, seconded by Boardmember Truchon, to table action on the April 18, 2023 board meeting to the June NRCB meeting.

Motion carried unanimously.

4. Open Forum for Citizen Input

No one appeared to address the NRCB.

5. New Business

- 5.1. 2023-182** Combined RFP for Consulting Services for BWS Wetland Bank and Consulting Services for BWS Trail System
Sponsors: Megan Hedstrom, Stormwater Coordinator

Stormwater Coordinator Hedstrom presented for discussion the combined RFP for consulting services for BWS Wetland Bank and consulting services for the BWS Trail System. She reported over the past two months staff has been working with BWSR and the Corps to revamp the RFP for environmental services. She explained the city would be combining environmental services for all of BWS on one RFP, which would impact the trail RFP. She commented on the tasks that would need to be completed in 2023. She noted BWSR would be providing final comments shortly. She discussed how BWSR has been helping staff with historic monitoring, especially with the wet meadow section of Site 7. It was noted the city would be pursuing a seven year contract.

Boardmember Genet asked what the difference was between the yellow and red trails. Ms. Hedstrom explained the red was the alignment that has been surveyed and was field accurate. She indicated the yellow area was field located, but has not been surveyed or delineated.

Boardmember Genet questioned what consultants were being asked to provide an RFP. Ms. Hedstrom stated Critical Connections, StanTec, Minnesota Native Resources, SEH, and Bolton & Menk.

Boardmember Genet inquired when the council would be considering the RFP's. Ms. Hedstrom reported the council would be reviewing this matter the week of June 19. She indicated staff would have the proposals in hand on Friday, June 2.

Boardmember Anderson asked if the board would be able to provide the council feedback on the proposals prior to them making a final decision. Ms. Hedstrom stated it was her intent to gather comments from the board prior to the council's review.

Boardmember Panning indicated the board asked to review the RFP prior to it being sent out and the board has not seen anything. She questioned how the board could access this information. Ms. Hedstrom noted she was still working on the RFP and would forward this information to the board when it was completed.

Boardmember Truchon stated she was thankful BWSR was helping city staff with this process.

5.2. 2023-185 NRCB Updates

Sponsors: Megan Hedstrom, Stormwater Coordinator

Ms. Hedstrom provided the board with an update on the following projects:

No Mow May - Staff noted 234 properties have registered for No Mow May.

Boardmember Truchon suggested the city sponsor a workshop with Metro Blooms on ecofriendly lawns.

Boardmember Genet reported St. Louis Park was not promoting No Mow May but rather was promoting a reduction or elimination of pesticides in public spaces, along with dandelions and white clover in public spaces. In addition, they have a native vegetation permitting process which was a more wholistic approach. She commented on how the city of Fridley was reviewing its ordinances to see where costs could be cut and where the city could move towards more sustainable efforts.

Boardmember Truchon believed it would benefit the city to pursue a more wholistic approach to vegetation for the city's parks. She supported the city using less pesticides and more native plantings. Ms. Hedstrom explained she would be reviewing the city's native yard ordinance.

Mowing at Lochness Park Disc Golf Course - Staff met with Carrie from ACD in order to walk the disc golf course and explained staff has the public works team on board for how to mow the course in June.

Boardmember Genet questioned what would happen to the piles of fill at Loch Ness Park. Ms. Hedstrom stated this was yet to be determined. Staff anticipated the fill would be moved back to the public works yard.

Student Rain Garden Flyer - Staff noted the rain garden flyer was posted at both Pioneer Park and Laddie Lake Park. It was noted staff would have these flyers available for the public at the Blaine Festival.

Boardmember Truchon thanked staff for their efforts on this matter.

Volunteer Opportunities - Staff reported May was Wetland Month in the city of Blaine. She noted the city was working with the Northtown Library on updating the display case information. She encouraged the public to participate in an upcoming garlic mustard pull event.

Boardmember Genet and Boardmember Panning were interested in assisting staff with garlic mustard pull events.

BWS Prescribed Burns in the Southern Portion - Staff reported Great River Greening would be holding controlled burns in May or June for the southern portion of the BWS. She noted a letter has been drafted and will be mailed to neighbors.

Boardmember Genet requested staff provide the board with maps prior to each meeting for future NRCB meetings.

Boardmember Anderson agreed this would be beneficial information for the board to have prior to each meeting.

June Open Space Tour Location Ideas - Staff reported the NRCB would be completing an open space tour during their June meeting, on June 20. She proposed the tour include Lochness Park and the BWS bat houses.

Boardmember Truchon stated she did not believe the city council and park board understood the NRCB very well. She recommended staff invite the city council and park board members to the upcoming NRCB open space tour.

Boardmember Anderson supported this recommendation.

Boardmember Panning suggested the NRCB boardmembers consider adopting and completing open space inspections again this summer and report back on the open space conditions. Ms. Hedstrom suggested she bring a list of open spaces to the June meeting and that the NRCB boardmembers divvy out the spaces at that meeting.

Further discussion ensued on future meeting topics for the NRCB.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Hedstrom provided the board with an update on Laddie Lake.

Boardmember Genet commented on the sign that was being proposed to be posted near the new bat houses within BWS and asked for feedback from the board.

Boardmember Panning stated she appreciated the great work on the bat sign. She stated she appreciated the great efforts in the community from the Eagle Scouts.

Boardmember Anderson suggested the benefits of bats be noted on the sign.

6. Adjournment

Chair Rafferty adjourned the meeting at 8:08PM.

**City of Blaine
Anoka County, Minnesota**

**Natural Resources Conservation Board
Tuesday, April 18, 2023**

7:00PM
Council Chambers
10801 Town Square Drive

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:00PM.
2. Roll Call – Chair Rafferty, Boardmembers Filipi, Genet, Panning, Truchon.

Absent – Boardmember McKinley.

Others Present: Recreation Manager Nate Monahan and City Clerk Sorensen

3. Approval of Minutes

Boardmember Panning reported the minutes should reflect the meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Acting Chair Rafferty. She noted the roll call should reflect Acting Chair Rafferty was in attendance and Chair Perkins should be removed. She stated on Page 5 under Boardmember Genet's comment she would like more detailed information included on the project would move forward.

Boardmember Truchon requested a change to the top paragraph on Page 5 stating her comment should read: she did not want asphalt used on the trail.

Boardmember Panning suggested this statement read: she appreciated the fact the city had the option of moving forward with a sustainable composite building material. Then staff should strike the next line.

Boardmember Panning requested a change to the minutes on Page 6 in the sixth paragraph noting her comment should reflect she would like the number of board members to be further discussed with the mayor.

Boardmember Panning reported on Page 12 the adjournment should reflect Acting Chair Rafferty adjourned the meeting.

MOVED by Boardmember Truchon, seconded by Boardmember Genet, to approve the minutes of the March 21, 2023 board meeting as amended.

Motion carried unanimously.

4. Open Forum for Citizen Input

Alena Shank explained she lived on campus at the University of Minnesota but was a resident of Blaine. She stated she has a strong interest in promoting a healthier and more sustainable community. She reported she was studying environmental science. She reported she was currently enrolled in a Natural Resource and Environmental Policy class and she was tasked with implementing a small scale environmental change. She noted she and her team were promoting rain gardens as an effort to combat urban runoff. She commented Blaine was home to over 700 stormwater ponds. She indicated she would like to inform the public of the benefits of rain gardens through an informal pamphlet noting this would help her achieve her policy goal. She asked if the city would allow her have a pamphlet at the city's booth at the Blaine Festival in June. She thanked the commission for their time and consideration.

Giana Piatza, introduced herself to the board.

Boardmember Truchon stated this was a wonderful idea. She reported she served on the Anoka Conservation District and noted she would push to have a pamphlet at a booth at the Blaine Festival. She encouraged Alena and Giana to attend this event.

Mr. Monahan stated an informational board could be posted at Pioneer Park and Laddie Lake as well.

5. Approval of the Agenda

Boardmember Truchon asked that after the wetland bank presentation, she be allowed to discuss open space resources.

MOVED by Boardmember Panning, seconded by Boardmember Genet, to approve the agenda as amended.

Motion carried unanimously.

6. New Business

6A. Oaths of Office: Dottie McKinley, Kristen Genet, Mary Jo Truchon, Ken Anderson

City Clerk Sorensen administered the Oath of Office to NRCB Boardmembers Kristen Genet, Mary Jo Truchon, and Ken Anderson. A round of applause was offered by all in attendance.

6B. Wetland Bank Presentation

Mr. Monahan stated Patrick Hughes from Rice Creek Watershed District and Ben Meyer from Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources will give a presentation on wetland banking.

Ben Meyer, Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, provided the board with a presentation on wetland banking. He discussed the value and function of wetlands and how they are regulated, commented on the purpose of wetland banking, reviewed the process followed for establishing a wetland bank, and noted what actions are eligible for credits. He provided an overview and purpose of the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) and commented on the organizations that oversee waterways in Minnesota. He described the function of the local government road wetland replacement program. He commented on how exceptional natural resource value (ENRV) areas are protected, noting state conservation easements are put over these areas. He

reported Minnesota has more wetland banks than any other state in the union and these banks are owned by cities, counties and private property owners (farmers). Further discussion ensued regarding the timeline and process followed for a draft prospectus. The role of the Technical Evaluation Panel (TEP)/Local Government Unit (LGU) was discussed along with how mitigation plans and performance standards were measured.

Boardmember Anderson asked if conservation easements impact the value of a property. Mr. Meyer stated he was uncertain if property values were impacted.

Patrick Hughes, Rice Creek Watershed District, introduced himself to the Board. He shifted the presentation to comment further on how wetland credits are deposited once all requirements are met. He discussed how credits are withdrawn and transferred to other parties. He provided an overview on how wetland bank monitoring occurs noting monitoring was conducted for at least five growing seasons. It was noted monitoring reports had to be submitted on an annual basis.

Boardmember Genet thanked Mr. Meyer and Mr. Hughes for their presentation. She stated she understood if Site 7 does not achieve the proper performance standards, the monitoring would be extended. She questioned where the city's Site 7 monitoring report was for year 6. Mr. Monahan stated he does not complete this work and explained this work was completed by Ms. Hedstrom or the engineering department.

Boardmember Genet stated she would like to know more about the status of this report and if Site 7 was in compliance. Mr. Meyer stated Site 7 was not in compliance at this time because a year 6 monitoring report has not been submitted.

Boardmember Genet discussed the hydrology of Site 7 noting there were several issues that may be impacting the hydrology of this site. Mr. Meyer stated BWSR supported Site 7 and noted the hydrology on the site was working. He reported BWSR has two monitoring wells on Site 7 and the data from these wells could be shared with the Board.

Boardmember Truchon thanked Mr. Meyer and Mr. Hughes for their informative presentation. She noted the city of Blaine has a lot on their plate.

6B.1 Open Space Resources

Boardmember Genet stated it was brought to her attention today that Carrie Taylor from the Anoka County Conservation District met with Blaine staff to talk about pollinator plantings. She explained Ms. Tayler was seeking information about sites with rare plants, of which Blaine has many. She discussed an endangered grass that was found only in Loch Ness Park. It was her understanding there was fill sitting in Loch Ness Park and she did not want this fill covering the endangered grass. She also recommended reduced mowing be conducted in Loch Ness in order to protect this species of grass.

Ms. Monahan explained Ms. Hedstrom spoke with public works about the areas that can and cannot be mowed at Loch Ness Park.

Boardmember Truchon requested the fill be kept as far away as possible from the endangered grass to ensure it is not harmed. Mr. Monahan noted he would follow up with Ms. Hedstrom and Justin _____ regarding the fill at Loch Ness Park.

Boardmember Truchon recommended an interpretive sign be posted within Loch Ness Park to educate the public on this endangered grass.

6C. NRCB Updates

Mr. Monahan provided the board with an update on the following projects:

No Mow May – Staff noted the go live date to register for No Mow May was April 24.

Volunteer Opportunities – Staff reported 14 parks have been adopted for an Earth Day cleanup. He explained a garlic mustard pull event was being planned for Pioneer Park. Staff was organizing treatments in the Blaine Wetland Sanctuary for Site 7 and the southern section. In

addition, prescribed burns were being planned for the southern portion of the BWS this spring if weather allows.

Laddie Lake Pollinator Conversion – Staff stated in 2022, Anoka County Conservation District applied for a grant on behalf of the city to conduct a turn to pollinator conversion at Laddie Lake.

RFP for Consulting Services for BWS Wetland Bank – Staff will be emailing the board later this week with an update on the RFP process.

Boardmember Truchon stated she would like to know more as to why the current contract lapsed.

RFP for Consulting Services to update BWS Trail System – Staff has three proposals for the BWS trail system. He explained staff was reviewing the proposals and will be emailing the board later this week with findings from the review of the three RFP's.

Eagle Scout Project - Bat Houses BWS – Boardmember Genet explained the bat houses were supposed to be installed last Saturday, but this did not happen due to the weather. She noted the bat houses would now be installed on Saturday, April 22, on Earth Day.

Boardmember Genet invited the Board, city staff and city council to attend a virtual sustainability panel on Thursday, April 20.

7. Other Business

None.

8. Communication

None.

9. Adjournment

Chair Rafferty adjourned the meeting at 8:51PM.



City of Blaine Staff Report

File Number: 2023-244

Agenda Date	Status
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June 20, 2023

In Control	File Type
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Natural Resources Conservation Board

Motion

New Business -

Agenda Item # 5.1

Recommendation of RFP for Consulting Services for BWS Wetland Bank and Trail System

Background

Staff will present and provide hard copies of the RFP for Consulting Services for BWS Wetland Bank and Trail System.

Recommendation

By motion, recommend to the City Council an RFP for Consulting Services for BWS Wetland Bank and Trail System.

Attachment List

None



City of Blaine Staff Report

File Number: 2023-245

Agenda Date	Status
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June 20, 2023

In Control	File Type
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Natural Resources Conservation Board

Action Item

New Business -

Agenda Item # 5.2

Open Space Inspections

Background

Staff will provide open space map and checklist for board members to select for inspections.

Recommendation

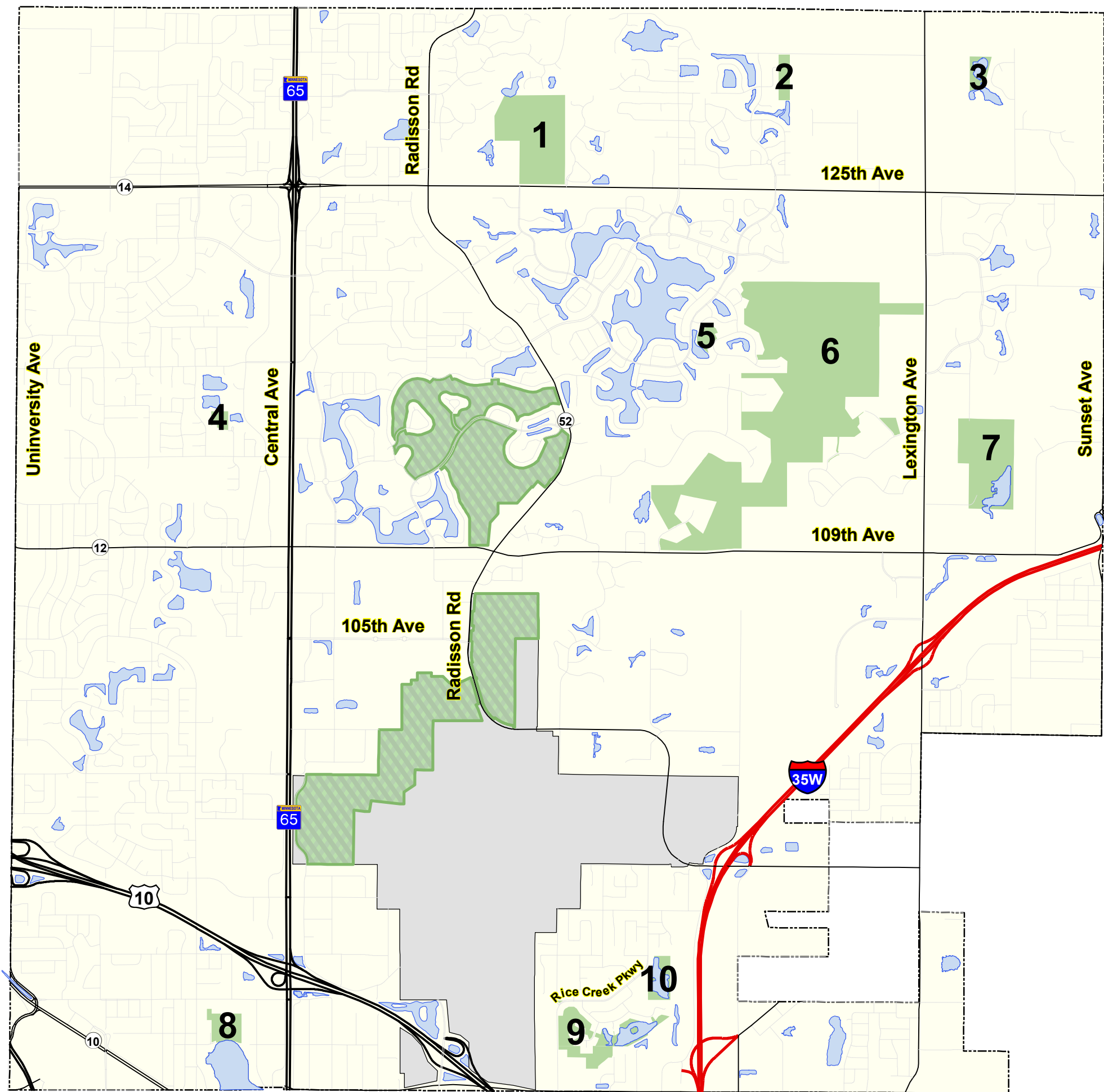
Informational

Attachment List

1. Open Space Overview Map
2. INSPECTION CHECKLIST FOR BLAINE OPEN SPACES

CITY OF BLAINE

OPEN SPACE



- 1 Pioneer Park, 2491 125th Ave NE (100 acres)
- 2 Legacy Woods Open Space, 3560 131st Ave NE (10.1 acres)
- 3 Sunrise Ponds Open Space, 13000 Jewell Cir NE (11.8 acres)
- 4 Hidden Ponds Park, 11465 Polk St NE (5.3 acres)
- 5 Oak Savannah, 11730 Naples Cir NE (6.7 acres)
- 6 Blaine Wetland Sanctuary, 11980 Lexington Ave NE (521.6 acres)
- 7 Lochness Park, 11121 Lexington Ave NE (89.2 acres)
- 8 Laddie Lake Park, 1051 87th Ave NE (15.1 acres)
- 9 Kane Meadows South, Southwest of 2946 Rice Creek Pkwy NE (12.5 acres)
- 10 Kane Meadows North, East of 2946 Rice Creek Pkwy NE (17.6 acres)

Map Created by: City of Blaine GIS
Map Date: March, 2020

Disclaimer: This document has been compiled using information gathered from various governmental offices and other sources and is to be used for reference purposes only. Every effort has been made to make sure the completeness and accuracy on this document. The City of Blaine does not represent that the data can be used for exact measurement of distance or direction or precision in the depiction of geographic features. If errors or discrepancies are found, please contact (763) 717-2639.





INSPECTION CHECKLIST FOR BLAINE OPEN SPACES

LOCATION: _____ DATE: _____

INSPECTOR(S): _____

Instructions: Please complete a thorough evaluation of your assigned open space. Make note of the condition of all amenities from a safety and aesthetic viewpoint. If there is an amenity that is not on this sheet, add it to the section titled "other". When identifying an issue, please be as detailed as possible about the location and take photos if possible.

PARKING LOT	SATISFACTORY	REQUIRES ATTENTION	NOTES
Are appropriate signs posted and visible?			
Are the parking areas free of trip hazards?			
Is the lighting sufficient?			
Is it free of debris?			
Are stalls clearly marked?			
Other			
TRAILS/BOARDWALK	SATISFACTORY	REQUIRES ATTENTION	NOTES
Are the trails free from trip hazards? (eg. No pot holes, cracks, etc)			
If trails are wood chip, are the wood chips still functioning?			
Are there any safety hazards? (eg. trees across trail, trees leaning over trail, etc)			
Are the trails free from debris? (eg. Garbage, dog poop, etc)			
Other			

PICNIC SHELTERS	SATISFACTORY	REQUIRES ATTENTION	NOTES
Is the park shelter free of debris?			
Are the picnic tables stable & in good shape? (markings, bolts)			
What is the condition of the roof?			
What is the condition of the posts/concrete pad?			
Is there vandalism?			
Other:			
KIOSKS/SIGNS	SATISFACTORY	REQUIRES ATTENTION	NOTES
Are the kiosk/signs in good condition?			
Is there vandalism?			
Do the posters need replacing?			
Other:			

OVERALL SITE CONDITION	SATISFACTORY	REQUIRES ATTENTION	NOTES
Are there invasive species?			
Is the site free of debris?			
Is there any vandalism?			
Are there any washouts to water bodies/drainage areas?			
Is there any encroachment from neighboring properties?			
Are there opportunities for additional plantings, signage, or amenities?			
Other			
OTHER:	SATISFACTORY	REQUIRES ATTENTION	NOTES

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OR CONCERNS: _____



City of Blaine Staff Report

File Number: 2023-246

Agenda Date	Status
June 20, 2023	

In Control	File Type
Natural Resources Conservation Board	Action Item

New Business -

Agenda Item # 5.3

Open Space Tour: Starts at 6:45pm

Background

NRCB will be touring Open Spaces

Blaine Wetland Sanctuary: Meeting at East Lake Park

Lochness Park: Meeting at the South Parking Lot

Please wear comfortable shoes for walking.

Recommendation

Attachment List

None