City of Blaine
Natural Resource Conservation Board

November 21, 2023 | 7:00 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 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.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

3. Approval of Minutes

3.1. 2023-566 Approval of August 15, 2023 and September 19, 2023 NRCB Minutes.
Sponsors: Nate Monahan, Recreation Manager

4. Open Forum for Citizen Input

5. New Business

5.1. 2023-567 Approval of the 2024 - 2028 Open Space Capital Improvement Program
Sponsors: Nate Monahan, Recreation Manager

5.2. 2023-568 NRCB Updates
Sponsors: Nate Monahan, Recreation Manager

6. Adjournment

City of Blaine
Natural Resource Conservation Board

August 15, 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

NRCB Members Present – Chair Rafferty, Boardmembers Anderson, Genet, Panning, Truchon.

Park Members Present – Boardmembers Lizakowski, Paulseth and VanBuren.

Absent – NRCB Boardmember McKinley. Park Boardmembers Ford, Keraka, Neubert, and Chair Lester.

Others Present: Senior Recreation Manager Jerome Krieger and Recreation Manager Nate Monahan.

3. Open Forum for Citizen Input

No one appeared to address the NRCB or Park Board.

4. New Business

4.1. 2023-359 Review of Parks Capital Budgets
Sponsors: Jerome Krieger, Sr. Recreation Manager

Recreation Manager Monahan provided the group with an updated report of the proposed five-year Park Development CIP and the Parks and Trails budgets. It was noted the city may need more ballfields if the airport fields are lost to new development in the next three to five years. This would require the city to buy a larger parcel for new fields. He commented further on how valuable trails were to Blaine residents, noting the improvements that would

be made in the next five years.

Boardmember Paulseth asked how staff came up with the estimates. Mr. Monahan described how staff prepared estimates with inflation for the budget.

Boardmember Anderson questioned what the revenue stream was for trail improvements. Mr. Monahan stated trails are funded by park dedication fees.

4.2. 2023-360 Review of Open Space Capital Budget
Sponsors: Nate Monahan, Recreation Manager

Mr. Monahan reviewed the proposed five-year Open Space capital budget.

Boardmember Truchon commented on the proposed trails within the Blaine Wetland Sanctuary (BWS) and noted most of these would be completed in the southern end of the BWS. Mr. Monahan reported this was the case. It was noted the proceeds from the sale of all wetland credits were set aside for BWS improvements.

Boardmember Truchon explained the remaining eight acres of the EDA's wetland bank credits have been made available. She asked if the city had credits available anywhere else in the city. Mr. Monahan stated there were only wetland credits available on these two sites (BWS and Site 7).

Boardmember Truchon indicated the BWS nature center was still a high priority to her and the NRCB. She was interested in moving this figure two years earlier. She commented on how a nature center could be utilized by the entire community and hoped the remainder of the NRCB would support this recommendation. Mr. Monahan agreed there was a need for a gathering space or structure at the BWS. He noted this budget was fluid and items could be moved as priorities change.

Boardmember Lizakowski questioned why the boardwalk trails were so expensive. Mr. Monahan explained the boardwalk trail work can only be done in the winter months, which left little time for mobilization and actual work. He indicated the price for materials was also quite high.

Boardmember Genet asked if the city was working to meet performance standards in order to free up more wetland credits. Mr. Monahan stated the city was working towards this with a consultant and the Army Corp of Engineers.

4.3. 2023-361 Park Updates
Sponsors: Jerome Krieger, Sr. Recreation Manager

Mr. Monahan provided the Board with an update on the following matters:

- Aquatore Bandshell - Staff commented on the work that has begun on the bandshell and noted lighting in the park would be updated.

- Sunrise Pond Park/Trail - Staff provided an update on the playground equipment that had been installed at this park.
- Oak Creek Park Playground - Staff reviewed photos of this park and noted swing will also be installed at this park.
- Jim Peterson Sports Field Lighting
- Lochness Disc Golf Improvement - Staff commented on the improvements that were made to the Lochness 9-hole disc golf course.
- Lexington Athletic Complex Hockey Rink Expansion
- Trail Improvements

4.4. 2023-362 Open Space Updates

Sponsors: Nate Monahan, Recreation Manager

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

- Blaine Wetland Sanctuary (BWS) Trails and Wetland Bank - Staff commented on the three consultants that submitted bids to assist the city of Blaine with the management of the BWS. It was noted a clearing event was scheduled for the southern portion of BWS on September 8. The Board requested staff consider how to address motorized vehicles that are using the boardwalks.
- Open Space Inspections - Staff explained Hidden Ponds, Oak Savanah, Laddie Lake, and Kane Meadows North and South still need to be inspected for 2023.
- Lexington Athletic Complex North Trail Connection
- Laddie Lake Park Shelter and Building Removal - Staff reported two of the rundown buildings at Laddie Lake Park would be removed this fall.

5. Adjournment

Chair Rafferty adjourned the meeting at 8:03PM.

City of Blaine
Natural Resource Conservation Board

September 19, 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

Present – Chair Rafferty, Boardmembers Anderson, Genet, Truchon.

Absent – Boardmembers McKinley and Panning.

Others Present: Stormwater Coordinator Megan Hedstrom.

3. Approval of Minutes

3.1. 2023-421 Approval of NRCB Minutes for July 18 and August 15, 2023
Sponsors: Megan Hedstrom, Stormwater Coordinator

MOVED by Boardmember Truchon, seconded by Boardmember Anderson, to approve the minutes of the July 18, 2023 and August 15, 2023 board meeting as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

4. Open Forum for Citizen Input

No one appeared to address the NRCB.

5. New Business

5.1. 2023-422 NRCB Updates

Sponsors: Megan Hedstrom, Stormwater Coordinator

Stormwater Coordinator Hedstrom provided updates on the following topics:

- Rare Grass Signage at Lochness Park - The commission did not believe it was necessary to have two duplicate signs for the rare grass, but rather could support two signs being posted within the park that were different.
- Laddie Lake Pollinator garden and building/north shelter removals
- RFP for Blaine Wetland Sanctuary - The council would be reviewing the BWS RFP in October. It was noted a special botanist had to be brought in to help with the Site 7 complexities.
- The commission requested staff report back at a future meeting with information on how groundwater levels were being impacted by the drought.
- Volunteer Opportunities
- BWS Walkthrough would be held on Wednesday, September 20 from 9:30AM to 12PM
- Blaine Wetland Sanctuary Southern Section - A volunteer event was held on September 8 where 20 native shrubs were planted, buckthorn was removed and native understory seed was spread

5.2. 2023-424 Open Space Inspection Reports
Sponsors: Megan Hedstrom, Stormwater Coordinator

Ms. Hedstrom stated staff and board members will provide reports from inspections of Open Spaces. It was noted staff will create work orders based on the findings within each inspection.

Kane Meadows South: Nate Monahan - Several signs needed updating and work orders were brought to the public works department.

Kane Meadows North: Ken Anderson - The trail has several cracks and vegetation was growing in the cracks. Several sizeable trees in the park were dead and should be removed. It was recommended city vehicles no longer drive on the trail. One of the park benches was in need of replacement. There was minor spider cracking on the basketball court.

Sunrise Ponds: Ken Anderson - There were some minor invasive species along the trail, such as thistle, that should be removed. It was recommended all the ponds within the park be dedicated as open space. The old farm barbed wire should be removed when the trail was installed.

Oak Savanna: Kristen Genet - This park has no parking lot. This park has a wood chip trail and boardwalk. Both were in good condition. It was noted the residents have created an intricate mountain bike course in this park. The new dirt trails have impacted the integrity of the oak savana. The park has some buckthorn invasion and should be checked for garlic mustard this spring. Staff was asked to investigate the new dirt trails within this park.

Laddie Lake: Gene Rafferty - The parking lot was in good shape and the spaces were clearly

marked. The trails appear to be in good condition, but the shelters were in rough shape. Staff noted the shelter and building would be removed this week. Staff indicated a prairie restoration project was being pursued for this park. It was recommended signage be posted to inform the public when to turn into Laddie Lake Park.

Hidden Ponds: Megan Hedstrom - This open space could only be accessed by on street parking. There were several signs for this park and staff noted the Open Space signs should be replaced. The wood chip path needs new chips and maintenance. The open space has buckthorn that has to be removed, as well as garlic mustard. It was noted this would be a great park for an educational/volunteer land management event.

Boardmember Truchon commented on a meeting she had with City Manager Wolfe, Recreation Manager Monahan, and Boardmember McKinley where the use of electric scooters/bikes and motorized vehicles on city trails was discussed.

6. Adjournment

Chair Rafferty adjourned the meeting at 8:37PM.

City of Blaine
Staff Report

File Number: 2023-567

Agenda Date	Status
November 21, 2023	
In Control	**File Type**
Natural Resources Conservation Board	Motion

New Business -

Agenda Item # 5.1

Approval of the 2024 - 2028 Open Space Capital Improvement Program

Background

Staff will review 2024 - 2028 Open Space Capital Improvement Program with the Natural Resource Conservation Board.

Trails Development - Open Space
Laddie Lake Park Forest Management and Trail Development Discussion

Recommendation

By motion, recommend to the City Council the 2024 - 2028 Open Space Capital Improvement Program.

Attachment List

1. 2023.10.10 - 2024 Parks Capital Open Space Fund Summary
2. 2023.10.10 - 2024-2028 Parks Capital - Open Space Fund by Expense Category
3. 2023.10.10 - 2024-2028 Parks Capital - Open Space Fund by Revenue Source

CITY OF BLAINE, MINNESOTA

OPEN SPACE FUND - 402

2024 Budget

	2022 Actual	2023 Adopted	2024 Proposed	2025	2026	2027	2028
Beginning Balance	**$ 3,917,841**	**$ 5,151,720**	**$ 2,724,710**	**$ 2,142,912**	**$ 2,519,701**	**$ 3,204,347**	**$ 2,838,993**
Revenues							
Park Dedication Fees	762,220	249,140	523,202	661,789	739,646	739,646	739,646
Interest earnings	(255,142)	83,850	-	-	-	-	-
Wetland Credit Sales - BWS Site 7	1,059,115	375,000	200,000	520,000	750,000	750,000	750,001
Total Revenues	**$ 1,566,193**	**$ 707,990**	**$ 723,202**	**$ 1,181,789**	**$ 1,489,646**	**$ 1,489,646**	**$ 1,489,647**
Expenses							
Operating Expenses - Open Space Management	230	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Capital Improvements-Current Yr. Appropriations	332,084	2,950,000	1,300,000	800,000	800,000	1,850,000	850,000
Capital Improvements-Prior Yr. Appropriations	-	180,000					
Total Expenses	**$ 332,314**	**$ 3,135,000**	**$ 1,305,000**	**$ 805,000**	**$ 805,000**	**$ 1,855,000**	**$ 855,000**
Increase (Decrease) in Reserve	1,233,879	(2,427,010)	(581,798)	376,789	684,646	(365,354)	634,647
Ending Balance	**$ 5,151,720**	**$ 2,724,710**	**$ 2,142,912**	**$ 2,519,701**	**$ 3,204,347**	**$ 2,838,993**	**$ 3,473,640**

2024-2028 Parks Capital Improvement Program

Projects by Fund and Expense Category

Fund - Project - Expense Type	Budget to Date	Proposed 2023 Changes	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Total Project Budget
405 - Open Space Development	**3,400,000**	**-**	**1,300,000**	**800,000**	**800,000**	**1,850,000**	**850,000**	**9,000,000**
PRK220100 - Pioneer Park Restoration	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**
4590 - Projects - Construction	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PRK220300 - Blaine Wetland Sanctuary Structure and Restroom	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**750,000**	**-**	**750,000**
4590 - Projects - Construction	-	-	-	-	-	675,000	-	675,000
4591 - Projects - Consulting	-	-	-	-	-	75,000	-	75,000
PRK990200 - Blaine Wetland Sanctuary Trail Development	**2,550,000**	**-**	**1,000,000**	**500,000**	**500,000**	**750,000**	**500,000**	**5,800,000**
4590 - Projects - Construction	2,300,000	-	925,000	475,000	475,000	700,000	475,000	5,350,000
4591 - Projects - Consulting	250,000	-	75,000	25,000	25,000	50,000	25,000	450,000
PRK990600 - Ongoing Maintenance of Blaine Wetland Sanctuary	**100,000**	**-**	**50,000**	**50,000**	**50,000**	**50,000**	**50,000**	**350,000**
4591 - Projects - Consulting	100,000	-	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	350,000
PRK990700 - Trails Development - Open Space	**600,000**	**-**	**150,000**	**150,000**	**150,000**	**200,000**	**200,000**	**1,450,000**
4590 - Projects - Construction	585,000	-	150,000	150,000	150,000	200,000	200,000	1,435,000
4591 - Projects - Consulting	15,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	15,000
PRK990800 - Wetland Management - Site 7	**150,000**	**-**	**100,000**	**100,000**	**100,000**	**100,000**	**100,000**	**650,000**
4591 - Projects - Consulting	150,000	-	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	650,000

2024-2028 Parks Capital Improvement Program

Projects by Fund and Revenue Source

Fund and Revenue Source	Budget to Date	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Total Project Budget
405 - Open Space Development	**3,400,000**	**1,300,000**	**800,000**	**800,000**	**1,850,000**	**850,000**	**9,000,000**
3802 - Park Dedication Fees	450,000	518,202	600,000	150,000	750,000	200,000	2,668,202
3902 - Sale of Wetland Bank Credits	425,000	200,000	200,000	650,000	734,646	650,000	2,859,646
9405-1 - Fund Reserve - Open Space Park Dedication Fees	275,000	-	-	-	365,354	-	640,354
9405-2 - Fund Reserve - Site 7 Wetland Credits	2,250,000	581,798	-	-	-	-	2,831,798

Fund - Project - Revenue Source	Budget to Date	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Total Project Budget
405 - Open Space Development	**3,400,000**	**1,300,000**	**800,000**	**800,000**	**1,850,000**	**850,000**	**9,000,000**
PRK220100 - Pioneer Park Restoration	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**
3902 - Sale of Wetland Bank Credits	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PRK220300 - Blaine Wetland Sanctuary Structure and Restro	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**750,000**	**-**	**750,000**
3902 - Sale of Wetland Bank Credits	-	-	-	-	584,646	-	584,646
9405-1 - Fund Reserve - Open Space Park Dedication Fees	-	-	-	-	165,354	-	165,354
PRK990200 - Blaine Wetland Sanctuary Trail Development	**2,550,000**	**1,000,000**	**50,000**	**500,000**	**750,000**	**500,000**	**5,350,000**
3802 - Park Dedication Fees	50,000	368,202	-	-	750,000	-	1,168,202
3902 - Sale of Wetland Bank Credits	250,000	50,000	50,000	500,000	-	500,000	1,350,000
9405-2 - Fund Reserve - Site 7 Wetland Credits	2,250,000	581,798	-	-	-	-	2,831,798
PRK990600 - Ongoing Maintenance of Blaine Wetland Sanctu	**100,000**	**50,000**	**50,000**	**50,000**	**50,000**	**50,000**	**350,000**
3902 - Sale of Wetland Bank Credits	100,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	350,000
PRK990700 - Trails Development - Open Space	**600,000**	**150,000**	**600,000**	**150,000**	**200,000**	**200,000**	**1,900,000**
3802 - Park Dedication Fees	325,000	150,000	600,000	150,000	-	200,000	1,425,000
9405-1 - Fund Reserve - Open Space Park Dedication Fees	275,000	-	-	-	200,000	-	475,000
PRK990800 - Wetland Management - Site 7	**150,000**	**100,000**	**100,000**	**100,000**	**100,000**	**100,000**	**650,000**
3802 - Park Dedication Fees	75,000	-	-	-	-	-	75,000
3902 - Sale of Wetland Bank Credits	75,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	575,000

City of Blaine
Staff Report

File Number: 2023-568

Agenda Date	Status
November 21, 2023	
In Control	**File Type**
Natural Resources Conservation Board	Report

New Business -

Agenda Item # 5.2

NRCB Updates

Background

Potential Recommendation of a RFP for Blaine Wetland Sanctuary. We are currently reviewing feedback from the Army Core of Engineers and hoping to provide more details and a recommendation to review by the board.

Rain Garden Updated Signage - Metro Blooms

Aristida Signage Update

NRCB Meeting on Tuesday, December 19, 2023 has been canceled.

Other

Recommendation

Informational

Attachment List

1. Rain Garden Sign

RAINGARDENS: PROTECTING LAKES, RIVERS, & STREAMS
DID YOU KNOW THAT
RAINGARDENS . . .
• are designed to drain within two days - eliminating mosquito habitat
• require the same amount or less maintenance than a typical landscaped yard
• reduce flooding
• save money on lawn care