



City of Blaine

Natural Resource Conservation Board

August 20, 2024 | 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, Dahl, Panning, Truchon.

Others Present: Recreation Manager Nate Monahan.

3. Approval of Minutes

- 3.1. 2024-353 Approval of the April 16, 2024 NRCB Minutes
Sponsors: Nate Monahan, Recreation Manager

Boardmember Panning requested staff put into the minutes the languages changes
Boardmember Anderson and Boardmember Truchon requested for the rain gardens and rain garden signs.

Boardmember Anderson recommended Dottie's last name (McKinley) be added to the minutes under the approval of minutes section. He requested in Section 5.1 in the last sentence of the first paragraph that moved be changed to removed. Also changing who to that in the reference to the Planning Commission. He asked that the reference to BWS be spelled out as Blaine Wetland Sanctuary with (BWS) following. He requested the reference to rare grass on the last page of the minutes, change the word install to installed.

MOVED by Boardmember Anderson, seconded by Boardmember Truchon, to approve the minutes of the April 16, 2024 board meeting as amended.

Motion carried unanimously.

4. Open Forum for Citizen Input

No one appeared to address the NRCB.

5. New Business

- 5.1.** 2024-354 Presentation by Intern Irene Woods
Sponsors: Nate Monahan, Recreation Manager

Intern Irene Woods was not able to be in attendance at this meeting.

- 5.2.** 2024-356 NEW! Blaine Wetland Sanctuary New Solar Walk
Sponsors: Nate Monahan, Recreation Manager

Recreation Manager Monahan presented the NRCB with information on the new Solar System interpretive walk at the Blaine Wetland Sanctuary. He thanked Heidi Farris for her assistance with this signage.

Boardmember Anderson asked if hard copies of the signage information was available for parents and children. Mr. Monahan stated printouts would be available at the library and city hall, otherwise parents would be able to follow along with the walk on their smart phones.

Boardmember Truchon thanked staff for their efforts on this project.

- 5.3.** 2024-370 Review of Wetland Bank Concept Signage from Metro Blooms
Sponsors: Nate Monahan, Recreation Manager

Mr. Monahan reviewed with the board conceptual signage for wetlands that was designed by Metro Blooms.

Boardmember Truchon recommended the city provided a definition for a wetland bank on this sign.

Boardmember Panning supported the city installing this type of sign at all of the city's wetland banks.

- 5.4.** 2024-357 Volunteer Opportunities
Sponsors: Nate Monahan, Recreation Manager

Mr. Monahan discussed volunteer opportunities the NRCB members could participate in through the Anoka County Conservation District (ACD), which included an event being held

at the Cedar Creek Conservation Area on August 21 and pollinator garden planting events scheduled for September 14, September 16 and September 19. He reported there would be a collection of wildflower seed event on September 24 and a pollinator meadow planting event on October 3. He stated he would be sharing the list of these events with the boardmembers.

5.5. 2024-369 NRCB Updates

Sponsors: Nate Monahan, Recreation Manager

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

Eagle Scout Brayden Samuelson Project: Three benches were constructed at Sunrise Ponds within the Open Space.

Boardmember Anderson expressed concern with the fact the benches were quite close to the trail. Mr. Monahan explained he would mention this to the Park Supervisor to ensure staff does not damage any of the park equipment.

Dottie McKinley's Memorial Bench at Pioneer Park: Staff explained a bench will be installed in Pioneer Park in memory of Dottie McKinley. He read the words that were written by her family and were inscribed on the bench.

Boardmember Truchon discussed how Boardmember McKinley was the driving force for getting Pioneer Park turned into a park. She thanked staff for their efforts to get this memorial bench in place.

Blaine Wetland Sanctuary Consultant: Staff reported Stormwater Coordinator Hedstrom has been working with BWSR, Rice Creek Watershed District and the Army Corp of Engineers on the consultant proposal. He reported he would continue to push for a Stantec proposal to be brought forward to the City Council at a future meeting.

Boardmember Anderson explained several of the boardmembers wanted an opportunity to review this proposal before going to the City Council. He questioned if the proposal would be reviewed by the NRCB prior to going to the City Council. Mr. Monahan explained it was his understanding the proposal would be forwarded to the board for comments.

Boardmember Truchon indicated she recently spoke to the Army Corps and it was understanding they were waiting on the City of Blaine. She stated a conditions assessment had been completed because of the wetland bank regulations. She commented on how important it would be for the consultant to have the right qualifications in place in order to properly manage the wetlands. She asked that the previously completed trail system be honored by the City and that the upland routes be completed so as not to disturb too much of the wetlands.

Mr. Monahan explained Ms. Hedstrom had met with BWSR and the watershed district. It was his understanding that these groups do not move with any sense of urgency. He stated it was staff's intention to island hop in order to use the upland areas and due to the

expense of boardwalks. He stated once conceptual plans were in place, town hall meetings would be held.

Boardmember Truchon asked who the three vendors were that submitted proposals to the City. Mr. Monahan explained proposals were received from Stantec, WSB and SRF.

Boardmember Truchon discussed how Stantec's plans for the interpretive center had not gone well. She hoped the City would have more success with Stantec through this proposal.

Boardmember Anderson asked if the trails would be gravel on the upland and boardwalk across the wetlands. Mr. Monahan stated this would be the case. He discussed how the technology for boardwalks has improved since 2016.

Boardmember Anderson questioned if a controlled burn had occurred within the wetland area this year. Mr. Monahan explained this has not yet occurred because of weather concerns.

Chair Rafferty asked if staff would entertain holding a special NRCB meeting to review the proposals prior to the final proposal going before the city council. Mr. Monahan stated he could speak with Ms. Hedstrom regarding this item to try and get a meeting scheduled.

Further discussion ensued regarding the ballfields at Airport Park.

6. Adjournment

Chair Rafferty adjourned the meeting at 8:13PM.