

Blair Park Board
Meeting Minutes

March 8, 2017

I. Call to order

Neil Jensen called to order the regular meeting of the Blair Park Board at 7:05 PM on March 8, 2017 at the Blair City Council Chamber .

II. Roll call

Neil Jensen conducted a roll call. The following persons were present: Neil Jensen, Todd Wick, Steve Tonn, Jeene Hobbs, Joe Burns

Troop 188 Scout leaders Brent Fullmer and Tony Wilson and two Troop 188 Boy Scouts introduced. Scouts asked why the old Lions Park playground equipment was torn out. Park Supervisor Pat Long and board members explained that the equipment was old, and improvements were part of City Master Plan. Steve Tonn added, “ This is what we are trying to do to improve our Parks. Long said, “ If you have any questions or suggestions please come and voice your opinion. This gives us good feedback.” Long talked about over-all plan to improve or replaced all of park playground equipment to make ADA compliant and for safety. Improve and update shelters and plant trees and suggested potential service projects in the parks including Eagle Scout projects.

III. Approval of minutes from last meeting

Neil Jensen read the minutes from the last meeting. The minutes were approved as corrected - minor sentence correction.

IV. Old business

- a) No bills submitted.
- b) Ralph Steyer Park Playground is out for bid and back on March 27 and will be scheduled for the April 11 City Council meeting for bid approval. Park Board needs to form another subcommittee to go through the evaluation of bids. A subcommittee meeting is proposed for Monday, April 3 at 7:00 PM, site TBD.
- c) Update on other projects: Optimist Park paving of sidewalk and parking pad for ADA access from the parking lot to fishing pier. Spring cleanup in parks. Spring tree planting - 10 trees at the library and additional trees at Rhoades Park, Steyer Park, and Vets field. Tree and stump removal to continue, and trimming trees throughout the city parks.

Lions Bathroom. Architects are confident that documents will be ready in next few weeks. Long needs information to implement grant papers for Papio Valley Natural Resource grant.

Steve Tonn expressed interest in working with the Parks Board to pursue a grant for playground improvements at Stemmerman Park.

Jeene Hobbs voiced concern about plans to take care of Black Elk Neihardt Park repairs including the Tower. She asked if the Black Elk-Neihardt Board (Friends of Black Elk – Neihardt Park) is functional? Long said the (Friends) board is gearing down. Joe Burns and Long commented that discussions are in progress to turn over accounting and donations to the Blair Foundation. Engineering and feasibility studies are needed to determine a permanent fix for the Tower deterioration. Hobbs said “You need to find somebody that wants this to be done.“ Burns said that the whole project is so overwhelming and intimidating that no one is willing to step up to the plate. Long said it makes economical sense that they (Friends) move (accounting functions) to the Blair Community Foundation because of expenses incurred in maintaining their own account and website. Long said he would like to see what Friends’ ideas are for the future.

V. New business

- a) Friends of Arboretum meeting scheduled for March 9 at Police Department Community room.
- b) Parks department is back up to three permanent employees. Blake Gutchow has been hired to fill vacancy.
- c) Arbor Day tree planting ceremony is scheduled to take place at the new library on the last Friday in April 29.
- d) Tonn asked if it is possible to list Parks along with cemetery in the phone book.
- e) Eagle Scout Butterfly garden project is planned for southwest corner of the new library.

Public discussion

Troop 188 Scouts asked questions about the future of a new or renovated swimming pool.

Adjournment

Neil Jensen adjourned the meeting at 8:15.

Minutes Submitted by Secretary Joe Burns