

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Notes Monday, August 5, 2024 5:30 PM

1. Call to Order

Steve Berseth called meeting to order at 5:30 PM. Board members present: Steve Berseth, Jay Larsen, Doug Smith, and Brenda Andersen. Board members absent: Erika Saunders, Nathaniel Condelli and Stacy Zervas. City of Brookings staff present: City Manager Paul Briseno, Park, Recreation and Forestry Director Kristin Zimmerman, Assistant Director Parks, Recreation and Forestry Joshua Bauman and Park, Recreation and Forestry office manager Ashley Marler.

2. Approval of Agenda

Doug Smith motions to approve the agenda, Brenda Andersen 2nds motion; Motion is carried.

3. Approval of Minutes

Jay Larsen motions to approve July 2024 minutes, Brenda Andersen 2nds motion; Motion is carried.

4. Call to the Public

Several members of the public attended the meeting tonight. Doug Smith supports the idea that the City of Brookings acquires the 5th Street Gym. Due to the large number of people in attendance of the meeting it was decided to move onto the discussion regarding 5th Street Gym and give members the option to share their feelings after the discussion. The discussion will be outlined in Section 5 of the minutes and public comments will be noted in section 4 of the minutes. Joe Schumacher mentioned that there was a time that we wanted to bring a retirement community to Brookings. During the months of November through April we have many people that are stuck inside and are wanting to get out and do things. If we are able to create an indoor recreation space, we could bring more revenue to the city because people will want to move here because we have more options. Joe agrees that if people become more aware of this people may decide that they do want to donate and help with the effort to raise the funding. Paul Briseno did state that people have raised money before for city facilities, so it can be done. If there is effort to raise the money it would be well received. Doug Smith suggested that if there is anyone interested in starting a group, he would lead it. Joe Sheffer's is with the Brookings Basketball Association. He believes there are some items that need to be done immediately. The water runs down the brick and it seeps into the building and that is why the walls have damage. The HVAC system is a big thing, it heats, doesn't work well, it doesn't ventilate well in the summer and there is of course no AC. He did get a rough estimate for the HAVC and it was much lower than a million. The floor isn't that much of a complaint, it is old, but it works. The Brookings Basketball Association uses it 10 to 12 Saturdays in the winter and will use it when we can outside of park time. Joe thinks that there is money to be made in the 5th Street Gym. Ken Meyers suggested possibly getting SDSU students of the Architect and Engineering college to help on this project. They might want to contribute to this in order to help build their resumes. Ken also suggested that we look at the YMCA for ideas.

5. 5th St Gym/Indoor Recreation Space

Kristin stated that Jared Thomas, the City of Brookings Chief Building Official has been looking at the 5th Street Gym and the cost that it would take to update the facility. The estimate is about 2.6 million dollars' worth of improvements. These improvements and updates include the brick façade outside, the materials for the ceiling, updating the entrance to meet ADA compliance, the interior and exterior doors and lighting being replaced, replacing the roof membrane and updating the bathrooms to meet ADA compliance. The biggest items would be adding an air handler to the facility since there is currently no air conditioning which creates too much humidity and causes the floor to be extremely slippery. The vault pit would need to be filled in or repaired. We would also need to install sprinkler and fire alarms systems to the facility. The 2.6 million dollars doesn't include the repair or replacement of the flooring in the facility. For the city to operate the facility it would be an additional \$100,000.00 to \$150,000.00 each year. These numbers are very high and we are trying to see if we can fit them into our Capital Improvement plans while also being as fiscally responsible as possible. City Manager Paul Briseno also clarified that the Brookings School District did speak with the city about the ownership of the 5th Street Gym. The school district does own the gym and has owned it for sometime but it hasn't had any real investment in keeping the facility updated. The school has inquired about if the city would be interested in taking over the 5th Street Gym. The interest is there however the money isn't. We don't have the money set aside to bring the facility up to city standards without cutting other things. There are a number of

park projects we could look at cutting if that is something the Park Board would like to consider. Paul Briseno stated that the school knows that he would be open to having a conversation with city council and making a recommendation if we could find some way to meet those 2.6 million dollars. But we would also need to find ways to make up the \$100,000.00 to \$150,000.00 a year to operate the facility. If we are going to take over a facility it is critical that we make it run efficiently and effectively, but we would also need to be able to set aside funds to make sure we are able to replace in the future. The cost to operate would have to be offset with fees, other revenue sources or we would have to start cutting other programs. Doug Smith asked if the school was willing to give the facility to the city if we were willing to fix it. Paul Briseno stated in discussions with the school they are interested in divesting themselves from the 5th Street Gym, but they do not have the funding to give to the city to upgrade the facility. Steve Berseth asked if the facility would need a new floor. Kristin Zimmerman did explain that the flooring would need to be replaced to utilize the gym fully for recreation space. Doug Smith mentioned that indoor recreation was the number 2 item on a survey done by the city. He believes that the next thing on the Parks and Recreation list should be indoor recreation space. Paul Briseno stated we all agree that everyone wants to have indoor recreation space, the issue is where do we find the money. It is up to the Park Board to prioritize things. There are things that weren't in the budget before that became a priority. We can always deprioritize things. The city only has so much money and it is up to us as a group and council to prioritize the needs of our community and move forward. It would be great to have the 5th Street Gym, but again we have to make up that difference somehow. Doug Smith would like to see if we could set up a committee and fundraising for the 5th Street Gym. He believes that there are people in town that would be willing to do sizable donations to an indoor recreation facility and we could possibly raise funds through fundraising to make this happen. We could offer naming rights that would bring in more funding. We could do more than one naming right. Steve Berseth asked if this is something we can do with in the Parks and Recreation budget or is it bigger and more of a city item. Doug Smith thinks that with the park and Recreation Budget we could come close but we have designated the funds to other items. Kristin explained that we are really looking at raising funds for many of our projects, using nontraditional services to raise those funds and make our dollars go further. Brenda Andersen does have concerns about the 5th Street Gym. She would rather see us looking at the big picture and spending that 2.6 million towards a new facility. Kristin Zimmerman did point out that a brand-new recreation facility that would include an indoor walking track, indoor swimming, basketball courts would be anywhere between 50 and 70 million Dollars. This would be the equivalent of tripling people's property taxes. Fundraising will always make our money go forward. Steve Berseth also agrees that while he appreciates the building there are other needs and issues that are going to arise with the building and it could be a difficult problem. Jay Larsen believes that the 5th Street Gym is a deteriorating building. It is available to use and the relationship now isn't bad when it comes to consideration of public use. If it ever becomes private use, we will have to look at alternatives. Note, a new floor is over 1/2 million dollars on its own. He believes that it is hazardous to even play on the floor, the locker rooms, bathrooms and other areas aren't of value, it is pretty deteriorated. Jay Larsen would like to have further discussion on this before anything is to become policy in case there are other options. There could be other things that no one has thought about at this time. Steve Berseth suggests that Doug Smith think of a way to bring a potential motion to discuss this more and vote on it when we have more members. Brenda agrees that we should look into other resources and not making a decision right now.

6. Bike Subcommittee

We want to start a bike subcommittee and Kristin Zimmerman gave a draft of the press release to the board. She would like to have some clear directions with the subcommittee.

- Establishing infrastructure recommendations
- Program development
- Working with community outreach
- Policy advocacy

We would like to open it up to the public for accepting applications from the public. We would also like to have two people from the Park Board as well as someone from our staff to go through those applications to establish that bike subcommittee. Jay Larsen and Brenda Andersen are going to volunteer.

Jay Larsen motions to approve the plan to invite the public to apply to be on the advisory bike subcommittee under Parks, Recreation and Forestry, with Jay Larsen and Brenda Andersen being the Park Board representatives. Doug Smith 2nds; Motion is carried.

7. Emerald Ash Borer

Kristin updated the Park Board on Emerald Ash Borer. In the last month we have had some confirmed cases in Brookings so we now are under a quarantine. This means that hard woods are not to leave outside of Brookings County. It is also recommended that Ash trees not be removed between Memorial Day and Labor Day since that is when the bugs are still alive and are moving around in the trees. If you cut it down the bug will move around and transfer to other trees. Since 2018 our department has been removing Ash trees to help mitigate the EAB situation. Now that we have confirmed cases it will become more aggressive. A lot of what we are doing is educating the public about EAB. We will likely lose 85% of our Ash tree canopy in the next ten years. To put that into prospective, about 23% of our boulevard trees are Ash trees. So, it will be noticeable when we start to remove them. We will remove about 60% of our city Ash trees and treating some of our more sturdier Ash trees. The ones that we are removing will be the ones that are less desirable. We will stagger what we treat and remove so that we are not taking them all out. Treatment is every 2 years for the rest of the life of the tree. We will let residents know if we will take their Ash trees. We are going to be making up door hangers to inform the public. Residents would have the option to treat a boulevard tree if they don't want use to remove it, but it would be at their cost. We have about 10,000 boulevard Ash trees and about 10,000 more throughout our park systems. We have 4 fulltime forestry employees. We are also seeing more cases of DED as well, due to our wet spring. So, our guys have been treating EAB and DED and removing some Ash and Elms as well. We want to avoid standing dead trees. If it is a dead tree, the cost is going to cost more to remove due to being high risk. It's very important that the public stays on top of the Ash trees that are on their property.

8. Project Updates

Pickleball Courts: we are on track; lights have been delivered and the fence is up. The shelters will be moved from the school districts site to the pickleball sites late fall early spring. The painting of the courts will happen the week of August 15th. We are hoping that it is done the end of August with a Ribbon cutting mid-September.

Golf Course: We had USGA out for a site visit July 7th, due to all the rain that we have had the grass looked great. But he did notice some signs where we need improvement. He did commend our maintenance staff for doing such a great job with our resources. He also praised the city for the equipment and how our team works more efficiently. Banner is still working on the water usage; they are looking at a long-term solution so they are really working on the water usages and cost estimates. We are still waiting for our water testing results from the other properties. The irrigation update is set for 2028.

9. Director's Report

Pioneer Bandshell is completed! We had the formal announcement on July 7th. Kristin also wanted to highlight what an amazing job that staff does. We had the Summer Arts Festival, the American Legion Class A state tournament and we had about 5 inches of rain that night and we only had an hour rain delay. They worked very hard to keep the fields going. We also had SDSU Soccer at the Soccer complex. Our Nature Park has had higher numbers than ever before. Our staff works very hard in taking care of our parks and we are proud of all the work that they do! This month was Parks and Recreation Month and it was a great month for our team.

Capital Improvements for next year. We are looking to replace a Forestry dump truck, sweeper vac, fairway mower and sprayer for the Golf Course. We will replace one fleet pick up. We plan to be resealing the Nature Park, installing a splash pad, skate park replacement and hillcrest playground replacement. We will be investing in a generator at the Larson Ice Center, electrical and HVAC and roofing membrane for the Larson Ice center and a fire suppression system in the Larson Ice Center. A \$200,000.00 trail repairs, bikes and walking and it includes repairs. That is the entire capital plan for 2025.

In the past the park board would pick someone for the Mayor Awards. We would need a nomination and decision by September and that will be on the September agenda.

10. Discussion & Possible Action: September Board Meeting

September is our Park tour meeting; it won't be on the 1st Monday of the month. It will be on the 2nd Monday the 9th. We will have a small meeting from 5:30 to 6:00 and then will have a tour.

11. Adjournment

Jay Larsen motions to adjourn. Brenda Andersen 2nds; Motion is carried. Meeting ended at 6:35 PM

