



City of Sidney, MT  
Park and Recreation Committee Meeting 1-13-23  
January 13, 2023 12:00 PM  
115 2nd Street SE | Sidney, MT 59270

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The City Council meetings are open to the public attending in person, with masks encouraged when social distancing cannot be accomplished. If the public does not wish to participate in person, they are also invited to participate via a Zoom meeting. You can participate via phone:

Meeting ID: 874 5442 1812 Passcode: 4332809 Call: 1-346-248-7799

Alderman Present: DiFonzo, Godfrey and Christensen

Others Present: Mayor Norby, Clerk/Treasurer Chamberlin, PWD Hintz, Parks Superintendent Ridl, George Biebl, John Nesper, Travis Rosaaen

**1. New Business**

**a. Quilling's Park Ice Skating Rink**

Mr. Nesper and Mr. Biebl came before the Park and Rec Committee to further discuss the ice-skating rink at Quilling's Park. Mr. Nesper stated that after discussing with members of the public one of the first things that they feel should be looked into is putting in a rink to shrink the size and make it more manageable. He stated that with a smaller size they could add small layers to the rink with a water truck, instead of sitting with hoses for hours. He stated that also having to flood with hoses due to the size causes unevenness, cracks etc. He stated that even if we cannot purchase an actual rink, they could do it with a light colored tarp with railroad ties. He stated you can buy all different kinds of outdoor skating rinks of varying sizes. He stated he would be happy to continue to look into prices and what can be done until one can be purchased. For the current rink, he stated using a water truck putting a small layer of ice during cold snaps would help a lot with creating an even and safer layer of ice.

Mr. Biebl stated he has discussed this with City staff and he understands there has been a lot of hours put in to get the ice we have now and that it is being used. He stated when the ice is good people do utilize that rink and right now there is good ice due to Parks Superintendent Ridl's hard work. He stated moving forward, the water trucks with half the size of the rink putting in small amounts of water down at a time is a good option moving forward. He stated they do not have to have bladders and he understands the City does not have water trucks, but he wonders if someone else would be willing to donate the use of theirs as an in-kind donation. He stated that you can purchase rinks with a bladder and a 2-foot boundary, but he understands the costs that come with that and the issues with snow removal, but they are items that could be looked

into. He stated regardless of changes to the rink, it would be more resourceful for City resources to put smaller amounts on at a time and let the layers freeze.

Parks Superintendent Ridl stated there was a lot of issues this year in creating the ice and removing the snow with broken down equipment. He stated that this year she used a nozzle on the hose and instead of having the hose directly on the ice she put it on the bank, and it helped considerably with creating the nice ice there is now. Mr. Biebl stated Parks Superintendent Ridl has shown she is very good at fundraising and pursuing grants and by giving her more budget authority by promoting her would open her opportunities to get funding for a new rink and it would alleviate work on PWD Hintz. He stated he feels promoting her would use her strengths better for the City in more considerations than this circumstance alone.

Alderwoman Christensen stated the hockey dome puts in a lot of hours creating the ice. Alderman DiFonzo asked about volunteering by the public to assist Parks Superintendent Ridl in this additional man hours to get this ice the way it could be. Mr. Biebl stated himself, Cole Fink and John Nesper are willing to help volunteer when it is needed. Alderwoman Christensen stated PWD Hintz has presented to the Budget and Finance Committee on purchasing one of these rinks before and PWD Hintz provided that information. He stated the biggest issue this causes is how to remove the snow from the ice before it ruins it. Alderwoman Christensen stated other communities that have nice ice rinks charge to use the rink. Mr. Nesper stated part of the purpose of this is to make the maintenance and setup easier. PWD Hintz stated the cost could be upwards of \$20,000. Alderwoman Christensen asked if we have a place to store and PWD Hintz stated there is and if the bathrooms remodel happens there would be space there. PWD Hintz stated that the City could purchase a broom to remove the snow, but that is an additional \$5-7,000 cost.

Alderman DiFonzo stated the City could continue to look into the possible purchase of the rink and a plan, but either way there will be need for assistance and volunteers, including snow removal during snowstorms. Mr. Nesper stated they have already been volunteering to remove snow, one time up to 6 people, when City equipment was broken down. He stated he has also been down there personally with his snow blade and kids have taken to it with shovels. He stated he is more than happy to volunteer on Fridays when he is not work and Mr. Biebl agreed. Alderman DiFonzo asked if Parks Superintendent Ridl could come up with a plan and cost estimates to look into the budget process. Clerk/Treasurer Chamberlin stated when they are going to volunteer, there is a form that needs to be completed so they can be covered under the City's workman's comp plan.

Alderwoman Godfrey asked Parks Superintendent how this project ranks in her list of projects, and she stated high in the winter and low in the summer, but the investment would pay-off. Parks Superintendent Ridl stated the flooding has to happen during the work hours and Water Commissioner Elletson needs to be involved in this discussion because the only water access is via a hydrant. Mr. Biebl stated once a plan and cost estimate is made, he would be willing to assist with local fundraising.

Motion was made to recommend that this year, the City will continue to work on the current rink and will look into any further purchases during the budget process based on a plan provided by Parks Superintendent Ridl.

Motion made by DiFonzo, Seconded by Christensen.  
Voting Yea: DiFonzo, Godfrey, Christensen

**b. South Meadows Softball Complex Fence**

Alderman DiFonzo stated the proposed permanent fence would establish a regulation youth softball field, which the complex does not have currently. He stated he has been working with Mr. Rosaaen and they would like the field officially designated as the youth softball field. He stated other programs have fields permanently set-up to meet their regulations, whereas the girls' softball has a temporary fence that has to be put-up and taken down and does not look very well. He stated the permanent fence would be 200 feet from home plate, which would still be usable for up to the high school and summer program. He stated the adult softball would not be able to use the field, but they still have field 1 and 3 that they can use. He stated by keeping the current permanent fence up that is behind where the new fence would be, they could use the space in-between for warm-ups.

Motion was made to recommend approval the permanent fence and designation of the field for youth softball.

Motion made by Godfrey, Seconded by Christensen.  
Voting Yea: DiFonzo, Godfrey, Christensen

Alderman DiFonzo stated they are currently still looking into the purchase of the materials and volunteers in the installation of the fence, but before they finalized anything, they needed approval of the designation. Parks Superintendent Ridl stated she would like to see the old 4-foot fence taken down, mostly because it is hard to maintain chain-link fences. Alderman DiFonzo stated the new 6-foot fence wouldn't enclose the field as the current one does, but they can continue to look into it and keep that in mind.

Adjourned: 12:43pm