



# CITY-COUNTY PARKS ADVISORY BOARD SUMMARY

Wednesday, January 6, 2021



### City Members

- Pat Doyle
- Steve Baiamonte *excused*
- David McGuire

### County Members

- Vacant
- Vacant
- Nyle Howsmon (Lincoln Parks Board)
- Ernie Lundberg (Lincoln Parks Board)

### Joint Member

- School District Representative – Neal Murray

### Commission Representatives

- Sean Logan, City Commissioner
- Jim McCormick, County Commissioner

### Staff Contact

- Lindsay Morgan **and Connie Dedrick**, Lewis and Clark County Representative
- Kristi Ponozzo, Parks, Recreation, and Open Lands Director
- Craig Marr, Parks Superintendent
- Kait Perrodin, Recreation and Aquatics Program Manager
- Jennifer Schade, Recorder

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/94870697663?pwd=NllmcEwzK2FkaDlLZ1JKUEh2VEdsdz09>

Meeting ID: 948 7069 7663

Passcode: 663448

One tap mobile

+13462487799,,94870697663# US (Houston)

+16699006833,,94870697663# US (San Jose)

Dial by your location

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington D.C.)

Meeting ID: 948 7069 7663

Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/ahPlpmcw7>

*“The City - County Parks Board’s mission is to promote investment in the development and maintenance of parks, recreation, trails and open space.”*

**Visitor(s):** Alvaro Freye, Kiwanis Club; Chase Rose, Fundraising Consultant working with the YMCA; Tanya Eychner, Member and Fitness Director, Helena YMCA; John Cochrane, Helena Babe Ruth Association, Jason Egeline, Kiwanis Club and Helena Babe Ruth; Randy Ranalli, Helena Police Department Representative

**1. Call to Order**

- Chairman Pat Doyle called the January 6, 2021 City-County Parks Board Meeting to order at 11:30 am.

**2. Establish Quorum/Introductions/Review Agenda/Approval of Minutes**

- A quorum was established.
- There were no changes to the agenda.
- October 7, 2020 Minutes
  - As there were no noted corrections to the October 7, 2020 minutes, Commissioner Jim McCormack moved to approve the minutes as presented. Pat seconded. Motion carried.

**3. Comments from Persons Present**

The board will accept brief comments from the public for items that are not on the agenda at this time.

- None.

**4. Unfinished Business**

- None.

**5. Action Item(s)**

- None.

**6. Presentations/Discussion Items**

**Helena Regional Sports Association (HRSA) Update**

- Pat began this discussion by giving a brief history of the Helena Regional Sports Association.
- Per Chase Rose – the individual that was scheduled to present for the Helena Regional Sports Association was unavailable for today’s meeting. Therefore, we may need to reschedule the presentation.
  - ✚ Chase gave a brief update of his role with the Helena Regional Sports Association. His organization is called the Bannack Group based in Bozeman.
  - ✚ They have been engaged by HRSA and the YMCA in partnership to conduct a fundraising feasibility study in the Helena community. The goal, in the next couple of months, will be to interview potential lead donors, to include approximately 30 – 40 community leaders. They will take the plans for the new facility out to key community stakeholders in an effort to gain their perspective on the plans and the scope, potential phasing options, and also, as two of the more important elements, try to identify key volunteers to help with the campaign as well as lead and major gift donors. Chase hopes to bring back to this group and the city/county commissions a report of their findings.
  - ✚ Bannack has done a number of these studies across the state of Montana.
  - ✚ They are also in conversations with city leadership and very soon intend to reach out to county leaders as well to share the plans. It is the opinion of Bannack, HRSA, and the YMCA, that to raise this money from 100% private sources is unlikely to reach the levels

*“The City - County Parks Board’s mission is to promote investment in the development and maintenance of parks, recreation, trails and open space.”*

need to create a facility of this magnitude. Therefore, they will be exploring private/public partnership opportunities and the possibility of a public bond.

✚ They would deeply appreciate this boards advocacy in negotiations and the possibility of public resources being a part of the strategy.

- Per Pat D - Several years ago there was discussion of a Regional Parks District. Is your group looking at the Helena YMCA property as the location for this facility with the HRSA being a partner? Chase stated yes and reiterated that his firm focuses on nonprofit fundraising campaign efforts. His firm is not intimately involved in the design or site location. His goal is to understand what the philanthropic enthusiasm is of the Helena community and the amount of money they may be able to raise for such a project.
- Commissioner Logan – what kind of timeframe are you looking at for this project? Chase stated that they hope to complete the feasibility study within the next 4 – 6 months. At the conclusion of that, assuming the feasibility study comes back favorable, his company will recruit a campaign committee and begin the leadership phase of a fundraising campaign. However, there will a time when all associated stakeholders will have the opportunity to review the results of the study. At that point, will have to negotiate more specific details (i.e., what a bond might be, etc.). Chase anticipates that the fundraising could take 3 – 4 years of fundraising.

#### **Proposed Improvements to Ryan Ball Fields: Lindsay Morgan**

- Lindsay – Planner, Lewis and Clark County: Lindsay announced a short presentation from Alvaro Freye with the Helena Kiwanis Club. Also present today to assist with the presentation is Jason Egeline, also with the Helena Kiwanis Club and Helena Babe Ruth and John Cochrane with the Helena Babe Ruth Baseball Association. They will be discussing the potential opportunity for some playground equipment at Ryan Ball Fields.
- Background: 1. The Helena Babe Ruth Baseball Association (HBRBA) has a history at Ryan Park. They have an agreement in place with the county that renews annually for 10 years. This includes maintenance and improvements to the facility. HBRBA has made substantial improvements to this facility already. 2. The Helena Kiwanis Club has a history of helping with parks throughout the Helena community. One of the greatest accomplishments of the Kiwanis Club is the newly built ADA Playground at Cherry Park. This was a \$250,000 project that the Kiwanis Club helped raise money to complete along with a matching grant. When finished, there was \$15,600 left over in the parks account. The Kiwanis have been looking for the next park project to do. Jason suggested building a playground at Ryan Park. HBRBA has wanted a playground structure for many years at this facility. Alvaro is proposing to replicate what was done at Cherry Park at Ryan Park. This could be a very impactful and useful playground for Ryan Park.
- Cost: While Cherry Park cost around \$250,000, the Kiwanis believes the playground structure at Ryan Park could be accomplished for \$50,000 - \$100,000. HBRBA can do some of the ground work. It is a smaller space than Cherry Park. The structure will be smaller.
- Timeline: each club (HBRBA and the Kiwanis) has a parks improvement committee. Each club has pledged \$15,000 for a total of \$30,000.00. They are confident they can raise the additional funds for the project.
- Next steps:
  - Tom Rolph is a Kiwanis member and a new County Commissioner. Alvaro thanked him for his support.
  - Alvaro also thanked Lindsay Morgan and Roger Baltz for being so responsive to this project.

*“The City - County Parks Board’s mission is to promote investment in the development and maintenance of parks, recreation, trails and open space.”*

- The number one goal for the Kiwanis and HBRBA is to ensure that the county and city are in support of the project.
- They would like the approval to use the seed money to scope the project for the cost and create a brochure in an effort to get more donations.
- Lastly, the county has a MOU in place with HBRBA for the use of Ryan Park; the city had a MOU in place with the Kiwanis for the building of the ADA Playground in Cherry Park. These two boards (Kiwanis and HBRBA) would like to have an agreement in place with the county and/or city to proceed with this project.
- John Cochrane stated that HBRBA has had multiple conversations as a board about the need for a playground structure at Ryan Fields. They just needed a partner to assist with additional funding for a project like this. This facility would be so much more family friendly with the addition of a playground.
- Jason stated he is coordinating a design with Landscape Structures to get a schematic idea of what kind of structure will fit and what that may cost. He is working to finalize a budget. They won't be using the poured-in-place material which was used at Cherry Park. That will reduce this budget by \$60,000.00. The Babe Ruth Association has a massive ability for physical labor so they will save quite a bit there as well.
- It is an attractive project for HBRBA as they would like to do more playground projects in the county.
- This project is definitely more manageable for the Kiwanis Club than the Cherry Park project.
- The next steps for Jason will be to identify the final design with Landscape Structures. He hopes to have some of this identified by mid-February.
- Per Jason – there would not be a need to modify the agreement in place with HBRBA and the county. The only agreement would need to be between the Kiwanis and HBRBA.
- Lindsay stated she can forward on their agreements to Alvaro and visit with the county attorney's.
- Kristi doesn't believe the city would have input on she understands that Ryan Park is a county park. Lindsay stated that Ryan Park is a county park but is located within the City of Helena city limits. John stated that it is on city and county land, but is managed as a county park.
- Pat added that this boards primary involvement with Ryan Fields is that we hear HBRBA's work plan each year and the additional money the county allocates for addition mowing, etc.
- Pat then stated that this is an awesome project. In the last several years, this board has received yearly updates from Helena Babe Ruth. They have done a lot of work and mitigation for people who had vandalized this facility (to include the installation of jersey barriers. Are there any concerns that a new playground at Ryan Fields may draw in more attention (to include negative attention)?
- John stated they do have "no trespassing after dark" signs. They did install the jersey barriers which has helped. People walk their animals, fly kites, etc. at the fields. People should have access to it. The damage to the fields was people driving through the fields. They have limited driving but won't limit access other than night time access. Treat it as a park!
- Alvaro – if the agreement between HBRBA and the Kiwanis is acceptable, they are ready to move on with the project. Is the county okay with this?
- Per Jim M – any decision made would have to be the decision of county commission. The request would need to be routed through Lindsay and she in turn will bring it to the county commission.
- Lindsay stated that she will visit with the county legal council today and find out what the next steps will be.
- Alvaro will follow up with Lindsay later in January.

*"The City - County Parks Board's mission is to promote investment in the development and maintenance of parks, recreation, trails and open space."*

**Update on Open Lands Recreation Major Projects: Kristi Ponzozzo**

- Kristi provided background of major projects on the City of Helena Open Lands. We recently updated Chapter 7 of the Open Lands Management Plan. This was a very robust public process. We had several proposals from the public on major recreation projects. We reviewed each proposal, held public listening sessions and evaluated each project based on our criteria. We did Environmental Assessments on all projects and brought forward seven projects to the commission.
- Some of the approved projects include:
  - Several improvements to be made to some of the trailhead parking areas
  - A new ADA trail on Mt Helena that will start from the Mount Helena Trailhead and go out west
  - The formation of a working group to work on the DeFord/Davis trail head. There were four different proposals on this trail – one of them being an ADA project proposal and parking improvements and improvements two biking skills courses.
- Kristi asked Parks Board members if there was anyone who would like to serve as the City-County Parks Board Representative on HOLMAC. After some discussion, David McGuire the newest member of the board, stated he would serve in that capacity. Jennifer will send David information about HOLMAC. Thank you, David!
- Jim – in the public comments, there was questions regarding trail maintenance funding. Commissioner McCormick would like to have more discussion on trail maintenance funding in the future.
- For more information regarding the 2020 Comments on Helena Open Lands Major Projects, please go to:  
[https://www.helenamt.gov/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Parks/Documents/Open\\_Lands\\_Documents/Open\\_Lands\\_General\\_Documents/2020\\_Comments\\_on\\_Major\\_Projects\\_-\\_Listening\\_Sessions\\_Final.pdf](https://www.helenamt.gov/fileadmin/user_upload/Parks/Documents/Open_Lands_Documents/Open_Lands_General_Documents/2020_Comments_on_Major_Projects_-_Listening_Sessions_Final.pdf)

**Kindrick-Legion Fields Discussion: Kristi Ponzozzo**

- At the last City-County Parks Board Meeting, we had some discussion about the use of Kindrick Legion Field. Currently, we no longer have a formal contract with Legion Baseball. Their contract expired at the end of December. We are now looking at future use of the fields.
- We began the process by surveying the community to find out what people wanted to see happen with Kindrick Fields. We had over 300 people respond to the survey. An overwhelming majority wanted to see baseball at the fields. Many also wanted to see other community events at that location (other than baseball, in the off-season).
- The majority of respondents were interested in the continued use from Legion Baseball. We also had many respondents express interest in other minor league baseball programs.
- We took this to the City Commission and received direction from the members to pursue a Request for Proposal (RFP) with the thoughts of shared use with Legion Baseball at Kindrick Legion Fields. Kristi hopes to get a RFP hopefully out by the end of this month. At this time, the Expedition League (collegiate league) is the only other league that has expressed interest in use of these fields; however, we will entertain all kinds of proposals.

**7. Reports**

City Parks and Recreation Director Report	Kristi Ponzozzo, Director
---	---------------------------

*“The City - County Parks Board’s mission is to promote investment in the development and maintenance of parks, recreation, trails and open space.”*

City Parks and Recreation Maintenance Report	Craig Marr, Parks Superintendent
County Report	Lindsay (or Representative)
Helena School District	Neal Murray (or Representative)
Helena Police Department	Randy Ranalli (or Representative)
<b>BOARDS REPORTS</b>	
Fair Board	Vacant
HOLMAC - David	Vacant
Lincoln Parks Board	Ernie Lundberg / Nyle Howsmon

Kristi

- None.

City Parks and Recreation Maintenance Report – Craig

- The parks maintenance department has been busy . The ice rink is the big maintenance item this time of the year. They have been flooding during the night. While there will be rinks at Memorial Park, Lincoln Park, and Cunningham Park, we will not have a rink at Barney this year because of an issue with the fire hydrant.
- We are working on the Urban Forestry work plans for the spring.
- We are also working on needs assessments for many of the parks. We have received a lot of comments of the need for restrooms facilities instead of portable toilets.
- The Parks Maintenance department is evaluating the capital improvement process.
- Because of the lack of snow, the crews have been able to do some turf sweeping, preventative maintenance and playground maintenance.
- The staff has been dealing with graffiti in the tunnels in Centennial.
- Urban forestry staff has been out doing pruning in the parks.
- Crews have been doing work on the solar lights along Centennial Trail.
- Commissioner McCormack stated that he recently walked around Centennial Park. He said it is a very nice facility! He asked Craig if the tree mounds are on a drip system. Craig stated yes. They were put in those mounds because of the landfill. However, we have had some issues with them not getting the water they need. Some of the trees are planted too deep so it can be challenging. When the crew plants new trees, they will plant away from the mounds.
- Jim added there were a lot of people using the park.

County – Lindsay

- Lindsay – none.
- Commissioner McCormick stated water quality protection district continues to work on the PPLT valley streambank restoration.

School District – Neal

- They are coming out of the first four months of school while maintaining COVID safety.
- The maintenance crew are finalizing some safety protocols for Capital and Helena High Schools.
- Having Wednesdays with no classes, the staff are able to clean much easier without having to schedule around classes.

*“The City - County Parks Board’s mission is to promote investment in the development and maintenance of parks, recreation, trails and open space.”*

- We all want full classes. The maintenance staff hasn't changed a lot. They are using some different chemicals (COVID approved), but are doing the same amount of cleaning. The goal is to keep staff, teachers, and the kids healthy.

Helena Police Department – Randy Ranalli

- No updates to provide.

Fair Board

- None.

HOLMAC Board

- None.

Lincoln Park – Ernie

- Nyle stated there is snow on the ground. They received a \$3,000 donation. One half of this will go to the skate park and the other half will go to the park itself.
- Ernie – they are beginning to put together plans for maintenance needs/desires for the upcoming season.

Welcome David McGuire

- David stated that he noticed this board was in need of a member and applied.
- He has been retired for six years. He ran the Donut Hole for several years.

## **8. Communications and Future Agenda Items (Board Members)**

- Update: Two County Board Vacancies

## **9. Next Meeting Date**

- The next scheduled City-County Parks Board Meeting is scheduled for March 3, 2021.

## **10. Other**

- None.

## **11. Adjournment**

- With no further business, the January 6, 2021 City-County Parks Board Meeting adjourned at 12:35 pm.

### **ADA NOTICE - CITY**

The City of Helena is committed to providing access to persons with disabilities for its meetings, in compliance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Montana Human Rights Act. The City will not exclude persons with disabilities from participation at its meetings or otherwise deny them the City's services, programs, or activities.

Persons with disabilities requiring accommodations to participate in the city's meetings, services, programs, or activities should contact Sharon Haugen, Community Development Director, as soon as possible to allow sufficient time to arrange for the requested accommodation, at any of the following: Phone: (406) 447- 8490; TTY Relay Service 1-800-253-4091 or 711 Email: [citycommunitydevelopment@helenamt.gov](mailto:citycommunitydevelopment@helenamt.gov), Mailing address & physical location: 316 North Park, Avenue, Room 445, Helena, MT 59623.

*“The City - County Parks Board’s mission is to promote investment in the development and maintenance of parks, recreation, trails and open space.”*

## **ADA NOTICE – COUNTY**

Lewis and Clark County is committed to providing access to persons with disabilities for its meetings, in compliance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Montana Human Rights Act. The County will not exclude persons with disabilities from participation at its meetings or otherwise deny them County's services, programs, or activities.

Persons with disabilities requiring accommodations to participate in the County's meetings, services, programs, or activities should contact Aaron Douglas, as soon as possible to allow sufficient time to arrange for the requested accommodation, at any of the following: (406) 447-8316, 316 North Park Avenue, Room 303, Helena, MT 59623; TTY Relay Service [1-800-253-4091](tel:1-800-253-4091) or 711, [adouglas@lccountymt.gov](mailto:adouglas@lccountymt.gov).

*“The City - County Parks Board’s mission is to promote investment in the development and maintenance of parks, recreation, trails and open space.”*