

PARKS & CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MINUTES
City Council Chambers
140 West Pine Street
Missoula, Montana
July 17, 2019, 9:15 AM

I. Administrative Business

A Roll Call -- [History](#)
Members present: Stacie M. Anderson, Mirtha Becerra, Michelle Cares,
Heather Harp, Jordan Hess, Gwen Jones, Julie Merritt,
Bryan von Lossberg, Heidi West
Members absent: Julie Armstrong, John DiBari, Jesse L. Ramos
Others present: Donna Gaukler, Neil Miner, Morgan Valliant, Pelah Hoyt,
Cassy Gladwin, Betsy Willett

B Approval of July 10, 2019 Minutes -- [History](#)

Minutes approved as posted.

II. Public Comment on Items not Listed
None

III. Regular Agenda

A Bluebird-North Hills Open Space Acquisition --Donna Gaukler [History](#)

Donna Gaukler presents the Bluebird North Hills Open Space Acquisition. This acquisition helps accomplish some of our goals to connect neighborhoods through the Grant Creek Corridor.

Peyah Hoyt, Lands Director for Five Valleys Land Trust presents. Five Valleys Land Trust is requesting \$450,000 of Open Space Bond monies to acquire parcel.

This acquisition will provide opportunity for a new trailhead in an area with little access to Open Space. Peyah presented an overview of the current conservation easement in the North Hills which will connect with this new acquisition.

This acquisition meets three of the conservation values; public access, scenic values and plant & wildlife habitat.

Morgan Valliant - Conservation Lands Manager Missoula Parks & Recreation, discussed potential of access and future connections this property could provide. develop plans for recreational uses and long term potential connections to other lands. Morgan reviewed the site conditions of the property including the current native species present there. The plan is for plant preservation and to build infrastructure to protect.

Staci Anderson stated that one of the criticisms of Open Space purchasing is taking land

away from affordable housing.

Morgan Valliant stated that this area would take substantial grading, and work to develop and the slump area is not suitable for building.

Brian von Lossberg asked what the status of the Wheeler Gravel Pit and the communication facility is. Morgan said the pit is no longer active and the communication facility is a portable tower.

Pelah Hoyt stated that the Open Space Advisory Committee voted unanimously to support, County Commissioners have agreed this is eligible for Open Space Bond money, and we have included 5 letters of support from various organizations.

Gwen Jones asked how many acres again and Pelah stated 124 acres.

Heidi West - How many invasive species are existing and what is the plan to manage them? Morgan Valliant responded that there is unfortunately a lot, and we will need to invest in non-native species control. But the location and access it provides makes this a critical purchase.

Julie Merritt moved to set a joint public hearing with the Missoula Board of County Commissioners on August 12, 2019 on a resolution to expend up to \$450,000 of the City's portion of the 2006 Open Space Bond funds to purchase 124 acres of open space land in the North Hills to protect scenic open space and wildlife habitat and provide a new public access trailhead and recreational trail.

Mirtha Becerra - Where will the funds come from for the trail development?

Morgan - the Levy will help tremendously, we have options for usage of the Open Space bond to do trailhead development as well. The planning for this will take around 3 years which gives us time to seek out other money opportunities. The Grant Creek Trails Association is passionate about this area so we have their support.

Public Comment –

Karen Sippy - representing Grant Creek Trails Association and Conservation Lands Advisory Committee voiced the support of both the Association and the Committee for this acquisition.

AYES: Stacie M. Anderson, Mirtha Becerra, Michelle Cares, Heather Harp, Jordan Hess, Gwen Jones, Julie Merritt, Bryan von Lossberg, Heidi West

ABSENT: Julie Armstrong, John DiBari, Jesse L. Ramos

Neil Miner Missoula Parks & Recreation presents the Tower Street parking lot repair. Knife River had low bid. FEMA project to do repairs from flood damage.

Heidi West - Does this fix problems from future flood events. Neil Miner - FEMA will only pay for like replacement

Stacie M. Anderson moved to approve a contract with Knife River in the amount of \$26,967.00 for reconstruction of Tower Street Conservation Area Parking lot and authorize the Mayor to sign. .

AYES: Stacie M. Anderson, Mirtha Becerra, Michelle Cares, Heather Harp, Jordan Hess, Gwen Jones, Julie Merritt, Bryan von Lossberg, Heidi West

ABSENT: Julie Armstrong, John DiBari, Jesse L. Ramos

IV. Adjournment
Adjourned 9:53 am

Respectfully submitted,

Betsy Willett
Administrative Manager