

MINUTES
CITY OF WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS, MONTANA
PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
OCTOBER 14, 2025

ACTION ITEMS

All – Attend and complete tasks for 10/27/25 Bair Park Celebration

Emma Hensley

- Identify ice rink user's group
- Work on drafting an amiable and accountable Baseball User Group Agreement for 2026.

Jen Frazer

- Research materials/cost for ADA accessible pathing the Forest Service uses.
- Review/Update Parks Maintenance checklists for Committee review.

Pattie Berg

- Follow up with City as described below
- Research best practices for sanding/maintaining sand in baseball infields.
- Speak with Rotary about rink in Shelter
- Speak to Cummins about wayfinding sign.
- Speak with the Golf Board about formalizing cross country skiing on the Golf Course.
- Review City Attorney's email regarding Committee Ethics rules; update Handbook as necessary.

Call to Order, Roll Call, Additional Agenda items

The meeting was called to order at 5:03 p.m. by Chair Emma Hensley.

Present: Chair Hensley, Jen Frazer, Tressa Blair, and Jordan Luell via zoom

Also Present: Pattie Berg, City Council Liaison to Parks Committee

Additional discussion Items.

- **Bike Rodeo** - Chair Hensley would like to talk about helping to sponsor a bike rodeo. There is one child in town who is driving his bike dangerously, and she thought it would be good to sponsor a bike rodeo in the hopes that he and others learn to be safer riders. It was noted that Jeremy West is the go-to guy for a bike rodeo and it was believed he also is able to hand out helmets at those events.
- **Ice skating rink.** Chair Hensley provided the Committee with information regarding a used EZ ice rink which is for sale in Bozeman. The rink is 25x 50, has in-rink lights, lighted netting for around the rink, and a DIY Zamboni. It also has rubber bumpers. It's listed for \$5,000 but the owner is willing to go to \$4,500. The owner pokes holes in the liner every year so the water doesn't flood the area. A replacement liner is \$140. A new 20x40 rink without lighting and netting would cost \$5,500.

Discussion followed regarding the benefits of this product as opposed to a primitive ice rink which has commonly been built in the city. Benefits include no staking, easier to set up, easier to maintain the ice, the water level can be adjusted as needed and, if a chinook melts the ice, you don't lose the water: all you have to do is wait for it to freeze again.

It was noted that, when the school had a primitive rink, ash from the homecoming bonfire would rise up and freeze in the ice, creating a trip hazard.

Because it doesn't use stakes, it was suggested placing the rink inside the Rotary Shelter. It was noted that splash pads double as ice rinks, so setting an ice rink on a concrete pad should not be a problem. Because the rink can be downsized, it could be adjusted to fit the available area. It was also suggested to form a user group to take care of the rink. Chair Hensley will work on forming an ice rink user group. Liaison Berg will speak with the City about the rink, and about its location and will do a 'courtesy check' on this idea with the Rotary Club.

Liaison Berg noted that, because there had not been a 48-hour public notice, any actions taken by the Committee at today's meeting would need to be ratified at the next meeting. Jen Frazer made a motion to pursue the purchase of the used EZ Ice Rink, and to look into the feasibility of installing it in the Rotary Shelter. Tressa Blair seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Liaison Berg will follow up with the Mayor.

Report on Action Items from Last Meeting Minutes

- Adopt a Spot – Emma Hensley offered to get the program materials from Kelly Huffield and take the program from there.
- Organization of Shared drive – This task has been removed from the Action items list.
- Lee Zehntner and Weeds – See comments from Tressa Blair.
- Sign at Joanna's -Emma Hensley shared a photo of the sign, and it was consensus of the committee that no work needs done at this time.

Discussion Regarding Basement User Agreement

Representatives from the City and the baseball users group were invited to attend to identify any issues/concerns, and to work toward preparing a user agreement both parties could be happy with, and be held accountable to. Wests were unable to attend and Anita West from the City was out of town, so Liaison Berg told the Mayor he did not need to attend.

Tressa Blair reported as follows:

- She had spoken with Eva Kerr regarding the practices when Kerr was in the user group. Keri Jo had a lot to do, then it went to Eva. Under that agreement, the users mowed the infield and outfield. When Lee Zehntner approached them about the noxious weeds in the infield, it was agreed the users would purchase the chemicals, which Zehntner applied at no charge.
- This group had a binder describing everything needing done which was given to the Wests, but limited training had been provided.
- The Committee reviewed the signed 2025 user agreement. A few potential issues in each party's ability to hold each other accountable were identified, including:
 - The term of the agreement was only for 2 months, but the City expected the group to maintain the infields all summer.
 - The beginning and ending dates were completed as month and year, not month, day, and year.
 - In the agreement, Ms. West had asked for help in dealing with dog poop, but it was unclear whether any assistance was provided or offered.
 - Ms. West had indicated to Chair Hensley that, while the City had agreed to pick up the garbage, either cans were not provided, or not enough cans were provided, so Wests took the garbage from the field to other City-owned cans around town.
 - The agreement required the user group to sand the infield, but didn't specify how the sanding was to be done. Liaison Berg will look for industry standards for maintaining a sanded infield so appropriate language can be included in the next user agreement.

Given the Committee's goal for the two parties to come to an amiable and accountable agreement, Chair Hensley offered to speak with both parties, continue to identify deficiencies, issues and corrective actions, draft a User Agreement for the 2026 season, and meet together with the parties to finalize the document.

A question was raised about whether the agreement should require that food concessions follow health code, and what, if anything the City would do to address vandalism in the park. Berg said she believed the health code issue is covered in Code, which she will verify, and there is money in the budget to purchase cameras for security.

Bair Park Celebration

Liaison Berg informed the Committee that the work is almost done at Bair Park. Following discussion, the Committee agreed to hold a celebration at Bair Park on Monday October 27, 2025 at 4:00 p.m. The Committee will use the supplies left over from the Springs Park celebration, and will make hot cocoa for those in attendance. Liaison Berg will draft a press release and send the Committee a list of remaining supplies. Chair Hensley will prepare a poster announcing the celebration and Jen Frazer will prepare the hot chocolate.

Liaison Report

The Liaison Report is included at the end of these Minutes.

At a recent council meeting, Beth Hunt asked to reserve Springs Park every year beginning in 2026 for what she described as 'pop up' class reunions. Because of the annual nature of the event, Berg had asked at the Council meeting that this be sent for the Parks Committee to review. She also said that since this was going to be a 'more than one time' event, a User Agreement may be required as per parks code.

Berg asked the Committee for comments regarding Beth Hunt's request. Committee members expressed concern about the ongoing nature of the reservation: some felt family reunions are common at the Rotary Shelter over Labor Day. There were also questions about liability if each class has its own tent. Since Labor Day is several months out, the plan is to ask Beth Hunt to the next Committee meeting so the Committee can more fully understand the nature of the request.

Berg will speak with the Mayor about this request.

Public Comment/Committee Comments for the Good of the Order

Public Comment – No public was present

Comments for the good of the order.

Chair Hensley asked Committee members to send her names of people who might be willing to serve on an ice-skating user group.

Set Next Meeting Date/Adjourn

The next meeting will be held on Thursday November 13, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 6:17 p.m. on a motion made by Emma Hensley and seconded by Jen Frazer. The Committee then went to Bair Park to see the newly finished play area.

**Parks Advisory Committee
Liaison Report August/September 2025**

Funding Update

- **HB355 Funds**
 - McStravick Park parking pad and path is scheduled to be started this Thursday. The City will put a notice on its Facebook page that the park is temporarily closed.
 - Vault Toilet at Rader - unknown ETA.
- **T-Mobile Grant** - The “Final” report was submitted 8/29. (FYI folder) Continuing to monitor as Bair Park work will be paid for by @14,000 of remaining T-Mobile funds. Shawn Wallace is aware of this, and I intend to send him and/or a final, final report upon completion of that work.

Project Updates

- **Springs Park Work:**
 - The grand opening celebrations were great! Thanks to everyone for being so helpful AND flexible when the weather “rained on our parade”. Also, thanks to Emma Hensley for being open to meet with groups after the Sunday hand painting event, so more handprints could be added. The wall looks great!
 - By the time the Committee meets, I will have submitted the Thrivent closeout report.
 - Pending as of 9/15/25:
 - Parking Lot - There are no further plans to work on this. The Mayor believes the current surface will be sufficiently accessible. Needs monitored. (July/August Liaison report)
 - I spoke with the Mayor about easing the transition between the sidewalk and the footprint. He will look into it. (July/August Liaison report)
 - Removal of the wooden “Springs Park” sign. (Rocky/Frank directed to remove it at the 8/4/25 Council meeting.)
- **Bair Park Work**
 - The Mayor has been told by BOO Construction of Missoula that they will be here October 13, 2025. Halloween party anyone?
 - The work plan will be sort of a repeat of the springs work.... City Crew will do rough leveling, and remove the equipment. BOO will reinstall them.
 - Budget:
 - T-Mobile Hometown Grant \$14,531.41
 - City: \$7,838.59
 - Total: \$22,370
- **Radar Park**
 - Rocky/Frank directed to remove the faded sign at the 8/4/25 Council meeting.
 - At the same meeting, the Mayor said the vault toilet will be installed on property south of Chilton, which is what the Committee had initially discussed/recommended.
- **Spike’s Happy Trails**
 - I submitted an app to OnX for one of their \$10,000 awards to help develop this park. (FYI folder)
 - Pending work - As of this writing, I haven’t started the bid package for the fencing. The Mayor was getting bids.
 - The Committee should discuss whether/when it will approach the City Council to formally request abandoning the platted streets interior to this park.
- **Other:**
 - **Adopt a Spot** –
 - Laurie Auger contacted me to ask if the City had any projects a group of individuals could do in memory of Thea Paugh. I suggested adopting the Bair Park garden. She was going to go take some pictures of the park and follow up with her group. I also explained that the play area is going to be updated, and what the updates will be.
 - Someone needs to volunteer to take over the Adopt a Spot program beginning next year.
 - **Golf Course Cross Country Skiing** – Have not contacted Rob Holean. Will do this when I have time. We have requested funds for signs. Will just need to see if they’re interested, and then work out the details.
 - **Panhandling** - We had an individual panhandling at the park reopening celebration. Other members of the public have complained about panhandling in other places. The Council is considering a panhandling ordinance. It would be a violation of code to approach anyone and ask for money (that would be considered ‘aggressive panhandling’).

- **FY25-26 Budget** – The City’s budget was adopted the first week of September. The FYI folder includes a DRAFT of the budget and an estimate of funds available for ‘non-targeted’ parks projects. I’ve requested some additional info and should have the final figures by the time we meet on Thursday.

