

**VISION FUND CITIZEN COMMITTEE**  
**Tuesday, October 18, 2016 - Public Hearing 2-4 p.m.**  
**First Floor Community Room**  
**Rapid City, South Dakota**

The meeting began at 2:00 p.m. with the following Committee members present: Heather Forney, Megan Reder-Schopp, George Grassby, Tim Johnson, Mark Massa, and Katy Kinnan.

The following Committee members were absent: Jo Lynn Little Wounded, Dawn Connor, and Bob DeMersseman. The following City staff was present: Mayor's Assistant Lindsey Seachris, Communication Coordinator Darrell Shoemaker.

Committee Chairman George Grassby thanked those in attendance and explained the process of the committee. He explained each applicant is provided 10 minutes to present their project followed by a 10 minute q/a period.

The **Idlehurst Lane Dog Park** project is presented by Ellen Pinholdt as a private citizen of Rapid City. The project proposes improvements to an existing off leash Dog Park at Idlehurst Lane through the installation of fencing around the perimeter with areas divided to accommodate a large dog and small dog area. The overall goal of improvements is to enhance the existing dog park to provide a fenced in, off leash dog park where well-behaved canines can exercise in a clean, safe environment without endangering or annoying people, property, or wildlife. Pinholdt noted that South Dakota ranks 12<sup>th</sup> in the nation for dog ownership (42.8% of households have dogs). The project proposes fencing in with double gate entry so no dogs are let loose coming and going while offering protection from road and bicycle traffic. Pinholdt provided an aerial map of the flood area surrounding the park showing land parcels that would need to be acquired to complete this project. Pinholdt discussed how this project aligns with City's Comprehensive Plan and long term goals of the community. The presentation was concluded with emphasis that this project impacts the Citizens and visitors of Rapid City by offering a safe, controlled area for Rapid City dogs and dog owners, offer protection for non-dog owners and recreational users of this area, and provides a recreational and social outlet for older citizens who have dogs by offering a safe and controlled environment.

Grassby asked how many people utilize this park. Alex DeSmidt of Parks and Recreation stated that they do not currently have numbers on total usage; however, this area is largely utilized and often has a full parking lot throughout the summer months. Does this project need approval through Parks and Recreation? The Parks Department would need to negotiate with the land owners to acquire parcels and get approval from City Council to purchase land. Do you have public support for your project? Pinholdt stated that there are many citizens that utilize this area. Megan Reder-Schopp brought forward the question of how soon this project could be implemented in terms of land acquisition. DeSmidt stated that negotiations and land acquisition should not take that long. Forney asked if the land owners have been communicated with at any point. DeSmidt stated that the land owners have been contacted in the past, but not recently. Johnson asked if there were any collective efforts or plans to help maintain the park if moving forward. DeSmidt stated the Parks Department would maintain the grounds and parking lot. The user group is also very involved in maintaining this area. DeSmidt stated that Mrs. Pinholdt is not alone in her concern as there have been others who have brought this to the attention of the Department.

The **Black Hills Farmer's Market** project was presented on behalf of Jessica Stori, market manager, Chris and Kyle, assistant manager and interim president of Black Hills Farmer's Market, respectively. Jessica explained that the Farmer's Market is currently utilizing the Founder's Park location. The Black Hills Farmer's Market has outgrown this space in terms of vendor space, vendor safety, and parking. The project presented requests assistance from the City and Parks and Recreation Department with several green space locations throughout Rapid City identified as possible permanent site locations. The major components sought for permanent location in this project proposal are ample space for market configuration and 150 parking spaces. Black Hills Farmer's Market is requesting the sale or lease of park land with a 100-year agreement and sale of land for \$1 as well as \$500,000 for the construction of a small bathroom/office facility.

Mark Massa asked how many areas have been explored or identified to provide you with sustainability for Farmer's Market. Stori responded that several locations have been explored but they all present their own unique challenges. There is Campbell Field 7 just next to the Fair Grounds with ample parking already, other green spaces identified by the Parks and Recreation Department were a location just east of Rapid Spa off of Omaha Street. This location, however, does not offer parking and only has one way in and one way out. There is also an area identified as the old tennis courts just south of the Civic Center with some parking available. Stori indicated the desire of BHFM was to remain centrally located so they may continue to provide access to all citizens. Megan Reder-Schopp inquired as to where or not the BHFM has been in contact with Parks and Recreation or looked into the legality of locations designated public park lands? Stori indicated they have been in communication with Jeff Biegler, director of Parks and Recreation, but have not research any of the legalities involved. Alex DeSmidt clarified that this project would fall within parks land designation usage in response to the legality question proposed by Reder-Schopp.

George Grassby inquired as to terms of the lease and whether they would be willing to consider 3-5 year lease rather than a 100 year lease? Stori stated that a 3-5 year lease makes them nervous in regards to future planning, but would be willing to negotiate a 10 year lease. Grassby asked what days business in operation. Stori stated for 2017 BHFM will be open Saturday's 8-1 p.m. on Tuesday from 2:30-6:30 p.m. also launching a roadside stand as a mobile unit that would travel throughout the City from 8-1 p.m. or 8-2 p.m. Grassby asked how many vendors they presently have. Stori responded that they have around 50 vendors at this time and expect to have 60 by this time next year. And in terms of usage, how many customers do you have stopping in? Stori responded that on busy days they have 400-500 customers.

John Kaiser Operations Manager of the Central States Fairgrounds presented **Central States Fairground's Stall Barn project**. Kaiser highlighted this project much more than a stall barn, indicating this term was used as a wide-range description for this multi-purpose facility. The fairgrounds offer a variety of events including the Central States fair (CSF), Stock Show, concerns, auctions, weddings, livestock shows, horse shows, etc. The James Kjerstad Events Center is currently booked out through 2018, and CSF often have to turn away events (conventions, livestock, horse shows, etc.). The Fairgrounds has been working on updating their master plan and is currently working with a company called Populous. They have identified additional stalling, stall barns, covering, and arena space as number one improvement priority. This project would provide many needed improvements as well as free up space in the events center for other activities.

Kaiser indicated there is a tremendous amount of economic impact is lost if this project is not selected. The CVB estimates that \$274/day per visitor is spent in Rapid City when a guest is visiting from out of town. The potential economic impact of a 3-4 day national event is tremendous, impacting our hotels, restaurants, and community as a whole. Kaiser stated that Rapid City has a lot to offer and people want to host their events here. Kaiser noted several national and regional industry groups interested in hosting events here throughout his presentation. This arena will not only accommodate regional and national events, but it allows for growth and better service to the existing contracts/events held at the CSF. This project has the potential to open up a wide range of opportunity.

Massa inquired about completion of hosting events, and asked how many communities bid against events mentioned and how big of a draw, if any, we would have? Kaiser stated that the competition's edge is that they have more stalls to offer. The idea behind this project is to use this facility as multi-purpose/multi-use facility. The leg up they have on competition to this area is the desire to host events here, stating people want to come to Rapid City and the Black Hills. Johnson asked for clarification on what it means to be maxed out for 2016? Kaiser indicated that many of their events are hosted annually and CSF book event dates a year in advance. Johnson asked how this project would fix the booking issue, and in response, Kaiser clarified that the stall barn operating as a multi-purpose facility could free up smaller events from the events center. Kaiser clarified that this zero maintenance cost to the City as CSF maintenance staff currently maintain the existing facility at the fairgrounds and would also take care of this space.

Forney asked for clarification on Kaiser's statement that many of the present contracts hold multi-year contracts, and if the events they are interested in bringing to Rapid City also have long term contracts with other facilities? Kaiser explained that project provides opportunity to host multi-events simultaneously. The single largest issue is overall lack of stall space. Kaiser stated many potential customers have contacted CSF asking them to submit a bid on hosting their event in Rapid City for a particular date/time and they are booked. Grassby thanked Kaiser for the work he has done and asked what the total square footage proposed? Kaiser believed it would have to be large enough to accommodate a good size arena with 250+ stalls. Populous would ultimately provide final recommendation on arena size based upon their completed market analysis. Grassby asked how soon this project could be implemented, Kaiser indicated that if funds allocated to this project, he would have something in front of the County in the next 30 days. Grassby asked for clarification on support of the County, and Kaiser indicated this investment would require support from both City and County, as this would impact our entire community.

Dr. Lilly Bruckner presented on behalf of the **Black Hills Children's Museum**. She provided an overview of what the Black Hills Children's Museum purpose and summary of the work completed thus far. The museum will provide enriching educational experiences for children of all ages in Rapid City and surrounding communities providing hands on, educational, interactive exhibits for children and families of all ages. The project is a collaborative effort and will focus on community involvement. Bruckner highlighted the many benefits of having a Children's Museum including inspiring minds through creative play, exploration, and discovery. She stated the vision of becoming a long standing sustainable organization within our community. Bruckner indicated the planning process will take between \$1.5-2m and this is what they are presently requesting from Vision Funds. The planning process will include elements such as building a business plan, site selection and development, building design, exhibit master planning, etc. Bruckner touched on the many ways in which the Children's Museum is in alignment with the City's Comprehensive Plan and long term goals. Bruckner shared they have received tremendous community support while hosting several community events. They have established a Board of Directors comprised of community leaders, professionals, educators, parents and other invested interest parties. To

date, the organization has raised just over \$50k in their initial 'Founding 50' campaign and will continue on with their capital campaign. Bruckner described the public support and enthusiasm as contagious and believes this demonstrates the need for a Children's Museum in Rapid City. She noted Board of Directors' desire to work with the Journey Museum, Dahl Arts Center, Child Care Centers and School District, to enhance the work of these organizations rather than replace or duplicate effort. Bruckner discussed the many ways in which a Children's Museum aligns with the City's Comprehensive Plan and long term goals of the City.

Kinnan thanked Dr. Bruckner for her presentation and commended her for the work they are doing. Kinnan inquired as to the timeline of the project provided the scale. Bruckner answered the planning phase of a Children's Museum typically happens over a 12-18 month period and could be potentially happen sooner if Vision Funds were awarded. Kinnan asked where the organization is at with funding to date and Bruckner responded that they have just over \$50k. They have spent \$20k on a consultant, an expert in Children's Museums, to come in and assess the market. Kinnan asked if they plan to charge an entrance fee. Bruckner indicated there would be a charge of \$7-10 per visit with an estimated 30% segment of the population eligible for a reduced fee or free entrance. Massa asked if the consultants were presently working on a business plan. Bruckner informed the Committee that a business plan has not been completed at this time and their focus is on the strategic plan at this time. This will provide them with next steps and the feasibility of sustaining a Children's Museum in our community. Members of the Board in attendance introduced themselves to the committee.

Parks and Recreation Landscape Architect Alex DeSmidt presented on the **Parkland Acquisition at Founder's Park** proposal. The project acquires 8.37 acres of designated Parkland within Founder's Park Subdivision and is comprised of two separate lots. Lot 1: 2.21 acres with existing parking lot and Lot 10: 6.16 acres of undeveloped land. The land parcels are next to each other and centrally located in Rapid City off of Hanson-Larsen Memorial Park. DeSmidt shared that this area has seen major development over the last several years as Founders Village had developed detailing 4 commercial office buildings, 9 apartment complexes, as well as 85 single and 100 multi-family dwelling units. DeSmidt discussed the many benefits of acquiring the land parcels and preserving this area from future development by designating this as public parkland. The Parks Department would not only like to preserve this site but also acquire the parking lot for patrons use and parking. DeSmidt said the land is currently a commercial zoned property with existing infrastructure in place and is the reason for high cost of land. A commercial building is planned for future development should the City of Rapid City not acquire the property first. The lot is in good condition and currently functions as a parking lot to the trailheads of Hanson-Larsen Memorial Park. The property does not look like much but historically it has been home to a host of different businesses and is adjacent to Founder's Rock. This location in particular holds a lot of cultural significance; however, most people are not generally aware of the significance. DeSmidt went on to highlight the many ways this proposal aligns with the City's Comprehensive Plan and long term goals of our community. DeSmidt concluded his presentation by highlighting the importance of continuing to attract and draw people to this area. The facility and surrounding Parkland is an attraction and draw for the entire community.

Kinnan, in response to Black Hills Farmer's Market (BHFM) mentioned previously in presentation as operating in this area and needing additional parking and space, asked DeSmidt how BHFM relocating to a new location would impact them and if they would be able to serve the needs of this organization better with the potential land acquisition. He detailed the land acquisition would allow them to utilize the additional parking lot for vendors and parking, while also utilizing the existing location potential offering a newly constructed parking lot and modern restroom facility. Massa sought clarification as to why the Parks Department is requesting money from Vision

Funds for this project? In response, DeSmidt explains this project is presented as a community project for consideration and qualifies for request from Vision Fund, further stating, that the Division of Parks and Recreation is incapable of purchasing this land through Parks Capitol funding at this time. This land acquisition is time sensitive.

Forney asked what would happen if this project is not supported by Vision Funds? DeSmidt responded that we'll likely see Founder's Village continue to develop. Moreover, in planned development, the owner has to provide all the parking, lighting, sidewalks, etc. prior to moving forward. That is why the existing parking lot is there now. This space is currently being used for the trailhead and when a commercial building is built, the parking will be utilized by that facility. Grassby thanked DeSmidt for bringing the proposal forward. Grassby inquired with the Committee as to whether or not a breakdown would be worth a look, to assess individual costs per lot, with specific interest in Lot 1. Discussion pursued and the Committee expressed interest in learning individual cost breakdown. DeSmidt indicated he would inquire about individual lot costs with the seller, as requested, and get back to them with this information.

Alex DeSmidt presented the **Dinosaur Park Improvements Proposal** on behalf of the Division of Parks and Recreation. This proposal includes Phase 2 of improvements to Dinosaur Park, a universally accessible path to the top of Dinosaur Hill. Phase 1 was completed in 2015 as part of the Vision Funds Skyline Wilderness Area Trailhead and Trail Improvement Project and included a parking lot, ADA improvements, as well as parking expansion. Phase 2 includes cultural and recreational improvements and is estimated to cost \$2.5m. The primary issue is limited access to the Park, a nearly 50 year old stone staircase with over 80 stone steps and no alternative access to the top. The park is located off of Skyline scenic byway and is a tourist attraction for our City. The dinosaur sculptors are on the National Register of Historic Places, originally constructed in 1936, is one of the City's oldest parks and receives an estimated 50k visitors a year. Rehabilitating the foundations of the dinosaurs is the other large component of this project. There are a few methods of moving about working with the National Park Service Guidelines for Historic Properties, including rehabilitation and the addition of accessibility measures in accordance to the ADA Act of 1990. DeSmidt presented the typography challenges of this area as well as a cost breakdown of the proposed improvements as a hand out to Committee members. He discussed the overall site plan includes steep topography and the layout of existing Dinosaur Pods can be overcome to provide a universally accessible, ADA compliant path that keeps the character of the existing structures, sculptures, and stairs. DeSmidt concluded his presentation with mention of the various ways this project aligns with the City's Comprehensive Plan and long term goals for the City. DeSmidt indicated the Parks Department has looked into other potential solutions including a dirt path. A dirt path is not a favorable solution, provided the amount of visitors annually, and the fact that a good majority are children.

Massa expressed his concern that ADA accessibility seemed of utmost importance and asked for clarification of line item 1 in cost breakdown: \$225,000 of total cost of the project. DeSmidt indicated this cost was for the base project and features and main path. Further clarifying this option addresses only the path and does not address any of the structural issues or sustainability of the dinosaurs. Forney inquired if the cost of this project was to go out to bid for someone else to compete the scope of work. DeSmidt indicated this project would be bid out and is beyond the expertise of the Parks Department maintenance staff. Reder-Schopp asked if other funding sources had been identified, provided this park is listed on the National Register. DeSmidt stated they had previously applied for Land and Water Natural Conservancy grants unsuccessfully. A program Rapid City is eligible to apply for, however, allocations are often awarded to high-volume dense population areas and our small community has had a hard time qualifying to receive funding. Grassby asked why this project falls on us now after 80 years? DeSmidt referenced the

City investing in Phase 1 of the project and again mentioned the aging infrastructure, at 80 years old, needs the City to invest in one last time. Grassby asked how many people use this park and a breakdown of the 50k visitors mentioned? DeSmidt indicate this is a community park as well as a destination park and is open all year around. Grassby thanked DeSmidt for his comprehensive analysis. Kinnan inquired as to the plan moving forward, if not funded? DeSmidt indicated Rapid City has a new Parks Foundation who will continue to seek funding through private donation.