**WILLMAR PARKS & RECREATION BOARD subject to approval of the Board**

**MARCH 20, 2019**

**Members Present: Jim Anderson, Tom Gilbertson, Abdirahim Hussein, Rand Middleton, Andy Ogdahl, Rachel Skretvedt**

**Rick Fagerlie and Julie Asmus, City Council Representatives**

**Staff Present: Rob Baumgarn, Eric Banks, Britta Diem, Curt Hein, Gary Manzer, Ryan Scheffler,**

**Becky Sorenson**

**Guest Present: Richard and Andy Engan**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Hussein. He asked if anyone had any questions or concerns regarding the March 6 Board minutes. As there were no questions, Jim Anderson made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Tom Gilbertson. Motion carried.

The next item on the agenda was the four season shelter. Richard and Andy Engan were present to discuss their plans for the shelter. Copies of the proposed four season shelter master plan were handed out and viewed on a PowerPoint presentation. The master plan for the Island is to have one road on the south side. The existing road curving around the back side of the Island will be closed to vehicles and be pedestrian traffic only.

The location of the four season shelter has been moved further up the hill than was originally planned on, due to soil borings which showed that the soil quality was poor in the first proposed site. This would also move the road further north, using the driveway to Guri.

The Program of Needs listed the following:

1) Public community room – 1,400 square feet – warming house, gatherings;

2) Public restrooms – 877 square feet – men’s, women’s, two unisex,

3) Park headquarters – 884 square feet - staff offices, concessions/vending, mechanical/housekeeping, equipment rental (paddleboards, etc).

4) Circulation and structure – 960 square feet.

The new community area of the proposed shelter (1,400 square feet) should not be smaller than Guri and the building should outlast any programming.

The design of the shelter has the community room on the south side with a view of the lake. The rental area would be on the northeast and highly visible. The winter plan for usage could include a skating rink and cross country skiing. The site plan is to tie in with existing trails and move the road over a bit. The shelter will be about four feet higher than the current bath house. A couple of trees will need to be removed. A fire ring is also in the plans.

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Plan A is double the cost currently allocated. Plan B has no staff area, reduced size of the community room and storage and rental of equipment to come closer in line to the funds appropriated. Rachel Skretvedt asked what the square footage is for the two proposed shelters. Gary Manzer responded that Plan A is 1,400 square feet, which is slightly bigger than Guri. Richard Engan said that Plan B is 935 square feet. This is the initial proposal and was presented to the City Council who feels that Proposal B meets the cost but not the needs.

Richard said that Plan C was developed to include the possibility of a community center. One of the challenges for the City is to have two separate facilities requiring staffing, etc. This was done without any input from the Community Center group, basically was as a big picture idea. Richard Engan’s feeling is that the City Council wants to get started this spring but Plan C would take over a year in the planning. Julie Asmus stated that, at one point, it was thought to go with Plan A and, in the future, add onto the building for a community center but it seems, in talking with the DNR, and other entities, that was not feasible so it was dropped by the Council.

Richard stated that he has found that the majority he has talked to want Plan A. Costs are $952,650 for Plan A versus $503,000 for Plan B. These costs do not include water and sewer which was, originally thought to be available but has since been determined to be un-useable. There is a new water line on the north side of the Island. The restrooms on top of the hill also have their own septic system and should be connected to the sewer line. The costs for both are not included in the listed price. Also not included in the cost estimate are patio, fire pit or trail work outside the building. There is a 10% contingency fund built in to cover additional costs as they arise, architect, soil borings. Additional soil borings will need to be done as not all were completed. Also not included is furniture, tables, chairs, etc.

There was a presentation to the City Council on December 17, 2018. The 2017 budget was $781,000. This included $365,000 for the Four Season Shelter, $127,840 for the interpretive boardwalk, $130,000 for trails, $80,000 for the plaza and $78,100 for design and engineering. Funding to cover this was a $606,000 grant and a City match of $175,000.

The 2018 amended budget was $952,000 for the four season shelter, nothing for the boardwalk, the same amount for trails and plaza and $140,000 for design and engineering for a total of $1,302,060. The board walk is still a priority but there are things such as drainage in athletic field and other items that need to be done first. The 2019 amended budget for funding sources was $606,000 from the grant and a 2017 local match of $175,000 with an additional local match of $521,060. Council did not take action to approve additional money for the project. So if we want to proceed with Plan A, additional funding in the amount of $521,060 needs to be found.

There are some other things that are not included: roads, some utility work, what to do with the Guri Endresen building. The roads could be done thru the local option sales tax, $3 million for roads and parking lot designated for Robbins Island. The goal would be to get the shelter built and roads, etc can be done at a later date.

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It is not being proposed that the restrooms would be able to handle concerts and other big events.

Areas around the building – outdoor areas would be raised up about four feet, want to blend in with the surrounding area and soil will need to be dug out for the building foundation. In thinking of it as a four season shelter and use for warming house, we would need to have walking paths to the ice.

The plan is to use wood frame with a masonry veneer on the outside, tiled bathrooms. Staff areas could be dry wall but would need durability for meeting facility ie wood paneling, or wood board, not dry wall. Floor – stained concrete. Heated with propane or electric. Roof similar to Rice Park shelter, Lots of windows. Parking should be closer to the highway to get people out walking.

One thing that has come up is the Christmas light show. The back road could be un-blocked so people can drive around as they did last year or the lights could be installed on the walking trail so people get out of their cars and walk the route.

Rachel Skretvedt said we need to understand that we are under a time constraint. We can’t choose Plan B just because it fits the budget. The shelter is too small and she feels the public would be disappointed with that choice. She also serves on the Local Option Sales Tax committee for Robbins Island and feels this group should work with that group to create the best concept for the Island. She prefers Plan A if the extra money could be found.

Richard stated that we need to be in the construction phase by June 30, 2020 or the grant funding goes away. Before construction starts, there are still some items that need to be taken care of. What is needed soon is to get thru an approval of the concept. If this committee recommends Plan A, then it goes to the City Council and, if they can’t find the money for it, then we would need to change the plan. Richard feels the Council is leaning towards Plan A.

Jim Anderson asked about the water and sewer, stating that is something that needs to be done. Richard responded that the sewer is available for the new building but not for the restrooms on top of the hill. There is water to the bath house but the line is bad and it makes more sense to hook up to the new line on the north side of the Island. The road can possibly be paid for with money from the local option sales tax if that is approved by the State. The goal would be to start the road construction right after Labor Day.

A discussion followed regarding square footage, changes in the general usage of the rooms, making Robbins Island the place to have all kinds of events. Rand Middleton asked about open hours, would the building be open 12 months a year. Rob asked if the City wants to get into the rental business. Some organizations have expressed interest in setting up a rental business from the shelter.

In addition to the restrooms being handicap accessible, there will also be a couple of family restrooms.

Rachel Skretvedt asked how we avoid the vandalism problems that we have had at Rice Park.

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Jim Anderson made a motion to move forward with Plan A, seconded by Tom Gilbertson. Discussion followed. Rachel Skretvedt asked if staff had any comments. Jim clarified his motion to state going with the concept of Plan A, with changes as necessary, whether that would entail deleting parts or possibly adding if City Council found more money. Julie Asmus spoke for PW staff with regards to blind spots. The feeling is that the building should be totally square with no rooms jutting out which creates corners to hide in, allowing for vandalism or criminal activity. Public Works staff agreed.

Gary Manzer said that, in talks with staff and Ike, Plan A was the preferred plan but Ike stated that we didn’t have enough funds for Plan A. Gary stated he didn’t feel anyone would be happy with a scaled back version of the shelter and said we should either go forward with Plan A or wait until we have the money to build Plan A with some adjustments. Some things learned with Rice Shelter is the need to have facilities in the changing rooms, in addition to the hidden corner problem. Gary stated that his personal opinion was to do some fine tuning on Plan A and to find the funds to build.

A discussion followed about restrooms, accessibility, being able to keep the restrooms open if the main room is un-occupied and locked. Richard agreed there would need to be some fine tuning to Plan A before a final decision was made. The motion passed.

The next few meetings we will need to discuss and decide what plan to go with

Staff Reports – To save meeting time, it was decided staff reports would be emailed prior to the upcoming meeting and the Board could bring up any questions they have at the meeting.

Rob received a request from St. John’s Roadrunners 4H Club to place a Little Free Library at Bria’s Park and Miller Park. Rob stated he had also recently received a request from a girl scout group to put up something similar but with games instead of books. A question was asked regarding cost. Rob answered the installation would be covered by the group and the cost to the City would be for maintenance. After some discussion, Tom Gilbertson made a motion to give staff discretion regarding these types of requests. He also suggested we have a time line of 10 years of taking care of the structures and decide at that time if it should be continued. Rick Fagerlie suggested that 3-5 years would be enough. Motion carried. It was the consensus of the group that the game box was not a good idea.

A Board Member had asked if the meeting location could stay at the same location. As other Board Members agreed, it was decided to keep the meetings at the Civic Center.

Tom Gilbertson made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Rachel Skretvedt, motion carried.

The next meeting will be April 17 at the Civic Center at 1:30.