


CITY OF RAPID CITY

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
125 WATERLOO STREET
RAPID CITY, SOUTH DAKOTA 57701

Jerry W. Cole,
Director
(605) 394-5225

To: Mayor Alan Hanks and City Council Members

From: Jerry Cole, Director 
Department of Parks & Recreation

Jeri Taton
Administrative
Assistant
(605) 394-5225

Subject: Naming the Bike Path after Long-Time Public
Works Director Leonard "Swanny" Swanson

Date: July 17, 2008

Lon Van Deusen,
Parks & Cemetery
Manager
(605) 394-4175

Recommendation: To name the Rapid City Bike Path the
Leonard "Swanny" Swanson Memorial Bike Path.

Doug Lowe,
Recreation Manager
(605) 394-4168

Background: On July 15, 2008 the Parks and Recreation
Advisory Board met to discuss a letter from Mayor Alan Hanks
requesting that the City's bike path be named after Leonard
"Swanny" Swanson who worked for the City of Rapid City for
many years. A copy of that letter is attached.

James (JJ) Walraven
Golf Superintendent
(605) 394-4199

Leonard Swanson provided leadership in the City's cleanup
efforts after the 1972 Flood. One of the main jobs beyond
getting the flood debris out of the floodway included acquisition
of the properties which has now become the Rapid City
Greenway and Open Space, that so many of us enjoy today.

Duncan Olney
Aquatics Manager
(605) 394-5223

Negotiating and purchasing the flood ravaged properties from
people who had lost loved ones to the flood was a very hard
and emotional job but Swanson steered the City on a straight
course which was something that was desperately needed in
the community at the time. In 1996 Mr. Swanson again stepped
up as one of the Chairmen of the "Survivors to Save the
Floodway" Group to defeat an initiated measure in which a "yes
vote" would have allowed the City to sell a portion of the
greenway for private development.

Mr. Swanson felt that the City had a stewardship responsibility to protect citizens, (past, present and future) from potential flood events as well as the greenway from ever being developed again. The vote to sell the property was defeated but only by a small margin.

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and Staff have reviewed the City's Naming Policy and this request meets all the criteria with the exception that Mr. Swanson has not been deceased for at least one year. However, because of his sustained and lasting contributions to the City, it was the Advisory Board's unanimous recommendation that the request be submitted to the City Council for final approval. A copy of the Naming Policy is attached for your perusal.

It is hoped by that by naming the Rapid City Bike Path after Mr. Leonard "Swanny" Swanson the City will provide an opportunity to educate the public in perpetuity on the tragic events of June 9, 1972 and the incredible work of how one person with a vision has changed the City of Rapid City for the better.