



MARION COUNTY PARKS COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES OF THE MEETING

August 7, 2014 - 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

5155 Silverton Rd. NE, Salem, Oregon in the North Santiam Room

PRESENT: Scott Anderson, Ted Dingman, Sandy Grulkey, George Moeller, Wayne Rawlins

PUBLIC: Marty Heyen

STAFF: Jeff Bickford, Russ Dilley, Jolene Bray

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS: 9:02 a.m.

APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 6, 2014 MEETING MINUTES

Scott made a motion to approve the May 5, 2014 meeting minutes. Wayne seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

George introduced Marty Heyen, who has applied to be on the Parks Commission, and gave some information on her background. Ted made a motion to recommend her for appointment to the Parks Commission to the Board of Commissioners (BOC). Scott seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

PETTYJOHN PROPERTY UPDATE

Jeff said the BOC did a property tour with the trustee's daughters and attorney. He said their general feeling was they liked the property and thought it would make a nice opportunity but were concerned about the liability and responsibility of the home property. Jeff said since then staff has gotten more information about development and general maintenance costs. He said park development would include adding two gates, putting down gravel in the parking area, port-a-potty, fencing, and trail building at a cost of approximately \$10,000 in capital improvements. He said this was not a budget buster because there will be an additional 5% in RV fee revenue this year and another 5% next year, which will mean about \$50,000 more per year overall. He said this is also eligible for SDC funds, which is about \$10,000 per year and increasing. He said long term maintenance post-development would include mowing, weeding, security for gate opening/closing, and a port-a-potty during the open season at an estimated cost at \$8,000 per year.

Jeff said the home site has been a sticking point for Marion County and the Northwest Land Conservation Trust (NWLCT) has agreed to take title of it after a lot line adjustment is done. He said they have worked up a draft conservation easement and have agreed that Marion County will take 27 acres for park land and NWLC will take the other 2 acres with the home. He said this property has Measure 37 and Measure 49 rights to develop. Jeff said he discussed this with the board of

commissioners at a management update meeting and staff is planning to hold an open house on the property. He said one of the biggest concerns remaining is public acceptance, particularly the neighbors. Jeff said the open house will be held on September 11 from 5:00-7:00 p.m. and staff will send out direct mailers to all neighboring properties. He said at the open house, staff will talk about what is proposed, which is keeping it natural with a walking trail. He said the conservation easement will happen whether it's a park or not. George asked how many properties are involved. Russ said 30-40. Jeff said they will also put out a media release that will be distributed, but this flyer will be mailed directly to the involved properties.

Jeff asked the parks commission to review the flyer and email any comments or feedback to him by Monday, August 11. Wayne asked who else he sees attending besides property owners. Jeff said he would also like to see someone from the BOC, sheriff's office, and parks commission. Scott said it is important to stress that a security firm will be by twice a day. Wayne asked if there would be graphic displays at the event for the press to see. Jeff said staff is working on that with NWLCT.

Wayne asked Russ if he was concerned about maintenance. Russ said a juvenile crew would do mowing and weeding so it should be manageable. Marty asked the length of the trail. Jeff said the trail is approximately one mile long, and that this is an old road and the county would create a small new section of trail. George asked if anyone from the press would be there. Jeff said a press release is being sent out but it was up to them if they attend. Wayne asked if this would be a 24/7 park or daylight to dusk. Jeff said it would be open daylight to dusk from May 1-October 31 just like other seasonal county parks.

FUTURE ACTION ITEMS DISCUSSION

George said the group had discussed parks program objectives approximately a year ago and identified 8 items to pursue. He said there are limited resources, so may involve more work on the part of the commission and they will have to mesh with Russ and Jeff's work schedule. George said he'd like to go through the list of items and then get an idea of where they'd like to focus their efforts and pursue or discard. He asked the commission to rank each item and the highest would be pursued.

1. Assess progress toward meeting goals/objectives of the Marion County Recreation Plan, and outline future needs.
2. Evaluating opportunities and constraints to achieving Marion County Parks program objectives.
3. Assess opportunities for funding and obtaining added support for the Marion County Parks program.
4. Evaluate education needs and opportunities through use of community resources and volunteers.
5. Promote volunteer programs and community involvement (e.g. "adopt-a-park", similar to "adopt-a-highway" program).
6. Enhance interface with Marion County commissioners
7. Assess opportunities for *enhancing and* additional parks
8. Role of MC Parks in "Land Banking"

Wayne recommended adding “enhancing and” to #7, which could range from playground equipment to infrastructure improvements.

There was discussion about the diminished use of parks by young people. Ted said he wonders if it is a lifestyle change in young people that doesn’t attract them to the parks and if the parks industry needs to rethink the purpose of management of the neighborhood park. Jeff said he’s heard there are two big factors that are causing less usage: 1) video games/electronic devices, and 2) a perceived safety issue with parents unwilling to let children go to the park by themselves and unable to go with them all the time. He said this is seen in all jurisdictions. Wayne said he agreed with Jeff. He said he has seen a large increase in parks use by Hispanics both in town and regionally, which fits with their culture to gather and wondered if there was a way to check numbers.

Scott said one other way that parks are used is through formalized activities for youth (sports, 4-H, etc.). He said one thing missing from Marion County parks that some city parks have is more education oriented activities which he realizes takes money and/or a well-organized volunteer program. He said every year people become lost while walking in parks and thinks education about how to care for yourself if you become lost is important. He said that at existing parks there are opportunities to educate. He suggested linking Bonesteele Park with the OSU Master Naturalist program to educate citizens. He said it would take a lot of effort on the commission’s part since there is not staff available.

George said he thinks Scott’s idea fits under #4 on the list and Wayne’s idea fits under #1. Wayne said the 2010 Census shows Hispanics make-up approximately 24% of the population and suggested recruiting a Hispanic member to this commission which will require outreach to Hispanic groups.

Sandy said she had been researching learning center schools and natural environments and has learned that people are using green spaces differently. She said people may not use the space physically but are appreciating them as psychological relief or a sense of home. She said as we look at numbers we need to think of other ways people use this space. Ted said recognizing this, the group also needs to ask what impact this has on our management. Sandy said one thing recommended is to put parking lots in the back instead of the front.

Marty said today most households have two working parents and most kids are in daycare or with babysitters, but thinks the pendulum is changing with more stay at home parents. She said her son doesn’t like to use the local park because of safety concerns. She said he attended the Jane Goodall School and recommended that school as an education resource.

Russ said all these ideas are good but we need one staff person to be the volunteer coordinator and that’s a 40 hour a week job. George said this is a real issue but there may be some options in how to manage this. Russ said to do a lot of these things we really need more staff to make it happen. Jeff said he likes the idea of active education and this may be something the PC can help with. He said the City of Salem has a Parks & Recreation department but Marion County doesn’t have a recreation program and it would be great to have educational opportunities. He said he thought getting youth engaged in education needs a hook. He said staff has also noticed more use by Hispanics and large family

gatherings and having a Hispanic member would be good for the commission. He said the department's waste reduction coordinators are bilingual and can assist with recruitment.

Scott said he thought a dedicated staff member was important to putting together more active education, but suggested one or two commission members set up a program and if successful then request additional funding from the BOC for staffing.

Scott said regarding #6, he suggested when the PC has ideas they update the BOC. George asked if they are getting outside of the role of the parks commission. Jeff said he didn't think so. George said the commission doesn't want to go beyond their role. Jeff said the BOC receive the minutes of this meeting and will have a feel for what is happening with the group. Scott recommended having one meeting per year that focuses on reviewing if the commission is on track with their purpose.

George asked commission members to take 100 points and rank the 8 action items. The group tallied their individual rankings and those receiving the highest scores and identified for future focus were #1, #4, #5, and #7 (#1– 100 points; #2 – 10 points; #3 – 90 points; #4 – 200 points; #5 – 160 points; #6 – 55 points; #7 – 105 points; and, #8 – 0 points).

Scott suggested having a work session to work on these and flesh them out. There was discussion on how many items and which on the list the commission should first work on. Wayne said he thought the focus should be on the top two. George said he thought #4 and #5 fit together and all agreed. Marty suggested identifying volunteer needs before working on developing a volunteer program. Russ said that information is available on the website. George said this would be part of the work session meeting. He asked if there were two commissioners who would take either #4 or #5 and then be prepared at the next meeting to lead a discussion on that item. Scott volunteered to take #4. George and Wayne will take #5. The group discussed when to hold the work session. Jeff said they can hold a special meeting or do it at the next quarterly meeting. The group decided to extend their meeting time and meet from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 6th.

PARK COMMISSIONER INPUT

- Wayne said his, Ted's, and George's terms expire in November. Jeff will send each of them an email and their response will be their formal acceptance to serve another term.
- Wayne asked how the meeting with the new Oregon State Parks director went. Russ said it was very positive.
- Wayne asked if Cindy Gooch did anything with Joryville after the last meeting. Russ said she investigated the grant opportunities but he doesn't know if she pursued any of them. He also received a phone call about Eagle Scout opportunities and he directed him to Cindy.
- George said he would like to pursue new members for the commission. He asked Wayne about people retiring from state parks. Wayne said he sent a note to the former director for recommendations but hasn't heard back.

STAFF UPDATES:

- Bear Creek Campground has a camp host who has been there since about mid-June. Everything is going great and the campground has been full since July 8. Russ said the host had one

incident with rowdy people but was able to call SO Dispatch via radio which caused them to leave the park. Jeff said they are investigating installing a phone line to the park. Russ said overall everything is going great.

- There is a garbage bag bandit at North Fork and Salmon Falls parks. Russ said the person pulls the full garbage bags from the can, dumps the garbage back into the empty garbage cans, and steals the bags. He said there is also a problem with someone dumping their personal garbage.
- The water pump went out at Spongs Landing Park. Russ said staff is waiting for an electrician to come in and then they will install a new pump.
- Scotts Mills is getting a new playground. Russ said the slide and swings are being removed and he is researching options for replacement. Jeff said we hope to install the new equipment in spring 2015.

NEXT MEETING: November 20, 2014 @ 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. (Note: after the meeting, it was determined that the originally planned date of November 6 did not, work, so the next meeting was rescheduled for November 20.)

ADJOURN: 10:51 a.m.