

**MARION COUNTY  
Parks Commission  
Meeting Minutes**

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Date: Thursday, January 20, 2022  
Time: 3:00pm – 5:00pm  
Location: Zoom or Willamette Conference Room at Public Works, 5155 Silverton Road NE

Present: **Members:** Wayne Rawlins, Robert Emanuel, Alton Hoover, Marisa Roskelley, Katy Waid  
Members present via Zoom: Chris Teichroew, Steve Staten

**Absent:** Malcolm Aquinas

**Staff:** Tom Kissinger, Brian May, Natalie Tomaszewski

**Guests:** Herschel Sangster, Kathy Rogers

Quorum: Yes

**ADMINISTRATIVE (Information/Discussion/Action)**

Wayne called the meeting to order @ 3:02 p.m.

**Member and Staff introductions:** Members and staff were introduced.

**Attendance/Roll-call:** Done

**Agenda Changes:** Wayne added Park Naming process to the agenda, following admin.

**Approval of September 16, 2021 minutes**

**Motion:** Marisa made a motion to accept minutes with corrections. Alton seconded.

**Discussion:** None.

**Result:** A voice vote is unanimous – motion passes.

**Parks Naming Process**

Wayne wanted to point out that during the Beachie Creek Fire there were a number of lives lost and brought up the idea to rename North Fork after one of the people who was lost. Wayne stated that it would be good to form a subcommittee to address the potential parks re-naming or development of a memorial. Marisa volunteered to be on the subcommittee.

## **Santiam Canyon Update**

### **FEMA**

Tom stated that they have two projects currently being reviewed by FEMA: the first being the ETART (Erosion Threat And Response Team). ETARTS is a report that is done after a disaster happens, focusing on the environmental aftermath of said disaster. Tom said they landed on hydroseeding to help control noxious weeds. Another aspect of this is having a consultant for replanting trees and such is to figure out a list of native species.

The second project being reviewed by FEMA is focusing on the structures, amenities, parking lots and such. The project is currently with the CRC, a group that reviews and complies market values analysis. They offered 990k based on the site inspections and documentation provided. Tom stated they are working with FEMA to acquire a more accurate figure based on what is truly recoverable and what isn't.

The next steps are to receive FEMA's offer and they may counter that offer and then discussion until a number is agreed upon. From there, it has to be approved by Congress. Tom stated the plan is working on other ways to get some money now to start on projects since it can take a long time, Tom heard a decade, before the money is actually seen.

### **Walker Macy**

Tom stated that they are in phase two of the planning, which includes the planning of how we actually accomplish those projects. Phase two is broken up into three main goals: a restoration plan, how do we phase our construction efficiently and funding wise. Tom is working with Echo Northwest to look at different funding options as there is a \$17 million gap for what Walker Macy proposed.

Tom shared the restoration goals that were sent by Walker Macy with the Committee. The document noted all the goals and opportunities for parks within the canyon.

### **Restoration Goals:**

#### **North Fork**

Tom stated some of the main goals for North Fork was to maintain/stabilize road access to the park from the main road and establish environmentally appropriate native plants with an emphasis on climate change resilience. Other goals for North Fork included establishing user access points, picnic shelter areas and increasing the camping area capacity. Katy stated that ADA accessible facilities was a top priority for her; Tom stated that it a goal, but not for the initial slot of money.

Minto and Niagara will be heavily focused on for restoration and Bear Creek and Salmon Falls will be more focused on recreation. All parks will focus on installing/creating aquatic, terrestrial and avian habitat. The restoration goals aspect only focused on the parks within the canyon, but the economic goals focused on all the parks.

### Bear Creek

Tom stated some of the main goals include increasing camping and RV capacity, adding into a buffer for the user area from the road and including an on-site storm water treatment.

### Salmon Falls

The main goal is to increase the camping/day use area capacity. There are discussions with Elk Horn, a recreational group who owns a piece of land next to Salmon Falls, to buy the 12 acres that borders Salmon Falls. Other goals include establishing a buffer for the park from the road, improving function and form of a tributary within the park and establishing user access points to the river.

Katy commented on a lifejacket program and Tom stated that that has been discussed and will be included in the future plans.

Steve asked about plans for the other side of the river; Tom stated that ideally, they would bridge the two parts.

### Minto

Tom stated that the future of Minto is going to be the Rail Trail. There is also opportunity to utilize some of the dead trees to provide habitat and build up the understory of the forest. The lower shelf will be for rebuilding the understory and the top shelf will be for the Rail Trail.

### Packsaddle

Tom stated the main goal is to improve the day-use area capacity, parking lot and the boat ramp. Other goals include conversing/improving the tributary function of the river, establish trails and dedicated user-access points on the river, and establish a covered picnic shelter area.

### Niagara

Tom stated that the main goals for Niagara are restoration of the area, and it is going to take a lot of work; most of the park will be shut down for restoration, except for the day use area. Some goals are to establish/re-open trails and dedicated user access points on the river. The long-term plan for the western side of the park is to have a natural wildflower meadow and partner with the bordering tribes to have an annual interpretative day.

Wayne asked for clarification on utilizing the trees for restricting habitat access; Tom stated those projects would be spearheaded by the Watershed Council and Marion County would assist by providing the trees, supplies and equipment. With it being a joint project, all organizations could apply for grants for the project.

### **Economic Goals:**

Tom shared the economic goals portion from Walker Macy with the Committee. The document is a market analysis that looked at operational costs (staff, materials, etc.), maintenance costs, and compared it to the broader market of camping to analyze the market demand.

The boundary of analysis is along Hwy 22, Hwy 20 and along Hwy 226 to establish a comparative. Brian stated they will also be looking at all of Marion County to analyze the capacity aspect.

Tom stated there are four amenities to explore: Day use, event venues, amenities for kids and integration with the local economy (local trips, etc.).

Marisa mentioned the idea of a bicycle repair station within the parks; Herschel commented that they had just installed one at Salem-Keizer rapids. Tom commented that those will be utilized along the Rail Trail system.

Tom stated that dynamic pricing will be a topic for the next meeting as he would like the committee's opinion.

## **Staff Updates**

### **Rail Trail**

Tom stated that they are in the process of applying for the Rivers Trails Conservation Assistance Program for National Parks Service; there is a private stakeholder in the area, Resilient Headwaters, who are very interested in particularly bike trails. They will be a major spearhead with the Rail Trail project. Tom stated that the Rail Trail will be the 'spine' of the area with various trails and parks branching off.

### **Parkdale**

Tom stated it was a priority for the Commissioners and had a lot of public interest. The county has received 60 million in ARPA funding. Tom shared the Parkdale Park Improvement image with the committee.

Marisa asked about the wetlands there; Tom stated the goal would be to add a boardwalk and interpretative signage to that area.

Kathy Rogers, a guest on the East Salem Service District Advisory Committee, commented needing to ask for input from the neighborhood. She also mentioned the need for a playground in this area; Tom commented that the goal to install a nature-based play area at Parkdale are included in the plans. Kathy suggested reaching out for input from the area. Tom stated they should hear back within a month about whether their application was awarded or not and the timeline for building is 2026.

Kathy thanked Tom for his presentation.

### **North Santiam Recreation Area**

Tom stated there was a short delay due to conflicts of wordage between the documents; these conflicts were updated. Tom reminded the committee that Marion County Parks is going to take over the North Santiam Recreation Area. Septic permitting and plan designs are in the works right now.

### **Commissioner Roundtable**

Tom stated when the weather gets nicer, he would like to take the committee on a tour of the 'valley' parks to show their future goals.

Katy requested the concept plans from Tom, and she would like to focus on dynamic pricing at the next meeting.

Chris commented that it was a great meeting and great information.

Meeting adjourned at 4:58pm.

*NEXT MEETING: Thursday, March 17, 2022 @ 3:00 p.m.*