

**MARION COUNTY  
Parks Commission  
Meeting Minutes**

Date: Thursday, March 20, 2025  
Time: 2:00pm – 4:00pm  
Location: Teams or Willamette Conference Room at Public Works, 5155 Silverton Road NE

Present: **Members:** Herschel Sangster, Bryan Hall, Wayne Rawlins, Tabitha Henricksen, Alton Hoover (Teams), and Bob Emanuel (Teams)

**Staff:** Kevin Thompson, Whitney Ned, Toni Whitler – Boards Office (Teams) and Commissioner Kevin Cameron (Teams)

**Guests:** Elijah Welch (Teams)

Absent: **Excused:**

**Unexcused:** Steve Staten, Chris Teichroew

Quorum: **Yes**

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

Hersch Sangster called the meeting to order at 2:25 pm.

**Introductions:** Commission members, staff, and guests were introduced.

**Attendance/Roll Call:** Done.

**Agenda Changes:** Adding recognition for Wayne Rawlins and Bob Emanuel's service on the Parks Commission following their notice of term non-renewals.

**Approval of January 16, 2025 Meeting Minutes**

**Motion:** Tabitha made a motion to accept minutes. Alton seconded.

**Discussion:** None

**Result:** A voice vote is unanimous – motion passes, with one abstention due to absence.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Parks Renaming Update**

Wayne recapped his recent email conversation with a member of the public asking for an update on the North Fork Park being renamed after one of the canyon fire victims.

- Discussion reaffirmed that the Board of Commissioners accepted the Park Commission's recommendation not to rename the park.
- The Board of Commissioners are exploring a canyon-wide memorial, possibly involving a commemorative plaque on a bolder, to include recognition of victims and first responders.
- Responsibility for any canyon fire-specific memorial projects has been transferred to Chris Eppley, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer.

### **Parking Fee Expansions Update**

Kevin shared the seasonal parking fees are effective April 1 through October 31 for the following Marion County parks:

- North Fork
  - Bear Creek
  - Packsaddle
  - Minto
  - North Santiam
  - Spongs Landing
  - Scotts Mills
- Parking Fee: \$5 daily or \$30 annual pass.
  - Exemptions: Scotts Mills residents offered free annual passes
  - Scotts Mills and Spongs Landing account for 54% of Valley Park operations and maintenance costs.

### **Shelter/Campground Reservations and Parks Websites**

Kevin presented a sample of the new Marion County Parks website, going live in the next few days, as well as the Camplife website for reserving campgrounds at North Santiam. Reservations for picnic shelters—through Camplife—will be available in the next couple weeks.

### **ODOT Micro Grant**

After purchasing four bike racks, three of which have already been installed, the remaining \$1,400 may be used to purchase a bike repair station. Rogers Wayside was a suggested location due to its likelihood of usage and community visibility.

### **Parks Projects**

Kevin went over ongoing and upcoming projects, as well as improvements for overall cleaning procedures for parks. He shared event information for Earth Day and the TRACK trails ribbon cutting and that the application for Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) funding was denied.

- **Salmon Falls:** Wetland restoration and infrastructure (parking, restroom, stairs). Reopening planned for Fall 2025.
- **Niagara Park:** Geotechnical survey pending due to slope instability concerns.
- **North Fork Park:** Expanded trails and trail access, potential campground expansion.
- **North Santiam Park:** Hazard tree removal and campground re-opening.
- **Parkdale Project:** Construction scheduled for summer completion.

### **Parks Memorial Program Subcommittee**

General agreement on the need for a subcommittee to create a general Parks Memorial Program (unrelated to the canyon fire/parks renaming subcommittee).

- Volunteers for the committee: Hersch Sangster, Alton Hoover, and Tabitha Henrickson.
- Whitney Ned to send scheduling poll for first subcommittee meeting in April.

### **Parks Tours**

Discussed plans to tour Linn County parks to learn more about successful operations and revenue models, as well as the possibility of combining tours with community outreach or recruitment events.

### **Commissioners' Roundtable**

Brainstormed ideas on how to raise funds, possibly through a sponsorship program, advertisement or foundation.

#### **Recommend Removal of Parks Commission members to Board of Commissioners.**

**Motion:** Bryan made a motion to recommend removal. Alton seconded.

**Discussion:** The issue of excessive absences for members Steve Staten and Chris Teichrow. Parks Commission by-laws were reviewed.

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

The need for recruitment efforts was emphasized.

Meeting adjourned at 4:07 pm

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, May 15, 2025 @ 2:00 p.m.