



MARION COUNTY PARKS COMMISSION

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

August 18, 2016 - 10:00 a.m.

North Santiam Room at 5155 Silverton Road NE, Salem, Oregon

MEMBERS PRESENT: Sandy Grulkey, Marty Heyen, Steve Koch, George Moeller, Wayne Rawlins, Ben Williams

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Alan Haley, Brian May, Russ Dilley, Jolene Bray

BOC LIAISON: Commissioner Sam Brentano

PUBLIC SIGNED IN: Anna Rankin, Pudding River Watershed Council; Ashley Smithers, Pudding River Watershed Council

ADMINISTRATIVE (Information/Discussion/Action)

Welcome and Introductions

Ben called the meeting to order. Several committee members shared that they were unable to attend the planned field trip to North Fork and Salmon Falls parks at the end of today's meeting, so it will be rescheduled for a date in late September.

Ben introduced Brian May, the newly hired Environmental Services Division Manager. Brian said he has a 27-year history in recycling, but the parks system is a new endeavor. He said Russ has done great job getting him up to speed and he's happy to be here. Alan said Brian will be attending future parks commission meetings.

Approval of June 9, 2016 Meeting Minutes

George made a motion to approve the June 9, 2016, meeting minutes as submitted. Steve seconded the motion and the motion was approved unanimously.

Public Input

Anna Rankin reported that the Pudding River Watershed Council (PRWC) is in consensus about moving forward with the Scotts Mills Dam removal, which includes the entire dam and fish passage. She said the removal is also supported by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW). Anna said the long term vision is to return the area to its natural condition as much as possible. She said the next step is to apply for a grant with the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board for a technical assessment. She said the grant is due in October and she is requesting a letter of support from the parks commission.

Ben asked where they are in dialoging with other involved agencies. Anna said they did not come up with any registry or barriers and the Army Corp of Engineers is not involved since the dam is not federal. She said the engineer that is hired will contact all involved agencies. Anna said she expects this work to be done in April – June 2017, and then will submit another grant application in fall 2017 for continued work for 2018.

Wayne said it would be helpful if the commission was provided with a list of what they can help with, as well as timelines for different stages of the proposed process. Anna provided a copy of a letter with a timeline but said they will continue to add more details especially after hiring the engineer. Steve said with the dam removal the water level would drop and asked if they knew how far that would be. Anna said the engineer will determine. Steve asked how, from a historical perspective, they had thought to keep Scotts Mills story alive without the dam. Sandy said there was already a historical marker at the falls. Anna said they hoped to partner with the

county for any additional signage. Sandy said the Scotts Mills Historical Society was very supportive of the PRWC efforts because of their sensitivity towards the history of Scotts Mills.

Alan asked if it had been determined who owns the dam. Ben said this was discussed at a prior commission meeting and the county owns the dam. Alan said this matter needs to be reviewed by legal counsel if the county is the owner of the property and will then need to go to the board of commissioners (BOC) for approval. Anna said the Marion County Tax Assessor said the county owns the dam. She said because the dam is in the stream, the argument can be made that it is not county property and PRWC can seek an exemption, but she sees a much better outcome if they work with Marion County. Alan said he hasn't updated the BOC about the dam removal yet. He said the PRWC is looking for the conceptual support of the parks commission for whoever owns dam so he will send to legal counsel for confirmation and advice, and will then take to the BOC at a Management Update meeting to update them and receive approval.

Alan said staff would inform Anna when the Management Update was scheduled so she could plan to attend. There was discussion about recommending a letter of support. Anna said the PRWC will defer to the engineer whether they report the removal of the dam is or isn't a good idea. Steve made a motion that the parks commission writes a draft letter of support for the assessment for the potential dam removal at Scotts Mills Park. Marty seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Anna said at last PRWC meeting they discussed doing a SOLV project and agreed that St. Louis Fish Ponds would be a very easy volunteer project. She said ODFW is stocking the ponds on October 8 and the group would like to do a weekend project after that date. Russ said the park closes on September 30 and people would need to be able to park at the locked gate and walk in. Anna said she would work with the ODFW park host about access and needs a signed release from the county allowing them to do the project. Russ said he will talk to Mark at ODFW to see what they're doing with the gates. She asked when she can anticipate documentation of approval. Alan said in a couple weeks.

Commission Member Announcements and Upcoming Events

Sandy said she contacted the watershed council in the Auburn Park area to see if they could help with the situation, but it hasn't gone anywhere. She said the commission voted to approve the sale of the undeveloped Cain property, with her being the one dissenting vote. Sandy said she was curious if the county had done its due diligence, so she did some research. She said she is really reticent to sell park property and asked if it could be used by people in that area for recreational purposes. Ben said there was a motion to approve the sale of this property that passed with one dissenting vote and to reconsider this matter the commission would need to reopen the vote. He said we talk about it as if it is a park, but it is a vacant lot that no one can get to. Sandy said if this type of issue ever comes up again, she's been in touch with people who do disc golf who say this is the type of land they would want. She said she also talked to someone who said the recreational dollar invested in disc golf has proven to be the most recreational beneficial to the surrounding businesses. Wayne said there are a number of disc golf courses in existence and he has seen no return like she's described. Ben said the biggest in the county is at Champoeg Park and a lot of the users are from George Fox University across the river, so there's also a demographic component involved. Ben asked if Sandy wanted to make a motion to reopen discussion on the Cain property. She said no, she just wanted to share this information in case other situations come up in the future. She said this issue shows the commission needs to ask the opinion of affected neighbors before park land is sold.

2017-2018 BUDGET/PROJECT SELECTION

Ben asked if the working timeframe is to have a prioritized project list by December or sooner if possible. Alan said December would be the outer limit. Ben said the purpose of the field trip to six county parks is to have background on information Russ is providing to the commission. Marty said it would be helpful to know the budget and the cost of these projects. She said she would say no to a second set of stairs and restroom replacement if the cost is \$200,000. Russ said that number has been revised because it's been decided that only

the fixtures would be replaced. George said he agreed and needs to know if all the budgeted money will go to one project or if they should spread it around. Ben said it would be helpful to have the range of cost for proposed maintenance projects and then rank them based on need. He said the commission could first rank the projects in the abstract and then look at funds available and see how these move around. Wayne said besides prioritizing differing properties, he'd like to ask what else is in need in parks operation and operational needs - staffing. He said the parks program has done pretty well for a long time with volunteers, but it's not getting the job done anymore. Wayne said he wants to look at the budget and see how much staff this amount of money can buy and how much maintenance they can get done with more manpower.

Ben said they need to differentiate between capital projects and operating budget, and asked if that's open for discussion. Commissioner Brentano suggested laying out a case to the BOC because there is support, but suggested the commission not think of it in terms of all in one year or as a combination of one man power and one good project. Alan said these projects are not for one year; they're building a list to be worked off in the coming years. He said some of these are not big items; they're operational and needed. For instance, he said \$500-\$1000 for new signs can be hugely beneficial. Alan said he and Russ have discussed staffing. He said the commission can put together their wish list and ask for that dollar amount, which may be approved by the BOC or may be offered a lesser amount. He said some projects need to be brought as a maintenance issue and that means staffing. Alan said if the commission sees the need from a perspective of staffing and wants to recommend that the BOC budget for staffing, including what the goals and benefits are, staff can present that to them. Steve said he thinks the commission is on the right track by visiting parks and having a minds-eye when discussing. He said Russ did a great job doing the initial pass on prioritization, but now the commission needs to get out there and look at other parks.

After some discussion, it was decided the commission would take the parks tour and continue work on this at the October meeting. Ben asked Russ to put together a bulleted document of staffing needs for the next meeting.

FUTURE TOPICS / EMERGING ISSUES / OTHER BUSINESS

- Marty said the Salem-Keizer School District and City of Salem are working together on land swaps and she asked about Auburn Park because Auburn School needs more land. Russ said Auburn Park land was purchased with Land Water Conservation Funds so it can't be sold to a school, but can be swapped for in kind property (i.e., recreational for recreational). Alan said there has been discussion with schools about this so they are aware of this type of sale or swap.
- Ben said they had a community meeting in Butteville sponsored by the Friends of Historical Butteville. He said they took everyone through the website which led to a page on the Butteville Landing. Ben said over 40 people were in attendance and the only "negatives" were not enough parking at the store, not at the landing. He said they made clear that it was a right-of-way, not a park, and they spoke about the plans Steve put together. Steve said the adjacent neighbor was excited and the only drawback was she wants a fence on the property line. Ben said they made no commitment about county involvement and when they discussed the potential paddle dock, there was huge support from attendees.

Staff Updates

- Russ said Tuesday was last day of the recently hired parks temp. He said he will have a juvenile crew to help out for the rest of the season.
- Russ said the perspective parks commission member is being deployed to Afghanistan so there is still a vacant commission seat.

ADJOURN: 11:39 a.m.

NEXT MEETING: October 7, 2016, at 10:00 a.m. in the North Santiam Room at Public Works.