



PARKS AND TRAILS COMMISSION

Monday, September 09, 2024 at 4:00 PM

APPROVED MINUTES

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Chair Scott Jacobson
Vice Chair Dana Lathrope
Commissioner Jerry Belcher
Commissioner Howard Blumenthal
Commissioner Nicholas Hellmich
Commissioner Reid Herman
Commissioner Lynne Pettit
Commissioner Jacob Woodruff

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Commissioner Paul Barlow

STAFF PRESENT

Buck Tupper, Facilities Maintenance Supervisor
Brandon Sundeen
Sheri Ingram
Lisa Scholl
Jacob Graichen

CALL TO ORDER - 4:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approve Minutes of August 12, 2024

Motion made to recommend that Council approve the Minutes of August 12, 2024 by Commissioner Blumenthal, Seconded by Commissioner Hellmich.

Voting Yea: Chair Jacobson, Commissioner Belcher, Commissioner Blumenthal, Commissioner Hellmich, Commissioner Herman, Commissioner Pettit, Commissioner Woodruff. Abstained: Vice Chair Lathrope

TOPICS FROM THE FLOOR: From attendees not otherwise of the agenda

NEW BUSINESS

OLD BUSINESS**2. Milton Creek Woodland Reserve**

Jacobson sent out a draft of everything done prior and went through it page by page and asked if people had anything to add to any of the pages. Graichen said one way to make this stick would be to look at zoning. They potentially have a zoning district called Open Space that is a designation in the Comprehensive Plan. If Dalton Lake gets annexed, it would be zoned as Open Space so that is embodied in the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan is the overall plan that helps guide what you do and the goals of that are to conserve open space and protect natural and scenic resources and to promote healthy and visually attractive environments in harmony with the natural landscape character. Based on what he has heard on the Woodland Reserve concept, it sounds like that is their general goal. Since the City owns the property and the Council agrees with it, he doesn't see a lot of push-back. The zone change process goes to the Planning Commission and City Council and takes a few months.

We are currently going through an economic opportunities analysis and when they inventory our employment land, they take out wetlands, flood plains, etc. He thinks the majority of this lands in those categories. Belcher said the park is in the floodplain and the camas field is 2-3 acres and a little higher and rocky. He thinks conservancies would like to see it saved. The other side is Port property. Graichen said that is in the City limits. Belcher asked if they can zone that as open space and Graichen said the Port would have to agree to it. Jacobson said it is industrial zoning right now so if they take it out, would that make us deficient with how much should be in inventory and Graichen said right now, we have a lot of industrial land so shouldn't be an issue. Jacobson asked if he had an idea of where the substation would be and Graichen pointed out on a map where the substation is proposed to go. It is pretty close to old Boise park and they would have to put in a street which will help with access to the park. Lathrope asked if they moved forward with possible re-zoning, would that secure it for their purpose and buy them time and can it be reversed later and Graichen said it could be. The Council of today can be on board but a different council later could have a different view of things.

Jacobson had a number of approximately 39 acres. Hellmich will figure out the approximate acres and also how many acres the Port has and he will identify landowners. He tried contacting Communications Officer King but she is gone until late September.

Lathrope asked if they are going to consider moving forward with re-zoning and Jacobsons said they are just concentrating on stakeholders right now. Hellmich asked Sundeen if he knew of any historical groups that would be interested and he said he would have to think about that.

Blumenthal thought they should put the seed out about the railroad tracks. Jacobson thought there was already a plan to use the tracks for part of the trail. Jacobson said they are studying a Scappoose-St. Helens trail right now and they should see if they could get funding through that to bring it all the way down to historic St. Helens using the railroad tracks. Tupper knows it is a private spur on the Boise property and doesn't know who owns the spur on Port property. Lathrope said the area could also be used for tourism parking, and they could consider the possibility for that area to be used in the future for tourism events like Halloweentown when they did the haunted walk-throughs at Nob Hill and McCormick.

Jacobson said they talked about Belcher, Walsh and him meeting with Shawn Clark with the Port to get some ideas of what they would like to see. Hopefully can get a presentation to the

Council by the end of the year. Hellmich said if we have a large surplus of industrial land, that could give us leverage.

Jacobson said they need photos for presentation.

Helmich said they have McCormick across the street so doesn't see the need for a playground. Lathrope would like to consider keeping it more on the natural place and she's not sure about signs because of vandalism and Belcher agrees. Jacobson said these are just things to think about and can come back at the next meeting and maybe come up with other rest and recreation areas to bring to the next meeting.

Belcher likes the quarries down there. Maybe they could have some kind of history on the cobblestones and how they took them out of there and where the people came from that worked there. He thinks it's a big part of St. Helens because there were a large amount of them around here. Sundeen said most of the cobblestones went to Portland. They called them Belgian blocks and most of the ones you see in Portland are from St. Helens.

3. Sign Grant Ideas

Belcher would still like a sign above the cliff where trail crosses River St. He found one that says "Caution - Unfenced Cliff". Thinks still a good idea to have a fence. Tupper said he still wants to talk to their lawyer and insurance guy about it. If there was a barrier, they wouldn't need a sign.

Lathrope said they need a sign at Civic Pride Park. Tupper asked if they want something like what is at the other parks and she said at least the bare minimum with a name because people don't know it's a park. Tupper said they did put up signs that say City Park but do they want signs with the name and where do they want it located. Lathrope would like to see one on the Red Apple side. Blumenthal would like a sign on both sides. Hellmich has a friend with a machine that can make a wood one and Tupper said they should look at the ones at the other parks so they match.

Tupper said they replaced the rules sign at Grey Cliff sign the day after Blumenthal told him about it. The off-leash area can be marked better and they do have signs already so he is looking into that. Blumenthal would like restoration signs. He has a picture he can send to Tupper. Tupper said those can be made of corrugated plastic so they will be cheap.

4. Sand Island Contract

Belcher said he thinks the agreement is a great idea and they are an advisory committee and the Council has the final say. But there are some concerns that people have brought to him and they have talked about. The shuttle is not in the contract and the mayor thought it was a verbal agreement. It needs to be clarified.

As far as the camp host, he thinks the contract says a host is supposed to there the whole time but maybe they don't need to be during the week. Maybe there should be an amendment. There wasn't one there the Thursday before Labor Day when he went over there.

There are five cabins there now. If something major is being done over there, he thinks it should be brought to their attention because the contract says if there are improvements made, the City has to buy them back. Contract says the City gets 10% of gross revenue and can be given as tax credits. It would be nice to see some kind of statement. He thinks things could be more open and transparent. Sundeen said they could make a formal request to Gloria Busch to come and talk to them. Belcher said there were a lot of unknowns when

contract was written so it needs to be amended. Herman asked who determines the value of the cabins and Belcher said each party has an appraiser and if they don't agree, they can have a third appraiser. Blumenthal likes the job they are doing on the island - no homeless and garbage issues.

OTHER BUSINESS

Jacobson said they gave the annual report to Council and it went well. He thanked Pettit for doing the draft for it.

Parks assignments – Herman help with the BMX and McCormick if they want. Hellmich will take Campbell Park. Herman will take Civic Pride.

Pettit said her husband mows and they clean up around the tree and she cuts the rhodies at Walnut Tree Park.

STAFF REPORT

Tupper said they have done a lot of routine maintenance and mowing. He has summer helpers until the end of the month. They have been replacing the wood on picnic tables and benches. The gas and diesel storage area at McCormick got broken into and they attempted to syphon gas out through three long hoses and were unsuccessful. They left a bunch of trash.

Hellmich said at hole 14, a tree collapsed on top of a place where you put a disk golf basket. Can they remove it?

Pettit thanked Tupper for moving the little library at Walnut Tree Park and moving the bench on the overlook. They do have some garbage that has been dumped below the overlook and all the signs and benches have been graffitied and painted. Someone cut the grass and left it all over the road so she blew it off the road.

COUNCILOR'S REPORT

Sundeen said thanks for showing up in force to the Council Meeting and thanks for the presentation. He can see if they want to have a joint meeting with Council once a year. They are not out of line with Sand Island questions. He has heard the same complaints from people. A group wants to talk to them about starting an RC track in one of the parks. Hellmich said there is one right next to the BMX track.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Tupper said to text him and let him know if walking the Boise property behind the gate, because the police will be on them if they don't. They have had problems down there so the police are patrolling the property.

Pettit said they are having a Dalton Lake cleanup on Sept. 28 from 9-12.

ADJOURNMENT - 5:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Sheri Ingram, Public Works Office Assistant