



PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Monday, August 08, 2022 at 4:00 PM

APPROVED MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT

Commissioner Jerry Belcher
Commissioner Howard Blumenthal
Commissioner Jacob Woodruff
Chair Lynne Pettit
Vice Chair Brandon Sundeen
Commissioner Scott Jacobson
Commissioner Paul Barlow

MEMBERS ABSENT

Commissioner Carmin Dunn
Commissioner Dana Lathrope

STAFF PRESENT

Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder
Melisa Gaelrun-Maggi, Parks & Recreation Administrative Assistant
Sheri Ingram, Public Works Office Assistant
Tory Shelby, Parks Field Supervisor

OTHERS

Emily Martin
Steve Toschi

CALL TO ORDER – 4:01pm

Pettit stated that minutes from last meeting will be reviewed and voted on next month.

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

- ❖ Steve Toschi. The parks are very important to him and his wife. They have walked in almost every park, the urban trail, the Nob Hill trail, etc. Where he lived in California, they used those parks all the time. Applaud the work of the Parks & Recreation Division. Brenda talked about the importance of water and nature views at the Keith Locke street vacation. It has really benefited him. He is a supporter. Thank you for recommending denial of the street vacation. Public access is extremely important. Encouraged the Parks & Recreation Commission to go to the continued hearing in September. The properties were neglected for years. There are always people trying to get the parks. Need to stay vigilant to maintain the parks.

Woodruff says it is safe to say everyone there loves the parks.

Steve wants them to show they aren't going to give up on retaining the space for the public.

Jacobson thinks he needs to show concrete plans before the City gives the property away.

Steve plans to inform the Council of his knowledge. He is afraid that the City will be stuck with a lousy project. No one is taking anything away from him.

Steve also has something on HB3115. He can bring back more information when they discuss it. He requested the Planning Commission begin reviewing it to give a recommendation to City Council.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Park Update: BMX Track/Skatepark - Paul Barlow (10 min.)

Barlow reviewed his report.

BMX Track

- Have been prepping the track
- Taking care of the blackberry bushes
- Had a large event on July 23. People were happy with the facility and the work that had been done. About 250 people attended.
- Suggested a speed bump in that area. Dragging racing is occurring in the area.
- Continue cleaning it and keeping it nice

Skatepark

- Event on July 30 with local kids. A scooter company gave away freebies.
- A lot of complaints about the rough surface. Can investigate a seal to make it smoother.
- Pettit said Cycle Columbia County asked if they could use Dalton Lake trails for a family ride. It's already closed, but she suggested using Rutherford Parkway. She is going to walk the trail. It's scheduled for August 24.

Belcher asked about the use of the BMX track. Barlow said they use it once a week. They also did a six-week course. He always sees people using the track when he's down there working.

Woodruff said he also sees remote control cars on the track. Barlow sees the same. He's never brought it up. It doesn't seem to be a concern.

2. Motorcycles in Parks - Howard Blumenthal

Blumenthal reported that a motorcycle came at him at a high rate of speed in Nob Hill Nature Park. He has a video of it and has been working with the Police Department. He is hoping it can be added to social media to identify who it was. An ATV has ridden through during the snow. He wants to have consequences, such as impounding the bike.

Woodruff compared it to camera speeding tickets.

Blumenthal said he came at him and compared it to assault. Repeated that it could be added to social media.

Pettit suggested that it be added to the Parks & Recreation Facebook page.

Jacobson suggested adding barriers to make it difficult to ride through. Blumenthal agreed that they may need to consider it.

3. Discuss New State Rules on Homelessness and Camping - Howard Blumenthal

Blumenthal talked about campers and a possible law allowing people to stay in parks if there are not available shelters in the community. He suggested people look it up prior to the next meeting.

Steve Toschi states he is a licensed attorney and that HB3115 is problematic.

It allows for any person who is experiencing homelessness to challenge camping laws in the City. He has never seen an objectively reasonable opinion. Basically, anyone who wants to complain about any sleeping in the park, can sue the City to say it's unreasonable from the perspective of the homeless. If the judge agrees with them, they win attorney's fees. Has the potential for massive litigation. Homeless advocacy groups can potentially fund many lawsuits. The effect will be the City will have a giant budget of litigations fending off lawsuits. Says he has met and talked with city officials about how to defend sleeping and lying laws. No camping without a permit, and no camping after sundown are current rules in our parks. Steve feels these are the laws that are going to come under attack. He proposes the Planning Commission study law ORS203.079, that says if your laws are humane, they are immune from attack. Propose to review those laws and create a standard of what is humane, which will hopefully insulate the City from attack. Takes effect July 31, 2023, need laws in place by then.

Pettit recommended everyone review that House Bill. Steve suggested they talk to Duggan as well to find out what she knows. He feels homelessness could become a huge problem.

Belcher talked about a Boise law, it is his understanding that if the City had a place for them to camp, they could be moved. Steve elaborated on the Martin vs. Boise case. If you don't have a space that is sufficient for them, they can't enforce the law.

Pettit thanked Steve and will invite him to a future meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Sand Island Tour Discussion - Howard Blumenthal

Woodruff said the bathrooms could have been a little better but overall, the campground looked nice.

Blumenthal was impressed with the island.

All the Parks & Recreation Commission members went to the Island, with the exception of Dunn, Lathrope, Barlow, and Sundeen.

It was asked where the money goes from the lease. Staff in attendance was unsure. They would need to find out.

Would like staff to report where the money goes. Pettit will invite them to a meeting.

Belcher would like to see the display board cleaned up.

COUNCILOR'S REPORT

Not in attendance

STAFF REPORT

Shelby did not have anything to report.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Pettit said that about a week ago they began their work on the Dalton Preserve. The advisory committee walked the site. They are moving forward. They had to notch the beaver down.

Pettit brought up the old Boise park at the last meeting and suggested members go look at it. It's unique. What does the Commission think about beginning to work on it as a subcommittee? Want to talk to the Port as well because they own adjacent land. Belcher agreed with moving forward on it. It was beautiful when Boise took care of it. Pettit would like a tour of the entire area. Blumenthal suggested a group field trip again. Pettit explained how to access the property. Jacobson talked about the foot bridges there. Pettit explained that a reserve is passive and doesn't have park amenities. Will bring a better description next time. Will send an invite to meet on site.

Barlow arrived at 4:40 p.m.

Pettit received a Special Use Permit for Spirit of Halloweentown. They are going to be using Nob Hill Nature Park and Columbia View Park, beginning in the middle of September. Blumenthal said they never received gravel after Halloweentown last year, had to rebuild the stairwell and shovel gravel back up onto the paths. He considers it a slap in his face to have no input from the Friends of Nob Hill and the Parks & Recreation Commission. Nothing is given back to the park. They are the only Friends Group on the website but are not even consulted by staff or Spirit of Halloweentown staff. They recently bought a people mover for 100+ people. Pettit asked if Shelby is aware. Shelby knows what he is talking about. Blumenthal said that the trail system is going to take a beating if they allow it. Wants to hear plans for the area from Walsh or Duggan. Pettit will talk to Duggan.

Belcher reviewed a grant they found. He gave a copy to Shelby for Duggan. He listed what is available and the match. It fits in with the urban trail and riverwalk. It has to be submitted by September 15. Belcher will follow up on it.

Jacobson reported that he has met with staff about the siting of the new stage. It's currently set back and skewed to one side of the amphitheater. They can look at centering it more. One scenario is to tweak it the other way and more towards the courthouse. They were concerned about the wind in that location. They discussed it more, and decided to leave it. They're going to add a berm near where the splash pad is located.

Blumenthal asked about the Special Use Permit vs. other permits that used to pass through the commission. Ingram explained Exclusive Use Permits used to come to the Parks Commission, but not the others.

ADJOURNMENT 4:57 p.m.