



Work Session Summary Minutes

OREGON

Parks Update

December 5, 2024. 1:30 PM
Courthouse Square, 555 Court St. NE, Salem
5th Floor, Suite 5232, Commissioners Board Room

ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners: Kevin Cameron, Danielle Bethell, and Colm Willis.

Board's Office: Matt Lawyer, Jan Fritz, Chad Ball, Chris Eppley, Alvin Klausen, Toni Whitler, and Trevor Lane.

Legal Counsel: Steve Elzinga.

Public Works: Kevin Thompson, Dennis Mansfield, Brian Nicholas

Kevin Cameron called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m.

Summary

The Marion County Board of Commissioners discussed park fees, focusing on camping and day use rates. Current walk-up tent camping fees are \$20/night, with no reservation fee and a \$5 per night extra vehicle fee. Proposed rates include \$25/night, a \$7 reservation fee, and a \$6 extra vehicle fee. The board agreed to maintain current day use fees and extra vehicle fees at \$5. They also discussed the need for a uniform fee across the North Fork corridor. Additionally, they addressed the Veterans Memorial project at Pack Saddle, emphasizing the need for proper permits. The board considered reacquiring Santana Village Park and discussed funding for park maintenance and improvements. The conversation revolves around the challenges faced in obtaining reimbursements from Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for park restoration efforts. Discrepancy between FEMA's estimates and actual costs, citing an example where FEMA allocated \$13,000 for stairs at Bear Creek, but the actual cost was \$25,000. Preparing to submit reimbursement requests by January, expecting a review process that could take two to three months. There is concern about potential budget shortfalls affecting park staffing, with a warning that the park group might need to be laid off without additional funds. The team emphasized the importance of retaining experienced staff and discussed strategies for managing cash flow and navigating FEMA's reimbursement process.

Park Fees and Rates

- Discussed proposed fees for camping, day use, and picnic shelters.
- Agreed to keep current day use fees and extra vehicle fees at \$5.
- Decided to keep shoulder season rates the same as on-season rates for simplicity.
- Discussed annual pass fees and potential for cost-sharing with other agencies.
- The new online reservation system, Camp Life, includes a \$3 per reservation fee and credit card charges.
- Campers can print out a parking pass online or obtain one from the camp host, and the vehicle fee will be included in the camp site reservation.

- Proposal for reservable picnic shelters, with different sizes and associated fees, including a \$50 refundable deposit for small shelters:
 - A \$75 fee for medium shelters and a \$50 fee for small shelters, with the deposit remaining at \$40.

Pack Saddle Park/Veterans Memorial

- Provided an update on the Veterans Memorial project at Pack Saddle:
 - Involvement of Point Man Ministries and Frank Lumber.
- Inquired regarding using the current access point for ingress/egress.
- Discussed the need for a stop work order due to unauthorized ground disturbance.
- Agreed to support the project while ensuring compliance with federal regulations and obtaining necessary permits.

North Santiam

- Discussed the progress on park improvements, including the recent opening of Minto Park.
- Highlighted the ongoing work at Salmon Falls and the need for a new parking lot.
- Challenges of obtaining FEMA funds and the need to prioritize projects based on available funding.
- Once the deed is filed the park will become a Marion County Park and signage will be revised.

Santana Village Park

- Discussed the issues with Santana Village Park and the sale of Auburn Park:
 - The requirement to find a replacement park of equal or greater value.
- Explored the possibility of reacquiring Santana Village Park and continuing the maintenance agreement with the association.
- Considered using the \$70,000 value from Auburn Park to address the Santana Village Park issue.

Other

- Discussed the challenges with FEMA reimbursement, including discrepancies in estimates and the need for detailed documentation.
- Concerns about the potential impact on staffing and cash flow due to the lack of FEMA funds.
- Important to retain long-time employees and explore alternative funding sources.
- Ongoing process of preparing supporting documentation for FEMA Oregon Department of Emergency Management (OEM), including requests for reimbursement for expenses incurred since July 2023.
- FEMA's detailed list of damages goes down to specific components, but OEM will not scrutinize costs as closely, focusing more on the overall project.
- The challenge with FEMA, including the need to request changes to the scope of work and the potential impact on funding.
- The team is working through issues with a positive note that their contact at OEM is supportive and wants to see the parks progress.
- Understanding how much staff time is being dedicated to restoration efforts and whether they can get reimbursed by FEMA.

Next Steps

- Approach the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department to discuss the \$70,000 value difference for the Auburn Park sale and how it can be used for the Santana Village Park
- Explore the possibility of the East Salem Service District taking over the ownership and maintenance of the Santana Village Park
- Provide an update on the FEMA funding process and the potential impact on the parks crew
- Organize an appreciation event for the volunteers and partners who have helped with the parks restoration efforts

Adjourned – time: 2:48 p.m.

Minutes by: Mary Vityukova

Minutes by: Gary White

Reviewed by:

Reviewed by:

Reviewed by: Commissioner Bethell Absent

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