



MARION COUNTY PARKS COMMISSION

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

January 9, 2018, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

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

Members Present: Sandy Grulkey, Marty Heyen, Ryan Mann, Wayne Rawlins, Ben Williams, Kyleen Zimmer

Public/Guests: None

Staff Present: Russ Dilley, Brian May, Jolene Bray

ADMINISTRATIVE (Information/Discussion/Action)

Call to Order: 10:03 a.m.

Approval of November 14, 2017 Meeting Minutes

Marty made a motion to approve the November 14, 2017, meeting minutes with a note that she and Sandy had swapped Auburn and Labish parks in their parks assignments. Sandy seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Public Input

None.

Commission Member Announcements and Upcoming Events

There were no announcements.

PARK STANDARDS

Russ gave an overview of proposed parks standards that looks at system-wide color schemes, amenities, signage, etc. and asked if urban parks should look different than rural parks. He said the parks program is currently using recycled paint and can't count on what color they may get. Russ said staff would like to decide on a paint color that is standard for all parks restrooms and he has a paint manufacturer that can supply the paint once a color is decided upon. He said staff has decided on the color "fawn" because it is a clean color that also stands out. Ben asked what determines the size of a particular park's restroom and Russ said it was a function of usage.

The group discussed new park signage and all liked the font chosen by staff. Kyleen suggested making "rules" signs more welcoming with wording, listing more about what visitors can do instead of what they can't do. She said she really liked the new signs and said they much more visible. Sandy asked about advance warning signs because people sometimes drive right past the park's entrance. Russ said advance warning signs are only used for canyon parks. He said he would check with Traffic Engineering about visitor or area attraction signs.

Russ showed photos of different informational kiosks and said county parks have two types; the wooden type with the peaked roof and the standalone metal type used for sign holders. Brian said that was goal is to have one area where people go when they enter the park for information about rules and allowed usage. Ben said he thought a park map needs to be on each kiosk. Kyleen said she thought staff was on the right track.

Russ said picnic tables have been graffitied and a paint scheme needs to be decided on so the tables can be treated when this happens again. He said a decision also needs to be made if the county should use a standard picnic shelter for every park or if shelters should be designed based on individual parks' use.

Russ said each parks is up to date on playground equipment. He said the only standard choice to decide for future purchases is color scheme. He said it's currently decided on by the particular park's usage. Sandy asked about installing benches so people can monitor children, and Russ said he wants to put in tables in some parks, such as Scotts Mills and Labish. Sandy asked about ADA walking paths. Russ said the Marion County Parks Plan says the county will provide ADA features where feasible. Kyleen said in the Oregon State plan they defined ADA accessibility by levels (Level 1, 2, 3) for the OPRD trails and is the national standard. Russ said one option for trails is to use wood chips that are available from Browns Island. Sandy said there is an area at Scotts Mills Park that would be perfect for a walking trail and asked who would be responsible for approving and/or installing a walking path. Brian said engineering staff would need to assess and Russ is working on a lot of projects with the entire county trail system.

Russ asked commissioners to think about these issues as they are visiting their assigned parks so they can include their feedback about them in their reports.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS (Spong's Landing and Minto)

Kyleen said she visited Minto Park with her husband and dog on January 1, and it was a beautiful day. She said the park entrance sign at the road obstructs field of vision when exiting into traffic on the highway. Russ said the sign is being raised so the road is more visible. Kyleen said she liked the bench donated by NW Steeleaders and view of the Santiam River is beautiful but is concerned that there is a steep drop off in front of it with no safety barrier. Recommends a rail or fence in front of bench. Russ said crews have materials for this because they are building stairs in the future. Kyleen said the park is linear and parking is limited but there are a lot of nice picnic spots. She said the trails are nice and appear to be relatively new but only one goes to the river. Kyleen said crews may want to hack them back in the spring. She said the trail sign is aged, outdated and needs to be replaced. Kyleen said Russ had discussed creating a campground at Minto at some point in the future, but has some concerns about camping because of the road noise.

Marty said she visit Eola Bend this summer because you need to walk or bike in. She said she will visit Salmon Falls in late March or early April. Marty said she was going to visit Auburn Park but it's now looking like Auburn School will be expanding and now the school district and county are in negotiations for a land swap. Sandy asked if Marty knows of any eligible land. She said she thought there was some identified but didn't know any particulars.

Sandy said she hasn't been to Labish Park but has an ally in Scotts Mills' City Council for creating crosswalks to the park. The council member wants the crosswalk at the entrance of the park but Brian said vehicles enter there and needs a dedicated pedestrian use too.

Ryan said he visited Rogers Wayside. He said his sense is the BMX track is the primary use plus the picnic area. He said he doesn't necessarily see little kids running around because of the terrain. He said it is almost a de facto rest stop because it's on the main highway between Silverton and Stayton, and he noticed glass and metal recycling containers but couldn't find trash cans anywhere. Russ said staff removed them just before Ryan's visit because it had become a home trash dump site, but they will bring back cans in future. Ryan said the restrooms looked like they were regularly used and were not welcoming. He said there was moss on the roofs of the picnic area and bathroom. Ryan said there is not a lot of parking so if visitors are using the picnic area for a party, there is not a lot of room. He said he was curious on amount of use BMX track gets and if that is long term vision for primary use. Ben said the parks plan has its primary use as the BMX track and wayside.

Wayne said he looked at Denny Park on Ivy and 39th Street between Portland Road and Lancaster Drive. He showed photos of the park, which included a lot of nice fir street. He said there are great snag trees for wildlife habitat and some marked trees on site also. Wayne said the park has nice ADA access from the street which leads to the playground, but has a lot of bark dust which could be difficult for wheel chair users. He said the park has adequate lighting without bothering neighbors. Russ said these are newer lights that were replaced in the last five years. Wayne said some bare spots that are currently just soft and muddy. Russ said this was old playground area and it has been seeded and will hopefully grow grass this year. Wayne recommended maintenance of the fir trees, reseeding the grassless areas and providing additional chips in the play area.

Wayne said he visited on a week day, which would have been a school day, and there was no one else there. He said he would do an update on two other parks at the next meeting.

Ben said he used the wrong key and couldn't get gate open on Spong's Landing. He said his immediate impression is the park is in good shape and is in use. He said the picnic shelter and playground equipment are in good shape and welcoming. Ben said a perimeter path around the park would be a real add. He said there is a metal sign by the riverfront but in high water there is no beach. He asked if additional signage is needed warning people away from this because of the risk of falling in a drainage ditch. Russ said when there is high water it may come up to the stairway so people aren't able to get down to the beach and walk through the drainage area.

Kyleen asked criteria for closing parks. Russ it is done for safety reasons and staffing levels. He said if he had more staff he may be able to keep Spong's Landing open but if the river came up he would not want people in the park. Ben said park is getting plenty of usage even in the winter because it is on the Willamette Water Trail map. He said the Willamette River Keepers have a list of improvements that include installing a primitive camping site and interpretive signs. Russ said the county is no longer a member of this group and we do not have these improvements on the county's list.

Ben thanked everyone for their reports and said future updates probably don't have to be this in-depth. He said issues, problems or kudos should be shared, and thanked staff for the current condition of the parks. Marty asked if an "update date" can be put in the footer of spread sheet (project) files when they're distributed.

WORK SESSION UPDATE

Brian gave kudos to Russ for pulling this presentation together. He said the board of commissioners (BOC) was happy to see new signage, and they talked about fees and campground development. He said they highlighted the parks commission's work and focus on individual parks projects, as well as planned upgrades this year. Brian said discussion included their short term vision for the parks (maintenance) to long term, which included bringing the parks up to standard and making them nice attractions. He said they recognize that part of that is staffing. Brian said he asked for one additional full-time position and 6 maintenance workers, as well as 2 fee collectors as seasonal temporary employees. He said the fees collected paid for kiosks and staff time to go up and back, which is how these positions will be funded, if approved. He said the BOC want a little more detail but are supportive. He said staff is looking at funding mechanisms and grant opportunities. Russ said there are two grant opportunities from Land and Water and Local Government. He said the county is partnering with Covanta every year and they've tree planting and widened trails trees at county parks. Russ asked commission members to keep that in mind if they see any projects they might want to do.

FUTURE TOPICS / EMERGING ISSUES / OTHER BUSINESS

Staff Updates

- Brian said staff is having conversations with BLM about a reservation system for the North Fork Corridor parks because everyone thinks that will help fill these parks.

Other Business

There was no other business from the commission.

Future Topics

- Commissioner's Park Reports
- Budget Discussion

ADJOURN: 12:04 a.m.

NEXT MEETING: March 13, 2018, at 10:00 a.m. in the North Santiam Room (1st Floor) at Public Works.