

MARION COUNTY Parks Commission Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, March 17, 2022
Time: 3:00pm – 5:00pm
Location: Zoom or Willamette Conference Room at Public Works, 5155 Silverton Road NE

Present: **Members:** Wayne Rawlins, Robert Emanuel, Marisa Roskelley, Katy Waid, Malcolm Aquinas, Herschel Sangster

Absent: Chris Teichroew, Steve Staten, Alton Hoover

Staff: Tom Kissinger, Brian May, Natalie Tomaszewski

Guests: Jim Day (Canyon Journal)

Quorum: Yes

ADMINISTRATIVE (Information/Discussion/Action)

Wayne called the meeting to order @ 3:01 p.m.

Member and Staff introductions: Members and staff were introduced.

Attendance/Roll-call: Done

Agenda Changes: None.

Approval of January 20, 2022 minutes

Motion: Marisa made a motion to accept minutes with corrections. Katy seconded.

Discussion: None.

Result: A voice vote is unanimous – motion passes.

Parks Naming Subcommittee

Wayne stated that it is being chaired by Marisa.

The goal of this subcommittee is to create a naming policy for Marion County Parks. Their next meeting is next Monday. Jim Day asked what the timeline would be; Tom stated that was one of the items that would be covered on Monday's meeting.

Once a policy is created, it will come to the Parks Commission for approval, before moving onto the Board of Commissioners for approval.

Santiam Canyon Update

FEMA

Tom stated that they are finally getting to the end of the process; he has received a fixed-cost offer, for 990k, to sign off on. The fixed cost offer is not a reimbursement project but available to use within parks how they see fit, which enables prioritization of projects. These funds will be geared towards restoring public access within the parks.

Marion County Parks is in the negotiation piece of the environmental restoration aspect with FEMA; generally speaking, they don't usually pay for the costs to replant trees or understory. Tom stated they are developing a project for hydroseeding for soil stabilization, replanting of trees that were removed during the hazardous tree removal, noxious weed removal. The timing on funding from FEMA is a long-term process.

Tom shared they are in process to acquire 18,000 tree starts for replanting, along with looking into other sources of funding.

Malcom asked about the FEMA funding being able to be pushed for more; Tom shared that did not happen.

Walker Macy

Tom gave an overview over what has been done with Walker Macy, the concept map, and stated they are now in phase two which is how to implement this plan; phase two has three components: the funding plan, construction plan over 10 years and the environmental restoration plan. There are three consultants involved: Walker Macy, Interfluve and ECONorthwest.

Tom shared the goals and opportunities from the consultants with everyone. The document looked at the restoration goals, recreation goals and how those interlock. He will be working on the prioritization of the goals with the environmental specialist at Public Works; there will be a future meeting dedicated to the goals, where the Committee will provide feedback and have discussion.

For example, there is a delineated wetland at Bear Creek but we could have it as an actual wetland for habitat restoration and an educational piece.

Tom stated that there have been some questions from the public regarding the opening of North Fork and there are plans to have a town hall in the future; he also shared that Parks has dedicated some funds to outreach.

Market Demand Assessment:

Tom shared the Market Demand Assessment document from ECONorthwest and Walker Macy with everyone. The purpose of this document is to look at the local supply area and the regional supply area; the local area is focused on HWY 22nd and North Fork Rd. and the regional supply area is focused on Clackamas County into Estacada and HWY 20 corridor. In these areas, they

look at what parks, how many parks, how many campsites, how many yurts etc.

A couple of interesting findings are that Forest Service operate the most tent sites in this area and there was some interesting data around what amenities people like in campgrounds, such as specific water related amenities like fish cleaning stations and family related amenities were seen. Electricity, wifi, plumbing and recreation connections were also among the amenities that people wanted to see. Herschel commented that we should keep our disabled community in mind when developing these amenities.

Tom stated there is an opportunity to be different from Forest Service though as most first-time campers are more interested in yurts and cabins and Marion County parks, especially along North Fork road, are set up well for that.

Tom stated that we want to match the prices of the site with the amenities that are offered with campsites, RV hook ups and yurts/cabins. The day use sites have a parking fee on North Fork Road of \$5; there are opportunities to do that at other parks as well. Katy asked if there was an opportunity for annual parking passes; Tom stated that was in the works with Forest Service for when the area opens up.

Tom asked for the Committee's opinion on dynamic pricing for days such as holidays; Wayne commented he would hate to see us price people out that aren't able to recreate any other days other than the weekends and holidays. Tom stated Linn County does it as a lower rate during the winter months. Another option that was brought up by Marisa is the idea of volunteering time for a reduction in fees for a site. Herschel mentioned consistency through the agencies is something to keep in mind.

Tom shared there is placer data that utilizes cellular pings to acquire data and it was utilized within the Market Demand Assessment to show an increase in usage.

Tom discussed the idea of a shuttle bus that would run from the beginning of North Fork Road and make various stops along the road that would probably operate as a day use bus.

Staff Updates

Rail Trail

Tom shared that the Rail Trail project is starting to take root and that the application for the Rivers, Trails and Systems program which would open up grant funding opportunities for this project.

Future steps include holding a meeting with all the involved stakeholders and organizations, along with a community survey. After that, it would go to the Board of Commissioners and the Parks Commission for approval.

Wayne asked where the 364k is coming from; Tom stated it is from the ARPA funding and there is not a matching aspect. Tom stated our application was accepted and budgeted for; Wayne requested to see this, and Tom will provide in the future.

Parkdale

Tom shared the GIS map that showed where Parkdale park was located. Parkdale is approximately six acres and has multiple access points with the idea being a ADA accessible path connecting those access points.

Other suggested improvements include a wetland interpretation, a playground and an off-leash dog area, along with other items. Parking for Parkdale will not be on this round of funding, but on the next. Malcolm asked if public input had been asked yet; Tom stated this project was brought up at a town hall as a want from the public. Wayne asked if it was within the city; Tom clarified it is within the East Salem Service District but within the urban growth boundary.

North Santiam Recreation Area

Tom shared he went to Board Session to present this topic to the Board and he just waiting for the signed agreement before he can begin operations and maintenance of that park.

Commissioner Roundtable

Herschel shared some local events that are happening in the future.

Bob commented there was an email that was sent out about volunteer tracking hours and Tom stated he could write down any “homework” that was assigned, any tours and the meetings.

Malcolm thanked Tom for the presentation and stated it was a great meeting. Malcolm and Wayne discussed how the meetings should be run in regard to discussions. Wayne suggested having individuals raise their hands and asked if the Commission would consider doing something like that in the future.

Wayne asked if Herschel had the appropriate documents for joining the Commission such as bylaws, park information and volunteer training information.

Wayne commented that the Commission should have a knowledge of the Parks budget and asked if Parks is going to get more FTE. Brian and Tom stated that is in the works.

Meeting adjourned at 4:43pm.

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, May 19, 2022 @ 3:00 p.m.