



# MARION COUNTY PARKS COMMISSION

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING

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**December 12, 2016, 2:00-4:00 p.m.**

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

**Members Present:** Sandy Grulkey, Marty Heyen, Steve Koch (by phone), Wayne Rawlins, Ben Williams

**Members Absent:** George Moeller

**BOC Liaison:** Commissioner Sam Brentano

**Public/Guests:** None

**Staff Present:** Brian May, Russ Dilley, Jolene Bray

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### **ADMINISTRATIVE (Information/Discussion/Action)**

#### **Approval of October 7, 2016 Meeting Minutes**

Marty made a motion to approve the October 7, 2016, meeting minutes as submitted. Wayne seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

#### **Public Input**

None.

#### **Commission Member Announcements and Upcoming Events**

Marty said she had recently tried disc golf, which helped her better understand the disc golf course that has been proposed for Bonesteele Park.

Sandy said she attended a community health day outreach event and had a really great time. She said she did an impromptu survey with people in attendance about what they want to see in parks, what they want improved, and what park they liked best. Sandy said participants overwhelmingly chose Minto and Scotts Mills parks. She said she was surprised by the number of people who were older and less mobile who said they enjoyed driving into parks' parking lots even if they couldn't get out and walk around.

Ben said a few weeks ago he met with Alan Haley, Public Works Director, and Alan is going to pursue an official status on the Butteville Landing project so staff and/or the community can pursue grant opportunities. Brian said Alan is still working on this.

### **2017-2018 BUDGET/PROJECT SELECTION**

#### **Field Trip Review**

Wayne said he and Steve couldn't make the last parks tour date and Russ took the time to do a separate tour for them, which he appreciated. Ben thanked Russ and Brian for scheduling the past parks tours and said they were very helpful.

#### **Priority List Review**

Ben asked commission members how they wanted to approach their prioritization and asked Brian how the prioritization will be used. Brian said the current list's rankings are based on funding opportunities by fiscal year. He said each fiscal year had a dedicated amount of \$5,000 for park system signage and staffing requests are

separate. It was decided that each commission member would share their ranking of each park project to see if the commission could come to a consensus in their recommendation.

Marty said she had heard that Auburn Park's ownership status may change and suggested any planned investments be put off 5-6 years. She said if there isn't a change then these projects can be done at a later date. Brian said Salem-Keizer School District (SKSD) has expressed interest in a land swap and county staff has had conversations with Oregon State Parks to see if there is an interest and to learn about how it can be done. He said it's a lengthy process, and the property it's exchanged for must be similar in market value and comparable in recreational value. Brian said SKSD has some properties that are idle that they will look at to see if this is doable. Commissioner Brentano said the board would be in favor of a land swap but not in adding amenities for Auburn School to the current park property.

Marty made motion that the new Auburn Park playground structure proposed for 2018-2019 and the Auburn Park walking path proposed for 2019-2020 both be moved to the 2020-2021 fiscal year with the potential of moving to a more current timeframe depending on the land swap negotiation. Sandy seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously. Commissioner Brentano asked if the land swap falls through that the commission reprioritize these two items so they happen sooner.

Commissioner Brentano suggested holding the \$45,000 earmarked in 2018-2019 for new playground equipment at Auburn Park in reserve for a stairway at Niagara after the engineering study is done.

The commission then discussed the park projects identified for 2017-2018, which included \$5,000 in dedicated funding for park system signing and these specific park projects:

- Replace/repair the fence at stairway at park (Niagara)
- Engineering study to assess existing stairway (Niagara)
- Install boulders along front of park (Labish)
- Install 2<sup>nd</sup> bench at new playground (Labish)
- Upgrade restroom/review septic (Spong's Landing)
- Install disc golf course (Bonesteele)

Wayne asked where funding came from when there were unexpected or catastrophic events that caused damage to a park. Brian said depending on the severity, a request would be made to the board of commissioners for additional funds. Russ said if it is a natural disaster a request is also made to FEMA.

Brian said reported the Public Works Director wants to keep the horse arena at Joryville Park if the county can partner with community members for support in maintaining. He said Russ has talked to the Juvenile Department about refurbishing and the goal is to make this a nicer amenity for the community since there are funds available.

Russ said he researched ownership of Aumsville Park and it was donated by the Oregon Department of Transportation. He said he also researched the Land and Water Conservation Fund website and now has a list that shows which county parks have received funding from them over the years.

Wayne made a motion that the 2017-2018 parks projects be prioritized as both projects at Niagara Park as #1, both projects at Labish Park as #2, the upgrade to the restroom and septic review at Spong's Landing Park as #3, and the installation of a disc golf course at Bonesteele Park as #4. Marty seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

## **FUTURE TOPICS / EMERGING ISSUES / OTHER BUSINESS**

### **Staffing Presentation**

Brian said he and Russ have spoken with Linn County Parks' staff to learn more about their program. He said it reinforced to them that having only one parks employee for 18 parks makes it difficult to keep those parks at a good level. Brian said they were able to hire one seasonal parks maintenance worker (PMW) in 2016 and saw

some improvement but not at a level that achieves all the needed tasks. He said they are requesting four PMWs in 2017-18 with the intent to achieve full coverage of parks because now they are not spending time with heavy trail maintenance or being a presence in parks. Brian said they need to do more of what they're already doing but also need time to interact with park goers, reminding them of fire dangers and park rules. He said he also wants Russ to be able to focus on the parks coordinator role, which includes managing the parking fee the board of commissioners approved for the North Fork corridor.

Brian said they would also like to create park districts (Canyon, Urban, North County, South County, and Undeveloped) which would help with scheduling. He said they routinely pull 16 bags of garbage from Scotts Mills Park, which requires two trips to the landfill, so they are now proposing garbage drop box be built (like one already up the canyon) where they could leave the trash and have the garbage company pick up for disposal. Russ said once the disc golf course is built at Bonesteele Park they would like to hold tournaments, which would help keep the enthusiasm level up for the park.

Brian said they would like to hire four seasonal PMWs in 2017 and then potentially hire one full-time PMW at the end of the 2018 summer season. He said they will be presenting this staffing request to the board of commissioners at a work session meeting tomorrow, which represents a budget increase of about \$200,000 over and above the current budget for capital projects and staffing. Brian said looking for approval for additional funding for 2016-17 to hire seasonal workers and approval for 2017-18 for capital projects and staffing. He said the board of commissioners usually approves annual budgets in late spring for the upcoming fiscal year that begins on July 1.

#### **Staff Updates**

- Russ said Scotts Mills Park closed early this year due to transient issues. He said bumpers and rods holding bumpers were removed from new playground equipment, presumably to be sold for scrap metal. He said garbage bags, toilet paper, garbage cans were also stolen. Russ said after the park was closed warrants were served on people living at the park and at a house neighboring the park.
- Russ said he recently met with BLM and Forest Service staff about the North Fork corridor and they are now working collaboratively on parks issues along the corridor. He said law enforcement requested the county change the hours on these North Fork parks to 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., which is the same as BLM and Forest Service parks. Brian said all three agencies have strengths and weaknesses and they want to exploit everyone's strengths for the benefit of the corridor.
- Russ said he received a complaint that a camp was set up in Denny Park. He said it was quite large but when he investigated with a sheriff's deputy, it was abandoned, so the deputy said Russ could collect and dispose of the camping equipment. He said he is now checking other county parks for transient camps because many, such as Spong's Landing, are closed for the season and has vegetation that could hide a camp.

**ADJOURN:** 3:44 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING:** February 9, 2017, at 10:00 a.m. in the  **pudding Room (upstairs)** at Public Works.