

MARION COUNTY Parks Commission Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, November 20, 2025
Time: 2:00pm – 4:00 pm
Location: Teams or Willamette Conference Room at Public Works, 5155 Silverton Road NE

Present: **Members:** Herschel Sangster, Alton (Al) Hoover, Wayne Rawlins, Tabitha Henricksen (Teams) and Amanda Arthurs (Teams)

Staff: Kevin Thompson, Whitney Ned, Toni Whitler – Boards Office (Teams)

Guests: Hunter McClure

Absent: **Excused:** Bryan Hall

Unexcused:

Quorum: **Yes**

ADMINISTRATIVE (Information/Discussion/Action)

Hersch Sangster called the meeting to order at 2:01 pm.

Introductions: Commission members, staff, and guests were introduced.

Attendance/Roll Call: Done.

Agenda Changes: None.

Approval of September 18, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Motion: Alton made a motion to accept minutes. Wayne seconded.

Discussion: None

Result: A voice vote is unanimous – motion passes.

Public Input: Guest Hunter introduced himself and shared his interest in possibly joining the Parks Commission.

Welcome Amanda

Hersch stated that Amanda has officially been appointed as a Parks Commission member and shared appreciation for her patience.

Parks Memorial Subcommittee Update

The subcommittee is scheduled to meet on December 4, 2025, to continue reviewing options for a memorial program.

Parks Membership Update/Recruitment

Whitney provided the following updates for consideration:

- The Parks Commission currently has one vacancy.
- The term for Herschel, Parks Commission Chair, expires in March of 2026.
- Recruitment efforts will resume after the holidays.
 - Kevin requested Parks commissioners be out in their communities recruiting for the open vacancy and potential waitlist.

Approval of OPRD Grant Letter of Support

Motion: Alton made a motion to provide a letter of support. Amanda seconded.

Discussion: Kevin requested a letter of support from the Parks Commission for the OPRD (Oregon Parks and Recreation Department) Local Government Grant to help rebuild Bear Creek Campground.

Result: A voice vote is unanimous – motion passes.

ORPA Membership Interest

Two free ORPA membership slots are available to the Parks Commission. Amanda and Tabitha expressed interest, though we'll need to check with Bryan. We have more Parks Commissioners than membership seats. This issue is tabled.

Canyon Parks Update

Reopening of Salmon Falls Parks

- Work completed this fall included building parking lot #1 (gravel), roughing out parking lot #2 (dirt), widening the entrance road and building a gravel maintenance road to the falls.
- Projected projects for winter/spring are general improvements to the restrooms, kiosk and related tech installation, fencing around the wetlands, rebuilding trails, boardwalks and stairs in the day-use area, as well as updating the tables, trash cans and signage. Asphalt at the entrance and depending on costs, on lot #1, along with concrete ADA, are construction projects for ITB (Invitation To Bid) contractors.

Reopening of Niagara Park

- Opening date is scope-dependent
 - Estimated cost for safe, pre-fire opening is \$255,000 plus Slope Mitigation Cost, roughly \$95,000 from FEMA.

- General improvements include minimal hazard tree and debris removal, culvert and safety fencing replacement, Ventek (parking pay station) installation, new picnic areas, tables, trash cans and signage, rebuilt dirt trails and foot bridge, and parking bollard/barrier replacement.
 - Geotechnical Assessment of the staircase/slope yielded the following three stabilization options: a structural tie-in for approx. \$100,000; a wire mesh on the slope for around \$250,000; or leaving as-is with periodic monitoring, which would cost nothing up front but likely require the staircase to remain closed.

North Santiam Tree Hazards

- This project is broken into three zones, with logging completion projected for early spring and the possibility of adding more tent camping.

End of Season Stats

Kevin shared the following 2025 season statistics:

Parking Passes

- 2024 season (5/15 – 9/30) — 4,625 passes sold
 - 99 annual passes
 - 4,526 day-use passes
- 2025 season (4/1 – 10/16) — 12,889 passes sold = \$76,620
 - 487 annual passes sold = \$14,610
 - 106 during the spring shoulder (4/1-5/14)
 - 24 during the fall shoulder (9/16-10/16)
 - 12,402 day-use passes sold = \$62,010
 - 600 during the spring shoulder (4/1-5/14)
 - 421 during the fall shoulder (9/16-10/16)

North Santiam Camping

- 2024 season (5/15 – 9/30) — 178 nights stayed = \$4,450
- 2025 season (4/1 – 10/16) — 572 nights stayed = \$17,789 (including \$270 for extra vehicles and \$480 for firewood)
 - 21 nights stayed during the spring shoulder (4/1 – 5/14)
 - 35 nights stayed during the fall shoulder (9/16 – 10/16)

Shelter Reservations

- 7 at North Santiam = \$574
- 21 at Spongs Landing = \$1,722
- 6 at Scotts Mills = \$382
- 1 at Roger's Wayside = \$82
- Total gross revenue: \$2,760

Revenue and Costs for Parking, Camping and Shelters

- Total Gross Revenue = \$97,169
- Total Direct Costs = \$15,579
 - o Starlink Internet Connection for Ventek = \$549
 - o Ventek Connection Fees = \$4,560
 - o Ventek Maintenance = \$5,654
 - o Camplife Fees = \$1,065
 - o Credit Card Transaction Fees = \$3,751
- Net Revenue = \$81,590

Work Efficiencies

Kevin and his team are continually assessing procedures, looking for innovative ways to be more effective and efficient. Hersch commended those efforts.

Commissioners' Roundtable

Hersch shared about City of Keizer's holiday events and their Multimodal Safety Committee's purchase of helmets. Al asked about an adopt-a-park program that could be a source of income, similar to a sponsorship. Kevin mentioned the existing program is more of a maintenance agreement, like the road department's adopt-a-road program. Tabitha proposed a new area of focus might be exploring different groups who might be interested in sponsorship and park cleanup. Amanda suggested partnering with high school seniors or club members who may be required to do a certain amount of volunteer/community service hours. It was reiterated that a key component to building a strong volunteer program is an active approach to networking and promoting Marion County Parks in the community.

Meeting adjourned at 3:38 pm

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, January 15, 2026 @ 2:00 p.m.