

City of St. Helens
Parks & Trails Commission
December 9, 2019

Members Present: Howard Blumenthal
Carmin Dunn
Jerry Belcher
John Brewington
Elisa Mann
Jacob Woodruff
Lynne Pettit

Members Absent: Paul Barlow

Staff Present: Thad Houk
Sue Nelson
Sheri Ingram
Doug Morten

Others:

1) **Call Meeting to Order - 4:00 p.m.**

2) **Approval of Minutes**

2.A Approve Minutes of October 14, 2019

Motion: Upon Carmin Dunn's motion and Howard Blumenthal's second, the Commission approved the Minutes of October 14, 2019. [Ayes: Howard Blumenthal, Carmin Dunn, Jerry Belcher, John Brewington, Elisa Mann, Jacob Woodruff, Lynne Pettit; Nays: None]

3) **Topics from the Floor: From attendees not otherwise on the agenda**

4) **Councilor's Report**

Morten passed out a communication to the residents of St. Helens Marina that Brad Hendrickson had copied to the Council. Part of it is an update of Sand Island which Dunn read aloud. Blumenthal said it states the moorage residents pay \$20 per night on the island so does everyone else pay \$30? He thought he had heard St. Helens residents get a break. Morten was not sure if they got a break on camping but the shuttle is free. Houk said he was told there is a \$10 break for County residents but that was last year. Belcher asked if we get a cut of the fees and Nelson said she thought we get a percentage of the net profits. He asked if the City gets a cut of the transportation fee too and Nelson they can't charge a fee to transport or they have to get a Coast Guard license and other things. Morten said there are future plans for traffic and transportation.

Morten said Belcher had told him of a new applicant for the vacant position but Belcher said there are family issues so he has not turned it in yet.

5) New Business

5.A Purchase a banner for Parks & Trails

Pettit had a table for Parks & Trails at Trunk or Treat and she was just about the only one without a banner so she was having to tell people who she was. She then went to Digital Graffiti and they have banners that are \$35-\$40 and she thought it would be nice to have for events they are participating in. She would like to offer to donate the money and Woodruff said he would talk to Digital Graffiti. Belcher would like to have a subcommittee come up with a design and Pettit, Dunn and Woodruff said they will do it. Belcher and Dunn don't mind throwing in money for it also if needed.

5.B Playground Equipment

Houk gave a handout of playground equipment. He posted some prices on there so they could see them. He said the Campbell and McCormick equipment was put in over 20 years ago and they are past their life expectancy. Nelson said replacing the equipment at McCormick is in the Master Plan. Houk said it will probably be at least \$20,000 extra for fall protection and installation. He talked to parents and kids and they all like anything climbing. Buffalo Creek and Bermuda are his favorites. He wants input on what they like the best. Blumenthal asked what they are made of and Houk said mostly heavy duty plastic with steel posts. They are rated to last 10-15 years but ours last a lot longer because they don't get heavy usage. Nelson said we had estimated \$100,000 for the one at McCormick.

Houk said they didn't need to vote on one but he just wanted their input. Woodruff, Brewington and Pettit like the Bermuda. Mann and Belcher like the Buffalo Creek. Nelson said it would be nice to get a couple of suggestions so they can figure costs and availability. Blumenthal said he wanted whichever one had more metal in it than plastic. Dunn said Foxcliff has more metal parts and slide part seems good for younger kid. Belcher said Buffalo Creek has a lot of similarities but looks larger.

5.C Wayfinding Signage

Blumenthal said signs look great but they abbreviated some things and he feels they renamed things because it's now Nob Hill Park – Nature was left out and Columbia Gardens – Botanical was left out. Nelson said she can't comment on the kiosk but there was discussion with the designer and putting everything on there with every amenity at every park would have been unreasonable. Replacing the blades on the wayfinding signs would be problematic because they would have to squeeze it together and would have made it more unreadable. It's not rebranding the park, it's just abbreviating and it's done all of the time and it's not changing the name or use of the park. Pettit feels a nature park would be different than a park. Nelson said we can have the new blades done but they will be a smaller font and scrunched up and less legible and a new blade would be \$800-1000 each. Blumenthal said he wished they would have showed them the names before they changed them and Nelson said those abbreviations and designations have been in the wayfinding plan since its conception. It was done so it is consistent over the years and all of this has been posted on the website during the process for over two years. Morten said they can make a recommendation to Council that the name not be changed on any literature going out. Blumenthal thinks the dog parks should have been listed on the kiosk down here. Belcher says he feels it should be listed as Nature. Dunn said when people get there, they will see the big sign saying it's a nature park and she doesn't think it's a big deal and needs to have money spent on changing it and Woodruff agreed. Mann said when she travels and sees a park, she will Google it to see what kind of amenities so she can find out if she can take her dog there. Belcher said the sign directs them to 4th Street where there is the

kiosk and park sign. He and his wife also look up parks to see how long trails are and if dogs can be there. Dunn said people will drive down there and see the sign saying it's a nature park and they will have either learned about a new park or they will turn around and leave because it's not what they expected and there is another park within a mile. She thinks they did a good job considering how many things they had to abbreviate. Belcher said Blumenthal should bring it up at the next meeting so they can vote on it.

6) Old Business

6.A Parks Commission Appointment

Ingram said the Council officially appointed Blumenthal to another term.

6.B Update on Identifying Parks Volunteers

Nelson said they had talked about having vests printed but anything that's done becomes a tracking issue because people will take their vests home so there is not an easy solution. Woodruff suggested a volunteer sticker they put on their shirt and throw away at the end of the day. Belcher said when Birkle brought it up, he was harassed by someone and it was very unfortunate that happened. Blumenthal said if you are in a big group, people understand what is going on but if you are just going out by yourself on a weekend to do some work, it becomes an issue. They could have something that clips on that says Park Volunteer. Nelson said there isn't a perfect solution because someone may just have a free afternoon and decide to do some work. Houk said the main problem was that Birkle didn't let him know he was going to be volunteering and the other guy did so he was concerned about someone else being out there without permission. Nelson said they are supposed to fill out a Volunteer form every year so it was suggested they could carry a copy of that. Morten thought they could have a card to carry in their wallets instead of carrying the form.

Motion: Upon Howard Blumenthal's motion and Carmin Dunn's second, the Commission recommended that the City make some type of ID card that would fit in a wallet for Park Volunteers that is good for a calendar year. [Ayes: Howard Blumenthal, Carmin Dunn, Jerry Belcher, John Brewington, Elisa Mann, Jacob Woodruff, Lynne Pettit; Nays: None]

6.C Master Plan List

Ingram said Morten suggested starting a list of Master Plan items. Belcher brought up lower part of Grey Cliffs trail and Houk said they are starting on building some stairs. Nelson said they will be part concrete and maybe railroad ties on part of it. It may not be steps all the way to the top but will be improved as much as possible and it will be worked on gradually. Belcher would like to see it in the Master Plan even though it's already being done. Belcher said eventually we will have the Urban Trail. Someone made a comment that he was not for the trail going up 5th Street and he is not against that at all but he doesn't see it happening for a few years.

He asked if anyone else had suggestions for the Master Plan and Dunn said they have talked about a dog area at Godfrey a lot. Belcher thinks they still need a fence on Grey Cliffs Dog Park. Dunn asked if there were any updates on Godfrey improvements and Houk said they just got a survey done. Belcher said if there is an official overlook at Dalton Lake, there should be a fence there and Pettit said that was in her presentation. Morten said her proposal should be in the Master Plan. Brewington asked if they could find out what is in the Master Plan and Ingram said Dimsho gave them all a copy last time they were updated. Nelson said it is on the website and we can get copies for everyone at the next meeting.

7) Discussion Items

Pettit handed out a progress report on Dalton Lake and went over it. They have a Facebook page. They have walking tours scheduled thru March. Barlow Bikes and Cycle Columbia County worked together on a grant to purchase two bike racks because she is anticipating needing one for the south entrance someday. They would like to add a repair station and small bench next to the bike racks. They have a list of materials for a kiosk and found a local builder and she took the material list to Dahlgren's and he said he would donate the materials. They will be working with City staff to coordinate on placement. Donated concrete benches will be placed at the overlook. Press release went out about the Dalton Lake Nature Preserve in October. Dalton Lake Nature Preserve Advisory Committee went to a Columbia City Council meeting in October to give information and take questions. A member of the Advisory Committee typed up a list up of all the bird species that have been seen there and she will e-mail it to everyone. They will be meeting this month about signage. Belcher said if City wants more benches, he was told Kathy Sirstat(?) turns on plastic film and when they turn in so many pounds, they get a bench. He will get Pettit her contact info. Pettit talked to Les at the Historical Museum and took him the historical pictures and information Belcher had given her and talked about putting some of the pictures on an interpretive sign. He said he went to Pacific Stainless and they made a picture sign and he suggested she go there. Nelson said if the concrete bench has been donated, the City has a form for donated items that needs to be filled out. Does she already have a bench to go by the bike rack? Pettit said no but they are working on it and she will get the details on it.

Blumenthal asked if they can get a poop scoop and dog leash sign at staircase because the ones on the fence got removed with the fence. Nelson will follow up. He said as far as the benches at Nob Hill, they are still trying to figure out where to locate them. Pettit asked if the City has benches and Houk said we can order them. He orders the frames and they put the wood on them.

Houk said we are in the process of putting timed doors on the restrooms at McCormick and Columbia View. The timer locks it at night and opens it in the morning but can be opened from the inside.

8) **Other Business**

9) **Adjournment - 5:25 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted by Sheri Ingram, Parks & Trails Secretary