

ST. HELENS PARKS COMMISSION

Minutes for Meeting of April 20, 2015

Council Chambers, City Hall

MEMBERS PRESENT

Jacob Woodruff, Chair
Phillip Roddy, Commissioner
Stan Chiotti, Commissioner
Howard Blumenthal, Vice Chair
John Brewington, Commissioner

STAFF PRESENT

Thad Houk, Parks Supervisor
Sheri Ingram, Secretary
Jenny Dimsho, Assistant Planner

GUESTS

Ginny Carlson
Mary Woiccak

MEMBERS ABSENT

COUNCILORS IN ATTENDANCE

Doug Morten

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CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Woodruff at 4:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chiotti made a **motion** to approve the minutes of the February 9, 2015 meeting. Motion was seconded by Blumenthal and approved unanimously.

TOPICS FROM THE FLOOR

Mary Woiccak with Friends of the Library wanted to talk to them about putting a little free library at Columbia View Park. They have one at the food bank and would like to move it down there maybe around the corner from the lifejacket station. They would install it and it would be restocked once a week with donated books from the library. If they put it down there, maybe the boaters would donate their books back to it. Woodruff asked about vandalism and Dimsho thought it was a good location. Chiotti said they could approve it and address the vandalism issue later if it happens. Woiccak said this is all free and Friends of the Library will install it and be responsible for maintenance on it. Brewington made a **motion** to recommend that Council approve putting the free library in Columbia View Park. Motion was seconded by Roddy and approved unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Parks Commission Report to Council: The Parks Commission has to give an annual report to the Council on what they have been doing and upcoming projects on June 3rd at 1:00. Brewington said he could do it and Chiotti said he may be able to be there too. Brewington will talk to Dimsho and get some points from the Master Plan. And he asked the other members to give him any information they would like included.

Smoking Ban in Parks: Ingram said this was brought up at a Council meeting and they wanted to know what the Parks Commission thought about it. The existing rule says there is no smoking within 50 feet of ball fields, playgrounds and other areas when there are other people present. Houk said no one enforces it. Dimsho said they had a Smoke-Free Forum and the police chief made a comment about how it is a societal enforcement. It's not something the police would enforce. Blumenthal worries about the summer coming and having vegetation fires. He has seen a lot of fires start from people throwing cigarette butts in barkdust. Houk asked if Sand Island was going to be smoke free too since it is a City park. And he wondered how you can tell people they can have campfires in the camping area but they can't smoke. Woodruff said there isn't any way to enforce it. The rule now says you can't smoke during events but he sees people smoking in the dugouts. Morten said they need to look down the road a year or two. Recreational marijuana is legalized and how are they going to deal with it around youth programs in the park? Can they set a precedent with advising no smoking? Woodruff said he thinks it just can't be enforced. Houk said you can have no smoking signs up and most people will honor it but one or two won't. Blumenthal says it gets tinder dry in the summer and you see signs on the County roads saying not to do it his time of year because of fire danger. Roddy said as long as signs are posted, there will be people who won't smoke so that helps. After some discussion, Brewington made a **motion** to recommend that Council keep the rule the way it is since it isn't enforced. Motion was seconded by Chiotti and approved by all but Blumenthal, who wanted a complete ban.

Vacancies: There were three applicants and they had a chance to talk to Jerry Belcher on the field trip to Nob Hill and he has a lot of good ideas. Blumenthal made a motion to recommend that Council appoint Jerry Belcher to the Parks Commission. Motion was seconded by Chiotti and approved unanimously. Chiotti made a motion to recommend that Council appoint Elisa Mann to the Parks Commission. Motion was seconded by Roddy and approved unanimously.

Reimbursements: At the last meeting, the Parks Commission recommended that Council not allow reimbursements for maintenance done by Girls Softball. Morten wanted to make sure that was still the case. Brewington said most of the fields in town were built with volunteer labor and groups have contributed thousands of dollars and they think it isn't a good idea to start something like this because everyone would want to do it. Blumenthal made a **motion** to recommend Council not allow reimbursements. Motion was seconded by Chiotti and approved unanimously. Houk said, on that note, Girls Softball has paid Tommy Fischer to level the other field at Campbell. They just put the sod down and are wrapping it up now.

OLD BUSINESS

Master Plan Update: Dimsho wanted to know if there was anything missing or anything else they would like to add to the Capital Improvement section. It is broken down by park and there are estimated costs for each project. The second half is about trails and she picked what she thought were the top five priority ones out of the list of 20 trails. Houk wanted to add three total shelters to McCormick because they have been asking for one at the dog park. Dimsho said Councilor Carlson requested that some all-play equipment for ADA-accessible play be added and they thought the best place for that would be McCormick. The sidewalk from the parking lot to the playground isn't wide enough and not level enough for wheelchairs. She will add that as a project.

The Columbia Botanical Garden is not included in this because most of the things that came up there were maintenance-related, not projects but the Planning Commission did want to see some interpretive signs there. That isn't too much money anyway.

Morten asked what the life of the Master Plan is and Dimsho said the Capital Improvement Plan is 15 years out and she doesn't think that is feasible. Some projects will not get done in that time frame because of funding. Morten thinks the Waterfront Development Plan should be added for future

development and Dimsho said there is a page in there for the possibility of adding property later. Also the waterfront trail is included in there and money is set aside for that. She also thinks Master Plans are representative of the time period when they were adopted and that will be clear with how we talk about the waterfront.

Pay Station Updates: Houk said they are having trouble getting Comcast down there to get things hooked up. And then the Marine Board will have to sign off on everything.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Houk said we are putting new roofs on the dugouts at Campbell. Dimsho said she would pull that out of the Master Plan.

Blumenthal said they had 12 to 14 people at their semi-annual work party. They planted 20 plants and built a seating area with logs and gravel. Since it is Volunteer Appreciation Week, he would like to thank everyone who donates their time to the parks and ball fields. Woodruff thanked Blumenthal for giving them the tour of Nob Hill.

Chiotti asked if it would be acceptable to plant wildflowers down by the Welcome sign on the highway. Houk said that property belongs to ODOT and they mow it. Chiotti said they are working with ODOT and just wanted to know if the City had any issues with it and Houk said he had no objections.

Morten introduced our newest Councilor, Ginny Carlson to the Commission. Carlson said she worked with Houk and Riverside on painting some tables and she said Riverside can't wait to come back and paint more tables. She has toured other parks and they have ADA adaptive swings. She knows the Parks have no money but Chief Moss is part of Rotary and he thinks they might be able to partner with us to put some in and she also has a connection at the State who can get them at cost. She has also talked to Neal about getting the path at McCormick widened and flattened.

She was part of the splash park people and they have closed their account and given the leftover money to John for maintenance. She also has extra jets for replacements. Also the splash park and the banners on the highway were done with a Ford Family Foundation grant and they are doing a class this fall and having registration now if anyone is interested in being a part of that class to steer where that money goes next time.

Parks are essential for healthy families and communities and she really appreciates all they do.

COUNCILOR'S REPORT

Morten said we now have a Youth Commission that Locke is overseeing and they are doing more Council-type of work. They are seeing how government works and what goes on at the meetings. He would like to steer a few of them to the Parks Dept. for projects and he would like Houk to identify so projects that youths could get involved in. It would have been interesting to see how kids weighed in on things they discussed today like the smoking issue. It is refreshing to hear from them. Carlson said they are meeting tonight for the fifth time. The meeting is at 6:30.

They were talking about the Boise Veneer property and at one of the Council Meetings, Conn brought up that a lot of people would like access to the property rather than having it just sit there. He has talked to Sheppard and Nelson about getting some kind of trail or pathway from Columbia View all the way down the waterfront as close to the water as they can get to get people to walk.

OTHER MATTERS

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 15, 2015, at 4:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sheri Ingram
Secretary

2015 ATTENDANCE RECORD							
P = PRESENT / E = EXCUSED ABSENCE/U = UNEXCUSED ABSENCE							
Meeting Date	John Brewington	VACANT	Jacob Woodruff	VACANT	Stan Chiotti	Howard Blumenthal	Phillip Roddy
2/09	P		P		P	P	P
4/20	P		P		P	P	P