

ST. HELENS PARKS COMMISSION

Minutes for Meeting of October 10, 2016

Council Chambers, City Hall

MEMBERS PRESENT

Howard Blumenthal, Vice Chair
Elisa Mann, Commissioner
Stan Chiotti, Commissioner
Phillip Roddy, Commissioner
Jerry Belcher, Commissioner
John Brewington, Commissioner

STAFF PRESENT

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

GUESTS

MEMBERS ABSENT

Jacob Woodruff, Chair

COUNCILORS IN ATTENDANCE

Doug Morten

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CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Roddy made a **motion** to approve the minutes of the August 8, 2016 meeting. Motion was seconded by Brewington and approved unanimously.

TOPICS FROM THE FLOOR

COUNCILOR'S REPORT

Morten stated that this Wednesday the Riverfront Development Committee, along with the Council and staff, will unveil the preliminary plans for the waterfront district. There is a lot of flexibility. He would like people to ask questions and give any advice or suggestions. He is excited about the park lands that will open up with the design. Columbia View Park will expand south. Everything is flexible as far as park area and parking. They will be having it in the tent on the Boise Veneer site. He would also like them to go down and see the sign with the sculpture. It was made by Jeremy Furnish and he would like to dedicate it to Columbia View Park. It is sitting down at Gracie's.

A guy called him up and wants to install pickle ball courts where the tennis courts are. The tennis courts were cost prohibitive to resurface and the ground keeps moving because it's on a wetland. So installing smaller pickle balls courts on one of them might be the way to go.

The Council is in favor of leasing Civic Pride Park to the Greater St. Helens Parks and Recreation district so he wanted to know if anyone wanted to go with him to meet with Keith Forsythe about it. He wants to see what they are thinking about as far as length of lease, what they want to do with it and if they are going to charge for it. Brewington and Belcher said they would like to.

The dog park at Grey Cliffs Park is closed until the storm project is done going through there.

There is talk about filling in the lagoon and the Council is adamantly opposed to anything that is hazardous material. The DEQ decides what is and isn't hazardous. There are a lot of different things that could happen with that property. Brewington asked if there were net revenues from Cascade from the paper mill property and Morten said the land is owned by the City and Cascade is leasing it from us. That money is going towards paying off the purchase of the veneer property. It will be paid off in 18 years that way.

NEW BUSINESS

Park Improvements: Blumenthal stated they are going to ask for more help mowing the trails at Nob Hill next June. They also missed getting any blackberry treatment this year so they will try to do that next year. The restoration crew from Woodburn has come out before and sprayed so they could try that or get Paul Gerdes to do it for them. He wanted to remind them that Scappoose Bay Watershed Council is having their native plant sale Saturday from 9 to 3 at the Scappoose High School.

OLD BUSINESS

Walnut Tree Park Report: Chiotti stated you shouldn't go out there without a hard hat. The walnuts are falling and Houk has been good about finding a crew to clean them up but they drop faster than they can be cleaned up. The rest of the time it's in great shape and a lot of people are using it. They have a new picnic bench this year since the other one rotted away and it's getting used a lot. There are two big dead branches that could be a liability so they are waiting for the tree people to come in. Houk said he is scheduled for this week. Chiotti said one year they hauled off 14 of Hudson's large cans full of nuts.

Woodruff was not there to report on his park. Ingram asked who would like to give reports at the next meeting and Belcher said he would report on the Botanical Gardens and Brewington said he would report on Columbia View.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Dimsho had an update on Dalton Lake. She said there has been discussion about purchasing that property from ODOT and there is an application process to do that. We filled out an application and will take 60 days minimum for review. Also the picnic shelter grant at McCormick was approved and they are getting costs. She should hear about the Nob Hill improvements grant on November 1st.

Houk said since they banned camping at McCormick there has been a huge improvement with garbage and drug paraphernalia and more families and kids are coming back to the park now and not feeling threatened. They got pay showers and they have to be installed which won't happen until sometime after Halloween. Last weekend someone took the soap dispenser off the wall so they would have soap in the shower. They had graffiti in both showers and they had graffiti in Campbell and Columbia View all on the same day. Blumenthal said the walls by the waterfront got fresh graffiti on them too and Houk said they would take care of it.

Houk said the restrooms are closed on the island because the doors got ripped off the storage areas and they took toilet paper and supplies and ripped out fixtures. Someone told the Parks employees that there was only one other boat at the island and it was a homeless boat that has been bouncing back and forth between the docks and the police are not citing him so he keeps hanging around. That

is an ongoing issue. Every day Paul Gerdes goes down and writes down the boat numbers and keeps track of them but nothing gets done about it. They are only supposed to be there for five days and this boat has been around for months. He also heard the court threw out some citations because of some technicality. Because a City employee kept records instead of a police officer, it was considered "heresay" which wasn't good enough.

Brewington said if we are getting a lot more park land, we are going to have to take a look at the budget next year.

Mann stated she has heard from people who are very happy that toys are now allowed in the dog park.

Belcher said he had talked to Morten about the triangle park and he thinks that would be a good place to have a kiosk. Also the City has various paths to walk and one of his ideas is to get together with Columbia City and have a path that started by the Humane Society and some trails built in there. You could walk to Pixie Park and Columbia City's dog park and loop back. They could go across the highway to the Bundy Memorial Park and Veteran's Park and across to another park back there and make a loop. The City should be encouraged to make a website with Columbia City and it's just a way to get people to come here. We should talk about seeing what Columbia City thinks about it.

Brewington said he likes the idea but we should also think about going the other direction by Scappoose Bay and down to Crown Z Trail. Blumenthal said the Bike & Pedestrian Committee has made their own map with advertising showing staircases and bicycle loops and places to walk. If they do another printing of that map, we may want to try to get some of these ideas into their maps. Morten said we should invite the Bike & Pedestrian Committee to one of our meetings after the first of the year. Belcher thinks they could speed the process up by inviting one of them to the December meeting and then maybe they can go back and discuss it with them. Dimsho said it may be better to meet outside of this group to speed things up.

Houk said more people are discovering the new bridge at McCormick and are discovering the trails back there. He has met a lot of people from out of town and they love to walk out there. Belcher said he used to walk Milton Creek doing fish counts and the lower part is beautiful. That could be a great hike and could be a continuation of the McCormick Park loop.

Roddy said the Lions Club is doing an inventory of what they need for the trails at McCormick and they also sponsor two Boy Scout troops and have talked to them about working in there.

Chiotti said the Veterans Day ceremony is coming up at McCormick Park and they would like to waive the fees for the permit. He is wondering if there is any more word on expanding for Afghanistan and Vietnam memorials. Morten said he thinks it's in the works and Andrew Neimi needs to give them a review of his ideas. Dimsho said he gave her a cost estimate and it is in the plan.

Dimsho wanted to point out since they were talking about trails using existing infrastructure, she has been working with the Public Health Foundation and Columbia Health Coalition and those groups are all about getting people out and moving so a map like that is bound to gain support from them.

Blumenthal said the work party at nob Hill is coming up on November 5th.

OTHER MATTERS

Ingram said Belcher and Roddy are at the end of their terms in December and would they like to serve another term on this Commission. They both said yes.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 12, 2016, at 4:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sheri Ingram
Secretary

2016 ATTENDANCE RECORD							
P = PRESENT / E = EXCUSED ABSENCE/U = UNEXCUSED ABSENCE							
Meeting Date	John Brewington	Elisa Mann	Jacob Woodruff	Jerry Belcher	Stan Chiotti	Howard Blumenthal	Phillip Roddy
2/08	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
4/11	A	P	P	P	P	P	P
6/13	NO QUORUM						
8/8	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
10/10	P	P	E	P	P	P	P
12/12							