

ST. HELENS PARKS COMMISSION

Minutes for Meeting of October 9, 2017

Council Chambers, City Hall

MEMBERS PRESENT

Howard Blumenthal, Chair
Stan Chiotti, Vice Chair
Jerry Belcher, Commissioner
John Brewington, Commissioner
Jacob Woodruff, Commissioner
Elisa Mann, Commissioner

STAFF PRESENT

Thad Houk, Parks Supervisor
Neal Sheppeard, PW Director
Sheri Ingram, Secretary

GUESTS

MEMBERS ABSENT

Phillip Roddy, Commissioner

COUNCILOR IN ATTENDANCE

Doug Morten

■ ■ ■

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Woodruff made a **motion** to approve the minutes of the August 14, 2017 meeting. Motion was seconded by Mann and approved unanimously.

TOPICS FROM THE FLOOR

COUNCILOR'S REPORT

Morten stated they had the public hearing for the soda tax. There were a lot of people and they had a good chance to express their concerns. They deliberated about it and they voted 5-0 to not move forward with it. Councilor Conn couldn't be at the meeting but she registered her "no" vote before the meeting. Matt Brown is going to go over suggestions and new ideas for funding.

He attended the Michael Curry/Rotary Splash Park opening in Scappoose and it is one of the most impressive ones he has seen. He recommends they go see it after dark when the lights come on. Mann said their play equipment station is impressive too.

NEW BUSINESS

Parks Reports: Woodruff reported on McCormick Park and he divided it into levels. Level 1 is the dog park, skate park, ball fields and BMX track. The softball fields look pretty nice. The Adult League takes good care of it. He has talked to people at the dog park and they love it and he sees it being used all the time. The skate park used to be one of the best in Oregon but isn't now. He sees a lot

of kids using it though and the BMX track gets used for events all of the time. Level 2 is the covered picnic areas, the memorial and playground. The bathrooms down below are unlocked all of the time but the ones by the ballfields are locked unless there are ballgames going. If a kid at the skate park has to use the bathroom, it's a long ways to go. Level 3 is the creek and there is a lot of open grassy area. People like to take their dogs down there and people will picnic down there during nice weather. Level 4 is the disc golf course which is one of the top ones in the nation and gets a lot of use. The park is so big you don't really see a lot of people but a lot of people are using it. He has asked people what they would like to see in the park to bring more people in and he has heard tennis courts, basketball courts and more restrooms. The park looks pretty nice and thanks to Thad and crew for what they do.

Chiotti stated the garden club takes care of the sign area on the corner of 18th and the area at the entrance once a month. They will clean up the Veterans Memorial before Veterans Day.

Belcher asked why the skate park isn't the best anymore and Woodruff said it's because of the technology on the way they are building new ones and they are adding more things for skaters to do. Ours was put in a long time ago and they've gotten a lot more advanced since then. Belcher also asked about the exercise trail. Chiotti said the Lions Club has been working on repairing the exercise stations and they are doing a great job. Woodruff said the trail itself is in good shape and a lot of people use it.

Chiotti reported on Heinie Heumann Park and said the City installed a bench and water spout inside the dog park and cleaned up a couple of fallen trees. There are two picnic tables, one inside and one outside the fence. People were using the dog park and it would be good if more people could drive by and see it being used.

In December, Woodruff will report on 6th Street Field Park and Mann will report on the dog parks.

OLD BUSINESS

Walking Trails: Belcher said 3-4 months ago, he and Blumenthal were going to meet with the Bikes & Ped about walking trails. They are still planning on doing that. Things have just been really busy.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Chiotti said the Kiwanis have been mowing Walnut Tree Park from March to the end of September. They have enough sense to stay out of there in October and Thad and his crew have been doing a good job of cleaning up the walnuts that have been falling. They also keep the doggy bags supplied so when they mow, they don't have much dog waste to mow over.

Brewington said years ago he walked McCormick before anything was done with it and it's amazing to see what has been developed into over the years.

Belcher said Sheppard had mentioned he wanted to clean up the steep bank at Grey Cliffs Park and Sheppard said that is a work in progress.

Blumenthal said there is a room tax that is supposed to go towards tourism. He thinks it's important to update the Parks brochure and he's wondering if they could get some of that money for that. Morten said they should make a motion on it so Blumenthal said it should be on the next agenda.

The staircase is built and the Scappoose Watershed Council is going to donate plants to plant along there. He asked Houk if he had extra dog signs he could post there too. The kiosk is installed and he brought a new wooden sign with the park name on it that he would like to be mounted on the kiosk. Sheppeard said he would have Roger Stauffer put it up.

There was a discussion on Parks funding and how they get more people. Sheppeard explained how the Parks budget comes out of the General Fund with Police and the Library and Public Works is funded from sewer and water fees and you can't just fire someone from one place and use that money to hire someone for Parks. Morten suggested they go to the Budget Committee meetings to request more money for Parks. Blumenthal asked if the SDCs got raised and Morten said it is still in process. However that money can't be used for operations so it wouldn't get them more employees. We are rich in property and poor in manpower. People also get very confused about the tax for the Greater Parks & Rec District. They think that comes to the City but that is just the swimming pool.

OTHER MATTERS

Sheppeard said he has talked to Schlumpburger about us delivering rock to be put on the trail at Dalton Lake. We will also be getting the cannon back at McCormick in about three weeks. Dimsho put in a grant for restrooms at Grey Cliffs Park and it's not official but it's looking good.

Houk said there were more people downtown for Halloweentown on Saturday than he has ever seen.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 11, 2017, at 4:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sheri Ingram
Secretary

2017 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
2/13	P	P	E	P	P	P	P
4/10	A	P	P	P	P	P	P
6/12	P	P	E	P	E	P	P
8/14	P	A	P	P	P	P	P
10/9	P	P	P	P	P	P	A