

# **St. Helens Parks Commission**

**Monday, February 13, 2017, 4:00 p.m.**

**City Hall Council Chambers**

## **Agenda**

1. Call Meeting to Order
2. Approval of Minutes: December 12, 2016 regular meeting
3. Topics from the floor—from attendees not otherwise on the agenda  
*Speakers are limited to 3-5 minutes. Topics requiring action may be placed on the next meeting's agenda for further discussion.*
4. Councilor's Report
5. New Business
  - Letter of Support
  - Elect Officers
  - Exclusive Use Permit – Girls Softball
  - 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan Discussion
6. Old Business
  - Park reports – McCormick and Columbia View
7. Discussion Items
8. Other Matters
9. Adjournment

The next regular meeting of the St. Helens Parks Commission is scheduled at 4:00 p.m. on Monday, April 10, 2017, in the City Hall Council Chambers.

# ST. HELENS PARKS COMMISSION

Minutes for Meeting of December 12, 2016

Council Chambers, City Hall

## MEMBERS PRESENT

Howard Blumenthal, Vice Chair  
Elisa Mann, Commissioner  
Stan Chiotti, Commissioner  
Phillip Roddy, Commissioner  
Jerry Belcher, Commissioner  
Jacob Woodruff, Chair

## STAFF PRESENT

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

## GUESTS

## MEMBERS ABSENT

John Brewington, Commissioner

## COUNCILORS IN ATTENDANCE

Doug Morten

■ ■ ■

## 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 October 10, 2016 meeting. Motion was seconded by Mann and approved 5-1. Blumenthal was against it because even though there was not a quorum for the June meeting, he thought the Commissioners who showed up should have their names marked in the attendance record.

## TOPICS FROM THE FLOOR

## COUNCILOR'S REPORT

Morten stated that he wanted their recommendations on the adopted framework for the riverfront district and their opinions on what they should do with the expansion of Columbia View Park. There was a handout of the framework map with public open space marked in green along the river and he wanted to know how they see that area so they can make future recommendations to the Council. Belcher said he would like to see the area as a park. It would allow more people to get closer to the river for special events. Things could be done there for concerts and Halloweentown. Woodruff agreed it should be a park. Blumenthal thinks that area should be park and kept as wide as possible because if they give it away for another type of development, they can never get it back. Chiotti said we need to think about expanding the Parks Department if we are expanding park property. Belcher thought it needed to be made public area even if it's not maintained as a park until we have the budget to do so. Chiotti asked where they were planning for parking. Blumenthal said the grey areas were streets and other plans that were shown have proposed making parking lots in the yellow areas between the main street and the hill. Belcher said the continuation of the street looks like the same width as 1st Street and he thinks that should be scaled down a bit so slow people down. Dimsho said

the width allows for parking on both sides and bike lanes and sidewalks and planter strips and it is angled parking on one side.

Morten said there has been talk about parking structures which could lead to an elevator like the one in Oregon City that comes down off the cliff. It could also involve enhanced tourism to see the view from up there. There are all kinds of possibilities because the people who drafted this had flexibility in mind. Blumenthal said someone sent out a packet a month or two ago and they should all look through it at the different renderings. Dimsho said the Masters of Urban and Regional Planning students at PSU have a program where they do graduate level planning concepts and she applied for a site plan for Columbia View Park. If we get that, we will have a group of students working on a site plan that will bring the budget number way down. They would hold public events to get input and talk to the Parks Commission. The students get to pick their own projects from a list and she thinks there will be enough landscape architect interest to get picked.

Blumenthal made a **motion** to keep the open space on the framework as parks property. Motion was seconded by Chiotti and approved unanimously.

Morten said the City attorney is drafting guidelines they asked for in an agreement with the Greater Parks and Recreation District for Civic Pride Park so he wanted to let them know that was in the works. He and Brewington met with Keith Forsythe about it and the City would feel strongly about reviewing any building permits. They would not like to see an apartment house there or anything that would generate money for the Greater Parks and Rec District. We would also like to revisit the lease every year or two just to see if there are any changes.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**Appointments:** Ingram said the Council approved Belcher and Roddy for another term on the Parks Commission.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

**Botanical Garden Park Report:** Belcher stated this is his neighborhood park. The property was donated by two families and he thinks there is a plaque down there with their names on it. He lives next to it and from 2003 to 2009, he would go down there about four times a week and work on trails. Then his dog died and he got a new dog that is a little fluffy thing so he doesn't go down there much. Back in the late 70s or early 80s when they had a Boys Club at the high school, they took the boys down there and moved a bunch of gigantic boulders. There is a big ridge that runs through the middle of the park and there is a trail on the south side of that and it used to be impassable until they moved the boulders. The park is on the site of an old rock quarry so there is very little soil. There is a low swampy area and a high level area covered with mossy boulders. One time when he was down there he found some unusual little four-toed salamanders. He looked them up and they are not very common around here.

Blumenthal asked if there was still a lot of ivy down there and Belcher said most of that is on Brownlow's property, not on the Botanical Garden property. The lower level next to 6<sup>th</sup> Street usually floods in the winter. The upper level is part of the old rock quarry with two trails but one isn't used very much. There is also a cliff on the Portland side and last year some kids went in there and built a bunch of trails in there. There is also a fairly large cave back in there. It is considered a nature park. On the survey, it got the highest rating for being "not maintained". He and Morten cut two or three big trees that fell in there last year. It rated low on amenities but he doesn't think a nature park needs many.

He doesn't think it needs a kiosk but would like to recommend a sign on Belton that shows the boundaries, trails and cave and maybe have an official parking area. He thinks they could do a general park and trail cleanup. Sometimes homeless go down there and leave sleeping bags, pillows, can and things like that. There are some dead trees by the trails that should be removed for safety reasons. The far trail on the east side could definitely use some cleanup and trees cut. Maybe we could talk to the Boy Scouts and as a project, they could label some of the trees down there and name the trails. Woodruff said he would try to talk to the Boy Scouts and try to get them involved. Blumenthal said an idea would be to form a friends group like Nob Hill and maybe they could have the corrections crew go in once a year or something. Houk said he has had the work crew go down there about once a year.

Morten said it would be a good joint venture to partner with the Bikes & Peds Committee to come up with a brochure. They had talked about having a joint meeting before.

Brewington was not here to report on Columbia View so we will hold it until the next meeting and Woodruff will report on McCormick at the next one.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

Roddy stated at McCormick, Jim with the Lions Club has worked on what they consider the worst exercise station, #17, and they have put braces in to pull the timbers back in. When the weather gets good, they will all be out there working on it.

Chiotti said the tree at Walnut Tree Park got a good trimming and they did a great job. He also thanks Neal for the gravel during the ice storm so the ladies could get out of the Elks Lodge parking lot. He asked how the Council was going with the Veterans Day gathering next year. He said the Council was going to take that over and it wasn't going to be a Chiotti venture any more. Morten said he doesn't know if the Council will accept the responsibility for the insurance. They have set up a foundation and the foundation is the one who would give insurance to the group sponsoring it. If the City provides insurance, it then becomes a City event. Chiotti doesn't think veterans need to apply for a permit every year because it is a national holiday honoring veterans and it's in the memorial area of the park.

Belcher asked who sponsors it and Chiotti said no one does. He and his wife have been putting it together for ten years and Garden Club ladies provide the cookies, Sunshine provides free coffee, the VFW supplies the flags but it is not a Garden Club-sponsored event. Belcher said it seems like the VFW should be the ones putting it on. Chiotti said the VFW doesn't have the two millions dollar policy the City requires either. Morten said all they need to do is fill out the form and go to the foundation and they will provide the insurance but they need to do it a few months beforehand. Sheppard suggested he go talk to John Walsh about it to get it all straightened out. Belcher said it sounds like it should be a VFW function because the VFW will be around for a very long time. And maybe they could even make it bigger and better.

Belcher said he would like to see some action taken or at least have the Council talk about this and give the Parks Commission their ideas. To start with, he would like to see one trail on the City website. He'd like to see it start at the flagpole behind the Courthouse and go down the River Trail to Frogmore Slough loop trail. It can go through Godfrey Park and along 4<sup>th</sup> Street but eventually it could go down the road to get people to come visit St. Helens. They could put up signs for Historic St. Helens and places to shop and eat. He made a **motion** to propose that Council develop a website for trails and put the Riverwalk/Frogmore Slough loop trail on it. Motion was seconded by Chiotti and approved unanimously.

## **OTHER MATTERS**

Houk stated that Coed Softball played into October and it was so rainy, they destroyed the fields. It takes a lot of time for them to bring them back to being playable in the spring and he would like to see their season not go into October. Woodruff said they had a Halloween tournament when it poured rain and he didn't play in it but he saw how thrashed the fields were afterwards. He said he would talk to Coed Softball about it.

He also wanted them to think about the future of camping. If they are going to keep it closed, he'd like them to think about turning the campsites into small picnic areas. Everyone thought that was a good idea.

Dimsho said the new pavilion is a 20X30 structure and should be delivered the first week of January. It's going to go kind of by the restrooms and playground.

Houk stated the Sand Island restroom vandalism has been repaired.

Blumenthal stated Dimsho asked him to sign a letter supporting the Brownfield Community-Wide Assessment Grant as the Parks Commission Vice-Chair so he wanted to make sure everyone was okay with him signing it. Dimsho said this grant is through the EPA and would fund tests for potential contamination on testing required by DEQ for property redevelopment. Everyone was fine with him signing it. Blumenthal said Dimsho also applied for a \$5000 grant through Public Health for a kiosk and staircase at Nob Hill and we got it on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month.

He said they had their semi-annual work party and it was the rainiest one they ever had and they also had a record 25 people show up. Someone has posted a "Private Drive" sign on a tree at the end of 4<sup>th</sup> Street. He wants someone to look at it because he doesn't know if it's supposed to be on a tree and if it is placed correctly. Also the "No Smoking" signs also haven't been put up yet. Sheppeard said we put them up a couple of times and they have been stolen.

Morten would like them to make notes of what the parks need for budget purposes so they can be passed on to Neal or Thad.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:25 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 13, 2017, at 4:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sheri Ingram  
Secretary

<b>2016 ATTENDANCE RECORD</b>							
<b>P = PRESENT / E = EXCUSED ABSENCE/U = UNEXCUSED ABSENCE</b>							
<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>John Brewington</b>	<b>Elisa Mann</b>	<b>Jacob Woodruff</b>	<b>Jerry Belcher</b>	<b>Stan Chiotti</b>	<b>Howard Blumenthal</b>	<b>Phillip Roddy</b>
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	A	P	P	P	P	P	P

## **St. Helens Parks Project List for FY 17/18**

### **\*SECURED\***

#### **Nob Hill Nature Park Staircase & Kiosk Installation**

Install staircase to connect nature trails to waterfront property trail. Install kiosk at Plymouth St. park entrance

#### **Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) Cities Grant**

Notification of Award: November 18, 2016

Grant Completion Deadline: October 13, 2017

Award: \$5,000 with 1 to 1 match (all in-kind labor)

### **\*SECURED\***

#### **McCormick Park Picnic Pavilion Installation**

Install 24' x 30' steel gable picnic shelter near the restrooms and playground

#### **Oregon Parks & Recreation: Local Government Grant**

Notification of Award: October 3, 2016

Grant Completion Deadline: October 31, 2018

Award: \$15,810 with \$13,833 required match (in-kind)

### **\*POTENTIAL\***

#### **McCormick Park Veteran's Memorial Expansion**

#### **Oregon Parks & Recreation: Veterans & War Memorials Grant**

Notification of Award: April 10, 2017

Grant Completion Deadline: April 30, 2019

Award (estimate): \$30,000 with 10% required cash match of \$3,000

#### **Parks & Trails Master Plan: Potential Projects**

##### **2/13/17 Parks Commission Discussion**

1. 6<sup>th</sup> Street Park (and Campbell Park?) - Dugout renovations (lay concrete, fencing, benches, roofing)
2. Campbell Park - Upgrade restroom fixtures
3. Campbell Park - Upgrade existing picnic shelters with utilities (electric)
4. Others?



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February 13, 2016

Kuri Gill  
Oregon Heritage  
Grants & Outreach Coordinator  
725 Summer ST NE STE C  
Salem, OR 97301

**Subject: McCormick Park Veterans Memorial Expansion**

Dear Kuri Gill,

The City of St. Helens Parks Commission would like to express our support of the City's application to the 2017 Veterans & War Memorials Grant Program for the McCormick Park Veterans Memorial Expansion. McCormick Park is popular among locals and attracts users throughout the entire region.

The existing veterans' memorial has hosted increasingly popular Veterans Day celebrations, attracting State Senators and House Representatives to be guest speakers at the event. As the location and event has grown in popularity since its installation in 2010, the event has outgrown the space available for attendees. Attendees are pushed to the parking lot, which is uncomfortable and a traffic safety hazard. The expansion will provide ample room for hosting events and guest speakers.

The McCormick Park veterans' memorial expansion will also recognize county-wide veterans who are currently unrecognized in St. Helens. The expansion will include Columbia County veterans who have lost their lives in more recent conflicts. This is an ideal location for this expansion because of its proximity to the existing covered picnic shelter, restrooms, parking lot, and ADA accessible ramps. This location also has ample space for a future phased expansion as needed.

The City has severely limited park funds available for new infrastructure and this funding request would leverage resources to provide a both a local and a regional benefit. The St. Helens Parks Commission is strongly supportive of the City's grant application for the McCormick Park veterans' memorial expansion and would like to encourage the Oregon Heritage Program to also see the importance of this expansion in providing recognition to veterans in our community.

Respectfully,

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Jacob Woodruff, Chair  
St. Helens Parks Commission