



*A place where families and businesses thrive.*

**Parks & Recreation Commission  
Meeting Minutes**

**November 17, 2021  
7:00 PM**

***Minutes Approved as Presented 12.15.2021***

**1. CALLED TO ORDER:**

Sullivan, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:** Howard Sullivan, Chair; Brad Bafaro, Vice Chair; Aaron Johnson; Mackenzie Johnston Carey; Tammi McLaughlin; Susan Taylor; Glenn VanBlarcom; Paul Waterstreet; Malynda Wenzl, Council Liaison.

**ABSENT:** Ralph Brown.

**STAFF PRESENT:** Anne Lane, P&R Director; Tom Martin, Parks Supervisor; Sherri Mead, Aquatics Supervisor; Rachael Van Loo, Administrative Specialist.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

**3. CONSENT AGENDA:**

- a) *Approve Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes of October 20, 2021.*

**MOTION:** Brad Bafaro moved, seconded by Paul Waterstreet, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented/amended. MOTION CARRIED 9-0.

**4. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS:** None.

**5. DISCUSSION/DECISION/PRESENTATION ITEMS:**

a) 2022 Meeting Dates

Anne: I included the prospective dates for 2022 in your agenda packets this month. I propose the calendar be approved during the February 2022 meeting, after installation of new commission members so that they have an opportunity to participate in the discussion, and if we need to change any dates and times, otherwise these are the tentative dates for 2022.

Question from Paul: Is the discussion of meeting times (not the dates) still on the agenda for discussion in January, and can we change it if it's necessary?

Anne Answers: I think it would be best if we wait until February to discuss times, and possibly dates at the time as well to give the opportunity for any new members to have an opportunity to engage in that decision.

Question from Paul: Do we need to amend the motion on meeting time discussions in January to move it to February?

Howard Answers: Correct.

Previous motion regarding times in January revised, moved and seconded to look at

dates and times in February, passed.

b)Timeline of Activity

Anne: This timeline was something I thought would be interesting to share with all of you especially as we move on and towards our levy discussion to give context for everyone. (Anne shares timeline of activity screen) I wanted to briefly walk through it with you and answer any questions. Included in this timeline is a little bit of a look back as well as a look forward. In 2016 city council adopted the parks & recreation open space master plan. At that time we had 158 acres of parkland and included in that parkland were 68 park amenities and facilities. Parkland is land that is owned by the city earmarked for the parks & recreation department, and either currently developed or marked for future development. In terms of park amenities and facilities, facilities are things like the aquatic center and park shelters, amenities are playgrounds, play structures. Our population at that time was 23,214. Two years later the operating levy was renewed at \$1.60. Two more years later our population jumped to 26,225, also in that year was the Anna & Abby's yard addition to the Roger's Park rehab. The next year, which is our current year 2021, again a population increase to 26,835, we introduced the Summer O' Fun recreation programs, and we added CivicRec recreation software. We still are currently at 158 acres of parkland, however we are up to 76 park amenities and facilities. As we forecast ahead to next year, 2022 we anticipate Stities park, Eastside park and minor development of the A.T. Smith park to be added to our parks system which brings us to 173 acres of parkland and up to 84 park amenities and facilities. One more year ahead, 2023 and now our current levy expires at the \$1.60 rate which has been maintained from July 2012 to June 2023. A lot has changed since 2012, not even counting inflation and those other outside things that impact how we operate and what we do. We have increased our acreage, we have increased our park amenities and the things we take care of. We have had a lot of wear and tear on our aquatic center as well.

Howard: I want to remind the group that the group asked that we had a condensed one page explanation of what occurred on the parks master plan and I think Anne has done an outstanding job of presenting that for us.

Question from Paul: In 2016 we had 68 park amenities and facilities which have increased, can you give us a little list of what those amenities and facilities from increase are?

Anne Answers: Yes, and in that count just the Roger's park and Anna & Abby's addition really increased that park amenity count. We added a pickle ball court, and a number of play structures. As we look forward to Stites park we are adding a community garden, more play structures, and restrooms. At Eastside park addition we are looking at play structures. A.T. Smith park will be more of a beautification, not an addition of amenities.

Question from Paul: The parkland that is being added, is it developed, undeveloped or do we own that physical piece of land?

Anne Answers: This land that is discussed for Stites, A.T. Smith and Eastside are

currently in our inventory. It's an increase in acreage that we are developing.

**6. B/C COMMUNICATIONS:**

a)Update from Parks & Recreation Director

**I. Eastside Park**

Anne: (shares screen with Eastside park presentation) The Forest Grove Eastside park has been a topic of discussion for quite some time. It's been recognized in the 2016 parks open space master plan that the eastside of Forest Grove was really underserved with both park features and recreation opportunities. We took that opportunity to dive a little deeper and do Forest Grove eastside parks need study. This context map you see outlined in red identifies the region of the eastside of Forest Grove that was taken into consideration. Through this process there was a handful of sites that were determined as possible sites for an eastside park. We worked with Place to complete this study, and Place identified three top choices, identified on this map as numbers 1, 6 & 7. The top option was the Rose Home mobile home park identified on the map as site number 1. There are couple of problems with this site. One pretty big challenge is this is privately owned land, in a private community which is not accessible to the general public. City parks are to be accessible by the general public and be maintained by the city. At the time of the study it was the most populated part of eastside. The second option on the list was a city owned parcel, the City of Forest Grove dewatering site. Although it is decently sized parcel, the dewatering facility would be a very complicated facility to move to another site, and it would be difficult to find another piece of property in Forest Grove to move this too. If we were to pursue this site it would be one of the most expensive neighborhood parks ever built, because of the cost to relocate a dewatering facility. Another downfall of this site is it is pretty far removed from high density neighborhoods. Access to the park would be fairly limited, right across the street are the Zesti food carts. If this space were to be developed into a park, usage would likely come from people dining at the Zesti food carts, which would lead to a higher influx of trash and maintenance which is really not park oriented for us. The third site that was on top of our list for consideration would be the Fernhill Elementary site. Small site, half an acre. Half acre parcels are very normal for neighborhood parks. However this site has been earmarked for future potential expansion for the school district. If we were to build a park on that site we would be presenting ourselves with a future challenge. So we starting digging around. With the help of Tom and some senior members of the parks crew we found the Fir lot. The Fir lot is located on the eastside of town, south of pacific highway, east of 47. We were originally concentrated in the more northeast portion, this site is more in the southeast portion of town. In 2016 this site was not considered because at that time it was being looked at as a potential affordable housing location. It was taken off the table as a potential option because of the utilities that run underground on this site. Building a park on top of utilities such as what are located underground on this site is completely feasible. High density housing now exists in this area of town, there have been multiunit apartment complexes that have been built within a 5

minute walk of this location since the 2016 study, which makes this lot really attractive. It is city owned, it is leveled/cleared, has easy access, and serves a really populated neighborhood.

Question from Malynda: What number is this site on the map?

Anne Answers: It was not indicated in the 2016 study at all. In 2016 this lot was being considered for affordable housing, so it was not considered as a potential park site.

Question from Brad: So the site is up against highway 47, are you concerned about that?

Susan: I am also concerned about the proximity to highway 47.

Anne Answers: So when we looked at developing this site, we've had a couple phone calls with place. What we can do here is we want to leave a clearance area as ODOT in the future may want to include a turning lane. We will add fencing and heavy shrubbery lines along the highway.

Question from Paul: Can you tell us what streets are there?

Anne Answers: Fir road and 19<sup>th</sup> Ave.

Question from Susan: How much acreage is this, and what are our neighborhood parks normally?

Anne Answers: Half an acre, we have neighborhood parks ranging from just under half an acre on up. Neighborhood parks in general are usually half an acre to an acre. Hazel Sills and Nox parks are just under half an acre.

Question from Tammi: I love that you found a parcel, but I think it is challenging for accessibility. That's a really busy area where would people park, how would you put in access in terms of crosswalks and sidewalks?

Question from Mackenzie: Do we have any other parks that are near a highway like that?

Tom Answers: We have a couple trailheads near a highway but no parks.

Mackenzie: I think you are expecting people to use the crosswalk up on the corner near Ace Hardware, and nobody will and I am concerned they will try to run across that highway.

Anne: That is a very valid concern. Although our focus is to serve those in this area. The realization that an apartment complex is being built on the other side of 47. There may be people trying to cross 47 trying to use the park.

Susan: For me it does not seem like a very attractive area for a park.

Anne: It lacks natural amenities?

Susan: Yes, you are right on the highway, it does not give a calming let's go there type of feeling. I also realized that we do need to do something on the eastside and it is really challenging.

Anne: The biggest hurdle on the eastside is land availability. When Place did their evaluation the sites they came up with as their top sites are a struggle to move forward on. We were excited when we came across this parcel that we are already currently maintaining, and the idea of developing it into a park feels good to us. I appreciate your concerns that everyone is raising.

Tammi: As a parent I wouldn't take my kid there, it doesn't like safe to me, it doesn't

look appealing and I know you'd put in shrubbery and such that would help, but I would rather not see the city go through the effort and expenditure on that parcel because I don't think it would be attractive to take children too.

Question from Paul: I agree with Tammi, before the apartments went in there, there was an informal pathway there to Neil Armstrong and it was a 5-7 min wait to even get across the road. I don't think I'd go there either. Have we looked at land that's available to purchase on the eastside?

Anne Answers: This parcel here, just under an acre is currently for sale at 1.2 million dollars. If we thought converting a dewatering facility into a park was expensive this is the most expensive neighborhood park in the universe.

Question from Howard: Where the pink spoon is now, it was my understanding that there was going to be a second phase with bottom floor business and up floor would be either office space or apartment buildings. Has that part of that development plan fallen through?

Question from Mackenzie: In the past we have talked about talking with the City of Cornelius because we are at a loss of park space in the eastside and they don't have a lot of park space on the west side of their town. Is that off the table?

Anne Answers: That's the first I've heard of this, it is certainly worth exploring.

Question from Brad: Can we go back to the Fernhill site, why was it not a good choice?

Anne Answers: It's my understanding that the school district property there at Fernhill was being considered for future development by the school district, from what I had read in the study.

Brad: I believe this site is on the west side of Fernhill, the school addition discussion was regarding the eastside. I don't know about any development on the west side of Fernhill land.

Paul: I don't think there is any room on the west side, because once you go from Fernhill you go right into Neil Armstrong's track.

Brad: There is a section of land there that is in between the track and football field and Fernhill parking lot. I think it is worth looking at again. With a partnership with the school district you can share some of the responsibility and cut some of the costs down. Perfect location and be positive for both the school district and the city.

Question from Susan: Have we had a discussion with the school district about this property at all?

Anne Answers: I have not.

Brad: There was an informal discussion with Ilene and Tom a while back.

Question from Malinda: Regarding the Fir road and 19<sup>th</sup> park, can we even do anything with 47 to make it safe to cross? I really like the idea of Fernhill site.

Brad: I don't like the idea of kids in that area by 47 but at least a safety analysis done by an outside team would give us more information. I don't think we have any control over 47 to put in cross walks and such.

Question from Paul: Would we have to purchase any of the land for the Fir lot or Fernhill site?

Anne Answers: The Fir lot is currently city owned, so there would be no cost to

purchase the property.

Question from Paul: Could we sell that property and buy a different piece of land?

Anne Answers: I think part of the trouble is the underground utilities and the inability to be able to develop the site to be much more than what it is.

Question from Paul: Would we have to buy the land for the Fernhill site?

Anne Answers: That is school district owned, no land purchase. This is a discussion we would have to have with the school district to see where they are at with us possibly wanting to build a park in this spot.

## II. Stites Park

Anne: We've been hung up in the permitting process for a number of months now, but we have finally gotten our clean water services approval. Our next step is another approval by clean water services for 26<sup>th</sup> Ave improvements. Place is now putting together the bid documents. Still hoping for first quarter construction.

## III. Customer Service Delivery Shift

Anne: We are making some changes at the front desk here at the aquatic center. It is important that we also represent parks and recreation at the front desk and not just aquatics. In Rachael's new full time position as admin she is leading a team of front desk staff, working towards coverage at all times that we have swimmers in the building.

Question from Malynda: Is that how things will be advertised on the website?

Anne Answers: Yes, and we added a general parks & rec email address that the front desk staff can check. We will be doing some readjusting to our phone lines so that Rachael will have a separate lines and phone calls are not being routed through a series of people.

## IV. Parks & Recreation Summit

Anne: I was not at our last meeting because I was in Arizona at the parks & recreation summit. I was invited to attend, the whole trip was paid for, and so there was no cost to the city. I was one of only two directors invited from the state of Oregon. I learned a lot, and made some great connections.

### b) Update from Parks Supervisor

#### I. Parks System Wide Tree Service

Tom: We got the backyard habit link put on the parks webpage. There will be tree removals happening at four different locations that are being contracted out. The first location is at Joseph Gale park, there are four clumps of dead or dying ash trees. Talisman park has a big willow with nasty hangers in it. Forest Glenn has a dead maple tree along the walking path. Finally, at Lincoln park there is a dead pine tree.

### c) Update from Aquatics Supervisor

#### I. Facility Usage and Attendance

Sherri: On Monday we had a \$10,000 registration day that set a new record. High school swim team kicked off with high numbers, there are about 40 participants. We have a really special group, this is the first year that we have had a unified swim team with 5 of our kids who have been involved in the adapted P.E. group for years. We also recently completed a small lifeguard class that we hope to receive a couple applicants out of. There is also an ad that will be running in the P.U. newspaper, and we will be pushing for a spring lifeguard class as well to help with our ongoing staffing shortage. We have a couple craft classes coming up that Cassy will be leading, they have been hugely successful. The small blue slide is back in our facility thanks to Tom and the parks crew.

d)Update from Administrative Specialist  
I. CivicRec

Rachael: We are working through two bugs with CivicRec and are waiting to hear back from them to get a timeline as to when they will be fixed. In the meantime we have been able to successfully create a couple hundred accounts and we have passed out lots of scan cards that have been very well received. Our memberships are now no longer on set three months quarters, so patron's memberships can start any day of the month without worrying about prorating, which has been easier on both our staff and patrons. We hope to have our next swim lesson registration happen through CivicRec.

**7. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS:**

Howard: On Saturday Jan. 1<sup>st</sup> we will be having races in a partnership with the Oregon Road Runner club to call the runs on that day "Ralph's runs" and part of the proceeds will be turned over to Ralph Brown's family.

**8. COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT:**

Malynda: We just announced a new fire chief, Jim Geering. Last meeting light and power came and presented, they have finished their substation expansion, doing great as far as energy conversation and completed street light update to LEDs. The next council meeting will be on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and we will have subcommittee meeting for board and commission interviews the following week on the 29<sup>th</sup>. Also CCI has scheduled a date for the annual town hall meeting. City council will meet on the 29<sup>th</sup> to discuss goals and objectives, then we will use ATM on February 12<sup>th</sup> to get community feedback about these goals and objectives. We now have a new and improved city manager report that is now titled "what's growing on in the grove". It is a great cliff notes version of what's going on in the city.

**9. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING:** The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 15, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

10. **ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting adjourned at 8:11 p.m.