



## PARKS COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Date and Time: 17 January 2012; 6:00 pm

Location: Redmond Public Works, Warehouse Training Room

Commission Members Present: Gary Parks; Cyndie Bell; Jerry Boysen; Andy Hoffman; Richard Lance; Shelly Neal; Shirlee Evans, Council Liaison

Public Works Staff Present: Chris Doty, Public Works Director; Mike Caccavano, Interim Public Works Director; Curt Petersen, Parks Operations Supervisor; Susan Bailey, Administration

Media/Others Present: Mayor George Endicott; Several members of the public

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Parks called the meeting to order at 6:02pm.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS (Items not on Agenda)**

Parks asked for public comment not related to the issue of horses in the Canyon; No comments were given.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

#### **Approval of Minutes from 15 November 2011 and 14 December 2011**

Bell made a motion to approve both sets of minutes; Second by Lance. The minutes were unanimously approved by vote.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

#### **Welcome New Member, Jerry Boysen; Reappointment of Andy Hoffman and Shelly Neal (through 12/2014); Reappointment of Cyndie Bell (through 12/2013)**

The Commission and staff members introduced themselves. Evans noted she would like to clarify her role as liaison later in the meeting. Parks welcomed Boysen who gave a brief introduction.

Mayor George Endicott commenced with the swearing in of new and reappointed Commission members Jerry Boysen, Andy Hoffman, Shelly Neal and Cyndie Bell. All parties affirmed their oath as Commission members.

#### **Public Works Leadership Transition**

Doty thanked the Commission for their service and announced that he will be taking a position with Deschutes County. He explained that Mike Caccavano will be the interim Public Works Director and will be in attendance at the Parks Commission meetings. Bell thanked Doty for his leadership and hard work. Lance thanked Doty for his role as acting Parks Director.

Endicott noted that the Council is in the process of defining the role of the Commission liaison and that they are working with the City Manager and legal counsel to develop procedures. Endicott explained that "liaison" means "communicator" and to "carry the message," noting that he will be talking to all committees and commissions over the next month to clarify this role.

Evans read a statement clarifying her role to the Commission and stating that her task is to listen to Commission deliberations and pass on recommendations to the Council. Evans clearly stated that she does not vote or participate in information gathering, and does not promote personal opinions.

## **DISCUSSION/DECISION ITEMS**

### **Review Policy Regarding Horse Riding in the Canyon**

Parks called for discussion regarding equestrian use in the Canyon. Lance noted that he would like additional information and asked if the Commissioners had walked the entire trail on the left side of the Canyon on a regular basis since the horse issue came up. Lance reviewed several photos showing areas of concern along the soft trail. Lance noted safety concerns with allowing horses on unpaved trails and stated that he is not ready to make an informed decision. Lance inquired about criteria from other mixed use trails and noted that the group should outline a plan to gather more information. Lance stated that he will vote against equestrian use because he doesn't have enough information.

Bell noted, from public comment, that riders have been in the Canyon for years and that there have been no adverse effects. She stated that there have not been any actual problems and that riders have been in the Canyon because they didn't know they couldn't. Bell suggested that the Canyon will not be a big draw for equestrians.

Parks stated that initially he was opposed; however, since receiving public testimony he was made aware that riders have been in the Canyon for some time and that he has not heard of any incidents. Parks noted that the Staff Report and the Oregon Trails Report do not indicate that there are many incidents or safety issues on other trails. Parks indicated that it would be more likely a bike and a runner would have an issue. Parks stated that even non-riders appear to be in support of having horses in the Canyon and that he would be willing to allow horses on a trial basis.

Bell noted similarities with regards to safety issues at the Skate Park and how they are addressed. Bell stated that the Commission has always tried to be very fair and inclusive of Redmond citizens and those in the surrounding area. Bell indicated that she would like to see the Commission be inclusive of horseback riders.

Boysen explained that he has been following the issue and had concerns about liability. Doty noted recreational immunity laws and that as long as we don't charge a fee, users must "use at their own risk." Doty noted that this allows private owners to open up their land for public use without liability. Doty stated that the same provision applies even if there is an obvious defect. Boysen asked about the number of people who are actually riding horses in the Canyon. Lance explained that it is a small group. Boysen asked about costs and maintenance.

Doty suggested that trail etiquette signage has been needed in the Canyon and that this issue has brought it forward. Doty noted that an equestrian group is looking into providing signage. Doty stated that regardless of the decision, etiquette signage will happen.

Hoffman noted safety concerns, especially for new moms and small children. He cited that kids don't know what to do when they encounter a horse. Hoffman indicated that there is a place for horses in the Canyon, but not on the current soft trail. Hoffman stated that he doesn't see designating a separate trail for a small number of users and that he is not convinced that ridership wouldn't increase.

Neal suggested that safety is the responsibility of both parties and that riders need a safe place to ride. Neal would like to see a volunteer coalition support long term maintenance of the trail.

Lance noted that the Staff Report suggests designation of all soft trails and that he is not comfortable designating all trails. Lance referenced the Skate Park study and similar decision to not allow bikes at the Skate Park.

Parks stated that he is comfortable approving the use on a trial basis and then sorting out the details. Parks noted that monitoring trail use in the summer would be better since usage is greater. He also indicated that he does not expect increased equestrian usage.

Boysen asked about the 10' offset from the paved trail noted in the Staff Report. Doty clarified that it would create a separation from the paved trail. Lance noted areas at the Wastewater Treatment Plant and paved access to the soft trail where equestrians would be close to the pavement. Doty cited recommendations from other cities.

Parks asked for final questions and called for a motion. Doty reminded the Commission that the City Code reads that equestrian use must take place on designated bridle paths and that Council would need to designate the soft trail as a bridle path. He explained that the Commission can direct staff to specify trails at a later date. He also recommended that the Commission could convene a user group. The Commission discussed the specific items needed in the motion.

MOTION: Bell moved to adopt the staff recommendations as presented with equestrian paths to be identified by a user group. Parks seconded the motion. Those in favor were Parks, Bell and Neal; those opposed were Boysen, Hoffman and Lance.

Doty clarified that a tie vote does not pass the motion. Lance suggested gathering additional information for the next meeting and holding another vote. Parks suggested that staff provide clarification regarding which trails should be designated.

Evans suggested using a consultant to identify trails and assess the trail conditions. Boysen stated that he would approve the use if specific trails were identified, however, does not see the need for a consultant. The Commission discussed designating exclusive trails.

MOTION: Bell made a motion to adopt recommendations 2-5 and include item 3 from the "additional considerations" section of the Staff Report, with the prompt development of a user group to determine exclusive use trails. The motion was seconded by Boysen and unanimously approved.

The Commission discussed items required for moving forward and Doty noted that this recommendation will go to Council on Tuesday; a user group will need to be created with representation from equestrians, runners, and bikers. Signage for the trail areas was also discussed.

## **UPDATES/PRESENTATIONS**

### **Parks Update (C. Petersen)**

Petersen provided a brief update noting that the Pumice staircase and paved path are approximately 50% complete. Doty explained the ODOT Flex Funds program that funded the Pumice project and that the grant also created an opportunity to fund the Maple staircase design. Petersen noted the success of the ice skating rink and RAPRD's role in daily operations. Petersen reviewed the vandalism report for 2011 and noted that cameras at American Legion may be a deterrent to future vandalism.

Doty explained that the City was approached by the Nolan Town Center group to purchase the property at the north corner of American Legion Park. The property was purchased prior to the end of the year for \$32,000 with budgeted capital outlay funds. Doty discussed strategically incorporating this property into the park system and getting the property cleaned up.

### **Update on Old School House (C. Doty)**

Doty explained that the Landmarks Commission has taken an interest in the building and that one option was to relocate the structure to a vendor pad by the Dog Park. He stated that the cost to move the house is approximately \$120-180K and that an RFP for interested parties to come up with capital for the move could

be prepared. Doty noted that CDD may take the lead on this project and that they do have someone interested.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- 1. North Canyon Master Plan Considerations/Canyon Access Plan**
- 2. City Code Update for Parks**
- 3. Signage and Advertising Policies**

Doty addressed future agenda items including the Canyon access plan from north to south and the update to the City Code. He noted that the advertising policy still needs to address donations, locations, etc. Parks stated there needs to be a policy regarding memorials for benches, trees, bricks, etc.

Parks asked Lance for an update on the Parks Foundation. Lance noted the Foundation currently needs new members and explained that members do not have to live in the City. He explained that the Foundation was established to raise money for park development in the City and surrounding areas, and as a conduit for the Dog Park project and the citizens group developing a disc golf in area in the Canyon.

Parks thanked Doty for his service on the Parks Commission.

**ADJOURN**

The next meeting is scheduled for 21 February 2012 at the Public Works facility at 243 E. Antler.

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned at 8:12pm.

APPROVED by the Parks Commission and SIGNED by the Chairperson this 21<sup>st</sup> day of February, 2012

  
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Chairperson