



# Josephine County, Oregon

Board of Commissioners: Cherryl Walker, K.O. Heck, Simon G. Hare

## **PARKS ADVISORY BOARD**

Doug Richardson, Chair

125 Ringuette Street / Grants Pass, OR 97527

(541) 474-5287 / FAX (541) 474-5288

E-Mail: [swright@co.josephine.or.us](mailto:swright@co.josephine.or.us)

## **JOSEPHINE COUNTY PARKS ADVISORY BOARD**

Monthly Public Meeting Minutes

April 26, 2016 – 3:00 PM

Josephine County Courthouse, Rm 157

**Members Present:** Doug Richardson, Diana Orlor, Bob Chard, Dick Fowler, RJ Jackson, Rycke Brown and Sue Fahey

**Staff Present:** Sarah Wright

**BCC Liaison:** Simon Hare

**Absent:** Doyle Nelson, Larry Ford

**Guests:** Archie and Jeane Clay

**Quorum:** Established

Meeting was called to order at 3:01 PM by PAB Chair, Doug Richardson

The minutes were not printed from last meeting, but were sent out in an email after they were complete and reviewed by members at this time. RJ made a motion to approve Minutes from February 23, 2016 PAB meeting. Diane Orlor seconded the motion. PAB voted all in favor. The Minutes were approved unanimously.

**Items from the BCC:** Commissioner Hare stated that the County's Budget Committee has started meeting, the next meeting is at 4:00 pm today. They have basic deliberation and have heard from some of the other departments but have not requested to hear from parks yet.

Commissioner Hare discussed the Forestry sale of timber, specifically the property across the creek from Wolf Creek Park. The timber has sold at this time, the buyer won't start logging immediately, but the first payment of 25% is due with their signed contract. Parks should see some profit from their timber. After the sale is complete Commissioner Hare will be looking into transferring the property over to Forestry's control as Parks should not be in the business of logging its property. There was some concern over future loss of revenue, but Commissioner Hare reminded that Parks now has other sources of revenue that will exceed what we might see from timber sales, including the Property Reserve Funds.

Commissioner Hare shared that there is a meeting tomorrow with several managers and the new Property Manager to discuss upcoming sales as well as general discussions on managing our various properties. The first sale is set for June 14<sup>th</sup> in which 15 properties are set to sell. This will be discussed at BCC public meetings in early May. About 95% of these tax foreclosed properties have been designated to Parks funds. There is close to \$1.5 million in Real Property Value, but the County probably won't see the full amount and realistically expects to have revenues at about 50% of value. The next sale will be in September. Typically, the County only acquires 3-9 properties per year, as this only occurs when there is 6 years of no tax payment. It has been 15 years since the County has had sales. A member mentioned that they remember a sale about 4 years ago. Commissioner Hare discussed that there was an attempt to sell 4 properties at that time, but only 1 property had sold, which was 80 acres.

Commissioner Hare stated that since our last meeting, two Economic Development fund requests have been approved, which consists of up to \$50k for Lake Selmac's Restroom/Bridge Project and \$50k for White Horse Phase 1.

**Items from the Public:** Archie and Jeane Clay brought up their concerns about Tom Pearce park, individuals continue to take advantage of the area outside of the gate where they park and walk in to avoid paying a day use fee. He had a copy of the park rules and read aloud that no fee shall be paid if individuals bike, horse-ride or walk in. Furthermore, the ordinance states it is unlawful for a person to pay fees for occupation". He had some suggestions of clearer signage or finding a way to charge everyone using the parks.

Doug Richardson agrees and stated that it is on our radar to find a solution. Commissioner Hare stated that he has been working with Manager Sarah Wright to get a Park Zone Designation, it just needs to be approved by BCC at this time. It will regulate parking as Park Fee area about 200 yards from the entry way. The Sheriffs can't help with enforcement at this time as Parks will need to be doing the

enforcement. Other counties have a park zones in place on their county thoroughfares. The Park Zone Designation will hopefully be implemented this year at 1 or 2 parks. Commissioner Hare has asked Legal to work with Public Works on this.

**Manager Items:** Manager Sarah Wright reviewed the plans for Whitehorse Park. Minor changes will be made to the masterplan as it goes into engineering. Whitehorse has \$30,000 in Economic Development Funds and will be moving forward with spending it on a surveyor and engineering for the park redevelopment. Changes made to the Park Masterplan will include less Cabin/Yurts than proposed (aiming for 3-5 total), creating more parking throughout the overnight sites, making the bottom loop tent camping only (remove proposed RV sites), add a new playground. Parks has applied for a \$205,000 grant and needs to submit letters of support by Monday at noon if anyone still wants to submit a support letter. We are still seeking about \$155,000 in grant money, but as a last resort could use the property reserve funds for the project.

Wright went over the 5-year plan for parks. Economic Development Funds were secured for the Ennis Riffle pavement (which has been completed), park bench boards are being sanded and painted at the Parks shop, metal signs for parks are about ready to be priced out, and we have the project for the boat ramp at Lake Selmac, Mallard, being quoted currently.

Parks needs volunteers. Every Saturday moving forward, Parks will have an opportunity for volunteers. Additionally, on May 14<sup>th</sup> everyone is invited to attend the Rogue River Cleanup. We also need extra hands for Memorial Day Weekend. We need extra help covering Park Host duties and helping collect fees, this includes day helpers and a couple of overnight volunteers at Almeda, Ennis Riffle and Griffin Parks.

Parks newest Park Ranger, David Heinze started on April 4<sup>th</sup> and is adapting well. George Armstrong is on leave still but should be back in early May. The Administrative Secretary position with 80% Forestry and 20% Parks has been filled, the new hire will start on Monday. Parks is also hiring for Park Aides. We are paying 50 cents above minimum wage to start, if you know anyone interested please send them onto Parks. Sue Fahey passed on that we should contact RCC to see if we can target individuals with interested in our field of works, Wright will follow up on it.

**Old Business:** Doug Richardson stated that Doyle Nelson talked to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) about the lake weed at Lake Selmac. ODFW does not seem to be concerned about it. At this time Parks doesn't have a solution. Wright mentioned that many years ago Public Works used to dredge the lake on a yearly basis. With the lake being shallow we will continue to have problems with both blue/green algae and lake weed. In a cold winter the lake would freeze over and naturally take care of the lake weed, but we haven't had a cold winter in a few years.

Grants for Lake Selmac are moving along. Wright went up to Salem last week and presented to Oregon Parks for the Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant in the amount of \$75,500. The presentation went well and Parks is hopeful funding will be granted. An additional \$10,000 grant was submitted to the Four Way Foundation, there is a meeting next Friday to discuss the grant with a board member of the Foundation at the lake. The project will be fully funded if both grants are received.

RJ said that Lee Spargo tried to contact Wright about the missing bridge at Pierce Riffle. Wright stated she did not receive a message to contact him and was not aware he tried to contact Parks, Wright will follow up this week. The Kiwanis did trail work and opened one loop but would like to finish and may even have funding to help replace the missing bridge.

The Wolf Creek Forestry sale was clarified by Wright. It was stated that Parks would like to keep the funding from the project at the White Horse Park for improvements. It seems the Forestry Sale came in at about \$70,000, there will be some administrative costs to Forestry but we should see a decent amount of money for improvements. Wright hopes to write grants to stretch the funding as far as possible. The Wolf Creek residents seem to first want the footbridge replaced and then work on improvements for the playground and the toilets.

**New Business:** None

**Items from the Parks Advisory Board:** None

**Miscellaneous:** Doug Richardson commented that Letters of Support have been requested by Parks and asked Wright to clarify what is needed. Wright stated that Letters of Support for any and all projects are needed. Without written letters of the need for improvements it is hard to secure funding. Letters should be addressed to the Parks department and can be written by board members or public members. They are to state what the issue is and why it needs to be fixed. Grants are best supported financially by Foundations when there is a large need in the community.

Recreational Immunity has recently been discussed by the Oregon Supreme Court. The last ruling stated that employees are not protected under recreational immunity. This basically ruling effectively just eliminated Recreational Immunity within Parks; Parks will now be subject to Discretionary Immunity. Moving forward Parks will continue to limit all liabilities. All employees will be directed to always

use diligence with projects and to not leave the project if it could be a hazard. If hazards are identified in Parks they are to be reported immediately so that a plan for reducing liability can be made.

Doug Richardson clarified that the last meeting was cancelled as it would not have been a productive meeting. With the Parks manager only being in her job for a short time, there were a lot of projects in the works that had already been discussed, but that just needed to advance.

The Granite Hill Cemetery was brought up by Doug Richardson. Parks and Richardson received a letter of complaint on the length of time to receive a deed transfer for a cemetery plot. Legal has taken 8+ months to create new deed transfer forms, we finally have a draft in place but are waiting on further instructions from legal to handle situations such as next of kin claiming rights to a deed. Additionally, Wright reported that when graves were originally sold, individual could pre-pay for openings and closings of the grave. There was never a deferred revenue account created to cover the past 50+ years and Parks is now liable for paying for this service, which costs \$300-500 per occurrence. Furthermore, Parks has absolutely no revenue coming in for the Cemetery, there are no remaining plots to sell to the public at this time. Wright will be working on new fees for 2017 which will include fees for marking graves at request from the public (required when adding a headstone or making other plot improvements by the owners), as well as fees for the deed transfers. This will help eliminate the financial strain the Cemetery has put on the other public parks.

**Action Items:** Commissioner Hare to work on Park Zone Designation.  
Manager Sarah Wright to work on Playground Inspections.

Diana Orler made a motion to adjourn the meeting with Bob Chard seconding.

Meeting adjourned at 4:34 PM.

**Next Parks Projects Workshop:** Scheduled only if a need arises.

**Next PAB Meeting:** May 24, 2016

Respectfully Submitted,

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Sarah Wright, Parks Manager

Reviewed by the Board of County Commissioners this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_,  
2016.

**Board of County Commissioners**

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*Cherryl Walker, Chair*

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*K. O. Heck, Vice Chair*

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*Simon G. Hare, Commissioner*