



Parks & Recreation

Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes March 13, 2025

Committee Members present:

Position #1	Jay Ego	✓
Position #2	Mary Mejia-Weaver	✓
Position #3	Hunter Tibbals	✓
Position #4	Carlisle Harrison	✓
Youth Advisor(s)	Yaneisy Perez	_____

Position #5	Erica Juarez	_____
Position #6	Angel Aguilar	_____
Position #7	Doug Minton	✓

City Representatives:

Jackie Myers, <i>Council Representative</i>	✓
Maria Duron, <i>Council Representative</i>	_____
Brandon Artz, <i>Parks & Recreation, Director</i>	✓

Kelly Schwirse, <i>Parks & Recreation, Admin</i>	_____
Kasia Robbins, <i>Parks & Recreation, Coordinator</i>	✓
Dylan Westfall, <i>Parks & Recreation, Coordinator</i>	_____

Members of the Public:

Meeting Commencement

Meeting called to order with a quorum. Agenda turned over to Brandon.

Introductions

Introductions of committee members:

- Brandon Arts, Parks and Recreation Director.
- Cardinal Harrison, part of the initial park and Rec Committee in the late 60s.
- Kasia Robbins, Recreation Manager.
- Jackie Myers, City Council Rep.
- Hunter Tibbles, Chairman.
- Mary Weaver, Parks and Rec Committee member.
- Doug Minton, new committee member.
- Jay Ego, new committee member.

Parks and Recreation Committee Purpose

- The Parks and Recreation Committee advises and oversees the Parks and Recreation Department helping to make decisions on projects and gives recommendations from the community.
- Members gather input, review, and recommend policies, operational and capital budget needs, and potential recreational spaces and programs.
- Meetings follow Robert's Rules of Order, but are generally informal.

Approval of Minutes

- Motion to approve the minutes from November, Seconded.
- No quorum in January, no minutes from January.
- February was a special event, so no minutes from February.
- No meetings in December.
- Motion Approval, Motion passes.

TRT Committee Recommendation

- Brandon recommends Hunter be on the TRT (Transient Room Tax) committee.
- TRT funds come from hotels and Parks and Recreation and are distributed throughout the city. Part of the funding goes into a grant.



Parks & Recreation

Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes March 13, 2025

- The TRT committee reviews applications for the grant every June.
- The budget for the TRT grant is recommended to be \$101,000 this year, up from \$85,000 last year.

The TRT committee is made up of:

- Hermiston Chamber of Commerce president (Val Hoxie).
- A hotelier (Jim Wally).
- A city council member (David McCarthy).
- A representative from the Parks and Recreation Committee.
- A citizen at large (Helen Nevin).
- Hunter is voted onto the committee.
- The TRT committee will be meeting tonight.

Recreation Coordinator

- Michelle Mack has been hired as the Recreation Coordinator. She comes from the Echo school district and has a background in coaching volleyball and working within schools. Her start date is technically the 17th, but she is already working. Michelle is also currently working with a core group of kids at Echo and will transition away as they find a replacement.
- Next committee meeting, she will be introduced.

Harkenrider Basement Renovation

- A ribbon cutting for the Harkenrider basement renovation was held on February 13 the renovation includes a multi-use area for meetings and events.
- There are already rentals coming up, including a baby shower with 60 people and a wedding in July.
- Tricia Wattenburger rented the entire facility for a fiber fest, which was "really cool" and filled the space.
- The Niman reception was held there.

ARC and Harkenrider Center

- The police department moved into the ARC building during renovations, displacing the ARC.
- The ARC will be moving into the basement area of the Harkenrider Center until their space is available.
- The city spent about \$400,000 upgrading the ARC, including new ramps and siding.

Senior Center and Parks and Rec

- A temporary receptionist from Parks and Rec is helping Judy and Willard at the Senior Center on Mondays and Wednesdays.
- The city wants to take a more active role in running the Senior Center, as Judy and Willard have been volunteering for a long time and are experiencing health issues.
- The goal is to use the building efficiently and bring in new programs.

Indoor Health and Wellness Center Task Force

- A task force including representatives from Umatilla, Stanfield, Echo, and Good Shepherd is exploring the possibility of an indoor aquatic center.
- The city cannot afford to build or run the center alone and is seeking partners.
- City Manager Smith is meeting with potential partners to determine their level of interest and financial contribution.
- Public outreach with more information will occur in April/May, with a full report in July.

Potential Aquatic Center Sites

- The task force has narrowed down potential sites, including hospital sites and the current pool location.
- Options for the current pool include building adjacent to it or putting a bubble over it.
- The consultants are reviewing recommendations and cost figures.



Parks & Recreation

Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes March 13, 2025

- The outdoor pool's future is uncertain if a new center is built elsewhere, with possibilities including a skate park or sale.
- The current outdoor pool has a 75-78% cost recovery.

Indoor Aquatics

- The city subsidizes 25% of pool operations.
- A new venue with 70-75% cost recovery is not feasible for the city.
- Combining everything at the current pool site would require significant upgrades and securing/enclosing the outdoor-built structure.
- Building off-site raises questions about the current site's future. Building onto the parking lot and moving the parking lot to the Good Shepherd area is a possibility.

Forestry Grant

- The city has a million-dollar forestry grant that is currently on hold due to the new Trump administration.
- Arbor Pro conducted an assessment and public tree inventory, but operations have stopped pending clearance to spend the funds.
- The grant agency is reimbursing checks, so they will wait another month to see if they can move forward.
- The grant will fund a public tree inventory, tree condition assessments, a tree planting plan, and a tree mitigation plan.

Harrison Park

- Forms have been laid for a ramp to the gazebo and for new park benches and trash cans near the basketball courts.
- Cameras have been installed but are not yet functional due to the need to trench from the charter pedestal to the pump house.
- Kriss Dammeyer will set a date for a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Pickleball Courts

- Fence posts are in, the grade has been completed, and the fence outline is done.
- Concrete work is scheduled to begin in April, weather permitting.
- Volunteers are working on the landscape area, digging out for concrete pathways.
- There will be ten courts, including the first ADA-accessible courts in the northwest. A small tournament is planned initially, with a larger one potentially run by a group from the Tri-Cities area.

Pickleball Courts

- The path running through the middle is open to the public, not just players. There will be paddle holders and potentially benches or picnic tables.
- The area is enclosed with 10-foot fencing and will be closed off when not in use.
- The Hermiston Pickleball Club will have priority, with a contract/agreement in progress.
- The club may hold up to two tournaments a year.
- The city can hold kids clinics.
- The goal is for the courts to be heavily used, but events will be scheduled.
- The Hermiston Pickleball Club is helping build the courts and giving them to the city.
- The aim is to keep courts available for public play, even during rentals.

Parks and Rec Updates

- Swim lesson registrations: 360 individuals registered, generating \$53,000 in revenue.



Parks & Recreation

Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes March 13, 2025

- Riverfront Park: The Read and Walk trail, donated by the Altrusa Club, is finished.
- Ribbon cutting on Saturday at 10:30.
- Skate park: Grass is installed.
- Parkmeyer center basement is done.
- Horizon Park: Work on the playground and basketball court will begin later this month.

Upcoming Programs

- Daddy Daughter dance next week.
- Cast and Catch Kids Fishing Derby: April 5.
- Arbor Day tree giveaway by Carlisle and the Rotary group: April 5. The giveaway started as a park and rec project. The Rotary Club took over financing and help in 1990. Six different tree varieties will be given away. The event is scheduled for 9:00 AM, but people line up as early as 8:00 AM.
- Recycling, hazardous household waste collection: May 17.

Cimarron Park Renaming Discussion

- Cimarron Park is in the Cimarron Trail/Terrace development near Loma Vista.
- Surveys were sent to the community online and to Loma Vista, Sunset, Helena Can
- Sunset, and Highland Hills Elementary School.
- The goal is to rename the park, similar to renaming Legacy Park to Horizon Park last year.
- Community survey results are available, including a note from Chief Edmiston about Studebaker.

Initial Suggestions and Considerations

- There's interest in naming the park after Randy Studebaker and incorporating a "wetland" theme.
- Suggestion: Studebaker Wetland Park or Trail.
- The area includes a park area and a wetland area with a trail and the entire area is considered the Cimarron Recreation Area.
- Survey results indicated preferences for naming after a person (42%), geographical feature (17%), location (13%), or plant/animal.

Top Name Contenders

- Randy Studebaker received 31 nominations in the survey.
- Other names mentioned: Sherman, Walshley.
- Initial top two names: Studebaker and Sherman.
- The committee will table the discussion for a month to further consider the options.

Additional Points

- These notes were taken with Minutes AI (<https://myminutes.ai>)
- Randy Studebaker was a police officer who died of cancer.
- Suggestion to name the parkland "Studebaker Park" and the trail something else.
- Rod Herndon advocated for creating a park (now Carlisle Park) when kids were playing
- soccer in the street.

Park Project

- Speaker recalls a situation where there was no money allocated for the park the following year. There was \$7,500 available. The speaker decided to use the money for a sprinkler system, FFA kids were the primary workforce for projects. They were hardworking, had equipment, and often brought their fathers. After tilling, the land was rocky and kids helped remove rocks from the field, Jared Boucher seeded the field, kids picked up the remaining rocks.
- A "samoric party" (hot dog party) was organized to get the kids to pick up the remaining small rocks.
- The park was named Harrison Park. The speaker joked about not being dead yet, as the policy was not to name parks after living people. The park was built for \$7,500.



Parks & Recreation

Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes March 13, 2025

Meeting Adjournment

- The speaker asks if anyone has anything to add.
- The meeting is adjourned.

These notes were taken with Minutes AI (<https://myminutes.ai>)

DRAFT