



# **PARKS AND TRAILS COMMISSION**

Monday, October 12, 2020 at 4:00 PM

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## **MINUTES**

### **PRESENT**

Chair Carmin Dunn  
Vice Chair Elisa Mann  
Commissioner Howard Blumenthal  
Commissioner John Brewington  
Commissioner Jacob Woodruff  
Commissioner Lynne Pettit  
Commissioner Jerry Belcher

### **ABSENT**

Commissioner Walter Fowler  
Commissioner Paul Barlow

### **STAFF PRESENT**

Sue Nelson  
Doug Morten  
Sheri Ingram  
Thad Houk  
Shanna Duggan  
Ginny Carlson  
Matt Brown

### **OTHERS PRESENT**

Jason Smith, CREST

**CALL TO ORDER** – 4:02 P.M.

### **APPROVE MINUTES**

1. Approve Minutes of September 14, 2020

**Motion** made by Commissioner Brewington, Seconded by Commissioner Pettit to approve the Minutes of September 14, 2020.

Voting Yea: Chair Dunn, Vice Chair Mann, Commissioner Blumenthal, Commissioner Brewington, Commissioner Woodruff, Commissioner Pettit

**TOPICS FROM THE FLOOR:** From attendees not otherwise of the agenda

**COUNCILOR'S REPORT**

Morten said Belcher has been instrumental in working on the Urban Trail and there has been a lot of time put into how it could work out and function in an urban environment. The Parks Commission has been on the right track with developing an urban trail and he hopes it will get some traction with staff. He would like to see someone on the staff take the lead and get traction on it. Dunn asked how they get movement on it and Morten said he thought Nelson could take it back to staff meetings. We are a small community and we should be able to make it happen.

Dunn said we have made motions before so do they need to make a new one? Nelson said she does not have staff capacity at this time and won't until maybe early next year because of other current projects that are time sensitive. She has a large construction project ready to start and three fast-track projects ready to go out the door in the next few weeks that are going to take quite a bit of time. She does not have staff capacity to walk this through right now and she knows Houk doesn't either since he is short-staffed.

Morten asked if Duggan was aggressively looking at developing trails in the recreation sector. Duggan said her trail involvement is just recreational so she is not involved in planning trails. Morten asked if she would be interested in that and she said she would have to look into it to see what it involves. She is with the Recreation Department which is separate from Parks. Morten talked to Barlow about new trails and he said he is slammed for time. Brewington asked if Parks and Parks & Rec were both out of the general fund and Morten said that is correct. Morten said Parks & Trails has already come up with a plan for an urban trail and he doesn't think the roadblocks are that big of a hurdle to get over. Brewington suggests they make it an action item to Council.

Blumenthal says we have the basic trail designed and with the new steps at Grey Cliffs Park and the new 5<sup>th</sup> Street Trail, he thinks we just need signage and delineation on a few streets. The biggest hurdle is we need a little bit of staff time. Signage should be under tourism so we should be able to tap some of that money.

Belcher said that over a year ago they came up with a plan for the urban trail and last week he went for a walk with Rachael Barry and she is in favor of it. It promotes the city and gives people a place to exercise and he thinks it would bring money in here. The thing he keeps harping on is they spent a lot of time designing the figure eight and he thinks we should get one loop done and then they can start adding things to it.

Pettit said we need to make sure we get public access at south end of Dalton Lake and Madrona Ct. It would give a lot of people on the south end of town access.

Dunn said the biggest roadblock is not enough staff to accomplish things. Is there a possibility for suggesting the City add additional Parks staff so we can explore these things. Morten said he brought up Recreation and Tourism so there are other people on staff who can help with planning and identify what is needed to get this going.

Carlson had a conversation with Morten and she is getting calls from citizens on recreational opportunities for kids in lieu of P.E. and we have a huge resource on trails already in existence and she was embarrassed she couldn't find any info to direct them. She could take people to them but there is not an easy way to get info. There was public input in the wayfinding program and info was given on the trails and lots of citizens were at the town hall meetings. She knows that info was put on a map so she knows there's information about the current trail inventory somewhere and she knows there used to be a trail brochure. If we had an inventory, we could go off the plan Belcher had and get grants to

implement it. She doesn't know how long we will be distance learning but she wants the community to see all of the work they have done.

Dunn thought Brown was updating website info and Nelson said he reformatted brochure and it is on the website on the Parks page and a lot of the trails are on the brochure. Blumenthal said maybe they could do walking tours after Covid is over. Carlson suggested they do a "Trail of the Month". Belcher said most of the trails are bits and pieces and the urban trail they designed hooks a lot of them up. Carlson said she is a walker and she doesn't think people realize that there are paths at PUD and Scappoose Bay and by the animal shelter. We have a bigger regional draw for outdoor recreation than we realize.

Belcher said the big issue is money and people to make it happen and Morten said big issue is taking it to staff and getting it done. He wants to go forward, no excuses. If staff has to drop what they are doing and pick up the pieces and go forward, that is what he is going to ask them to do.

**Motion** made by Commissioner Blumenthal, Seconded by Commissioner Brewington to ask the City Council and Staff to look at the Urban Trail proposal and move it forward.

Voting Yea: Chair Dunn, Vice Chair Mann, Commissioner Belcher, Commissioner Blumenthal, Commissioner Brewington, Commissioner Pettit

Morten said one of the highlights of past year was meeting up with Jason Smith of CREST and Pettit and touring Dalton Lake to see what can be done.

Carlson said she wanted to make sure the all-inclusive playground didn't get lost in the weeds and they overthink it. She had a project that she took to Thad and had him use his expertise and take the lead and the project came out flawlessly with Public Works staff and they got it done. She thinks we forget what a resource he is and what knowledge he has. He has a lot of knowledge and is a champion for inclusion and she wants to make sure his work is not diminished. She heard he had it ready to go and they changed paths. She wants to make sure it doesn't get lost.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### 2. CREST - Proposals for Dalton Lake Restoration - Jason Smith

Jason Smith is with the Columbia River Estuary Study Task Force. They are a Council of Governments and they serve local governments surrounding the Columbia River Estuary with a variety of services. They have an in-house planner and monitoring crew that monitors pre and post restoration monitoring and they have a crew of habitat restoration managers and that is what he is. In the past ten years, they have mainly been assisting Bonneville Power Administration and the Army Corps of Engineers in salmon recovery. They formed in 1974 and members include jurisdictions in Oregon and Washington. Salmon habitat is very important to the culture and economy. The power system and 13 dams have had a huge impact on the 13 salmon and steelhead species in the Columbia River. There are a series of mitigation measures required and one is restoring habitat in Columbia River estuaries. Dalton Lake fits into this. They want to build upon all nearby restoration projects and make this stretch of river high quality for salmon because as they head upstream, there are no restoration opportunities in Portland. Dalton Lake doesn't have fish access right now and has been on the radar for some time but it has taken a while to get to it because it's more technical. Salmon tend to find things very quickly no matter how long it has been blocked off. They have put out an RFP for consultants and received proposals from six firms. They have worked with most of them before and any one of them would do a great job. He wants to know if any of them would be interested in being on the scoring board and they can all go through all of the proposals. They have a scoring system to pick the best candidate. He can

get the proposals to all of them if they would like even if they aren't on the scoring committee so they can see the levels of expertise of these firms.

Belcher said he would like to be on the scoring committee.

3. Park of the Month

Belcher asked for it to be on the agenda. It was brought up at the last meeting but the Communications Officer is out on leave but they could discuss it and see where people want to go. Brewington said maybe we should wait until the first of the year. Dunn said we should wait until King is back and have a discussion with her? Blumenthal thought it would be good to put in the monthly newsletter. They requested it be put on agenda in January.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

4. All-Inclusive Playground Equipment

Dunn said we got MODA funding of \$37,000. It is half MODA/half Blazers. Nelson said we are trying to fast track this as much as we can. We all appreciated the research Houk did when we first looked at this but we didn't have as much all-inclusive components as much as now because the MODA grant didn't exist early on. We also, by law, have to get competitive bids and we have a lot more eyes on this project because of MODA and we have been getting contact from vendors who have participated before so we need to make sure we do this legally and go through the correct procurement process. We have to make sure it is right for the space and right for the community and that is where the input of Houk and Duggan has come in. Since we found out we won, we have been looking at types of equipment that are available. Last week, she and Dunn and Duggan went to Portland and looked at some all-inclusive playgrounds including another one that was funded by MODA. She showed pictures of equipment they had taken at the parks and talked about the different features. They are examples of the types of things they would like to install. They have contacts with the different manufacturers that are approved by the State and we will give a list of what we want and they will come up with a layout and cost. Fall protection is going to be a big part of it. She put up a map of McCormick of where it is proposed to go. We know our budget and basic type of equipment and should have some sort of a plan by the next meeting. Our budget is about \$200,000. This is another reason we have to go through the proper channels for such a large purchase. Dunn said Parks members will get to do scoring. Nelson asked if they wanted to have a group of Parks Comm & staff or do they want to do it as a whole Commission? Belcher said he wanted to be part of the committee and are they going to have some citizens on it? Nelson said that depends on what they want to do. They are trying to get it done as soon as possible so it's good to get feedback but could take more time if they were in on selecting pieces. Duggan said they should just have it on the agenda so people can provide feedback that way. She asked Brown if they could announce how much the MODA grant was for and an update so they may do a small article on that.

5. Master Plan List Additions - None

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

Duggan said they are still doing Let's Play every week and rotating parks. They have been getting the most participants at Godfrey and Campbell. That is providing a theme and physical activity for elementary age kids. They just started a Nature Buddies program for small children ages 1-4 walking on trails at McCormick.

Blumenthal had 22 ladies from Portland Garden Club out last week to see the park and where some of the \$500 grant money is going. They will have their semi-annual work party first Saturday in November with plants from a native plant nursery on Sauvies Island. People will bring their own tools and snacks because of COVID. He saw a large buck laying down in the park the other day. He said there is more dumping than ever at Grey Cliffs so they need to figure out something better than calling Code Enforcement.

Woodruff has noticed more people in McCormick Park, especially in the skate park. And they filmed a Netflix show there.

Pettit said surveyors came out and put stakes on the north end of the Dalton Lake property. Nelson shared pics of them to show how far people in the neighborhood are encroached on the property. Morten thinks Columbia City needs to be aware of it so they can deal with it.

She said the kiosk, bike racks, benches are going to get installed in the next couple of weeks weather permitting.

**OTHER BUSINESS****ADJOURNMENT**

5:43