



PARKS AND TRAILS COMMISSION

SPECIAL MEETING

Wednesday, May 29, 2024 at 4:00 PM

DRAFT MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT

Chair Lynne Pettit
Commissioner Howard Blumenthal
Vice Chair Scott Jacobson
Commissioner Dana Lathrope
Commissioner Nick Hellmich
Commissioner Reid Herman

MEMBERS ABSENT

Commissioner Jacob Woodruff
Commissioner Paul Barlow
Commissioner Jerry Belcher

STAFF PRESENT

Brandon Sundeen, City Councilor
Melisa Gaelrun-Maggi, Parks Administrative Assistant
Buck Tupper

CALL TO ORDER 4pm

OPENING COMMENTS FROM CHAIR PETTIT

Pettit went over her recollection of events on this topic from February to present. She also laid out how she would like the meeting to go and laid out her agenda. She then turned the floor over to Councilor Sundeen.

Sundeen thanked everyone for coming and expressed that he thinks it is a worthwhile project but feels everyone should work together. He mentioned that he is already aware of a proposal that Jacobson has to move forward.

Jacobson made a motion to propose a different approach to the Milton Creek Woodland Reserve project. Herman seconded. All voted yea.

Jacobson would like to make it an entire Parks & Trails commission project instead of a sub-committee project with no project chair. He would like to make it a standing agenda item and put together a plan draft. He sees this as an opportunity to expand the project beyond the Master Plan and partner with the Port. He would like a unified front and a fresh start. Jacobson asked for questions and discussion.

Hellmich asked who the interested stakeholders would be. Jacobson mentioned the Port and said that Pettit had some parties interested as well.

Lathrope feels that this approach is better so that they can review the video and minutes from the meetings instead of word of mouth from those who could not attend.

Pettit wants to make sure the name of this project is not the same as her project. She believes the name was changed previously in a sub-committee meeting to "trail". Jacobson stated he never agreed to change the name. Sundeen thinks that the name of the project should be agreed upon by everyone at this time going forward. Lathrope feels that this sort of past nuance is not the collaboration that is needed to make this project cohesive.

Hellmich asked what the current name is. Pettit stated that the name was changed to "City of St. Helens and Port of Columbia County Proposed Joint Milton Creek Trail Project" so that it wouldn't be confused with her project and presentation. Hellmich said that seemed like too much of a mouthful.

Lathrope said that Pettit has mentioned "her" project twice now and is confused as to why they are having this meeting if Pettit is doing her own thing for the same area. Pettit stated that she has been working on her project for some time now and it is for a "reserve" not a "trail". Pettit feels that this meeting is about clarifying the name of the "trail" project not joining the projects. Blumenthal said they should be one in the same. Lathrope does not feel she can support a commissioner doing their own separate individual project when the rest of the group is working on something else. Jacobson was surprised that Pettit's individual project has become so extensive.

Hellmich asked if they can at least agree on a name. Jacobson and Lathrope don't feel that the name is the issue. Lathrope is more concerned that the commission can't agree what aspects the group is working on and if the group is putting forth a unified message. Lathrope does not feel that Pettit should be going out on her own. Jacobson and Blumenthal agreed. Pettit stated it was already decided when an HB3115 statement was written up in June to the Planning Commission.

Lathrope and the rest of the commission have no recollection of this statement. Blumenthal feels that is in the past and they should move forward unified. Pettit says she does not understand where everyone is getting the idea that her project should be joined with the rest of the group.

Lathrope asked Pettit directly if she would combine the projects and work cooperatively. Pettit said that the commission has always worked cooperatively. Lathrope asked again because she felt that was not a direct answer. Pettit responded that back when she was on the Urban Trail sub-committee the process was followed. Jacobson stated that in the March meeting there was discussion about approaching the Port. Pettit said she didn't know that because she was on vacation. Jacobson said it was in the meeting video. Pettit said that it wasn't in the minutes. (Secretary note: there is mention of Jacobson discussing the Milton Creek Project in

the approved march minutes.) Jacobson reminded her that the minutes are not a word for word recount and that he also emailed her.

Pettit began to recount her recollections of the past events of this topic again, Jacobson interrupted to say that if they are going to continue to rehash the past there is no reason to continue the meeting.

Sundeen suggested that they all work together and that maybe Pettit's project could be phase one and they move forward together into phase two similar to the way the city is doing the Riverwalk project in phases.

Lathrope made a motion to dissolve the old sub-committee and adopt the new project approach as outlined by Jacobson and that the scope includes all things related to the Milton Creek area and any actions the Parks & Trails Commission takes in that area.

Hellmich seconded.

Open for discussion.

All voted yea

Pettit moved on to the next agenda item which was "the renaming of the project".

Jacobson pointed out that the motion just made the rest of the agenda irrelevant, and he feels they should move to adjourn the meeting.

Pettit stated that she had some things she wrote and wanted to read about the scope of the project.

Lathrope pointed out that they just settled all of that. Pettit said that she didn't get to address any of it. Lathrope pointed out that there was time for discussion. Pettit told Lathrope to "calm down" and continued to read her statement that the projects should remain separate and should continue to remain separate.

Jacobson told Pettit that her comment to Lathrope was unfair.

Pettit stated that there needed to be a motion to put the project on the next agenda. She was corrected by multiple members. Pettit interrupted Lathrope to ask if anyone else had comments before she adjourns.

Lathrope made a public statement that the current Chair Lynn Pettit's behavior is unkind and inappropriate, and she wanted to discuss how to move forward. Pettit spoke over her and said she didn't get to read her paper. Jacobson spoke up and said that Lathrope just made a public comment, and it should be addressed. Pettit spoke over him and asked if anyone had anything else. Sundeen stated that the concerns should be addressed and now is the time and place to speak up if there are any issues.

Jacobson and Lathrope both feel that the current chair has been speaking over other commissioners and limiting their ability to speak up at meetings.

They pointed out multiple ways in the code of ethics that the current chair Lynne Pettit has blocked open discussion, been controlling, refused to recognize a commission member, mistranslated the rules, and arbitrarily delaying discussions.

Lathrope is unsure how to move forward and would like to talk to HR to not make it public.

Jacobson made a motion to end the meeting.

Pettit adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT 4:50pm