

City of St. Helens
Parks & Trails Commission
July 13, 2020

Members Present: Carmin Dunn
Jerry Belcher
Howard Blumenthal
Paul Barlow
Lynne Pettit
Walter Fowler

Members Absent: Jacob Woodruff
John Brewington
Elisa Mann

Staff Present: Sue Nelson
Thad Houk
Doug Morten
Sheri Ingram
Jenny Dimsho
Shanna Duggan

Others Present: Caroline Skinner

1) **Call Meeting to Order – 4:03PM**

2) **Approval of Minutes**

2.A Approve Minutes of June 8, 2020

Motion: Upon Howard Blumenthal's motion and Carmin Dunn's second, the Commission approved the Minutes of June 8, 2020. [Ayes: Howard Blumenthal, Carmin Dunn, Jerry Belcher, Walter Fowler, Paul Barlow, Lynne Pettit; Nays: None]

3) **Topics from the Floor: From attendees not otherwise on the agenda**

Caroline Skinner said they had their annual native plant walk and had 9 to 10 guests. They all wore their masks and walked in a big circle so it was one direction with a short spur up the 5th Street ROW to see the new boardwalk. The Native Plant Society is interested in a native plant walk at Dalton. During the first six months of the year, they donated approximately 100 hours at the park and thanks to Blumenthal for all the weed whacking. She is still hoping, after this year, to get City staff to mow once a year from the park entrance to 3rd Street and back. The City build the 5th Street Trail with zero plan for maintenance so Blumenthal weed-whacked it because it was getting overgrown. She is wondering if the corrections crew could take care of that. Houk said the corrections crew did come and work in McCormick a little this weekend for the first time in months because of COVID. They can't transport them so they have to walk to where they work. Parks has three people and no summer help. Skinner said she understands

resources are limited and it is a long range hope and we don't even know if they will be able to next year but she wanted to plant the seed. Nelson said they are all on board and agrees it is a perfect activity for corrections and we will have to see how it plays out in the future.

Shanna Duggan said the Recreation Department, Parks, the library and Public Works all partnered together and put in a story stroll at McCormick Park that is 20 pages long. She has been going over twice a day to make sure everything is where it should be and has gotten a lot of great feedback. She would like to put in something more permanent so they can change out the stories every few months and put in events. She has a few partners who would possibly donate materials. Dunn said she thinks it's a great idea especially with uncertainty of school and would like to see it go permanent. Duggan said they have thought of other locations but are focusing on McCormick right now because of their limited resources. She would also like them to let her know if anyone sees any vandalism out there.

4) **Councilor's Report**

Morten stated he noticed some civic groups are meeting outdoors in the parks and that is exciting to see. Congratulations to Skinner and group for making Nob Hill so fantastic. Sand Island was totally full over the 4th of July holiday. There are 50-60 campsites and they were full. There are a lot of people using it for day use and lots of boats. It's functioning well and our Parks crew doesn't have to go over and clean it up now which was a big drain.

The grow operation at Boise is doing really well and has sold out of their inventory. They apparently have the highest quality on the west coast. They have decided to give a stipend to the City for parks, police and education. Dunn asked if he knew how much it would be and when we would get it and what specifically it could be used for and he said we won't have information until they sign their contract. It was supposed to be done six months ago but has been going back and forth between the attorneys.

He had some calls about the Veterans Memorial and he is asking for volunteers. He asked about that at a Veterans meeting and it went nowhere. It is an icon that needs to be kept up so if you know if any volunteers who would like to take it on, let him know. It would be good to focus a group in the Veteran's Plaza especially on holidays. Dunn asked if we had thought about reaching out to local businesses to sponsor a park or part of a park for a year. Morten said it is a good idea and they have reached out the civic groups.

5) **New Business**

6) **Old Business**

6.A Annual Report to Council Reminder - July 15th at the 1:00 p.m. work session.

6.B Dalton Lake Nature Preserve Update

Pettit is still waiting for a lot of things to come together but had a friends work party on June 27th and had 10 people show up. They focused on getting ivy off trees and filled several bags. They had two people show up from Canby who saw it on-line and they want to be notified of these things in the future. She created a spreadsheet for volunteer names and hours worked so she could provide a report in January. Everyone signed volunteer forms. Plant and bird lists will be

laminated and hung on the kiosks. They are waiting for the bench, bike rack and repair station for the installation and she is thinking by the end of August. She would like to have a ribbon cutting ceremony and invite the Commissioners. It is a big deal for the City and if she can get it done, she will let the City know by next month. Native species signs were going to be put along the trail and that is still in the works. They are still trying to figure out size and color and should be good to go next month.

6.C Master Plan List Additions

Blumenthal said there is a rental house at end of 4th St and people keep moving in and out. It was said the property line was 6 to 7 feet off the side of the building. He is wondering if in the Master Plan the can we get some way to identify parks property lines and get some rocks put in there because renters are driving trailers 15 to 20 feet beyond that. Dunn thought that would be helpful for the Botanical Gardens too. Blumenthal said renters are bringing stuff in and parking things in what would be considered the park. Dunn said that is something we should address outside the Master Plan as it should be taken care of sooner. Nelson said it would be hard to know exactly where property lines are and they could only guesstimate with GIS. If they start using it for permanent storage we could get code enforcement involved.

Dunn said they had talked about doing addendums to the Master Plan and she was going to draft something up but hasn't had time yet.

7) Discussion Items

Fowler wondered about putting a swing in the tree at Walnut Tree Park but Morten said that would be an insurance liability with something being put up that isn't certified safe.

Belcher asked Dimsho if she was still pursuing funds for the boardwalk and if she could give an update. She said two grants are pending with an ask of \$1 million for Riverwalk and they would be matched with a City contribution for a total \$1.5 million for phase one which would be focused on park improvements and the start of the boardwalk and is about 1100 feet to just outside Columbia View Park. Future phases will cover the rest of the property. One grant is federal and they have to get reviewed by National Park Service and that has been delayed. Not sure if because of COVID so we are holding right now. We have been calling it Riverwalk in the grant applications. The other is a State grant funded by lottery funds and with the COVID shut-down and lottery funds being down, that one is questionable at this point. They are supposed to make presentations to the State in September or October and they will base their decisions on those presentations.

Blumenthal hopes urban trail hasn't fallen off the grid since 5th Street trail has been done and stairs at Grey Cliffs. He wants to make sure it keeps going. We need to publicize it more maybe with a pamphlet.

He asked if there are more of the Parks pamphlets available for him to hand out and Nelson said she would have to see if they have them or would have to have them printed. Pettit can send him a copy of what they put up at Dalton Lake.

Morten said as far as the Master Plan, he is interested in seeing something aggressive on beefing up our bike lanes. He is disappointed in limited access bikes have to go from Point A to Point B in our City. Barlow said last time he looked at it, it had been addressed in the Master Plan so he isn't sure what extent Morten is referring to. He thought it had been addresses pretty well but he will take a look at it. Nelson said it is in the Transportation Plan.

Belcher said he doesn't want the Urban trail to go away either. He and his wife went on a road trip to Hood River and they have the Indian Creek Trail. People do go out and look for other places to go so it would be a way to advertise our town.

Barlow said there has been some minor vandalism at BMX track recently, nothing serious. There was a window busted and a door ripped off a building and gutters torn off. No one stealing anything, just being destructive. There seems to always be someone down there using it.

Pettit said that in the proposal was gaining access or actually buying out property so that we have a southern access to Dalton and was wondering if there was any progress made on that down there that he knows of and Morten said not that he knows if and he will chat with her afterwards.

Dunn asked Nelson if letter to marine board was signed and she said they decided not to pursue that grant option because Dimsho talked to the Marine Board and they have engineering services available outside of the grant process that are basically free so they decided it would be a better value to utilize that to get something designed so they have an idea of a scope to move forward with applying for a grant. Dimsho will check in with Marine Board this month.

Dunn said they talked about garbage can issues before and we were going to place cans and report back. Blumenthal said they locked one to a bench half way down and it is getting used.

Fowler said he was looking through Master Plan and down at the marina there was an idea to create a clamshell for music near the courthouse. Nelson said there was a plan to replace the gazebo with a multi-function stage. Dimsho said it is not included in the grants but may be designed in tandem with the boardwalk and she is sure in the design stage, there will be public involvement on it and the clamshell photo was just something she used as an example. Nelson said there was a press release about Wauna Credit Union renewing their partnership with funding 13 Nights – it has been an ongoing partnership.

Pettit said in trying to keep monthly work groups going at Dalton they are going to try to have one on July 25th. Fowler said he would like to help and Pettit said she will post it on the Friends of Dalton Lake Facebook page as an event.

Duggan said she is working with the Police Dept. to see what they can do with excess bike inventory. If anyone on this Commission would be interested in helping to repair some of them. They would like to do something super simple like giving them away to people who sign up to get them out to the community. Dunn said she's not good at repairs but she would be happy to help look through them or anything else they need help with. Blumenthal asked if there was still

a little money left form the Bike & Pedestrian budget and Barlow said there should be a few hundred left. Duggan said she can store helmets at the Rec Center.

8) **Other Business**

9) **Adjournment – 5:04PM**

Respectfully submitted by Sheri Ingram