



CITY OF SWEET HOME PARKS & TREE COMMITTEE MINUTES

July 16, 2025, 8:30 AM

3225 Main Street, Sweet Home, OR 97386

WIFI Passcode: guestwifi

PLEASE silence all cell phones – Anyone who wishes to speak, please sign in.

Mission Statement

The City of Sweet Home will work to build an economically strong community with an efficient and effective local government that will provide infrastructure and essential services to the citizens we serve. As efficient stewards of the valuable assets available, we will be responsive to the community while planning and preparing for the future.

Meeting Information

The City of Sweet Home is streaming the meeting via the Microsoft Teams platform and asks the public to consider this option. There will be opportunity for public input via the live stream. To view the meeting live, online visit <http://live.sweethomeor.gov>. If you don't have access to the internet you can call in to 971-203-2871, and enter the meeting ID to be logged in to the call. Meeting ID: #278 852 022 483

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was called to order at 8:32 AM

Roll Call of Park and Tree Committee Members:

PRESENT:

Member Scott Swanson
Member Matthew Bechtel
Chairman Wally Shreves
Member Lena Tucker
Member Nancy Patton
Member Debra Northern
City Councilor Aaron Hegge

STAFF:

Angela Clegg, Planning & Building Manager
Greg Springman, Public Works Director
Amber Steinborn, Planning & Building Permit Tech
Adam Leisinger, Special Projects Manager

GUESTS:

Chairwoman Candice Snyder, Beautification Committee
Jeff Parker, 1300 1st Avenue, Sweet Home, Oregon 97386
Marvin Hult, 1715 Fir Street, Sweet Home, Oregon 97386

Time Reports

A sign-up sheet was circulated for members to record their participation times for the Strawberry Festival parade over the weekend. Members were also encouraged to record additional hours spent on parade-related tasks, such as float -building, to ensure hours are accurately logged. Chairman Shreves directed members to turn in Time Reports to Manager Clegg.

Meeting Minutes

The location of the meeting is accessible to the disabled. If you have a disability that requires accommodation, advanced notice is requested by notifying the City Manager's Office at 541-367-8969.

a) 2025-06-18 Park & Tree Committee Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve June 18, 2025, Meeting Minutes as amended was made by Member Tucker. Member Patton seconded the motion.

Voting Yea: Member Swanson, Member Bechtel, Member Tucker, Member Patton, Member Northern

Voting Nay: None

Absent: Member Swanson (arrived late at 8:50 am, not present for vote)

Public Comment. This is an opportunity for members of the public to address the Park and Tree Committee on topics that are not listed on the agenda.

Jeff Parker made a heart-felt request, on behalf of the community-members in his neighborhood, for approval to install a memorial bench at Strawberry Park, located off Westwood Lane. The bench would honor the memory of Roger Sherman, a long-time resident of Westwood Lane, who passed away in February. Mr. Sherman was described as an “adopted grandpa” figure, who had a deep appreciation for the outdoors and the local park community. The bench would serve as a tribute to his love of the park and its environment. Mr. Parker emphasized that fellow neighbors in the community would contribute financially toward the bench, including the cost of a commemorative plaque. Mr. Parker mentioned that his daughter would be involved in creating the plaque. The committee was also asked to consider appropriate placement of the bench to maximize viewing enjoyment; while ensuring it did not interfere with Public Works operations. The committee expressed support, discussing possible tree planting nearby to complement the bench.

Marvin Hult raised concerns regarding the South Hills trail, which he reported walking multiple times per day. Mr. Holt discussed herbicide being sprayed along the South Hills trail, urging the Committee to prohibit Public Works, or any other individuals, from spraying herbicides where dogs and people walk. Mr. Holt also pointed out that several trees have been cut down and removed on the upper part of the South Hills trail, between 5th Avenue and the 1st Avenue, leaving a large gap in trees on the trail. Mr. Holt suggested replanting to restore the natural-feel. The committee explained that part of the trail borders private property, limiting their ability to intervene, but agreed to have Public Works inspect the area.

Old Business

Beautification Committee Update: Beautification Committee Chairwoman Candy Snyder provided an update, indicating that the Committee did not meet in July, but plans to reconvene in August. Volunteer engagement continues to be a priority, with only one new participant emerging from recent planting events and parade involvement. Chairwoman Snyder reported that the main volunteer push remains scheduled for May, the primary planting season, but ongoing weed removal efforts continue throughout the year. Volunteer registration and waiver forms were being collected, emphasizing the importance of tracking hours for city records.

Ivy Removal: Ivy removal efforts continue, with the recent successful event at Sankey Park during the Arbor Day event. A community member indicated that she is familiar with English ivy and offered to assist with future efforts. The Committee discussed expanding ivy removal into a community event to increase participation, emphasizing the need for proper volunteer registration and hour tracking. Potential new locations for ivy removal include North Side Park, near the river. Committee members indicated the best timing for future ivy removal events would be outside of October, which is Harvest Festival season. Disposal of removed ivy is managed by taking it to the city’s sanitation department to prevent regrowth.

Sankey Park Phase III: Manager Clegg reported positive progress on the Sankey Park Phase Three project, specifically the bandstand construction. City Council approved a special procurement allowing a direct contract with the Timber Framers Guild for the bandstand build, bypassing the usual bidding process. The trail portion will go out to bid separately, however. The Timber Framers Guild will lead the community build process, involving residents in material donations and volunteer efforts, though structural work must be performed by licensed professionals. The project timeline is dependent on grant extensions, with a deadline currently set for December 31st; Manager Clegg

indicated that as long as progress is being made on the project, she can file to have the project deadline extended to June of next year. The guild is optimistic about scheduling the build & Public Works staff have expressed enthusiasm for assisting with the project.

Weddle Bridge: Manager Clegg reported that Cecily Hope Pretty, Deputy City Manager, is working on obtaining historic designation for the Weddle Bridge, which could unlock grant funding for repairs. Director Springman advised that the bridge shows some rotting on the west side and ongoing damage from graffiti and trespassing. Per the Committee, the Weddle Bridge was moved from its original location, which explains why it was never previously registered as historic. Additionally, historical recognition is seen as beneficial, despite some challenges.

Covered Bridge Day: Chairman Shreves updated the Committee regarding plans to hold a run associated with the July Covered Bridge Day event being postponed until 2026 to allow better planning, marking the event as Biennial. Member Swanson advised that Cross Country teams could potentially assist with organizing the run in the future.

Health Fair: The Committee registered for the Community Health Fair, taking place on August 16, 2025, and will set up a booth with brochures, giveaways, and park maps. Committee members were encouraged to participate, with setup starting around 8:30 am, with the event running from 9:00 am through 2:00 pm. The event provides an opportunity to engage the community and promote upcoming activities such as the Bridge Day run in the coming year. Additional park maps will be printed to ensure sufficient supply.

Ames Creek Restoration: Director Springman reported that partnership with South Santiam Watershed Council is ongoing to restore an overgrown area near the Senior Center. The project is funded partly through a negotiated supplemental environmental project related to a DEQ fine. Efforts focus on invasive species control (reed canary grass, blackberry) using mowing, weed fabric, mulching, and selective spraying. The project is multi-year, involving initial vegetation control followed by replanting and maintenance. The restoration will potentially create usable park space with picnic areas once invasive vegetation is managed.

New Business

Safety Fair Report: Chairman Shreves reported that the event was a big success again this year, despite the intermittent showers; indicating the event was still a good turnout, overall. Many people came by the Committee's booth, allowing for Committee members to speak with numerous community members about the parks located in Sweet Home; many brochures were also handed out, providing community members with some guidance regarding local parks. Committee members also expressed surprise, due to the number of community members who are unaware of the many parks located within the City. Chairman Shreves congratulated Councilor Hegge on his son winning a bike at the event. Committee members were in agreement about continuing to support the Safety Fair effort moving forward, as getting community members into the parks is crucial.

Committee Media Policy: A new media policy was introduced by Manager Clegg, in an effort to guide Committee members on public communications. Committee members were reminded to avoid speaking on behalf of the Committee or city, outside official meetings, unless coordinated with staff. Responding to public inquiries on social media should be done cautiously and typically as private citizens, not official representatives. Contact information for the committee liaison was provided for directing formal inquiries.

Open Park & Tree Committee Position: Members were advised that there is an open Committee Member position, with a few applicants under consideration, per Special Projects Manager, Leisinger. Members were encouraged to share social media post(s) and direct any interested individuals to the official application link(s) on social media and on the City's website. Manager Leisinger clarified for the Committee members, that the Administrative Department and Finance Department conduct the interviews of any applicants for the open Committee Member position, and then they send their recommendation(s) on to the Committee for further review. Additionally, with the recent departure of Vice Chair Bob Dalton, the Committee was tasked with nominating a predecessor as Vice Chair.

A motion to nominate Member Tucker as Vice Chair was made by Member Patton; Member Swanson seconded the motion.

Voting Yea: Member Swanson, Member Bechtel, Chairman Shreves, Member Patton, Member Northern.

Voting Nay: None

Round Table Discussions (Committee comments about topics not listed on the agenda)

Sportsman's Holiday Parade Float: Member Patton reported the recent parade float was a success, with active participation from Committee members, City Council members, and volunteers. Kids on the float engaged the crowd by squirting water, adding a fun element. The committee appreciated the volunteer efforts, including Beautification Committee Chairwoman Candy's dual role, passing out brochures and pulling weeds during the event.

Harvest Festival: Manager Clegg shared that planning for the Harvest Festival is underway, with registrations for the annual pie contest opening soon, once the new City website is launched. The Committee anticipates a large number of entries for the contest and may separate judging categories for kids and adults. Judges are being recruited, including City Council members and community volunteers. Additionally, the Beautification Committee was given the option to share a booth with the Park & Tree Committee during the event, or have their own separate booth. If the Beautification Committee opts for their own separate booth, it would be located between the City of Sweet Home's booth, and the Chamber of Commerce's booth. Manager Clegg made the recommendation to have separate booths, so that the Beautification Committee would not be inundated with the pies being judged by the Park & Tree Committee members, during the pie contest.

Park-Specific Updates:

Quarry Park: Per Director Springman, the rock quarry located at 3101 Zelkova Street is not eligible to be considered a campground, due to building code and state policy restrictions regarding dispersed camping without amenities. In an effort to detour the public from attempting to utilize the area as a campground, the Public Works department has installed large rocks to restrict vehicle access beyond parking areas. The area remains open for walking, fishing, and other passive activities, and portable restrooms remain available for sanitation purposes.

42nd Street Park: Manager Clegg advised that any potential plans for development for this location are on hold, due to budget constraints and lack of grant funding. The area is currently maintained as a fire break after timber harvesting. No active park development is planned in the near future.

Clover Park: Director Springman addressed the Committee's questions regarding possibly reconfiguring the park's landscaping to improve flower planting conditions. Director Springman also discussed existing concrete and infrastructure remnants from an old fountain system, which complicate renovation efforts. Any significant changes would require heavy equipment and careful planning.

City Hall Park: Manager Clegg updated Committee members regarding questions concerning development plans for the property City Hall is currently located on. Manager Clegg advised that playground installation would require additional infrastructure (paths, utilities, etc.), which is currently unfunded. Additionally, a portion of the City Hall building & property has been leased to a separate organization and would therefore limit available space for expansion. Furthermore, Committee members expressed doubts about the need for an additional dog park, given existing facilities elsewhere.

Strawberry Park: Councilor Hegge shared a digital 360-degree photo project of Strawberry Park that he had previously worked on, and uploaded to Google Maps, in an effort to help showcase park features remotely; suggesting this could be extended to other parks. Councilor Hegge stated that his next goal is to take 360-degree images of Sankey Park with his new equipment and expressed that this would be a great way for people to see what

amenities each park has to offer (i.e. views, play structures, picnic tables, benches, restrooms, hiking trails, etc.). Committee members were very receptive to this idea and thanked Councilor Hegge for the time he dedicated to this project, reminding him to log any hours spent volunteering on behalf of the Committee.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:47 AM

DRAFT