

Parks Advisory Committee
April 11, 2005

Members Present: Damien Gilbert, Emily Schue, Johnny Medlin, Merle Bottge and Steve Davis

Members Absent: Janet Alexander

Staff Present: Todd Winter and Christine Johnson

Guests Present: Commissioner Faye Stewart

Damien Gilbert, Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

I. Announcements/Agenda Modifications

There were no announcements and a few agenda modifications – Winter wished to add an agenda item for discussion -- the FBP nursery greenway permit. He also had a few items to add to the Division Manager’s Report, including a review of the budget.

II. Approval of Minutes – March 14, 2005 Parks Advisory Committee Meetings

Gilbert asked that the minutes from the March 14, 2005 meeting be approved. Bottge moved that the minutes be approved as mailed. Medlin seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous in favor.

III. Public Comment (Maximum of 20 Minutes)

There was no public comment at this time.

IV. Welcome New PAC Member – Introductions

Winter stated that he went to the Board requesting re-appointment of Merle Bottge for another term on the PAC and to appoint Katherine Koehn as a new member of the PAC, filling the vacant position. The Board unanimously approved both appointments. Winter was not able to reach Katherine Koehn nor had we heard from her even though she should have received a letter from the Board letting her know she had been appointed to the vacant position. We will continue to try to reach her so that she’ll be able to attend the next meeting.

V. Friends of Buford Park and Mt. Pisgah Greenway Permit

The FBP will be going to the Land Management to get approval for a Greenway Permit for renovations in the North Bottomland area at Mt. Pisgah. Included in the permit application is a request for about seven buildings to be built near the nursery area – these include a greenhouse, drying shed, office space, etc. Winter stated that he was not going to endorse these additions to the North Bottomland, as they were not covered in the HBRA Master Plan, which is also part of the Metro Plan. According to the Master Plan, this area is reserved for three specific uses, which are an expanded equestrian center, a children’s educational/interpretive facility, and a park maintenance facility to support both the Parks Division and the Mt. Pisgah Arboretum – for material stockpiles, equipment storage, restrooms, etc. The Greenway Permit application referenced its consistency with the HBRA Master Plan by indicating the nursery/buildings are a maintenance facility since the plants they propagate help maintain the parks natural resources. Unfortunately, neither the Parks Division, the Mt. Pisgah Arboretum, and more importantly,

Land Management do not support this interpretation. We would have to go through the process of changing the Metro Plan/HBRA Master Plan in order to allow these buildings where FBP has requested – which is a very expensive process. Winter has talked this over with Chris Orsinger and an alternative is to look across the road at the area around the Keinzle barn, which we plan to renovate anyway. Medlin felt it would be appropriate to send a letter to Land Management to indicate an opinion of non-conformance with the Master Plan and state our position on the issue. It was agreed that we need to save the area in the North Bottomland for the facilities outlined in the Master Plan.

Motion: Bottge stated that based on the fact that the desired building facilities included in the Greenway Permit Application do not coincide with what is in the HBRA Master Plan, and that alternate sites may be available in already established buildings, and that this space should be made available for those facilities outlined in the HBRA Master Plan, moved that this Committee recommend that the Parks staff not endorse the application for a Greenway Permit for nursery building facilities. Schue seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous in favor.

Medlin asked if there was any part of the Greenway Permit application that we could allow. Winter said that he spoke with Jeff Towery in Land Management about this and he was told that no, there wasn't. The acre that FBP is already in the process of planting, is fine where it is, we just can't put the requested buildings there. Stewart asked how the nursery was sited there in the first place. Winter said that this was a decision of the previous management and he was not privy to those discussions and he could only speculate as to why. More discussion followed.

VI. Division Manager's Report – Todd Winter, Division Manager

- **Fern Ridge Dam Repair – Update:** Winter used a color map to describe how the repair process will most likely proceed. If it turns out that the clay soil that the contractors will be recycling back into the dam is not dry enough, they will probably use Orchard Point first as a drying field. If they need more space they will probably look at the Richardson Park day use area. The Orchard Point Concessionaires will be providing the meals for the repair crews who will be working 20-hour shifts with Sundays off. Plans will start to firm up once the Corps gets a contractor on board. The Board has approved the temporary closure of Clear Lake Road and the emergency services in the area are working on response concerns to accommodate the closure.

Issues that still need to be addressed are the construction noise, the lighting necessary for crews to work after dark, and whether the drying clay will cause an unpleasant odor. We are working on signage so that campers coming to Richardson Park can find their way to the campground no matter what direction they are coming from. Schue asked if we were planning to get some boat slips repaired while the water is down. Winter stated that we would like to but funds are still an issue. Still waiting to hear back regarding the \$1.5 million United Front request. Stewart asked about the bald eagles nest. Winter said that Eagle experts came in and found that the eagles were leaving the nest and there was probably only a 2% chance they would come back and re-nest there.

- **HBRA Entrance Sign** – We are working with the Mt. Pisgah Arboretum on some preliminary designs for a new entrance sign at Mt. Pisgah. Pete Barrell, General Manager of the Arboretum, is an architectural engineer and he will be putting some designs together. Once we have the designs, Winter will bring them before this Committee to comment on.

- **Selected Tax Foreclosed Property:** Winter said that he will be going before the Board on Wednesday to request that the foreclosed Glenada property be designated as Park property. Stewart asked if we knew the value of the property. Winter said that he hadn't requested a formal appraisal yet, but felt it was worth more than \$0.5 million and would hope to get at least

\$1.0 million plus for it. Could leverage a lot of projects with that kind of money. Davis asked what if we retained part of the property that is along the Siuslaw River. Winter said that although that is possible, this program was specifically developed to create additional funds for Parks and not create more park property that we don't have the staff to maintain. This property is bordered by State, BLM and Forest Service property and although there is someone living on this property we are taking the necessary steps to take care of him.

- **OPRD Opportunity Grant Awarded:** Winter said that we applied for three County Opportunity Grants to put in three play structures at our parks that have campgrounds, but only one was awarded – the one for Baker Bay, which was our first priority. The playground vendor is giving us a discount on the play structure and the Corps has agreed to help us install it.

- **Theft at Armitage Park Shops:** This morning when we arrived at work, we discovered that a break-in had occurred. A number of people hopped the fence and broke into the field staff's office – where they broke into desks and lockers and stole a lot of stuff as well as ransacking the office in general. They also got keys to the outbuildings where they stole tools and equipment as well as a flat bed truck to haul it all away. They even broke into the Nature House and stole a lot of the McKenzie Watersheds testing equipment and computers, etc. – about \$8,000 worth. We think they were scared off when they set off the alarm to the main administration office, because there was evidence that they dropped stuff where it was and then broke through the locked park entrance gate with the flat bed truck as they left the park. The truck was recovered this morning around 10:00 a.m. when we received a call from a Eugene City Park employee who found the truck abandoned at one of their parks. We've placed a night watchman in the shop yard area that will keep an eye on things until a more permanent security arrangement can be made. Since the County is self-insured, there is no insurance money to cover the losses.

- **FY 05/06 Proposed Park's Budget – Review:** Winter distributed copies of the proposed budget and briefly went over it. Some of the highlights included major reductions in several revenue items due to the Fern Ridge dam repair. Overall operating salaries are down (due to not hiring the usual compliment of seasonal employees) but there was a significant increase in Employee Benefits due to rising health care and insurance costs. There was also a significant increase in Refuse & Garbage which occurred when we switched over to dumpster, but this change saves us a lot of staff hours and also means a reduction in on the job injury claims. And there was an expected increase in Fleet Services due to the increase in fuel costs. Winter also said that our last entry into Blue Mt. to cut timber will occur soon which means we will have some timber revenues this year. Winter asked that everyone take the time to review the budget and get back to him with any questions or comments.

VII. Good of the Order

Winter said that the water well issue at Oceanwoods is still out there, just has not proceeded any further as of this date. Bottge asked about user fees and Winter said that he would eventually like to phase them out if we ever found a consistent funding source, but right now we just can't afford to give up any fee revenues. Bottge asked if Season Passes are available to purchase yet. Yes, they can be purchased at the Parks office, GI Joes, or REI downtown.

VIII. Adjournment:

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:05 p.m.

Submitted by Christine Johnson, Secretary