

**Parks Advisory Committee  
January 10, 2005**

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

Staff Present: Todd Winter, Jana Sorenson, and Christine Johnson

Guests Present: Faye Stewart, Lane County Commissioner

Merle Bottge, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

**I. Announcements/Agenda Modifications**

There were no announcements and two agenda modifications – adding the election of officers at the end of meeting and a discussion regarding a request from the Friends of Buford Park, after Item VI.

**II. Approval of Minutes – December 13, 2004 Parks Advisory Committee Meetings**

Bottge asked that the minutes from the December 13, 2004 meeting be approved. Schue moved that the minutes be approved as mailed. Davis 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. 2005 Eugene Boat & Sportsmen's Show – Volunteers Needed to Staff Booth**

Winter distributed a sign-up sheet asking for volunteers to staff the Park's booth at this years Eugene Boat & Sportsmen's Show being held at the Lane County Convention Center February 4, 5, & 6, 2005.

**V. Request Support of Operational Changes in Fern Ridge Zone**

Winter began by distributing a handout showing financial and operational impacts to Parks as a result of structural damage to the dam at Fern Ridge Reservoir. The Army Corps of Engineers reported that the structural damage to the dam is far worse than earlier thought. They feel that now they will need to replace the dam before bringing the reservoir up to full recreational pool again. They will be keeping the water levels at 360' or below (normal summer pool is 373.5') for the next three to five years or longer depending on funding of repairs. Winter stated that the Parks Division has already been running pretty tight and now we are going to be even tighter. Referring to the handout, between now and the end of the fiscal year, we could see a loss of revenue in the amount of \$212,779.00 and if you add in the operational impacts, it could be as much as a \$280,000 loss. Winter recommends moving field staff from the Fern Ridge Zone, to the McK./Willamette Zone at Armitage, and temporarily closing Orchard Point and Perkins Peninsula Parks. We will keep Richardson Park open, and Winter feels we can accommodate picnickers and campers, etc. at this park.

Bottge asked if Orchard Point would be open to foot traffic. Winter stated that we need to close these two parks to all traffic to help keep down vandalism, etc. However, we will be mowing

and doing minor maintenance at these sites as long as they are closed. Stewart asked if there was any other type of use that we could promote out at Fern Ridge to generate funds? Winter stated that we still will have the Country Fair camping at Zumwalt Park through the City of Veneta, the temporary camping we will provide at Perkins Peninsula for the Country Fair, and we may be able to provide a venue for musical events at Richardson as we have done in the past. However, with reduced staffing we will be limited to what we can do out there. Johnson added that we would be working with the Concessionaires at Orchard Point, who will be staying there to provide an on-site presence, to maintain their concession stand and catering business. Discussion followed including whether or not the Corps will be able to reimburse the Parks Division for loss of revenue, which Winter will be exploring, and if we have contacted our legislators yet. Winter said that on January 12, 2005, at 3:30 p.m. in Harris Hall, Smith, Wyden, DeFazio, and the Corps will be meeting to talk about allocation of repair funds. Sorensen added that a request was already in to provide emergency funding for this project. Winter said that best case – we would only have to wait three years for full pool to occur, but we are preparing for five years.

**Motion:** Schue moved that this Committee recommend to the Board that they authorize a temporary closure of Orchard Point and Perkins Peninsula Parks in view of the draw down of the recreational pool level on Fern Ridge Reservoir. Medlin added that this recommendation is in part, in order to maintain the service levels in the rest of the Parks system. Damien seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous in favor.

## **VI. Review Accomplishments for 2004 and Discuss Goals for 2005**

Winter referred to the handouts and briefly went over the list of accomplishments, which included supporting working with the City of Florence to establish water wells on Three-Mile Prairie, supporting the sale of Oceanwoods property with proceeds coming to Parks, and supporting designating tax-foreclosed properties as parklands for future sale with proceeds coming back to Parks. Winter then reviewed and discussed the goals for 2005, which included continuing to support the efforts in completing and implementing the Parks Master Plan, support the efforts to adjust service levels at parks located on Fern Ridge Reservoir during periods of low pool, and developing and maintaining cooperative business relationships with other agencies. Davis suggested adding that we look into diversifying usage of our parks, such as soccer fields. Stewart asked if there was a “Friends of County Parks” type of organization similar to the State Parks Trust that assists with State Parks? Winter stated that no there isn’t but we do have an Adopt-a-Park program where certain communities or groups will adopt a certain park, such as Mt. Pisgah, Fall Creek, etc. Stewart felt it would be to our advantage to look to see if there was interest in creating a Friends of County Parks organization. Medlin suggested talking with Jim Johnson who would be a valuable resource in the mechanics of starting such an organization. Stewart said the Sharon Lydie, Director of the State Parks Trust would also be a valuable resource.

Winter asked if there were any changes or additions to the 2005 Goals. The Committee suggested under the list of accomplishments removing the phrase “after much controversy and cost overages” in item number 12, removing the word “(Ongoing)” from item number 3, and removing the portion of the sentence in parentheses in item number 14; and, under goals: adding “and implementation.” to item number 8. Schue asked how we could still move forward with the sale of Oceanwoods since she had thought it was a closed matter. Winter stated that the only obstacle against the sale was that this property is zoned Natural Resource and we need to re-zone it Residential. Any other changes or additions this Committee wants to make in the Accomplishments or Goals, over the next few days, can be forwarded to Johnson, she will then e-mail everyone the final drafts before they are sent downtown.

**Motion:** Davis moved that this Committee support the 2004 Accomplishments and 2005 Goals as amended. Medlin seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor.

**VII. Friends of Buford Park Request Recommendation to the Board to Authorize FBP to Seek Funding for Ongoing Projects**

Winter distributed a copy of the request he received from Chris Orsinger, Friends of Buford Park and Mt. Pisgah. Winter stated that he only received the request to bring this before this Committee less than an hour before the meeting started so staff and the unions have yet to review some of the items listed. But if this Committee feels confident enough to move forward then we should proceed. Medlin thought we should get clarification regarding the “boilerplate” grant process mentioned in the second paragraph. Bottge felt that since this Committee already approved items I, II, and IV. in their initial project stages, that we go ahead and endorse Osingers request. Schue wanted to know if any of these projects were time-sensitive. Winter said that he was unable to get in touch with Orsinger to ask these questions prior to this meeting. The consensus of this Committee was to hold this agenda item until next month’s meeting after we had time to get all our questions answered.

**VIII. Division Manager’s Report – Todd Winter, Division Manager**

- **Lane County E-Commerce Program -- Update:** Winter distributed a copy of the cost estimate we received from the County’s Information Services Dept. for developing an on-line reservation system for our campsites. He will be going before the Finance and Audit Committee soon with a proposal to use Tourism Special Project funds (derived from Transient Room Tax monies) to fund this project. If the F&A Committee approves, then Winter will go before the Board for their approval on February 2<sup>nd</sup>. This would put us in line with the other agencies that already offer on-line reservations.
- **Foreclosed Properties Program – Update:** In March the Board had asked for a feasibility report on tax foreclosed properties being deemed parkland, then sold for Park’s purposes. We worked with the County’s legal department to develop policies and procedures for a Lane Manual change (which will go before the Board on February 2<sup>nd</sup>), and sent out letters to the 92 taxing districts stating our intent. Once the Board approves, we will work with Jeff Turk, in Property Management, to select a few foreclosed properties, go back to the Board to deem them parkland, then the properties will go in to the Sheriff’s auction process. Sale should occur in this fiscal year.

Chris Orsinger arrived and the discussion went back to item number VII. Orsinger was asked if there were any deadlines for any of the grants he wants to apply for. Orsinger said that there was one due in mid-February regarding the South Meadow projects. Orsinger added that rather than having to go to the Board for every single grant application, he would like to stream-line the process by creating a boilerplate grant for each of these projects that encompasses the work for a given period – 1 to 3 years – and ask for the authority to apply for any grant as long as the grant was consistent with the boilerplate in terms of the work plan, what’s to be done, or the budget. He sometimes has to patch several grants together to meet the budget of a particular project. Bottge asked if we did not support all the projects at this time and postponed a few to another meeting would this create a hardship? Orsinger stated that the South Meadow projects and the Nursery projects would need to be approved first to meet upcoming deadlines.

**Motion:** Schue moved that this Committee continue to support the South Meadow Floodplain project and the Nursery Project. Medlin seconded the motion, and the vote was four in favor, one against, and one abstention. The motion carried. The other projects will be brought to the next meeting for discussion and consideration.

- **Vacant PAC Position – Update:** John Rosselli’s position is still vacant and Bottge’s position expired on December 31, 2004. However Bottge wishes to serve another term and we will need to do a Board Order to re-appoint her. We have only received one application so far for the vacant spot, so will post for another 30 days.

**IX. Good of the Order**

- Election of Officers – this Committee unanimously elected Janet Alexander as Chair of this Committee. Schue nominated Damien Gilbert as Vice-Chair, Davis seconded the nomination and the vote was unanimous.

Bottge thanked the Committee for the opportunity to serve as Chair for the last two years.

As the next Committee meeting falls on Valentine’s Day, it was the consensus of this Committee to move the meeting day to Monday, February 7, 2005, same time, and same place.

**X. Adjournment:**

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:00 p.m.

Submitted by Christine Johnson, Secretary