

**Parks Advisory Committee
March 14, 2005**

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

Staff Present: Todd Winter and Christine Johnson

Guests Present: Ollie Snowden, Public Works Director; Howard Schussler, Assist. Public Works Director; Commissioner Faye Stewart; and, Kevin and Pam McGraw, Friends of Buford Park and Mt. Pisgah

Janet Alexander, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

I. Announcements/Agenda Modifications

There were no announcements and several agenda modifications – Winter wished to add one agenda item regarding selection of new PAC member to fill vacant position, and another item under the Division Manager’s Report regarding new off-leash area at Armitage. Alexander wished to add discussion regarding a possible By-Law change and review/discuss the Oregon State Parks Trust information.

II. Approval of Minutes – February 7, 2005 Parks Advisory Committee Meetings

Alexander asked that the minutes from the February 7, 2005 meeting be approved. Bottge 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. Review Plan Concept and Request Support of the Lane County Sheriff’s Posse’s Indoor Horse Arena at the Howard Buford Recreation Area

Winter distributed a copy of a site concept map for everyone to refer to and by way of a little history, Winter referred to the HBRA Master plan that was adopted by the Board in 1994. The HBRA Master plan is basically a refinement to the Metro Plan. In 2002, a public meeting was held at Harris Hall where the FBP talked about the South Meadow modifications they would like to do and the native plant nursery they would like to establish at Mt. Pisgah. Jake Risley, the Parks Planner at the time, also talked about the plans to renovate the Keinzle house and barn as well as putting in an indoor horse arena in the North Bottomlands area. Last summer, the Parks Division applied for a permit to allow up to 2,000 to 2,500 people to camp in the outdoor event area in the North Bottomlands – groups like the Society for Creative Anachronism, historical reenactments, etc. The outdoor horse arena is pretty well established in its new spot and now the Sheriff’s Posse is coming forward with its desire to establish an indoor horse arena, as identified on page 4 of the HBRA Master Plan, in the North Bottomlands area. They have a private funding commitment of \$500,000 as well as an endorsement from the Lane County Sheriff’s Office who has committed one staff person to help seek additional funding sources through grants, etc. What the Posse is asking for at this time is an endorsement of the concept as presented so that they can move forward with applying for greenway permits, exploring additional funding sources, and contacting all stakeholders, etc.

Bottge asked about the horse stalls indicated on the site map, and about how manure and any drainage problems will be handled. Winter said that these items had been discussed and would be refined as the process began to take shape and details worked out – which would then be brought back to this Committee. Kevin McGraw asked if the Posse had considered any other sites other than at the HBRA. Winter said they had done an extensive search. McGraw then asked if stakeholders such as local residents had been contacted. Winter said that the Posse was just starting the process and that this meeting was the first official contact other than when Winter attended the most recent FBP Board meeting. McGraw asked if the Posse had put together any information on how many events would occur at this site, as well as the anticipated number of people, increased traffic and user loads, will the road be paved, etc. Winter said that the Posse has discussed these things but as they are just starting out, they haven't put together any type of information packets. As far as the roads are concerned, they are designated as County roads and are in the CIP to be upgraded.

Motion: Bottge moved that this Committee endorse the concept of furthering enhancing the ability to serve the equestrian community and to authorize staff to continue to work with the Sheriff's Posse in developing their plans. Bottge added by way of clarification that we are not approving a specific plan, and would also like answers to the questions regarding how often, and number of events to be anticipated at this site. Bottge stated that she does believe that this could be an appropriate use. Gilbert seconded the motion and the vote was in favor of the motion with one abstention.

Schue wanted everyone to understand that the [HBRA] Master Plan from the beginning did want a horse arena somewhere in the [North Bottomlands] area. "When the planning was done, we would accommodate the horse folks in some reasonable way. And it seems to me that this concept meets that criteria and we should therefore continue to look at it."

V. Endorse Recommendation for Catherine Koehn to Fill Vacant PAC Member Position

Winter stated that after posting for the vacant position twice, and receiving nine applications, this Committee was asked to review all the applications and vote on their top three choices to be interviewed. The interview committee (consisting of Janet Alexander, Merle Bottge, Johnny Medlin, Todd Winter and Christine Johnson) met on March 7th and interviewed the top three choices. The interview committee came to an agreement that Catherine Koehn would be an excellent choice to fill the vacant position. Ms. Koehn is a retired teacher who currently lives in Fall Creek, has a Masters from the U of O, has experience in public relations and grant writing, and was on the Siuslaw Watershed Council and currently serves on the South Willamette Watershed Council.

Motion: Bottge moved that this Committee recommend that the Board of County Commissioners appoint Catherine Koehn to fill the vacancy on the Parks Advisory Committee. Schue seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor.

Bottge feels that Ms. Koehn will bring some good diversity to the Committee -- doesn't live in either Eugene or Springfield, has interest in natural resources and her experience working with watershed councils will stand her good stead with this Committee.

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

• **Fern Ridge Dam Repair – Update:** Winter said that he has attended all the meetings pertaining to the Fern Ridge Dam repair, so is pretty well informed as to what is going to happen there. Winter distributed a map overview of the signing proposal prepared by Transportation and Planning that indicates road closures, staging areas, sign language, etc. The Corps also wants to use Orchard Point Park, specifically the marina parking lot as an area to dry

the clay that will be re-used in the dam. Any damage caused to the park will be repaired upon completion of the dam repairs. Winter briefly went over the repair process. The Corps target start date is May 20, 2005. Mr. Stewart asked about the money we requested for repairs that the United Front Group took back to Washington DC. Winter stated that when we initially thought the repairs would take three to five years to complete, we requested \$1.5 million to help complete needed repairs as well as supply matching funds for grants applied for for a new marina and transient docks at Richardson Park and new boat ramp and docks at Perkins Peninsula. These projects and repairs would go a long way in getting people back into our parks after the long closure. The request is still out there and several people with the United Front Group put in a good word for us, but we don't know where the request stands at this point.

- **New Automated Self-Pay Stations – Update:** – Winter said that we are making some progress in switching over to the new automated self-pay stations at Armitage, Baker Bay, Hendricks Bridge, Mt. Pisgah, and Richardson Parks. The bid is in and we are working on the sites to get them ready to receive the new vandal-resistant VenTek pay stations. Some of the justification for the change is that when the fee collection season was extended by two months as well as the number of hours each day we collected fees, it began to cost more to collect the fees than what we were taking in at the fee booths. Cash handling was also becoming a major issue as well as enforcement.

- **Request to Purchase a Small Portion of Hileman Park by Neighboring Landowner:** Winter stated that Hileman Landing consists of about 35 acres with a neighboring landowner located near the entrance to the park. The landowner doesn't currently have legal access to her property and she has stated a desire to purchase a small portion of County property to provide her with this access. Winter feels this probably falls under the jurisdiction of the County Roads Dept. so will have them look into it, but will keep this Committee updated.

- **Cinderella Park Sports Complex Concept Plan:** Winter began by saying that the Tourism Task Force was formed about a year ago with a \$10,000 grant from the Tourism Special Projects Grant program. They were formed to provide an overview of tourism and convention activity in Lane County. One of the goals/ideas that came out of this process was to have a multi-field sports complex in Lane County. After Winter provided Com. Green with a list of all dormant park properties, and then attended a CVALCO meeting, where they also brought up the subject of a sports complex, Winter decided to take it a step further and go down to Cinderella Park and actually take some measurements to see what would actually fit on this 55 acre site. What came out of that was a conceptual plan that put five soccer fields and three baseball/softball fields on the site. Cinderella is about 10 miles from Eugene and just east of Creswell, with Emerald Valley Golf course bordering the property on the west side and the Creswell transfer site on the south side. The Parks Division doesn't have the money to fund this project – this project would have to be funded by economic development money, Kidsports type groups, or private funding, etc.

Motion: Schue moved that this Committee approve the concept of the Cinderella Sports Complex and suggest further discussion of this proposed project. Bottge seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous in favor.

- **June PAC Park Tour:** Winter said that this Committee tried to do a tour of the parks at least once a year, and since last year's tour didn't take place due to conflicting schedules he wanted to see if we couldn't get one scheduled for this June. A tentative date was set for Saturday, June 11th and we will plan to include a visit to Armitage Park, the HBRA and the Fern Ridge area.

- **Parks Master Plan Update:** Winter said that we have completed presentations at about 20 focus groups so far including youth groups, the Audubon Society, City Counsels, for example and are starting to meet with commercial groups such as Wildish, Monaco Coach, etc. Hope to have the first Master Plan draft completed and ready for comments in about two months. It will include a full financial plan as well as public comment.

- **New Off-Leash Area at Armitage:** Winter passed around a site map of Armitage indicating where the new off-leash area will be located in Armitage Park. It will be located in the old meadow area currently enclosed by a split-rail fence right next to Coburg Road. Park visitors must currently keep their dogs on a leash when in the park, so this new site will satisfy a need that we haven't provided before. We are using the dog park located at Alton Baker Park as a template in designing our area. Should be on-line in the next 30 days or so. Medlin suggested putting in cross fencing so that activity can be moved to a different area so that the turf can recover. He also stated that he has been lucky with volunteers from local dog groups that help keep the doggy bags stocked and the site clean, etc. He can provide names to contact if we are interested.
- **Possible Addition to By-Laws – Janet Alexander:** Alexander wanted to know whether or not we should add a clause in the By-Laws regarding who can request including an item on the PAC agenda. Winter indicated that a gentleman by the name of Jim Ness who lives in Cottage Grove wanted to be put on the agenda so that he could do a PowerPoint presentation regarding the concept of Forest Service property being conveyed to the County in areas outside the Urban Growth Boundary and a golf course idea – he was pretty vague. So if a private citizen wanted to talk to this Committee beyond the three minutes allowed during Public Comment, do we have an avenue to do that? After much discussion it was determined that we would not change the By-Laws and agenda items would be determined between the Chair of the Parks Advisory Committee and the Division Manager – who would determine if the item was appropriate or within our jurisdiction to bring before this Committee. Winter will contact Mr. Ness to get further information and if his request does not meet these guidelines, he will let Mr. Ness know, but that he still has the option to use his three minutes to bring his idea to this Committee during Public Comment.
- **Oregon Parks Trust By-Laws – Janet Alexander:** Alexander said that she read through the By-Laws and concluded that setting up a Trust is quite an extensive process. She said that if anyone else on the Committee wanted to read it and come back with any suggestions they were welcome to. The general consensus of this Committee was that there would be some great benefits from having a Parks Trust, but it would take quite an effort and by someone not on this Committee.

VII. Good of the Order

Bottge asked if Run for the Mountain would be occurring this year and if it will be on the 4th of June. She said that the Prefontaine Classic is also set for that date at 1:00 p.m. Winter said that instead of doing a design contest like we've done in the past for the T-shirts and posters, the students in the Art Dept. at the U of O will be working on coming up with several designs for us to choose from.

VIII. Adjournment:

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

Submitted by Christine Johnson, Secretary