

CITY OF CORVALLIS
MINUTES OF THE PARKS, NATURAL AREAS AND RECREATION BOARD
OCTOBER 20, 2011

Attendance

Lynda Wolfenbarger, Vice-Chair
 Philip Hays
 Marc Vomocil
 Jon Soule
 Kevin Bogatin, 509-J Dist. Rep.

Staff

Dave Phillips, Parks Ops. Supervisor
 James Mellein, Aquatic Supervisor
 Jackie Rochefort, Park Planner
 Mark Lindgren, Recorder

Visitors

Absent/Excused

Betty Griffiths, Chair
 Alejandra Gonzalez
 Randy Willard
 Joel Hirsch, Council Liaison
 Lainey Dyer
 Kent Daniels
 Don Williams

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Agenda Item	Information Only	Held for Further Review	Recommendations
II. Introductions	X		
III. Approval of Minutes	X		
IV. Visitor Propositions	X		
V. Cost Recovery Methodology Update	X		
VI. Goals Update	X		
VII. Staff Reports	X		
VIII. Subcommittee Updates	X		
IX. Board Member/City Council Liaison Reports	X		
X. Adjournment	X		The next regular Parks, Natural Areas and Recreation Board meeting is scheduled for 6:30 p.m., November 17, 2011 at the Downtown Fire Station Main Meeting Room.

CONTENT OF DISCUSSION

- I. CALL TO ORDER:** Vice Chair Lynda Wolfenbarger called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m.
- II. INTRODUCTIONS.**
- III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES.**
 There was no quorum, so the September 15, 2011 minutes could not be approved.
- IV. VISITORS' PROPOSITIONS.** None.

V. COST RECOVERY METHODOLOGY UPDATE.

James Mellein related that the department has been using the same cost recovery model for a couple decades. For example, Council mandated policy requires that adult sports are required to have a 95% to 100% cost recovery; youth sports and activities must have a 35% to 50% cost recovery. Because of fiscal challenges, it was felt necessary to tease out which services represented individual benefits versus those which are community-wide in order to be deliberate with property tax investment dollars.

The consultant has been at work for a month. The process has sought to assess the services bought by property taxes and how to recover that with fees. There have been five public workshops to engage the public, staff, stakeholders, and advisory boards to seek direction on how to change cost recovery. He related that 75 members of the public and 25 staff participated in the workshops. After the board's review and approval at its November 17 meeting, the revised model should go to the Council in December.

Mellein highlighted the department's mission statement ("Corvallis Parks and Recreation preserves and creates a community heritage by providing places and programs designed to enhance the quality of life") and said the process looks at the community's values and vision, and the department's mission. GreenPlay, the consultant, uses a Resource Allocation Pyramid Methodology that has been used in other parks and recreation programs around the country. This methodology is designed to help the community to identify where it wants tax investment dollars go, versus where individual funds should go to pay for services through fees, grants or scholarships.

The bottom of the pyramid includes parks, which benefit everyone; they are an economic driver for all residents, regardless of whether they use the park or not; they enhance property tax values, for example. Further up the pyramid, the process seeks to identify the degree to which services benefit individuals versus the community at large, or both. For example, recreation centers fall under Considerable Community Benefit. The third level is the Balanced Community/Individual Benefit category; experiences in this category include youth sports and youth swimming lessons, where the community benefits from children having the opportunity to play and recreate after school, but there is also an individual benefit to the experience. The further up the pyramid, the individual pays more and the property tax investment should be less. Considerable Individual Benefit includes swim team, where there is a benefit to the community, but there is also a higher level of individual benefit to being on the team. The fifth level, at the top of the pyramid, is the Mostly Individual Benefit, including concessions, or rental of a space for a private birthday party; here, you'd want the lowest amount of property tax investment dollars and the most recovery from payment from the individual.

Mellein explained that at workshops, members of the public were asked to assign all 29 of the department's service categories within one of the five levels within the pyramid. Generally, results were fairly similar from both staff and the public; there were no surprises. He said Director Karen Emery presented some of the results to the Council at its Oct. 17 meeting. The next steps include completing the definitions of direct and indirect costs; compiling a glossary of terms and definitions; determining what current cost recovery levels are based on this new information; and establishing new cost recovery guidelines for each of the levels. Staff will present the results to the Board at its November 17 meeting, and then to the Council in December. The new methodology will allow the department, in the future, to determine cost recovery of any new services or programs. At the November meeting, staff will present a sampling of new fees, based on the new methodology.

VI. GOALS UPDATE.

Wolfenbarger stated that there will be a goals work session at PNARB's regular January 19 meeting. She noted that many of the current goals have been accomplished.

VII. STAFF REPORTS.

Mellein called attention to the Director's Highlights in the board packet. He noted the new City Manager, Jim Patterson, started work this week and will meet soon with Board Chair Betty Griffiths and Vice Chair Wolfenbarger. The department received the Governor's Annual Fitness Leadership Award, based on its collaboration with the Benton County Health Department on the Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities Initiative. That effort includes the Community Garden Master Plan and changes to the Family Assistance Scholarship Program. He emphasized that the new cost recovery methodology does not change the need base; while the fees will be set based on the new methodology, the scholarships will help offset those costs to low-income families. He related that a couple of Councilors stated after the Director's presentation that Parks and Recreation is still a service to the community, and not a revenue center.

Upcoming events include the Boo Ball; the Childrens' Halloween event on Oct. 31 from 4-6 p.m., with 2,000 kids expected to take part; the October 28 Swim in the Dark; and the Turkey Trot, with 600-700 participants expected. There were about 180 participants in the Hidden Treasures Garden Tour last month, which brought in about \$1800. Dog Day featured 500 dog participants and 700 spectators; the event's outdoor pool was drained immediately afterwards for annual maintenance.

Parks Operations Supervisor Dave Phillips related that the Benton County submitted its Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) to the Fish and Wildlife Service. It seeks to conserve plants and animals with "take coverage" for two listed butterflies and five listed plants found in Benton County. Under the Plan, cooperating landowners get "incidental take" coverage, which means that if harmful impacts to those animals or plants occur on their property, and they happen in such a way that impacts are minimal or mitigatable, the property owner can't be fined under the Endangered Species Act. Landowners who incur take coverage without such a permit may be subject to fines under the Act. The City has formalized its agreement with the County and the Fish and Wildlife Service, so it is now a Cooperator, with incidental take coverage. As far as is known, the City has none of the endangered animals but it has several of the plants, including the Willamette Daisy at Bald Hill; Kincaid's Lupine at the watershed, and another lupine at Herbert Farm and the watershed. The City will write a report to Fish and Wildlife once a year regarding its activities, any new plans, and its expected "take". The overriding idea that this is a way to get animals and plants off the Endangered Species List, by trying to take into consideration known management activities of cooperators and marrying that with viable populations of rare plants. There is a restoration plan for the City watershed. He said the core of the plan relates to effectiveness monitoring.

Hays noted few counties have implemented HCP's yet; Benton County is the first to do so in Oregon. Without it, landowners have to file with the federal government and provide mitigation for proposed activities, which is complex and expensive. Landowners may now come to the county instead of the federal government; the county has an expected take of a specified number of acres of habitat, and the process is much faster, cleaner and cheaper.

Phillips reported that the conservation easement holder at Herbert Farm and Natural Area, ODFW, is working with the Institute of Applied Ecology on a grant to implement a couple of plant restoration projects there. The City has responded to the easement offer from Northwest Natural regarding its Loop Project and is waiting to hear back. A feasibility study for the park district should begin soon. Phillips

related that seasonal maintenance employees will finish work soon, and staff will shrink from 18 to 8 as facilities are shut down for winter. Soule asked how the OSU Game Day Parking program was proceeding; Phillips replied that the last two games netted \$12,000 to \$14,000. Staff improved parking striping and drainage. There are 12 new RV camping spaces, but few have used them so far.

Park Planner Jackie Rochefort related that grant-funded Central Park Plaza improvements include replacing all pavers; the old ones were donated to Habitat for Humanity. The bid for paver replacement went to Americorps Construction of Bandon. She said that conduit will be placed in the ground so that trenching will not be required to implement the future lighting plan, designed by the Madison Avenue Task Force. The City received a notice to proceed on Tunison Park improvements. The City also got a notice to proceed on improving the Shooting Star Trail, which is located entirely within wetland; where water is deepest there, there will be a boardwalk. She expected that due to water levels, work wouldn't begin until at least July.

Regarding a potential park in the Coronado subdivision, negotiations are underway and a design has been completed for a pocket park. There will be a CIP hearing on November 8; she encouraged members to attend to show their support.

She clarified that the term "take" for the HCP is different from the standard land use meaning of the term. She reported that the Walnut Creek public hearing was held by the Planning Commission last night; the Commission approved a plan. The multiuse trail plan was a key point of the meeting. Soule asked about the outcome; Rochefort said there were three options for trail alignments there, and at the next board meeting, she will bring back details on how the trail could be aligned.

She said staff will encourage the public to take a look at multiuse paths and the Trails Plan. The trails can follow riparian or rail corridors, streets, or a combination. Every land use decision grapples with where trails should go. Multimodal paths, in the Parks and Recreation definition, are multipurpose, for a recreation experience; they are not bike paths or bike lanes. Unfortunately, fast bike commuting and recreational use were blurred at the hearing last night. She said that following the cost recovery methodology process, consultants GreenPlay will then start work on master planning.

The Witham Oaks project has a new owner of the property, with a development proposal, though no formal application has been received. Parks staff will bring any application to the board. The proposed Harrison Street apartments will have an impact on parking near the Senior Center; staff will update the board. All Corvallis Rotary Clubs are interested in replacing the burned Willamette Park shelter; she is preparing the necessary documents so that volunteer project can move forward.

Mellein related that Larry Earhart passed away recently; he was a strong supporter of the Senior Center, and president of both Senior and Aquatic Councils. Director Emery attended his service on behalf of the department. Rochefort noted that Earhart was a leader in the PAC to support the bond measure. Wolfenbarger added that he'd been active in Benton County Planning over many years, and worked with the Senior Services Council.

VIII. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES. None.

IX. BOARD MEMBER/CITY COUNCIL LIAISON REPORTS. None.

X. ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 7:24 p.m.