

**CITY OF CORVALLIS**  
**MINUTES OF THE PARKS, NATURAL AREAS AND RECREATION BOARD**  
**APRIL 21, 2011**

Attendance

Lynda Wolfenbarger, Vice-Chair  
 Kent Daniels  
 Betty Griffiths, Greenbelt Land Trust  
 Jen de-Vries  
 Randy Willard  
 Charles Fisher  
 Phil Hays

Absent/Excused

Alejandra Gonzalez  
 Nick Todorovich  
 Don Williams  
 Joel Hirsch, Council Liaison  
 (Vacant) 509-J District Rep.

Staff

Karen Emery, Director  
 Jackie Rochefort, Park Planner  
 Dave Phillips, Parks Operations Supervisor  
 Mark Lindgren, Recorder

Visitors

Jeanne Raymond, City Councilor  
 Jessica McDonald, Greenbelt Land Trust  
 Aaron Manley, Public Works

**SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION**

Agenda Item	Information Only	Held for Further Review	Recommendations
II. Introductions	X		
III. Election of Board Chair			Betty Griffiths was elected board Chair.
IV. Approval of Minutes	X		
V. Visitors' Propositions	X		
VI. Bald Hill Land Acquisition			Motion passed to support the GLT purchase of the Bald Hill Farm and to request the City Council to pass a resolution in support of the GLT purchase of Bald Hill Farm.
VII. Mary's River Interceptor Project	X		
VIII. Sunset Review of Parks, and Natural Areas, and Recreation Board			Motion passed to adopt the staff report recommendations on sunseting with changes as reflected in discussion.
IX. Additional Budget Reductions Proposed	X		
X. Goals Update	X		
XI. Staff Reports	X		
XII. Subcommittee Updates	X		
XIII. Board Member/City Council Liaison Reports	X		
XIV. Adjournment	X		The next regular Parks, Natural Areas and Recreation Board meeting is scheduled for 6:30 p.m., May 19, 2011 at the Parks and Recreation Admin Building Meeting Room in Avery Park.

## **CONTENT OF DISCUSSION**

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** Vice-Chair Lynda Wolfenbarger called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.
- II. **INTRODUCTIONS.**
- III. **ELECTION OF BOARD CHAIR.** Daniels nominated Betty Griffiths for Board Chair; Randy Willard seconded; motion passed.
- IV. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES.** Wolfenbarger noted the March meeting was a joint meeting. Fisher moved to approve the January 20, 2011 minutes as presented; Griffiths seconded, motion passed.
- V. **VISITORS' PROPOSITIONS.** Corvallis City Councilor Jeanne Raymond, speaking as a citizen, related she had been contacted by Director Emery this morning about the possibility of siting a fenced dog park on a permanent or temporary basis at Martin Luther King, Jr. Park. She said the neighborhood park was in her ward. She stated that it was an inappropriate site for that purpose since the site would be too small for a good dog park. It would be sited adjacent to an area used seasonally for softball and other uses. There is already an off-leash space in the park as well as an off-leash space in the nearby Woodland Meadows Park, which should be sufficient for dog owners. She said MLK Park was not the right place for a temporary fenced dog park, either. She said she was the liaison to the MLK Jr. Commission and objected to the possibility of an "MLK Jr. Dog Park".
- VI. **BALD HILL LAND ACQUISITION.**

Emery introduced Jessica McDonald, Greenbelt Land Trust (GLT) Development Director. McDonald stated the organization was in its 22<sup>nd</sup> year. It serves the entire mid-Willamette Valley, including Benton Linn, Marion and Polk Counties. Its mission is to conserve and protect ecologically sensitive native habitats for wildlife, working lands, land of great beauty, and to connect people to nature on protected lands of the Willamette Valley. Early last year the group was offered a chance to buy Bald Hill Farm, a flagship property. The GLT finalized an option agreement to purchase the property and it has until 2013 to assemble the funds to purchase the property. She displayed the boundaries of the site. It is a 587-acre property, running from Bald Hill Natural Area and Oak Creek to West Hills Road; adjacent to it is another GLT property.

GLT retains a conservation easement on part of the adjacent Bald Hill Natural Area, which it purchased in 1991 and later deeded to the city. The GLT also purchased the nearby Fitton Green property and then deeded it to the County. The Bald Hill Farm site is in the middle of a number of protected properties and contains oak woodland, wetlands and upland prairie, which are rare in the valley. There are different zonings on the site; much is EFU. The site contains ecologically sensitive plants and animals; there are public trails, which can be expanded. There is an opportunity to use Bald Hill Farm as a learning laboratory and outdoor classroom for local schools; and use innovative sustainable ecological farm practices. She said that the site was in the center of the Benton County Prairie Conservation Strategy, published in 2010. It contains a mix of critical native habitats and serves as a corridor.

The farm can use sustainable agriculture. Rotational grazing of livestock will be used to enhance native habitats; food originating on the land can be sold locally; and an adaptive and flexible management plan can be used. She said public access is important. She highlighted almost three miles of existing public trails on the farm, and over 2 miles of potential future trail connectors have been identified there. McDonald stated that the farm can be used as a nearby learning laboratory for schoolchildren. The GLT is partnering with OSU on research opportunities and internships.

She highlighted a number of organizations that have formally endorsed the GLT effort to purchase the farm; she said that this was a big help in seeking grants. She asked the board to consider a letter of support. The total cost of the property is around \$5 million; she said that \$2 million in local grants can be used to leverage another \$3 million in grants over the next 18 months. Griffiths suggested board members check the GLT website to sign up for a tour of the property.

Daniels moved to support the GLT purchase of the Bald Hill Farm and to request the City Council to pass a resolution in support of the GLT purchase of Bald Hill Farm; Willard seconded; motion passed.

## **VII. MARY'S RIVER INTERCEPTOR PROJECT.**

Public Works Project Manager Aaron Manley stated that the sanitary sewer line replacement project is intended to eliminate recent surcharging in the Brooklane area by replacing an undersized sanitary sewer line. He displayed a drawing to show the existing and proposed sewer lines. The dig will be 20' deep and the new pipe 54" in diameter. Part of the sustainability goal will entail reusing the soil, requiring a large soil staging area. After consideration and discussion with Parks, they decided on using the new fenced dog park near the skate park. He said it had not been decided where a temporary or permanent facility fenced dog park facility would be.

Director Emery said that even though closing the new fenced dog park was a hard sell, by using it as a staging area, parking for businesses and their employees can remain and it saves the project about \$120,000 in soil transportation costs. This would pay for a new dog park. Griffiths asked about impacts to trees along the dog park fence; Planner Rochefort answered that the new trees planted along the fence will not be impacted. Existing cottonwoods (inappropriate for the dog park) will be removed and replaced with native Big Leaf Maple. Just outside the dog park, other cottonwoods will also be replaced with a Big Leaf Maple; the cost of replanting will be borne by Public Works.

Manley said that a section of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street in the area would be closed for the duration of the project. The street will be repaved after the project; there will be temporary access. The multiuse path between the skate park and the dog park would be closed. Rochefort added that the Wednesday Farmers Market would be relocated to the Saturday Market site for this year. Griffiths asked if it were not possible for the trenching to go under the street; Manley replied that that didn't make sense for a line of this short length; trenchless techniques are much more expensive. The expectation is to work from July to September; the work must be done during dry weather.

Rochefort related that the skate park would remain open all summer, though with limited access, and the restroom should remain open for most of the project. Rochefort said that Public Works will repair or replace anything they impact at the dog park; the existing surfacing will probably be improved. Emery related that along with repairing the existing dog park at the end of the project, Public Works had offered to build a second fenced dog park.

Rochefort said that with the proposed degree of construction, keeping part of the park open wasn't feasible. Concerns about a temporary facility include concerns by some that a temporary site would become permanent. Staff are just starting to look at whether a second permanent park was a viable option. They went back and looked at what parks were considered as options during the 2008 process for siting the existing dog park, as well as Natural Features Inventory impacts and new flood plain issues. They've looked at having a fenced park of roughly the same size as the existing one; she noted that there have been no complaints of the size of the current fenced dog park. In considering siting a dog park elsewhere in the community, they looked at Village Green Park and Martin Luther King, Jr. Park. (They also considered Washington Park and the Pioneer BMX site and Pioneer Park; however,

floodplain consideration precluded the last two). Both Village Green Park and Martin Luther King, Jr. Parks have an open grassy area not slated for other purposes that wouldn't pose conflicts with other users. Staff will put together a map as they move through the process.

Village Green Park has a field that faces Conifer Boulevard. Users could park on the street, with direct access, though there is limited parking; also, users of the playground must pass the dog park. A benefit of the site is that people currently use the nearby Cheldelin School fields to run their dogs, against school district policy; a dog park could help mitigate this. Evening users could use the Cheldelin School parking, though it would require crossing the street.

She said MLK, Jr. Park is more complicated; natural features overlays limits use. There are ball fields, an off-leash area, a playground, and a barn. Completely separated from these elements is an open grassy field, a portion of which is being considered for the fenced dog park. An advantage of the site is that there is plenty of parking and it is separated from all other park uses. Washington Park doesn't have a lot of available area and it has floodplain issues, limited parking and conflicts with a ball field and the playground.

Staff would like quick action to reach out to neighbors to find what they would like; where they want one; etc, through public process. Griffiths asked whether the Bald Hill Park Reservoir Road entrance had been considered; there is a DaVinci Days event there but it is flat and there is parking. Rochefort said that having a water source is helpful; non-potable water is available at the two under consideration.

Griffiths suggested Woodland Meadows; Rochefort said parking there was limited. Emery added that it was looked at in 2008; some neighbors said they would like more multiuse use there; also it has a significant gopher population, so it is not safe for a dog park. Phillips said that staff will bring the site selection matrix to the board. Griffiths asked why water was important; Phillips replied it was supplied at Woodland Meadows and the 2<sup>nd</sup> and B dog park; Rochefort added that it is probably not a deal-breaker.

Rochefort stated that at MLK, Jr. Park there were no houses looking at portions of the park, while at Village Green, there are a couple homes that look down at that section of the park. Hays asked why mitigating one summer's park closure was necessary; Rochefort replied that it was only one year old and it is not necessary to reduce that service. Emery added that there are reduced opportunities to provide amenities, and this is an opportunity to provide another and reduce driving. Rochefort added that it is somewhat of a windfall. Also, it gives Parks Maintenance opportunities to close one or the other dog park in order to perform maintenance. Manley said funds for both projects would come from Capital Projects.

Jen de-Vries said that staff and board work in developing dog park siting criteria was now proving useful. Daniels said that if this isn't done, somewhere there would be a savings; Manley replied that that was correct. Rochefort said it is not unprecedented to close a facility; it would just be unfortunate. Daniels said that Corvallis does more for dogs than anywhere else in the state.

Rochefort noted that in terms of balancing money, if Public Works were not using the dog park for staging, and instead staged in the parking lot, they would have to do a lot of reconstruction of the parking lot. Manley added that due to reconstruction costs, staging in the parking lot would cost a lot more than using the dog park site. Rochefort said that it was possible that a couple other trees would be affected on Second Street; Manley highlighted them on the drawing. Rochefort said that anything that is removed would be replaced.

Willard asked whether there will be strategy for informing the public and dog park users; Rochefort said that there is no strategy yet, since the full story is not yet known. Emery said staff will bring the criteria for dog park siting and will ask for a recommendation by the board. If the board chooses MLK, Jr. Park, Rochefort will get input from the MLK, Jr. Commission and the neighborhood. Daniels suggested getting publicity on the project as soon as possible; Rochefort said staff would do it as soon as it gets direction.

#### **VIII. SUNSET REVIEW OF PARKS, NATURAL AREAS AND RECREATION.**

Director Emery noted that there is a four-year sunset review for boards and commissions and highlighted initial recommendations to include in the staff report to the Council for the board's review and discussion. Griffiths praised the report. Emery said she would like feedback on accomplishments and activities since 2008 in Sections A through O, as well as Future Activities in A through L.

Fisher asked where "recruitment of youth member" was; Emery clarified that the Council had not designed such a position, but rather recommended that the board consider a youth when filling a position. Fisher said it would be difficult to find a student to fill a normal three-year position. Wolfenbarger added that there was initial discussion of the youth position being for a year at a time; Emery stated that the Council had chosen not to act on that recommendation.

Emery said that in the section on analysis of shared responsibilities, it seeks to look at duplication between different boards and commissions; she highlighted work the board did in collaboration. Griffiths suggested adding the Arts and Culture Commission. Wolfenbarger suggested adding the Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities grant under accomplishments. Fisher asked about the Majestic Theater; Emery clarified that Majestic Theater was not part of the Arts and Culture Commission. Fisher suggested adding work that the board has done regarding the Majestic Theater as an accomplishment, as well as the seismic work. Daniels suggested including work regarding Majestic programming.

Emery asked if anything related to the board's charge was missing or should be removed. Griffiths suggested consideration of a Boys and Girls Club representative as a non-voting member. Also, she suggested changing #2 to "Appointments to the board should be selected to typify the function of the boards service and activities of the department in order to represent the diverse nature of the community, *including all ages*". Emery noted that there was no senior or Senior Center representative, either, so that change would address that. Fisher said adding a Boys and Girls Club representative didn't seem necessary, since when you specify one group you leave another out. Regarding a Boys and Girls Club representative, Fisher related that a previous School District representative had found service extremely boring, since he was never actively involved in what the board was doing; and anything involved with the district he had already heard. He would only occasionally be asked about how the district did something. Griffiths said that increasingly the Boys and Girls Club was providing recreational services and sometimes they come into conflict with Parks programs and services, so having a rep on the board might give them a better understanding of the scope of Parks and Rec services. De-Vries noted that the Boys and Girls Club was not the only other group providing recreation services.

Griffiths suggested adding in the code section as (K), "advise the department regarding dogs in parks, natural areas, recreation areas and other facilities" since the board spends a lot of time on that. Griffiths said that "H" should be Best Management Practices (not Best Practices). She suggested under (I) replacing "citizenry" with "resident". In (D), she suggested replacing the words "active" and "passive" as they refer to recreation types; she suggested using "unstructured", "informal" or "organized" instead. Emery replied that they are old industry words, though still in use, and suggested striking the words entirely; the board concurred. Wolfenbarger suggested taking the capital off (i) in Section 1.16.265.

De-Vries moved to adopt the staff report recommendations to the City Council regarding sunseting with changes as reflected in discussion; Willard seconded; motion passed.

**IX. ADDITIONAL BUDGET REDUCTIONS PROPOSED.**

Director Emery related that she had been asked by the City Manager to reduce an additional \$100,000 in order to help meet a projected \$640,000 deficit in the budget. She recommended to the Manager eliminating a second Operations Supervisor position occupied by David Neighbor and have Neighbor occupy a reinstated Management position which was eliminated in the past budget year but the department doesn't function well without. (Neighbor has been filling both Management Assistant and Operations Supervisor jobs over the last year). To help adjust to the loss of the second Operations Supervisor position, there has been some reorganizing, including giving more responsibility to two Lead Workers. She also recommended to reduce a Parks Operations Specialist position from fulltime to 0.5 and to leave three vacant seasonal Parks Worker positions vacant for this year. Operations Supervisor Dave Phillips added that nine of twelve Seasonal Parks Workers returned on April 1. He said that with the reduction, we would give up the equivalent in funding of 1 of those positions in FY10-11 and at least another 1 in funding for FY11-12, so we are giving up almost two-thirds of the funding for those positions.

**X. GOALS UPDATE.**

Griffiths related that the board's dog subcommittee met March 15. It developed a scope of the committee, including education for dog owners and non-dog owners; looking at dog off-leash areas, especially Willamette Park and Bald Hill; and finding ways to pay for dog services in parks. The second meeting developed ideas for brochures; one would be similar to the State Parks on how to deal with dogs in parks; the other would be on how to keep a dog away from oneself. The group is recommending the Animal Control Officer update the existing brochure; the committee wants a vet or animal supply store to underwrite the cost and to distribute it more widely. Another idea is to add \$5 to animal licenses to help support enforcement on dog control or dog parks. Also, the subcommittee recommends that the cost of dog waste bags continue to come from the Stormwater Fee. A dog-free day in parks was considered but discarded in favor of a more positive educational approach. They discussed problems with signage at parks, including Willamette Park and Bald Hill. She will contact the County to clarify Bald Hill signage, since it's not clear from the signage whether it is an on-leash or off-leash area; it should be clarified to be an on-leash area.

Griffiths said that Lane County has greatly increased dog licensing by going door to door. She related that the County Elections Officer felt that about one-third of dogs in the City are unlicensed. She said there are about 6,000 dogs licensed in the County and it should probably be at least double that. The subcommittee is seeking ways to try to get more people to license their dogs. De-Vries said that the university holds a Pet Day every year; Fisher said that it is this Saturday. Griffiths said the next subcommittee meeting will be in May.

Fisher highlighted the Corvallis to Peoria Road highway project. He said that there were a number of complaints from cyclists regarding the proposed slip lane design. In response, there is now a proposal for a flashing blinking yellow light is under consideration for the Van Buren Bridge intersection. Griffiths asked what ODOT thought about the blinking yellow light; Fisher said ODOT had little experience with it. He related that Public Works' Steve Irwin found that there had been no problems with the light at the Fairgrounds. Hays related that the Trails Connections Committee felt the solution was for an overpass over the Van Buren intersection and the slip lane merging into that; this should help relieve rush hour congestion. Fisher said that the Van Buren Bridge was built to accommodate two

pedestrian lanes. Hays said in the long run an overpass will be built. Daniels related that ODOT had cut a number of trees along Highway 34; Fisher said ODOT will build a road on the north.

- XI. STAFF REPORTS.** Emery related that fee review was underway and the board will review it in May. Staff are planning a May 14 Helen M. Berg Plaza renaming; the board is invited. Staff are working with Benton County and the Greenbelt Land Trust to develop an integrated trails website and an accompanying agreement of understanding; this should assist in seeking future trails grants. The three have also written a letter of declaration that the board will review at its next meeting; the purpose is to describe how the parties intend to cooperate on restoration and rehabilitation of natural areas; this will be useful in future grant applications. An Oregon Arts Commission Grant was received for a plenary event on September 10, where artists will come to parks and their paintings sold at the end of the day.

Staff will meet with the school district regarding if a possible May elementary school early release day is adopted; Parks programming has been developed to respond to that. There will be a meeting the school district in May to discuss communications; Griffiths will represent PNARB. The Mayor has requested the school district replace Liaison Greg Lecuyer, who has retired.

The first of three community meetings has been held regarding the Community Garden Plan; Assistant Director Steve DeGhetto will update the board on the process at the next meeting. The City received the Tree City USA Award, which was presented to the City Council at its April 18 meeting; John Hinkle wrote a fun Arbor Month proclamation in "Dr. Seuss" format. Seasonal Parks staff returned April 1.

Staff are working with a citizen group seeking installation of an art wall near the skate park; they got a grant from the Benton County Cultural Arts Commission and have raised other funds as well, and now have sufficient funds to build the wall. The Arts and Culture Commission supported the project. The next step is to get engineering plans and the permitting process finalized. The group will work with staff to develop rules and regulations for use of the wall.

Operations Supervisor Dave Phillips reported that with return of seasonal workers, restrooms are open, all areas are mowed, fountains are on, and shelters and restrooms have been pressure washed. Sports fields are still closed since they are still soft. Some plantings along Country Club are being replaced with more drought-tolerant materials. There have been discussions with Benton County regarding equipment sharing.

Planner Rochefort related a grant submission was made to State Parks regarding Tunison Park. Outreach was done to neighbors regarding the two-acre park; over three hundred fliers in Spanish and English were distributed. The concept of healthy, active living is being targeted. It is designed with an opportunity for strong volunteering on the project. Rotary is participating by giving a small grant. A natural, sustainable playground that promotes activity is being considered, along with a circulation system that promotes walking and tricycle riding.

An RTP grant for the Shooting Star Trail renovation is still under review. The Central Park grant of \$50,000 in matching funds is still on hold. She said Administrative Assistant Chrissy Bevens has been assisting in writing the grants and has done a great job, especially in developing a distinctive "look" for the grants.

She expected that at the next board meeting a representative from Community Development and possibly a developer would attend to discuss a potential annexation vote of the McFadden property adjacent to Hewlett-Packard. If the annexation goes through, developers would be required to provide a multiuse path and a small trail.

She related that the CIP would come to the board for review in May and June this year instead of later in summer; this should help to better coordinate with Public Works. She related that the Civic Beautification and Urban Forestry Advisory Commission (CBUF) would give out Beautification Awards, with “Beauty Grows Here” signs going out. CBUF will have a booth at the Spring Gardening Festival on May 1.

Griffiths asked about apartments going up on Walnut; Rochefort related that at Timberhill Park, on the corner of Walnut and 29<sup>th</sup> Street, an apartment was quickly going up. A requirement is to provide a 5’ wide concrete path along the property line in the area; this will require removal of a couple trees, which are in poor condition. Griffiths noted that it is a very wet area along 29<sup>th</sup> area; sidewalks there already flood. Rochefort said she has not seen plans yet; she said that retaining walls there drain onto park property; this is a violation and developers have been notified and they have been given options, including to install an adequate drain pipe. They must provide a full drainage plan for the path. Griffiths said that drainage should be underground; adding more water aboveground doesn’t make sense; Rochefort said that underground drainage was the most cost-effective option.

Rochefort related that water-wise pesticide free plantings were planned for new pedestrian crosswalks being built on Circle Boulevard.

Emery related that Mayor Manning provided gift tote bags for board members in appreciation for their service (May is National Volunteer Month).

- XII. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES.** See Goals Update.
- XIII. BOARD MEMBER/CITY COUNCIL LIAISON REPORTS.** None.
- XIV. ADJOURNMENT:** Meeting adjourned at 8:23 p.m.