

**CITY OF CORVALLIS**  
**MINUTES OF THE PARKS, NATURAL AREAS AND RECREATION**  
**ADVISORY BOARD**  
**MARCH 19, 2015**

Attendance

Lynda Wolfenbarger, Vice-Chair  
 Ralph Alig  
 Tatiana Dierwechter  
 Phillip Hays  
 Deb Rose  
 Jon Soule  
 Anthony Stumbo  
 Marc Vomocil

Absent/Excused

Simone Frei  
 Michael Mayes  
 Joel Hirsch, City Council Liaison  
 Kevin Bogotin, 509-J District Liaison

Staff

Karen Emery, Director  
 Steve DeGhetto, Assistant Director  
 Jude Geist, Parks Operations Supervisor  
 Jimbo Ivy, Majestic Theatre Supervisor  
 Mark Lindgren, Recorder

Guests

Vanessa Blackstone  
 Molly Megraw  
 Nance Keisling

**SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION**

	Agenda Item	Summary of Recommendations
III.	Approval of Meeting Minutes – February 19, 2015	February 19, 2015 minutes approved as presented.
IV.	Visitors’ Propositions	
V.	Majestic Theatre - Ivy	
VI.	Sunset Review of Parks, Natural Areas, and Recreation Advisory Board	
VII.	Riverfront Park Policy Review	
VIII.	Joint Meeting with Benton County Natural Areas and Parks and Greenbelt Land Trust	
IX.	Goals Review	
X.	Board Review of Refunds Policy	
XI.	Board Member Reports	
XII.	Staff Reports	
XIII.	Council Liaison Report	
XIV.	Adjournment	The next regular meeting will be held April 16, 2015 at 6:30 p.m., at the Downtown Fire station meeting room.

## **CONTENT OF DISCUSSION**

### **I. CALL TO ORDER.**

Vice-Chair Lynda Wolfenbarger called the meeting of the Parks, Natural Areas and Recreation Board to order at 6:31 p.m.

### **II. INTRODUCTIONS.**

### **III. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: FEBRUARY 19, 2015**

Marc Vomocil moved and Deb Rose seconded to approve the February 19, 2015 minutes as presented; motion passed.

### **IV. VISITORS' PROPOSITIONS.**

**Vanessa Blackstone**, President of the Timber Ridge Neighborhood Association, distributed maps to the board, which she said were improved from her previous presentation. She requested the support of the board for additional natural resource areas and open spaces in north Corvallis. She said the board doesn't necessarily have to lead the effort- just support it. She distributed handouts of the area that the group was interested in, which would provide a connection between the existing Brandis City Park through Timberhill Natural Area and Chip Ross Park to McDonald Forest. It would serve as an important recreation and wildlife corridor. She said there were trail connections in the 2013 Parks Plan through the area; her group wanted to ensure those trails go through open space rather than the highly developed areas that the current owners plan. The group is interested in investigating conservation easements and outright purchase of some of the land to dedicate to open space. The idea is to both see the owners be recompensed while ensuring the City gets the benefits of open spaces.

Phil Hays asked about map labels; Blackstone explained that "TL" stood for "Tax Lot"; the two parcels in question are Tax Lot 100 and Tax Lot 3500. She cautioned that those numbers may change as there was a plan to join the two and subdivide them. She said that she was simply asking for the board's conceptual support for open space corridors along already designated connections and trails. Blackstone related that the whole site will likely eventually be developed. The development which will be in the news soon is named The Hub, causing a significant impact to wetland and riparian areas there; the development is not protecting sensitive areas as well as they could be. There is currently an incomplete application for a project called The Crest at Timberhill, off the northwest side of tax lot 3500, with 40 single detached and attached single-family units.

Director Emery said staff was having preliminary conversations with developers for a potential trail easement through the development to connect Timberhill Natural Area to McDonald Forest. Blackstone stated that Tax Lot 3500 was roughly 215 acres, and Tax Lot 100 another 10 acres. She hadn't yet calculated the amount of acreage of open space her group was advocating for. Emery suggested giving the board a month to review Blackstone's submitted proposals; Wolfenbarger concurred.

Soule asked whether the request was within the purview of the board; Emery answered that there were two issues to consider about this property. One, the board could make a recommendation to support (or not) the trail connection, either way. There is a connection on the Trails Plan that goes through this property. Another possibility would be to recommend (or not) the purchase of

property for additional natural areas or parks. The board may determine whether the City has (or hasn't) met the community's need for the amount of acreage of natural areas. At the next meeting, she will relate the findings of the Master Plan in regard to existing acreage and what the needs may be.

Hays said that developers may approach the City to propose trading land in exchange for System Development Charges or wetland mitigation. Emery added that it depended on the nature of the situation. Blackstone asked if any other information would be helpful prior to the next meeting; Emery replied the staff may want to contact her as they prepare a staff report.

**Molly Megraw** related she was a relatively new member of the community. She thanked the board, saying that her family chose to move to this area because of the amount of beauty that has been preserved. Also, the parks, natural areas and green spaces surrounding the city are a vital but often unnoticed part of the city's economic vitality. Many of the people she seeks to hire look at this, and often choose to come here over a place that pays more, so attracting and competing strongly for talent is an unseen advantage of the community. Because of this, she asked the board to support Blackstone's request that the board consider setting aside more natural areas in north Corvallis. She said existing areas there are heavily used and enjoyed. She advocated establishing a greenbelt and skyline around the community, saying that this is a special opportunity. Dierwechter praised Megraw's messaging and suggested she bring that message to Corvallis' Visioning process, which will look at strategic goals for the next ten years.

**Nance Keisling** highlighted a typo in the third line of the bottom paragraph on page 5 of the February 19, 2015 board minutes regarding the signage inventory, "the Dog Committee looked at all signs in all parks". She said that that wasn't correct; the committee will do that, but haven't done so yet. Geist added that *staff* have done an initial inventory of signs, but haven't taken it to the committee yet.

She said that March 27 is the last off-leash dog day at Crystal Lake Sports Fields, prior to various sports use of the fields. She announced that WDOG would be holding its annual April Stools Day there to clean up fields and trails (date to be determined), and is a fun, festive community event open to all. Emery said when it has been scheduled, staff would be happy to post it on the department's web page.

Ralph Alig asked about the progress on revisions to dog brochures; Keisling replied that they are still being reviewed and the committee is getting feedback on them. Funding is needed to print and distribute them; donations and underwriting will be sought from vet clinics and pet stores. Emery said that she and Geist would also like to review them, and that the department can prioritize paying for printing.

#### V. **MAJESTIC THEATRE.**

Recently hired Majestic Theatre Supervisor Jimbo Ivy related the department took over managing operations on January 1, 2015. Early tasks have included connecting with the community with a stakeholders board. Staff are finalizing an operational budget and starting an education program. Early in March there will be public forums regarding uses for the theater; the initial four facility uses have focused on theater, music, dance, and education. Two forums have already been held; the community seems excited about the possibilities of the Majestic under management by the City. Following the forums, he plans monthly check-ins with all interested in the facility.

Ivy stated that the Majestic wants to function mainly as a production facility, partnering with community arts and cultural organizations, and looking to the community to dictate events and activities, and seeking to manage events to be fiscally neutral. The Council approved a \$10,000 subsidy if needed, but he felt that it would not be needed, since with increasing usage, revenues should be significantly higher than projected in the five-year plan, since it was based on previous years of inconsistent use. All programs are rated Tier 4 or above (with 100% cost recovery). The educational aspect could be relaxed once the facility proves itself fiscally consistent. Programs and concessions are Tier 5. Following recent press coverage, there has been a lot of contact from the community, and he's meeting every day with creative people and groups that now want to utilize the facility. That coverage has generated a lot of interest and contacts from small local businesses that want to partner with the theater.

He said that educational programs would be partly modeled on Stephanie Long's successful 1990's programs for both youth and adults at the Majestic. He related that Elizabeth Wyatt at CHS wants to teach master classes and tech production and getting more productions done than they can do with their own facilities.

Yesterday there were announcements seeking applications for the theater season; the plan is to produce four shows in the August through December period; the application process closes May 1. On May 2, a membership gala will re-introduce membership volunteers and sponsor tiers and share with the community what has been learned speaking with stakeholders regarding integrating operations with the City. The new season will be announced on June 1, and auditions and rehearsals will begin.

He reported that the former management organization, MCM, plans to become Friends of the Majestic, preserving its 501c3 status, with a supportive role similar to Friends of Corvallis Parks and Recreation. It will accept project-restricted and tax-deductible donations for the theater, offering a clear, transparent donations process.

Dierwechter asked for capacity for outreach and access for diverse and sometimes ignored constituencies in the community. Ivy said that there were several ways to address that; the department's existing Family Assistance Program already allows low-income individuals and families to participate at minimal cost. Also, the department is converting many of current and new instructors to City employees or contractors, and seeking out more diverse groups of instructors and directors. He is continually seeking input from the entire community. Dierwechter said that there were ways to collaborate so that all kids in the community have access to it.

Dierwechter asked how the Theatre's stakeholders group overlapped with the Arts and Culture Advisory Board (ACAB). Emery replied that the ACAB has a specific charter to advise the City Council on all matters regarding the arts, while the stakeholders group that Ivy is working with is providing advice specific to content at the Majestic. Also, now that the Theatre is under the department's wing, the PNARAB will review policies as it does for the rest of the department. Ivy added that ACAB is holding its annual Connect event at the Majestic.

In outlining his background, Ivy related that he lived here four years ago, working for the Alchemist. Due to family illness, he returned to Kansas and his previous work of managing a 400-seat live theater and music venue. He'd spent about a decade there previously as technical director and program administrator for a municipal outdoor and indoor venue called Arts in the Park, which had a wide range of stage programming, including outdoor theater, live music, educational programs, rallies, etc. He's also done sound engineering since high school. Since

returning to Corvallis, he'd done marketing and promotion for local small businesses and arts and cultural organizations. He said this is his ideal job, combining venue management, budgeting, and promotion with his theater background.

Vomocil asked if bringing in traveling shows was anticipated. Ivy replied that previous management had had little experience in working with national and regional traveling acts, which may triple or quadruple their prices for municipal theater venues. Also, they often ask for a flat fee, which is not risk averse (they get paid whether anyone shows up or not). He said experienced bookers offer a backend deal, with a small upfront guarantee (\$250 to \$300, depending on their size and draw) and negotiate profit sharing on the backend, after the guarantee, and after costs have been made up in ticket admissions. That approach is risk averse and encourages acts to actively promote their shows.

In general, however, we'll focus more on local talent rather than national and regional shows, though we'll continue to bring in requested acts. He noted that events tend to simply break even in this relatively small venue, since we generally can't charge more than \$35 per ticket, and there are only 300 seats. Well-produced and promoted local acts, festivals, special events or shows can outdraw a decent-sized regional audience, and as can most national acts (since families and friends of participants attend). Instead of regarding it as a performing arts center, it is more fiscally viable to regard it as a community arts center.

Vomocil asked about the condition of the facility; Ivy replied that it was generally in good shape, but due to lack of the fiscal ability to invest in the facility over the last fifteen years, managers weren't able to keep up with technology; also, many drapes will be out of code in 3-5 years; the stage could use work; and the department is contributing a dimmer pack of lights this summer. However, even during thin times, supporters were making donations totaling in the range of \$80,000 a year; and this fall, a number of people made restricted donations specifically aimed at technology improvements. So, some money is available to take on improvements, and down the road, to start to put into reserves for ongoing improvements.

Vomocil asked how he saw the Whiteside and the Majestic co-existing. Ivy replied that as soon as he started, he began talking to stakeholders, including the board of the Whiteside, about the relationship between the theaters and how to work to co-produce events. The way they are arranged, there is some redundancy, though the Whiteside seats more people, around 600-700. The Whiteside still needs a lot of work, but working together on back end support, including tech staff, marketing and promotion, there is infrastructure to co-brand and work together on shows and stay out of each others way, especially on opening weekends and avoid doing the same kinds of shows at the same time. He said the "Seven by Seven" group agreed to meet regularly, avoid competition, and actively work in a collaborative spirit. The goal is by working together, more Corvallis residents will regularly engage with the arts each week. He'll seek to help other venues that need help, including restoring the Whiteside to its former glory. He noted that the two venues were designed and built to work in tandem by the same people in the past.

Ivy explained the "Seven by Seven" group refers to organizations within a seven by seven block area in Corvallis that includes LaSelles Stewart Center, Whitcomb Hall, CHS Theater, the Majestic, the Whiteside, the Arts Center, the public library, and all the non-profits, OSU and city organizations that do regular public performances and events. It is a formalized group intended to foster cooperation and collaboration.

Ivy related that the Majestic facility has multiple spaces as well as the main theater, with several spaces upstairs that work well for larger festivals and workshops. He is working with the Downtown Corvallis Association, as well as DaVinci Days, which is planning a less centralized approach this year. Mary Pat at Visit Corvallis has been making introductions with groups wanting to produce new events, such as the Solstice Festival. The Majestic must do something profitable every weekend, and so must engage as many different art forms and activities as possible. Engaging with festivals helps the revenue stream and staying financially viable. He encouraged board members to give him suggestions of people to meet. He said he has tried to retain all employees in place, including Christel Birdwell, long-time Administrative Assistant; Marshall Anderson, building facilities; Gabriela Ochoa, graphic design and marketing specialist; and he praised Linda Hart, of Parks Admin, who has done fine work turning around contracts. He said staff are scrambling on working on new contracts.

Dierwechter asked the best way to contact him; Ivy said the Majestic was not yet connected to the City by fiber yet, and suggested contacting him at: jimbo@majestic.org. Dierwechter said this was exciting, and advocated engaging the entire community to find partnerships and opportunities.

#### **VI. SUNSET REVIEW OF PARKS, NATURAL AREAS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD.**

Director Karen Emery highlighted the distributed municipal code regarding the board. Sunset review is required of advisory boards every four years. The board must evaluate its purpose, usefulness, and viability in order to either discontinue the advisory board or recommend authorizing another four-year period. The board's recommendation will be forwarded to the Human Services Committee (HSC) for its June2 meeting.

She asked board members to review the code in order to prepare for the discussion at the next meeting. She will compile a list of accomplishments for the last four years and include it in the April board packet as part of the review; she asked the board to let her know if they feel items are missing from the list. The board must also discuss its future goals at its April meeting, as well as evaluating current goals, and letting her know if the board would like to go through a board goal development process.

#### **VII. RIVERFRONT PARK POLICY REVIEW.**

Parks Operations Supervisor Jude Geist stated that the Riverfront Commemorative Park Use and Management Guidelines Policy are up for review. As part of that review, staff comes to the board for its advice and any recommendations to make the policy more effective. He highlighted the policy in the packet.

He said he could recommend several changes. A Special Use Permit Form was recently developed for Walks and Runs through the park to supplement the regular Use Permit; people applying to hold walks or runs must submit that permit form. On page 3, section (b), he will add a fourth or fifth bullet point that addresses that permit. Also in that section, the department could potentially require a map for events to show where event features would be placed. On page 4, under the Site Plan, there is a list of amenities that events should list, if applicable: potable water hookups, and garbage and recycling locations (the latter should spur more events to better plan ahead on garbage and recycling).

On pages 4-5, under the Public Use section, staff recommended changing the wording in item (d), "Non-paved areas are restricted to foot traffic only", since there are gravel parking and vehicle

access down to the boat access in North Riverfront, and current language would prohibit driving across them. After item (g), another letter would be added to state that no staking is allowed (for canopies, for example), and listing alternative means (such as water buckets and cement blocks) to staking. (Stakes can pierce irrigation or other facilities). Geist said the feedback was needed within two weeks; he encouraged members to email him. It must go to the City Council for adoption in June.

**VIII. JOINT MEETING WITH BENTON COUNTY NATURAL AREAS AND PARKS AND GREENBELT LAND TRUST.**

Director Emery said the board has historically met annually with Benton County Natural Areas and Parks, and the Greenbelt Land Trust, and the next meeting is tentatively scheduled for May. Specific agenda items include the GLT purchase of the Bald Hill Farm (adjacent to the City park and Benton County natural areas), and staff felt boards should talk about management plans and goals. The proposal is to meet jointly at the time of the board's regularly scheduled meeting in May; board members concurred.

**IX. GOALS REVIEW.**

Wolfenbarger said the new theater management addressed a couple board goals. She noted that former member Mike Mayes had taken charge of a Board Goal, so that Goal needs to be re-assigned. Stumbo said he needs to attend a new board member orientation; he felt that would help him be better utilized as a board member. Hays suggested that he visit facilities like Osborn Aquatic Center; doing so was quite useful to him; he also met with the director of the Senior Center. Director Emery said she would follow up.

**X. BOARD REVIEW OF REFUND POLICY.**

Director Emery highlighted an added agenda item. There is an internal refund policy, and not a City Council policy; key staff reviewed it recently. Assistant Director DeGhetto noted the administrative policy draft still had a few changes. With bringing on the Majestic, managing the Aquatic Center, the Chintimini Senior Center, and general recreation, staff all had to get on the same page, so all Administration and Recreation staff reviewed procedures of the refund policy.

He said that policy had considered refunds on account credit and changes were proposed to some of the associated time frames. He highlighted changes under 5.01.030.B, #2, "Refunds or account credit will not be issued for requests made less than five business days prior to the first class meeting or date of a scheduled event". This assists with cost recovery and fixes some problems for some classes.

Regarding item #3, staff found that people would sometimes reserve all the picnic shelters in the system but then only use one. We were losing money, so refunds won't be made unless cancellation is made thirty days prior to the scheduled facility rental. Item #4 stipulates charging a ten-dollar processing fee for transferring, to address people renting multiple blocks of time, and then changing their minds, which often lost the department the opportunity to rent them again, and lost others the chance to rent them.

Under #5, credits on accounts expire within one year of the date of issuance. Some people had credit on the books for a couple years; that is not an industry standard. Refunds may be issued to the customer's Parks and Recreation account. With amounts under \$50, we'll simply return it from petty cash from each site; over \$50, the refund will be by City authorized check and may take four to six weeks for processing. (He noted that it does not usually take that long; we do check runs twice a month, and it typically takes less than three weeks). Under item #11, fees paid

with scholarship funds will be credited back to the customer's scholarship balance. Under Admin policy, there is an Accelerated Review Fee of \$50 to get applicants at the front of the line. He said that requires a commitment of staff time, and we won't refund that money.

Regarding B.3, Hays asked what happens if a customer rents a facility less than thirty days out; DeGhetto replied that in that case, there are no refunds. Geist explained that for big facilities, like a shelter, once it's reserved, it's taken off-line and potential renters are turned away, and closer to the date of renting, we may not be able to rent it again. Hays asked about 9.b, for "Fees paid by check for less than \$50; if payment date is more than fourteen days *prior* to the date of the refund request, the refund will be in cash"; Emery clarified that the language's intent was to ensure the check cleared.

Vomocil said he didn't see a request for the accelerated review fee that DeGhetto presented; DeGhetto replied that he would add it, along with the processing (or transfer) fee. Vomocil asked about 8.b, page 2, "[For] fees paid by cash, for less than \$50 the refund will be in cash from each site". Emery suggested deleting the last few words "*from each site*". DeGhetto said that staff had put it forward as an accounting issue, to take petty cash for refunds from the facility in question, since each facility only has a given amount of cash to work with. Emery noted that the Majestic doesn't have any cash, so it may have to handle the issue differently. Wolfenbarger suggested ending it as "the refund will be in cash from each petty cash site".

Vomocil asked if he wanted to rent a room at the Senior Center, for example, if he'd have to go the Senior Center to rent it, rather than Avery Park. Emery replied that was true; you can register for a program anywhere, but you have to rent a site at the site. Vomocil encouraged staff to underline the changes to avoid users' frustration; DeGhetto responded that staff are talking with users and will include a summary of the changes in the Activity Guide.

Deb Rose said there was an opportunity to use credit *or donate it*; DeGhetto said that was the direction staff were looking at; to encourage customers to send those funds to the Family Assistance Program.

#### **XI. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS.**

Stumbo reported that the Harrison Boulevard parking lot capacity at Bald Hill was maxed out again. DeGhetto said park users were parking on the street shoulders, which is not allowed. Emery added that a proposed Run there was denied a permit, since the parking spaces couldn't be spared. She said that a new trail on south side of Bald Hill may attract some users to park at the other (Reservoir Road) parking lot instead.

There is also a need for parking for the Timberhill Natural Area, where users are parking in the neighborhood. She noted that when 29<sup>th</sup> Street becomes connected to Kings Boulevard in the future, the Transportation Plan will require the department to pay for half-street improvements, which will need a funding mechanism. Staff felt that other street and parking issues should be addressed at the same time. Dierwechter said that the three-year Transportation Systems planning process (guiding transportation priorities for the next twenty years) is underway, and is an opportunity to highlight interconnectivity of public transit with trailheads, and to highlight parking at trailheads.

#### **XII. STAFF REPORTS.**

Director Emery said the draft Master Plan was taken to the Planning Commission, which recommended the Council adopt it. The Council ran out of time to complete deliberations, and it

will be presented again in April. The Friends of Corvallis Parks and Recreation are hosting a tamales fundraiser, selling 1500 to raise money for playground equipment at Franklin Park. Frozen tamales may be pre-ordered by the dozen; there's an ad in the Activity Guide and they may be ordered from the website. Block 16 donated money for ingredients and most ingredients were donated- Jon Soule obtained a 75# spinach donation from Stahlbush Island Farms; Del Alma and Flat Tail Brewing donated pork; Safeway donated all the spices; and the Mexican Cheese Factory donated the cheese. Many volunteers assembling the tamales are Franklin Park neighbors.

Emery presented highlights from Planner Jackie Rochefort. The Owens Farmhouse assessment study is complete. Funds for Arnold Playground were from a State Parks and Recreation grant and a considerable individual donation through Friends; bids will be accepted in April and play equipment installed in May. The Pickle Ball court project, funded by donation through the Friends will be completed in April. That project includes replacing some court fence, and adding a concrete path to a memorial bench. The portion of the Shooting Star trail boardwalk damaged in the Timberhill Natural Area fire will be replaced between March 30 to April 3, and the trail will be closed during that time.

The proposed HUB subdivision, adjacent to the Shooting Star trail, will go to a Planning Commission hearing on April 1, to be held at the Senior Center. The plan eliminates the first section of the existing trail boardwalk and allows for the extension of Shooting Star Drive, with a sidewalk extension to a new section of the board. She related that the applicant has not provided adequate information for Planning staff to approve it at this time. Wolfenbarger asked if board members could attend; Emery replied that residents may speak during Visitor Propositions. Emery clarified that the trail has an easement, but the section of trail proposed to be removed is due to extension of the street.

Geist reported that last year there were just under 7,000 volunteer hours, down a little from the year before, but in general, volunteers have been steadily increasing over the last six years. At this point, the limited number of staff available to oversee volunteers are limiting the number of volunteers that can be utilized, and so how volunteers are managed is being re-structured. He emphasized that the department could not get done what it does without the large number of volunteers. We had the largest February for volunteers ever. Many OSU classes now have requirements for students to do community service; many took advantage of nice weather. Seasonal workers started in late February; we're down two workers, and hiring replacements is underway.

Assistant DeGhetto said the Spring/Summer Activity Guides are now out, with information on the Majestic Theatre. The Senior Center is developing a questionnaire to get feedback from user groups regarding renovating it; trust funds require that construction start no later than November 7, 2018. An RFP will be put out for conceptual architectural plans.

Planning is underway for an August 8-9 Pickle Ball tournament. Staff met today to plan a July 25-26 softball tournament. At the soccer tournament set for August 21-23, staff plan to have its new Type 3 Mobile Concessions unit deployed, featuring nutritious food, and providing Youth Recreation Corps and Youth Parks Corps staff their first time job experiences; grant support will be sought. Staff applied for three grants from the Benton County Community Foundation for swimming lesson inclusion; Summer Meal programs and Youth Volunteer Corps support.

**XII. COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT.** None.

**XIII. ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:16 p.m