



**CITY OF ALBANY  
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
Calapooia Room, City Hall  
Wednesday, February 4, 2009  
6:00 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

Commission members present: Mike Graham, Sharon Edwards, Russ Allen, John Vandepas, Jill Van Buren

Commission members absent:

Staff present: Ed Hodney, Parks & Recreation Director; Katie Nooshazar, Parks and Recreation Program Manager; Rob Romancier, Parks and Recreation Program Manager; Bruce Edwards, Sports Coordinator; Tari Hayes, Parks and Recreation Administrative Assistant

Guests present:

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Graham called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. INTRODUCTION OF NEW COMMISSIONER

Jill Van Buren was introduced as the newest Parks & Recreation Commissioner. Jill works has worked as an elections commissioner for the past 11 years, both in Linn and Benton Counties. Her position has taken her overseas as an election monitor. She is involved in Willamette River Keepers. She is excited to be a Commissioner and looks forward to helping the Parks and Recreation Department be a success in the community.

3. ELECTIONS OF COMMISSION CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

Elections were held for Commission Chair and Vice-Chair. Mike Graham was elected Chair and Sharon Edwards was elected Vice-Chair.

4. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 15, 2009

The minutes of the January 15, 2009 meeting were approved.

5. BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC – None

6. ACTION ITEMS - None

7. DISCUSSION ITEMS (discussed in reversed order)

a) Issues for FY 09-10 Budget – Hodney (handout)

Hodney provided a handout that was shared with the Budget Committee two weeks ago. The handout provided shows a five year forecast for the General Fund. Hodney reminded the Commission that the Parks and Recreation Department is primarily funded through the Parks Fund. The Parks and Recreation

Fund receives 20% of the gross receipts that the City collects in property taxes. The percent has gone down since it was enacted. It started at 32%.

The Parks and Recreation Department will be developing a department budget proposal over the next two months and will share it with the Commission. The proposed budget will be reviewed many times in the coming months, with the City Council adopting the budget towards the end of June. The Commission will be asked to advise the Parks and Recreation Department on the development of the budget and then will be asked to be an advisor to the Budget Committee.

Given the economic circumstances, the forecast provided could change many times. The General Fund covers many departments including a portion of Fire and Police, Planning, the Libraries and more. The handout shows both the resources (revenues) and the requirements (expenditures). The forecast also shows the fund balance and the percentage of changes over the next five years.

The fund balance has been built to its current level by a purposeful management strategy over the last two years of tremendous fiscal responsibility as well as by taking advantage of some one time funding sources. The fund balance is conservatively estimated to be \$3.6 million at the end of 2008-09. The percentage of the fund balance each year drops considerably, from 14% this year to 2% in 2013-2014, with 2012-2013 being particularly low. The most significant expenditure increase each year is in Personal Services, which are primarily controlled by union contracts that were just ratified through 2011.

Within the Parks and Recreation fund, if things play out at 5% increases each year (conservative), we'd see roughly a \$180K- \$200K increase each year; however our expenditures will increase more than that. The Parks and Recreation Department does not rely solely on the Parks and Recreation fund for funding. The department also relies on non-tax revenues such as sponsorships, participant fees, etc. The department needs to "balance the checkbook" with alternative funding sources as well as by reducing expenditures wherever possible. The Department is going to have to make some interesting budget decisions each year and the Commission will be asked to weigh in on those decisions.

Graham asked what percentage of the P&R budget were personnel costs. Hodney estimated that it would be about 50%, which is much lower than many departments. The department has been able to reduce personnel costs by contracting out services. The department is currently struggling to maintain the level of sponsorships and donations. We have seen the level of registrations increases in our classes and programs. The community seems to be staying in the community for services, and the department is positioning themselves to meet those needs.

b) Proposed Changes to the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) – Hodney (handout)

Hodney provided the Commission with the current *Funded Projects Summary and Detail* from the CIP, 2009-2013 as well as the proposed *Parks Introduction* page to the CIP for 2010-2014.

These handouts show projects that have been identified to be included in the five-year CIP. For the current plan year, 2008-2009, some of the projects have been deferred to future fiscal years. The deferments are caused by funding issues, both with System Development Charges (SDC), grants and donations, and/or the Parks fund. Most projects rely on multiple funding sources. The projects are resource driven and there's a significant slowdown based on projected revenue decreases in our current economic times.

A high priority of the Parks Master Plan is the replacement of outdated and inadequate playgrounds in existing parks. Since the adoption of the Master Plan, new playgrounds have been installed in Takana, Swanson, and Riverview and Burkhart parks. This year the City will complete the replacement of equipment at Eads Park. Playground at three parks – Teloh Calapooia, Pineway and Henderson were to be replaced. The projects have been postponed one or more years due to an anticipated reduction of revenue.

Parks SDCs budgeted new revenue at \$600K, so far we've seen \$80k come in, and we conservatively estimate that by year end we may bring in \$200K. We've seen a drop in new construction and that drop effects not only this year, but will also effect next year's projections as well. In this current year we've dropped the project budget down from \$1 million to \$600K and may need to drop it even more. Park SDCs is the major revenue source for park construction projects and may only be spent on new parks, not existing parks. We'll be making adjustments to the CIP for the next 5 years. We're not proposing to stop projects all together. We are going to focus on brining in additional revenue to cover the proposed projects.

Money that has been obligated to existing projects is being held safe. These projects are already in progress or have been committed by Council action, such as the Timber Linn Park Improvements portion related to the construction of the new YMCA in the park.

## 8. REPORTS AND UPDATES

### a) Capital Projects Report – Hodney (handout)

- Kinder Park – Construction is 65% complete. The project continues to be blessed by great weather.
- YMCA at Timber Linn Pak – City Council will review the proposed project in a work session on February 9.
- Albany Bike Park – the next major step is to go before Council at the March 9 work session. The taskforce is to the point where they need to talk to the neighbors at both locations as well as start some fundraising. Before these things can happen the taskforce needs to update the Council on their progress so far. A skatepark construction company has volunteered to come out and do a demonstration in March and the Commission is encouraged to attend.
- Allen asked to update the name of 53<sup>rd</sup> Avenue Park on the report and asked if that park was to be constructed with a picnic shelter? No, the neighborhood didn't want a shelter.

He noticed that some of the newer parks are scheduled to have shelters added (Lexington and Gibson Hill) and wondered why they weren't built when the parks were constructed. When the parks were designed and built, shelters were desired. However, the budget didn't have enough funds to build the shelters during the construction phase. For instance, Lexington needed to be built in two phases because of funding issues. Gibson Hill was built in one phase. Both parks are scheduled for shelters that will be paid for with SDC funds in part because they were promised to the neighborhood as part of the original plans and because SDC funds can be used to build new facilities in existing parks. There was a shelter at Takena that we took out due to safety issues. This shelter replacement is planned to be funded with parks funding and gifts and donations and has been put on hold until funding can be obtained.

### b) Refund Policy follow up (order reversed with Youth Sports) – Nooshazar (handout)

At the last meeting the refund policy was presented. As a follow up, a commissioner asked to have the department look at allowing a refund if a replacement could be found for a park shelter or ACP/COOL rentals.

The recreation team took another look and decided that a refund could be allowed in that portion of the policy. It wouldn't work for a Senior Center and Tournament rental, given the many different rental possibilities.

The policy remains as before with the addition of the wording: "If another renter is found, fees and deposits paid will be returned, less a \$25 processing fee." They also added to the policy: "Permit (alcohol, sound, etc) fees are non-refundable." These permits require advance processing and the work is already

completed by the time the rental occurs. These permits can also require approval from numerous City departments.

The policy will be enacted with the spring brochure.

c) Youth Sports Fees report – Edwards (handout)

At the last Commission meeting, Allen has asked about fee increases to community youth sports partners.

Edwards provided the Commission with a *Youth Facility Usage Plan*. The department has implemented a user fee for all sports user groups in an effort to ensure proper cost recovery for sports field maintenance. Prior to this, the City has never charged groups for use of the sports' fields. Budget constraints are making it hard to maintain facility standards and the department is being squeezed to keep the fields in play.

The department has adopted the Greater Albany School District's (GAPS) administrative regulation plan for facility usage fees in order to create a uniform, consistent fee structure throughout the City.

Before the fee was enacted, the sports coordinator met with all effected partners and received their support for the fee. The partners were happy that they had been able to use the sports fields for free as long as they had and understand the need for the fee. Hodney thanked Edwards for his hard work at building the relationships he has with the community youth partners.

The revenue that will be generated will be used to recover the expenditure costs of meeting the growing youth user group's maintenance needs. The money raised will be added to the overall revenue account for the Parks and Recreation department and the budget for sports field maintenance will be paid for from the overall revenue account.

Most sports teams will be charged \$50 per team. Football teams will be charged \$100 per team because they have more players per team and tend to do more wear and tear on the fields.

Allen believes that the mission of the school district is different than the Parks and Recreation Department. Providing youth sports programs seems to fit within the Parks and Recreation Department goals, and to the extent that the City can't provide youth sports programs (baseball, soccer, etc) within their budget, he feels that these programs may be doing the City a favor by filling this niche that the City can't.

Hodney agreed that the missions weren't the same, but the needs are the same. We can't continue to serve those groups with the revenue sources we currently have.

Allen also believes that the expectations of users may be raised now that the users are being charged. They may feel an entitlement now that they are paying, versus before when they were using it for free.

Edwards believes that this fee is building a better partnership with the user groups. They groups have a more vested interest and the fees give the sports program more options of services they can provide to the partners.

9. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The policy discussions on alcohol in parks and park hours have been tabled for now given other issues that the Parks and Recreation Department is working on. They will be brought back to the commission in the future.

Hodney encouraged any Commissioner to contact him if they had questions about the newspaper article in the DH today regarding the removal of trees at 34<sup>th</sup> Ave.

Allen raised a question to the department earlier in the week regarding the pricing structure for contract instructors. Nooshazar and Allen will meet off-line and the Commission will be given a follow-up.

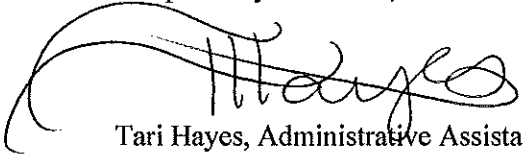
8. NEXT MEETING

The next regularly scheduled meeting is March 4, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. in the Calapooia Room in City Hall.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Tari Hayes", with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the left.

Tari Hayes, Administrative Assistant

Albany Parks and Recreation