

CITY OF OREGON CITY
PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes
City Hall Commission Chambers
Thursday, October 26, 2023 at 6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 6:00pm.

INTRODUCTIONS

Members: *Tim Wuest (remotely), Ken Worcester, Emily Lisborg (remotely), Joseph Knauf, Joyce Gifford, Steve Williams*

Staff: *Kendall Reid, Parks and Recreation Director; Denise Toyooka, Assistant Parks and Recreation Director; Brandon Watt, Parks and Cemetery Interim Manager; Cecily Rose, Community Center Manager; Melissa Sebastian, Aquatic and Recreation Manager; Kyle Christoph (remotely), Facilities Manager; Kori Buth, Administrative Assistant*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approval of September 28, 2023 Meeting Minutes

*Steve Williams motioned to approve previous PRAC minutes.
Joey Knauff seconded the motion.
Roll call passed motion.*

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment

PRESENTATIONS

Christina Robertson-Gardiner, Senior Planner, presented on the McLoughlin Blvd Enhancement Project.

Phase 3 of the 99E Enhancement Project. Phase 1 began in 2005, Phase 2 was in 2012-2014.

Ken Worcester asked how this would coordinate with any future riverwalk plans? Christina confirmed that pedestrian open space would be considered and align with the Master Plan for Tumwata Village.

Tim Wuest commented on the age of the drawn-up plans and asked how this would impact the Willamette Falls Legacy Project and what the status of that project is?

Christina mentioned that the Confederated Tribes of the Grande Ronde are still working through their Master Plan. Shared-use paths are still part of the plan and maintaining the same goals of the original plans to redesign 99E to the extent practicable to not feel like a highway that runs through our city.

Tim also mentioned that danger of 99E for pedestrians and that he can't fathom the fact that we would consider this a bikeway.

Christina responded with the fact that south of the tunnel is not an area of concentration. This project is only concerned with connecting pedestrians to Tumwata Village and better equipping downtown Oregon City for community use, growth and potential bike connection to West Linn.

Tim asked if there were plans for reducing the number of lanes on McLoughlin?

Christina doesn't anticipate a reduction in travel lanes.

Steve Williams mentioned the long history of angling access along the river and asked about how that will be maintained?

Christina said that one of the path options would likely include access to go down to the river and still have fishing and water recreation opportunities.

Emily Lisborg asked a clarifying question about where the sidewalk would be, exactly, if the space wasn't going to be taken from travel lanes on McLoughlin?

Christina stated that there are two options. One being a separate structure that runs parallel to 99E or the other being a space that goes down and pops back up to meet McLoughlin.

Emily also asked if the idea of having a biking lane be with the intention of opening up biking spaces within the small area of downtown? People aren't likely going to be biking into downtown from elsewhere so are there plans to create bike-safe ways of travel to get downtown?

Christina mentioned the connection to Gladstone and the Highway 43 loop that are heavily used by pedestrians on foot and bike. The hope is to bridge the gap before development of the waterfront is complete. Christina encouraged PRAC to share their thoughts and ideas through the open house process, as City Commission reads through all the comments from the community.

Tim Wuest mentioned that we will have no problem helping ODOT spend their money but asked if anyone from the City has talked to the tribes about their timeline of the Legacy Walk?

Christina responded that this is not an ODOT project, this is an Oregon City project and we're the ones that get the grants, design it, and build it. ODOT will maintain the segment in existing condition. Hoping to get through design plans and then be able to apply for construction grants. Project potentially done in phases. The key component is to have plans adopted so that when money is available, we can work to fill in the pieces between us and the tribes. Christina is unaware of the Confederated Tribes construction/project timeline.

Tim shared that Oregon City has spent years planning the Legacy Walk and finds it difficult to do all the work over again for the same potential outcome.

GENERAL BUSINESS

PRAC Involvement Ideas (PowerPoint provided)

Each department manager spoke on their involvement ideas. The overall department will always include PRAC on Master Plans and SDC Methodology updates, as those align with the City Commission goals for the department. Parks ideas included the Pollinator Garden at the Pool, fencing the dog park at Wesley Lynn, seeking funding options to repave Pioneer Cemetery Road, advocacy on increasing ADA accessibility, as well as funding for walking path repairs around the City. We also want to schedule a Cemetery tour to discuss the possibility of a future Cemetery Master Plan.

Ken Worcester asked if the new Master Plan includes an ADA Transition Plan. Denise responded that there are some plans for some facilities but nothing published. Kendall anticipates that the consultants will recommend that we develop an ADA Transition Plan.

Tim Wuest asked if there were costs associated with the Parks Involvement ideas. Aside from the Pollinator Garden, nothing has been quoted due to extreme fluctuation in costs at this time.

Emily Lisborg asked what the purpose of the Pollinator Garden excavation was? Brandon confirmed that it needs leveling out for safety purposes.

Ken Worcester showed interest in Pollinator Garden project and may schedule a site visit with Brandon. Ken asked for further clarification so that he knows how to advocate.

Steve Williams commented that being able to envision each project would help in collaboration.

Emily commented that the Pollinator Garden is a good tie-in with Bee City, which is something that NRC has been talking a lot about.

Cecily Rose spoke on Pioneer Center Involvement ideas which included March for Meals, physical projects during the annual facility spring closure, helping to organize and volunteer for an annual fundraiser (meal/auction), adopt a Meals on Wheels route/driver, adopt a department parking lot, advocating for grant funding, and attending community events.

Tim Wuest asked about the commitment hours for Meals on Wheels drivers and if there are drop-in hours available. Cecily commented that a steady commitment is preferred, but substitutes are always helpful.

Emily Lisborg asked if Meals on Wheels volunteers drive their personal cars or if there are City cars assigned. Cecily stated that volunteers do drive their own vehicles.

Joyce Gifford asked which parking lot could be adopted. Cecily mentioned that all parking lots across the Parks system could use the additional attention.

Melissa Sebastian spoke on Aquatics and Recreation Involvement ideas, which includes further engagement with the City Commission when it comes to supporting Parks and Recreation, advocacy for additional full-time staff at Pool to expand offerings, site visits, and attend community events to volunteer and engage.

Tim Wuest asked that PRAC be notified and provided talking points when advocacy is needed. Steve Williams mentioned that it doesn't feel right to represent PRAC if it hasn't been a subject the group has discussed prior.

Kyle Christoph spoke on Facilities need for Deferred Maintenance funding options. End of the Oregon Trail is quickly deteriorating and wasn't built to last long-term. Some of the needs at that facility include decking, HVAC system, building siding, and roofing repairs. Some of these projects have become safety concerns.

Steve Williams asked about the process in place to work through Deferred Maintenance. Kendall responded that the Deferred Maintenance plan was done in 2021 but there are big ticket items that just haven't been able to be done.

Steve mentioned that there has to be something put into place that keeps up from building new without sustainable future maintenance plans.

Future Agenda Topics

A list was provided to PRAC members to help narrow down ways to move forward with purpose and focus. The large ongoing agenda topic list proved to be overwhelming and not always relevant. A survey will be sent to PRAC to help identify where we place our attention in 2024 so that PRAC is able to become more engaged and involved.

Tim Wuest mentioned that the committee could choose 1-2 topics monthly to discuss and act on as necessary. He voiced that the role of PRAC in each topic is unclear and how they can be used to effectively advocate for Parks and Recreation. Tim would also like to include the additional of permanent nets at the Hillendale Pickleball court as a future agenda topic.

Kori Buth mentioned that there would only be 1-2 future agenda topics noted on each agenda and tracking of topics would be done by Kori behind the scenes and accessible to PRAC members as needed.

Steve and Emily talked about starting with a bite-sized project that would get momentum going to continue working through our list.

Ken Worcester feels that PRAC doesn't often have enough information about certain things to be able to effectively advocate for them. He says the Parks Master Plan process is a huge opportunity to plan for the future but couldn't identify even one key project coming from it.

Kendall clarified and reminded the group that goals, processes and major projects are dictated to the department by City Commission.

Ken also mentioned having flexibility so that opportunities don't pass us by, even if we are focusing on another project at the time. Emily stated that the projects should be contingent on how much potential there is for PRAC to be involved as well as funding available.

Kendall communicated that it is important to understand that City Commission sets our goals as a department and those have to be moved forward, so it would be a disservice for PRAC to come up with projects that end up using up resources and time from staff that pulls them away from those Commission goals. Commission goals are the Parks Master Plan and SDC Methodology update. We would like for the committee goals to be more centered around what the committee members want.

Steve Williams said that someone had briefly mentioned that the pickleball courts topic could be tackled in one night, but that is a multi-step process. Understanding the time and effort that goes into making things happen will help with future planning.

Joyce Gifford talked about PRAC previously having advocates for certain facilities and/or members areas of interest. It's unfortunate that isn't necessarily the case anymore. Sees the job of PRAC to be community listeners and bring those ideas back to staff to implement.

STAFF REPORTS

Kendall again mentioned the Clackamette Park Master Plan being brought back to City Commission to continue to discuss rezoning. Reminder that there is no meeting in November due to Thanksgiving. Work Session and regular meeting on December 7th for PRAC interviews. January PRAC meeting will be used to finalize goals and agenda topics moving forward.

Ken Worcester asked if there was a process for bringing new PRAC members up to speed on topics and projects. Kendall confirmed that there is a process for this.

PRAC by-laws were officially adopted.

Emily Lisborg will reach out to Kendall regarding the Pollinator Garden project.

MEMBER REPORTS

None provided

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING – December 7th, 2023

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned around 8:15 PM.