

Parks Advisory Committee Minutes

October 10, 2011

Members Present: Cat Koehn, Pat Hoover, Carl Stiefbold, Les Weinstein

Members Absent: Damien Gilbert

Staff Present: Mike Russell, Howard Schussler, Phil Guyette, Dave Stockdale, John Moriarty, and Sam Fox

Guests Present: Michael Randles, Darrell Bowes, and Wayne Ford

Cat Koehn, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m.

- I. **Public Comment** – Mike Randles, a current marina slip holder at Orchard Point Marina, had comments about larger boats being accommodated at the marina which he feels are making it difficult for smaller sailboats within the marina. He also presented ideas for Orchard Point marina which consisted of adding kiosks at Orchard Point and Richardson Marina for the boating community and moorage holders to share information, rebuilding the small boat pool south of the marina at Orchard Point, adding a breakwater jetty south of the marina, moving the powerboat buoys out and extending the reduced speed area farther south of the marina, adding a sandlot for soccer use, and moving or eliminating dock fingers at Orchard Point marina. Mr. Randles also raised concerns about Zumwalt Park and suggestions were voiced about adding reduced speed buoys and also asking the Army Corps of Engineers to assist in reducing silt in the bottom of Fern Ridge reservoir. Mike Russell replied that we have been in communication with the Corps regarding many of these issues and will continue to work with them where applicable. Committee chair Cat Koehn asked specifically about Mr. Randles written request to have his ‘gag order’ lifted. There was discussion about this gag order which Mr. Russell explained was put in place because other moorage slip holders had been approached and harassed by Mr. Randles over time so Lane County required Mr. Randles to bring his issues to Lane County Parks management or to the Parks Advisory Committee meetings, which he did at this meeting. Mike Russell advised Mr. Randles that he is free to talk with anyone else in the marina as long as it does not become harassment. Committee member Carl Stiefbold attempted to clarify the feelings of the moorage holders who had issues with Mr. Randles and the discussion became argumentative with Mr. Randles stating that he believes many of the issues at Orchard Point marina would be resolved if the larger boats were prohibited from mooring at this marina and only the smaller sailboats allowed. Chairwoman Koehn

inquired about boat sizes and fees charged per boat and it was noted that each boat is charged according to its length and that as long as an owner is willing to pay the proper fees that all boats would be allowed up to the current size allowed by the County. Howard Schussler made a recommendation for staff to make note of Mr. Randles concerns and to perhaps set aside time for review at a later PAC meeting where the issues can be included in an agenda where proper time is allowed for further discussion.

Parks Volunteer, Darrell Bowes, who lives on Chapman Drive across from Whitely Landing, raised concerns about alcohol issues at this location. He states that he approached the committee approximately one year ago (February, 2011) about a particular group of park users and their use of alcohol and the resulting behavior at this location. Mr. Bowes reports that this group appears some days as early as 10:00 a.m. and stay until late into the evening hours during the summer consuming alcohol and being disruptive. Mr. Bowes feels these activities keep the family element from utilizing this park area and he requests that an alcohol ban be initiated for the Whitely Landing area. Mr. Bowes has been volunteering to lock and unlock the gates at Whitley Landing over the past 15 years and has been responsible for evicting people from the park at closing time. During the past summer Mr. Bowes was assaulted by persons at this location as they attempted to steal his vehicle. He also had to contact emergency services at one point to break into a vehicle to assist an intoxicated woman who was passed out in her vehicle. Interim Parks Manager, Mike Russell, and Parks Superintendent, Phil Guyette, stated that the issue of alcohol use at this location had been raised before and that they have talked with this group of park users and feel that they do not create a problem in this park. Mike and Phil reported that park Rangers have increased their presence at Whitely Landing by adding more frequent patrols and strictly enforcing parking regulations. Both Mike and Phil state that this group responded favorably to their meetings with them and even showed interest in keeping the area cleared of litter and overgrown vegetation as many of the people in this group state that they grew up in the Whitely Landing area and that the area is special to them, which is why they frequent this park location. At this time, Parks management acknowledges Mr. Bowes' concerns but does not feel that the group in question is using Whitely Landing in an inappropriate way. Howard Schussler offered that there has been discussion to approach the Board to give the Park Manager some discretionary authority over County code for reasons such as safety issues to change a park designation to be alcohol free. Committee member, Carl Stiefbold, recollected that previous discussion regarding this issue was that the PAC committee was in favor of supporting an alcohol ban at this location if Parks management and the Board felt this action was necessary. Other PAC members in attendance tonight agreed with Mr. Stiefbold on that decision of support and committee member Les Weinstein recommended that Mr. Bowes obtain a copy of other jurisdictions' regulations regarding alcohol bans and present them to the Board. Superintendent Guyette advised that future problems that occur after hours that might result in confrontation be referred to either the Parks Superintendent who

would then call the Sheriff's office or contact the S.O. directly. The PAC has recommended a more persistent effort to the Board to gain authority to make this an alcohol free location. Until that time, Parks staff will continue to monitor this area and act accordingly when necessary until there is further direction from the Board.

- II. **Action Item: Approval of Minutes, Announcement/Agenda Modifications** – Approval of September 2011 minutes with modifications to add comments and discussion about the previous marina management issues and resulting newspaper article, as well as the dates and times for the marina slip holders meetings planned for October. Chair Koehn has requested more detailed minutes for future meetings.

- III. **Motion/Discussion Item: Homeless Action Coalition** – Mr. Wayne Ford, Chair of the Homeless Action Coalition which is affiliated with St. Vincent De Paul. Mr. Ford explained a camping program through the Coalition and St. Vincent De Paul where homeless students or veteran's who are approved by the Coalition to take up residence in the parks during the off-season to help give them a place to live and keep them off the streets and out of the residential neighborhoods. This program has already been approved and initiated through the City of Eugene. Mr. Ford is requesting that Parks management consider using some of the approved people in the program as camp hosts or security presence in the off season at one or more of the Lane County Parks. Carl Stiefbold raised the issue of whether a remote location of an available park feasible, and Les Weinstein asked what kinds of accommodations the campers would be equipped with if Parks did approve of this request. Mr. Ford stated that approved candidates would be screened by SVDP for such things as a valid driver's license, a camper or motor home, and any other requirements that would meet Lane County Park management requirements. Parks Analyst, Dave Stockdale supported Mr. Ford's program by detailing the benefits of additional security presence, litter patrol, vegetation maintenance and more at HBRA North Bottomlands, Rodakowski, and Whitely Landing. A pilot program could be initiated via a contract with SVDP, and by adding a parking pad and covering the costs of utilities where needed, the program would benefit the Homeless Action Coalition as well as Lane County Parks. Carl Stiefbold raised the issue of portable toilets and garbage pickup at these locations and it was noted that garbage pickup is already ongoing at most park locations and many of the sites already have portable toilets or could be added to the contract for minimal cost if the program is approved. Committee member, Pat Hoover brought up a point of length of stay which would likely be in neighborhood of approximately 90 days while the camper/custodian looked for more permanent housing or employment unless the Parks department extended the contract with SVDP. Dave recommended a pilot program contracted with SVDP to determine if this is a good for all involved.

Mike Russell stated that the proposal would still need support from the BCC in possibly January or February 2012.

Motion (Les Weinstein): The PAC recommends early implementation of the pilot program, working with St. Vincent DePaul, and pursuing approval from the Board of Commissioners.

Second: Pat Hoover

No further discussion.

Motion passed unanimously (4 in favor, 0 opposed)

Mike Russell and Dave Stockdale will begin preparing paperwork regarding the pilot program to bring back to the PAC for the November meeting.

- IV. **Information: Action Items** – There was a recap of the fee changes proposed from last month. The Committee members have all had a chance to review the changes. There was additional discussion of fee schedules for park locations not referenced in the proposal such as Zumwalt park and HBRA and how fees are charged in comparison when the entire location is reserved. There was also discussion about enhancing the Parks website, the use of professional photography, and other ways to encourage the public to view the Parks website to learn more about locations available for reservation use. The committee agreed that the new fee schedule was appropriate and showed desire to move it forward for Board approval.

Motion (Pat Hoover): The PAC approves the fee changes as presented and forwards the proposal to the Board of Commissioners for their consideration.

Second: Carl Stiefbold

No further discussion.

Motion passed unanimously (4 in favor, 0 opposed)

There was further discussion relating back to an earlier topic in tonight's meeting regarding marina slip holders and potential eviction of a slip holder if the renter is aggressive or does not follow park rules. Mike Russell suggested we reserve this topic for a future Committee meeting. The discussion was then tabled.

- V. **Draft FY 13-17 CIP: Staff Report** – Mike Russell presented the Budget Review of Systems Development Charges. As a new process for the PAC, in reviewing the CIP and SDC's, Mike recommended a motion from the committee to entertain a motion to release the budget information to the public in anticipation of a public hearing at the November PAC meeting that would allow the public to present ideas for Park funds over the next five years. Depending on the attendance of that public hearing and the feedback received, Mike encouraged the PAC to then provide a recommendation to pass this proposal on to the BCC. Advertisement of the public hearing would happen by placing an ad in the Register-Guard newspaper and by also listing the information on the Parks

website. Mike discussed the priorities which staff has determined various projects and their level of necessity and desirability for funding.

Motion (Carl Stiefbold): The PAC make public the SDC CIP and advertise for a Public Hearing about the SDC CIP to be held at their November 2011 meeting.

Second: Pat Hoover

No further discussion.

Motion passed unanimously (4 in favor, 0 opposed)

- VI. **Q1 Budget Review** – Dave Stockdale presented a first quarter budget review which included information on camping, marina management, annual parks passes and general park admissions.
- VII. **2011 Camping Survey** – Dave also reviewed the camping survey and showed how the Parks department use of funds toward marketing and advertising is working towards bringing the public to the various Lane County Parks and campgrounds. There was discussion about diverting advertising funds towards the Parks web site rather than spending those monies on advertising. Committee members were very responsive to this suggestion.
- VIII. **Staff Reports** – Howard Schussler announced that Lane County is currently scheduling interviews for the Parks Manager position and has invited PAC members to attend a meet & greet lunch on November 22, 2011, to meet the candidates and to give feedback to the interview panelists. Pat Hoover indicated that she would like to participate.
- IX. **Good of the Order/Concerns of the Committee** – Pat Hoover requested that PAC member phone number and other contact information be updated and made available to other PAC members. Howard Schussler made a point to inform the committee that the contact information could become available to the public if there were a public records request. It was suggested that a page may be added to the Parks website with a dedicated email address that will provide committee information with a way for the public to contact them without releasing personal data. A form was circulated for those who wanted to supply their information.
- X. **Adjournment** – Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.