

Parks Advisory Board Meeting Minutes March 25, 2015

Chairperson Norma Hernandez called meeting to Order at 6:50am.

Present - Norma Hernandez, Jessica Schleif, Andrew Fick, Tammy Loughran, Eric Halverson, Joe Miltenberger, and Jim Holen

Absent - Peter O'Farrell, Grace Laman and Howard Rub

Guests - Drew Herzig

Staff - Angela Cosby, Pam Pearce and Jonah Dart-McLean

Approval of Minutes

1. Andrew Fick noted the following correction to the February minutes under New Business A.: "Andrew Fick **seconded the motion**. The motion was unanimously approved." Joe Miltenberger motioned to approve the minutes as corrected, Tammy Loughran seconded the motion. February minutes were unanimously approved.

Public comments

1. Drew Herzig, 628 Klaskanine Ave. Astoria, said a Safeway employee told him she liked the recreation center and loved the teachers. However, she was concerned about the bark chips in the children's play area and would like the chips replaced with interlocking rubber mats. She believed it would be better for the children to fall on rubber mats instead of bark.

President Hernandez

1. What do you hear- Andrew Fick heard from an Alderbrook resident they appreciated the work that was done on the Riverwalk Trail near the neighborhood. Jim Holen heard that several dog owners were excited about the proposed dog park on Columbia Memorial Hospital (CMH) property. However, people are concerned about establishing expectations for park users. He suggested getting sponsors to fund signage that addresses safety, cleanup, and rules of engagement. President Hernandez noted the dog park would not be discussed at this meeting because the Parks Board is still gathering information.

Employee Recognition

1. Director Cosby recognized Jonah Dart-McLean as the February Employee of the Month and Pam Pearce for 5 years of service to the City.

Old Business

1. Tammy Loughran said she would have an update on the Parks foundation after their meeting later that day. The update would include information about the OK Run fundraiser.
2. Jonah Dart-McLean gave an update on the Parks Lawn and Plant Management Task Force, which visited Alderbrook Lagoon, Fort Astoria, Shively Park, Lindstrom Park, and Nemi Field during their last meeting two weeks ago. The Task Force discussed mapping and cataloguing the plants, adding signage about historic plants, park adoption, partnering with entities throughout the North Coast, and weed suppression through mulching and mechanical means. He hoped to present the Board with recommendations in April. Jessica Schleif added she was

amazed by the drainage problems on the softball field. The Task Force had a lot of great suggestions. [Brook Dueling from the Watershed Council](#) was also on the tour.

New Business

1. Director Cosby updated the Board on the special City Council meeting at Ocean View Cemetery by showing the presentation given at the meeting, which noted the history, plot mapping, financing, maintenance, future development, current challenges and proposed solutions to the challenges associated with the cemetery. City Council indicated fiscal responsibility should take priority over improving cemetery conditions. Therefore, incremental fee increases would be presented to Council in the next few weeks. City Council also wanted the Parks Department to begin mowing more frequently and focus on eliminating net annual losses. Drew Herzig added it was important to understand the City is contractually obligated to provide perpetual care of the plots and plot owners have expectations that the cemetery will be well maintained. Staff reductions have resulted in perpetual care that is not up to cemetery standards. The Board shared ideas for future development, maintenance, and increasing revenue. Director Cosby described issues with volunteer groups that have provided maintenance services at the cemetery. A CHIP-In event at the cemetery has been scheduled for the weekend of May 23 – 24, 2015.
2. Director Cosby gave the maintenance project report, noting maintenance would increase at the baseball and softball fields this year. Jonah Dart-McLean added the roof project at Shively Park was complete, expect for installing insulation in the attic.
3. Director Cosby gave a report on the CHIP-in program. The next event is April 19 at Tapiola Park from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm.
4. Director Cosby gave the Special Projects report. [Janice O'Malley Galizio](#) was recognized for her work getting sponsorships and partnerships for Run on the River. So far, about 130 participants have signed up for the marathons.
5. Director Cosby gave an update on Lil Sprouts and Port of Play. The school district and Head Start helped install the new playground. The Dr. Seuss event was a success.
6. Director Cosby reported on the community gardens.
7. Director Cosby reported on the recreation center, programs, fitness, and athletics. This will be the second year of the youth volleyball program and new classes will be offered. New Staff members are increasing programming for the after school program. Hard-boiled eggs will be used this year at the Easter Egg Hunt to help promote the Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) Program and to prevent environmental issues caused by plastic eggs left in the park. Staff is concerned there may be some opposition from the community about using real eggs. She asked the Board to help spread the word about the use of real eggs this year. The school district, senior center, and youth have volunteered to assist with boiling and dyeing the eggs. Volunteers are still needed to hide the eggs before the hunt. Instead of candy, prizes will be given to the children. Any remaining eggs will be shared with the Column and the Maritime Museum or given to hog farmers.
8. Director Cosby gave the Aquatic Center report, which included statistics about rescues and the demographics of persons rescued.
9. Director Cosby updated the Board on upcoming events.
10. The Board and Staff discussed the teen center. Director Cosby noted the center had a group of teens that attended regularly. Andrew Fick suggested promoting the center to middle school students.
11. [Tammy Loughran](#) announced that Gray School Community Gardeners would host an Earth Day event on April 19th. Once the time has been determined, the event would be added to the

event calendar. Director Cosby said the Parks Department would support and help advertise the event.

12. Eric Halverson announced there would be several activities around town in April in support of Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

Next meeting will be held Wednesday, April 22, 2015 at 6:45am at the Astoria Recreation Center.