



City of Sweet Home  
Parks Board  
City Hall  
Conference Room  
1140 12<sup>th</sup> Ave.,  
Sweet Home, OR 97386

## Park Board Minutes

March 21, 2016

**Call to Order** at 8:43am

**Attendance:** Chairperson Jane Hazen, Planning Services Manager Laura LaRoque, Planning Assistant Katie Wilcox, Andrew Allen

**Visitors:** None

**Absent:** Public Works Director Mike Adams, Nancy Patton, Councilor Dave Trask, Angela Clegg, Councilor Ryan Underwood

**Note:** Todd Branson's appointment expired on 3/12/16

### Welcoming and Introductions

Chairperson Jane Hazen welcomed all and thanked them for attending.

### Introduction/Submission of Inquiries, Ideas, & Proposals

Chairperson Jane Hazen asked Planning Services Manager Laura LaRoque to share the request she had received in regards to the native birds in the park.

Planning Services Manager Laura LaRoque explained that a citizen had been to Ashbrook Park and was hoping that there would be some sort of interpretive signage for native birds in the park.

Andrew Allen suggested contacting the Audubon Society.

Chairperson Jane Hazen said she would like to develop and implement an interpretive program. She also asked for more information about the park donation funds, as she was not aware of the donation program.

Planning Services Manager Laura LaRoque mentioned that the citizen had also asked where the donation funds are being spent. She explained that the donation funds come from an option on the water bill to donate. She explained that the Parks System receives about \$168.00 a month on average. Laura also mentioned that there are other ways to seek donation funds and more comprehensive methods.

Chairperson Jane Hazen stated that this brings to mind two projects. She went on to explain that she would like to see a plan for media interpretation of the donation process and a connection to a project.

Andrew Allen asked what the typical cost of an interpretive sign was.

Planning Services Manager Laura LaRoque answered by stating that signs could be costly depending on what size and how much information is on them.

Chairperson Jane Hazen said that there were less costly ways of having interpretive programs, such as using QR codes. She also explained that these new cost effective interpretive systems can be more easily managed by a central hub such as a website, which would fall under a good media plan.

Chairperson Jane Hazen mentioned she would like to discuss long term programming and activities in general for the parks at the May meeting. She said she would like to get some guests from the schools to come to this meeting and coordinate recreational programs.

Chairperson Jane Hazen asked if there were any other general discussion ideas or proposals. No other inquiries or ideas were proposed.

### **Park Board Draft Ordinance Revisions**

Chairperson Jane Hazen opened the discussion and asked if the discussion could be general since most of the board was absent.

Andrew Allen explained his concerns about adding more members. He stated that it is hard to fill the board positions as is and worries that it would be difficult to have a quorum in order to make decisions.

Chairperson Jane Hazen stated that she understood Andrew's concerns, but if they continued to operate by general consensus then a having a quorum would not be an issue. She said that this could be done by writing a statement into the ordinance. She explained that her idea was to enlarge the board so that there would be more of a working crew, to work toward making recommendations. She added that it would add diversity by bringing in teenagers. She explained that she would like to see the age for youth representation to be 18 and under. She stated that she also had concerns about the resident requirements that had been added into the ordinance.

Planning Services Manager Laura LaRoque explained that the residency requirement is aimed to get more local feedback and that the requirement is standard language in most city ordinances. She did remind the board members that this ordinance revision is a draft and welcomed them to recommend changes.

Chairperson Jane Hazen stated that she feels the board would be limiting resources and opportunities from people with expertise in related fields.

Andrew Allen explained that such people could attend as guests.

Chairperson Jane Hazen stated that she would think some may want to participate on a regular basis.

Planning Services Manager Laura LaRoque explained that the ordinance did state two members could reside outside the city limits.

Chairperson Jane Hazen asked for clarification of outside the city limits but within the school district.

Andrew Allen explained that the school district boundary is larger than the city limits.

Chairperson Jane Hazen asked if then, as an example, a person from Corvallis could join as a board member.

Andrew Allen answered by saying no.

Chairperson Jane Hazen explained that she would like leave the opportunity open to people who could really contribute.

Andrew Allen said that he would not mind having such people come in as guests or advisors, but would like to see board members remain local and involve the community.

Chairperson Jane Hazen explained that she understands Andrew's point. Jane said she is thinking along the lines of how to get diversity among the skillsets of the members on that board and opening up positions to people outside the community is one way to diversify those unfound skillsets in order to accomplish goals they are reaching for. She explained that small towns can benefit from

outside resources. She stated that two or even one member from outside the area would suffice for what she has proposed.

Andrew Allen explained that you would also want to consider the general users of the park and the tax payers who pay into the parks.

Chairperson Jane Hazen explained that currently the board does not know who these people are.

Andrew Allen explained that people who pay taxes towards the parks are the ones who would be using it, and the ones who reside within the City or the School District boundaries.

Chairperson Jane Hazen explained that she pays taxes for these things but is not a resident within the city limits or school district boundaries.

Planning Assistant Katie Wilcox explained that Jane was talking about property owners who live outside the community.

Chairperson Jane Hazen explained that even as a local property owner she would be excluded from the option of being on a local advisory board. She explained that it is exclusive and reads exclusive. She went on to explain that there are a lot of people who work, own property, businesses and more that may be able to contribute and represent outside expertise. She reiterated that she supports Andrew's idea of guests who are experts as well as local community involvement, but would also like to allow one or two members to be from outside areas.

Planning Services Manager Laura LaRoque explained that an option would be to change the wording in the ordinance so that it would then read as "A maximum of two members may reside outside the city limits."

The group then decided to think about the ordinance and revisit it at the next meeting.

Planning Services Manager Laura LaRoque then went on to explain in general what the changes were in the new draft of the ordinance. She explained that most of the changes were to clarify duties and to unify the board standards with other committees and boards within the City.

The group decided that the minimum of four meetings a year was reasonable. They also agreed that having two unexcused absences would be the maximum amount allowed before being relieved as a member of the board.

Chairperson Jane Hazen asked if there was a need for an attendance policy, considering most absences will be excused. She asked if they should do away with it all together.

Planning Services Manager Laura LaRoque stated that there have been cases where someone was appointed and never showed up. She went on to explain that without a policy the board would then have to ask City Council to consider relieving that member of their position.

Andrew Allen explained that people on the board often have other things that they need to do or places they need to be and often miss meetings.

Chairperson Jane Hazen explained that she understands that people are busy and sees it as a positive thing, but also would like everyone to consider the idea that if they are too busy, maybe they should not be on the board. She explained that being busy is not negative, but it would be great to have people who are not too busy to attend on a regular basis.

Andrew Allen explained that keeping the attendance policy is needed, just so they can refer back to it if needed.

Chairperson Jane Hazen agreed and felt that two absences were enough to constitute a dismissal from the board. She also explained that she feels there is more to the attendance issue that can be discussed at another time.

Chairperson Jane Hazen asked Laura to explain the ordinance where it explains the duties of the board.

Planning Services Manager Laura LaRoque went over the draft ordinance and explained what the duties of the board are as a representative of the Sweet Home Community.

Chairperson Jane Hazen suggested certain language changes to the ordinance in regards to the “Powers and Duties – Generally” section of the ordinance.

It was discussed to have language in the draft to state that the Parks Board will act as liaison between the Sweet Home community and the park director, and the park director will act as the liaison between the Parks Board and City Council, as well as the City representative.

The group discussed changing the wording and structure of the “Powers and Duties – Generally” section of the ordinance.

Chairperson Jane Hazen asked if Laura could play with the formatting of the ordinance so that Jane may use it as a way to insight people into joining the board. She also mentioned adding another point to the listed items on the power and duty list, being the park planning documents. She also asked if the language should be vague, as far as stating “planning documents” or actually stating the “Capitol Improvement Plans.

Planning Services Manager Laura LaRoque took note of all suggested changes and stated that she can work on another updated draft.

### **Park Staffing**

Chairperson Jane Hazen asked Planning Services Manager Laura LaRoque, as Park Director, where she would see park staffing in the next 5 years.

Planning Services Manager Laura LaRoque said she would like to see it increased. She explained that the recreational programs have been more family focused rather than just aimed at youth.

Chairperson Jane Hazen asked if the Boys and Girls Club have provided recreation for the youth in the community.

Planning Services Manager Laura LaRoque answered yes and added that because staffing is so limited the City has been reaching out to other partners to participate and share the resources. Laura explained how the activities like the music and movies in the parks are growing and that they should still look into partnerships within the community. She explained that there are currently quite a few partnerships and thinks that by evaluating those partnerships there can be a plan devised on how to enhance those activities and partnerships, or if there are any voids that can be filled by increasing staffing. She explained that staffing towards recreation may be less received because it would get into the area of a limited budget, where if you were increasing staffing for maintenance it may be better received.

Chairperson Jane Hazen asked about the possibility of earned income to pay for staffing, by having fee based programs.

Planning Services Manager Laura LaRoque said it was a possibility but the Sweet Home is a low income based community and it would be difficult for some to pay those fees.

Chairperson Jane Hazen explained that it would be a lot easier to find a grant funder to pay the fees, than it would be to find a grant funder to pay a salary.

Planning Services Manager Laura LaRoque mentioned that there are also opportunities to bring in interns or students who are working towards their continuing education credits.

Chairperson Jane Hazen agreed, but that there should be a plan for recreation before asking for interns, partners or volunteers.

Planning Services Manager Laura LaRoque stated that for now funding for staffing would remain reserved for maintenance and general care of facilities. She continued to say that there are small improvements she believes they can make now, with limited funds.

Andrew Allen mentioned that these interns and students would be limited to a year of participation.

Chairperson Jane Hazen mentioned that she is primarily interested in groups like AmeriCorps.

Planning Services Manager Laura LaRoque mentioned that another group to reach out to is the Ford Family Foundation.

Chairperson Jane Hazen stated that she thinks bringing in information from the county parks and their programs may help. She went on to explain that you can contract with partners to provide interpretive programs at the parks. She explained that this is a way to get people into the parks. She would like to reach out to the communities and see if people would like to get programs going in the park.

Planning Services Manager Laura LaRoque explained there are opportunities that they can build on similar to what Jane is speaking about.

**Discussion: Recreation Program**

Chairperson Jane Hazen asked that for the May meeting everyone bring in some ideas for Park recreation.

**Discussion: Media Plan**

The group decided that for the April meeting everyone should have some suggestions about the media plan, blogging, how to be more active with media.

**Adjournment at 10:04AM**

**Next Regular Parks Board Meeting - April 18, 2016 @ 8:30AM**