

City of Newport
Parks and Recreation Committee
Minutes 05-20-2009

I. ROLL CALL: Members present: Susan Boehlert, Roger Holstein, Ed Simon, Karen Smith, and Sandra Surber. Committee Chair Paul Reed and Vice-Chair Sarah Follett were not able to attend; by unanimous consent of the committee, Karen Smith acted as committee chairperson.

Representing City Council was Council liason Lon Brusselback.

Also present representing staff: Parks and Recreation Department Head Jim Protiva; Dene Bateman of the Parks Divison; and Administrative Assistant Bob Fuller.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Acting Committee Chair Karen Smith called the meeting to order at 8:30 A.M. Ed Simon moved to approve the March 18, 2009 minutes. Motion was seconded by Susan Boehlert and approved on a unanimous voice vote.

III. CONCERNS OR COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS: None.

IV. REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR: Jim advised the department is on the short list for the Coast Park grant for \$500,000. He will be in Bend on June 9th to make the presentation to the grant board.

Liam Hughes just wrapped up the middle school track meet and is now working on the baseball and softball programs. Liam has been doing a great job of enthusiastically managing the youth sports programs.

The city has been updating the City of Newport websites, including the Parks and Recreation Department's website. Jim urged the committee to take a moment and explore the site; there are many new items and new links available.

Staff is preparing the Summer Activity Club at Frank Wade Clubhouse.

The Senior Center is having some roof issues; the Budget Committee has approved funding for repairs.

Jim introduced Dene Bateman, senior staff member with the department. Dene is a long-time Newport resident and involved with Boosters and the Baseball Club. Dene is retired and now works part-time in Parks and Rec maintenance and at the Senior Center. Dene reported that Boosters and the Baseball Club recently joined together to purchase a new/used scoreboard for Frank Wade Park for \$5100 (it's about five years old; cost new was \$21,000). This was at no cost to the city. The scoreboard should be operational today and will be available for the state play-offs, and this year Newport High School made the playoffs . Dene also says the fields at both Frank Wade and Betty Wheeler are in great

shape thanks to lots of work by parks staff. Jim pointed out how much help the baseball community is in helping to keep these facilities in top shape.

V. RECREATION CENTER BUSINESS: No report.

VI. NEW BUSINESS: Jim provided an update on the budget process. The city manager had submitted a proposed budget that initially made cuts in part-time positions at the Rec Center; this would probably have led to a substantial reduction of hours of operation and service levels. Historically the city has subsidized the department's budget because of cost increases; however, fees have remained flat for a number of years while the subsidy increased. Therefore the Budget Committee would like a business plan to address how to reduce the need for this subsidy. They have decided to leave our budget level as-is to avoid any reductions in service, and we will study our fees and other costs to see where we can increase revenues by fall of 2009. (This will actually be a city-wide study of all city fees.) For now this subsidy will be funded by contingency funds until that time. The way to make the subsidy smaller is probably to increase fees, which have remained flat for several years; the operation itself is quite efficient.

The bottom line is the Rec Center will not be reducing hours or cutting positions, and addressing the fee structure and developing the marketing plan will help us sustain ourselves over the long haul.

Lon Brusselback advises the fee study will cost about \$130,000 and will give the city a software program that will allow it to monitor and increase fees as needed in the future. This study is necessary to prepare an adequate business plan.

Ed Simon suggested advertising the Rec Center at the local state parks and campgrounds; Jim agreed this was a good idea and will research further.

VII. OLD BUSINESS: Jim provided an update on the issue of drainage at Betty Wheeler Field. Initially it appeared the main line was plugged, but further investigation and digging showed this was not the problem. It appears the clay soil plugs the drain lines; a "Y" drain configuration was installed and appears to be working.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by Chair Pro-tem Karen Smith at 9:20 AM. The next meeting is scheduled for June 17th, 2009, at 8:30 AM.

Signed:

Karen Smith, Committee Chair Pro-tem

