

WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES
SISTERS CITY COUNCIL
520 E. CASCADE AVENUE
MAY 01, 2008

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Brad Boyd	Mayor
Bill Merrill	Council President
Lon Kellstrom	Councilor
Sharlene Weed	Councilor
Shawna Bell	Councilor

STAFF PRESENT:

Eileen Stein	City Manager
Lisa Young	Finance Director
Brad Grimm	Public Works Director
Kathy Nelson	City Recorder

GUESTS:

Carrie Ward	SOAR Exec. Director
Bonnie Malone	SOAR Board Member
Sue Boettner	SOAR Board Member
Jim Long	SOAR Board Member
Peggy Tehan	SOAR Board Member
Carole Davis	SOAR Board Member

ABSENT:

Eric Porter	Comm. Dev. Director
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The meeting was called to order at 8:02 a.m. by Mayor Boyd. Introductions were made.

1. SOAR (Sisters Organization for Activities and Recreation)

A. SOAR Strategic Planning Process and Name Change

SOAR Executive Director Carrie Ward thanked the Council for meeting with her and the SOAR Board members. She stated she wanted to share SOAR's recently completed strategic plan and the reasoning behind the name change for the organization. She distributed a copy of SOAR's *2007-2012 Strategic Plan* to the Council.

Director Ward stated that SOAR was created in 1995 as a non-profit organization for organized youth activities. In 1998 voters approved the formation of the SOAR District with its own special taxing district and tax base. With that transition the SOAR Board began thinking of becoming a full park and recreation district. When SOAR prepared its strategic plan for 2007 to 2012, becoming a parks and recreation district was identified as one of the primary goals. **Director Ward** directed the Council to page three of the plan and briefly discussed the mission, vision and critical goals for SOAR through the year 2012. She stated there is a shift from offering primarily children's activities and programs to becoming an organization that will offer recreational activities and programs to the entire Sisters community and providing the necessary public facilities to encourage health and wellness. She pointed out the boundaries of the district on a display map, stating they matched the Sisters School District boundaries with the exception of one small area to the east of Sisters that belongs to the Redmond Park and Recreation District. She asked if the Council had any questions regarding the name change and implications it presents.

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Board Member Bonnie Malone added that when SOAR was developed it was never the intention of the organization to assume ownership of City parks. She stated the organization will continue to focus on the trails and disc golf course that already fall under SOAR's umbrella.

Mayor Boyd stated he felt the name change was a good idea for SOAR. He stated that City parks serve a far greater population than the Sisters community. He stated there has been a great deal of conversation regarding public facilities such as a pool that he feels would best be organized and managed by SOAR as it has a larger tax base. **Board Member Jim Long** stated he agreed and stated he felt that voters would look more favorable on having SOAR manage those types of facilities as opposed to the City. **Councilor Weed** stated the Council has discussed the need for the formation of a Parks Commission to oversee the development and vision for the parks. She asked if SOAR's vision includes that type of oversight.

Director Ward stated that once the joint effort to work on a public facilities plan begins for the greater Sisters area and decisions are made where to site these amenities, such as a pool, ball fields, senior center, schools and additional parks, there will need to be additional conversations about implementation. She stated first there needs to be the creation of a community vision and then the decision on how to move forward. She stated there are a lot of different models on how organizations coordinate such efforts and that it will require a significant number of intergovernmental agreements and time. She stated that although it will take a great deal of time it is not too early to begin planning for the future.

Councilor Bell asked if the land that SOAR currently occupied is owned or leased by SOAR and how much acreage is involved. **Director Ward** stated that SOAR has 14 acres of land that it has obtained via a long-term lease from the Sisters School District. **Board Member Malone** stated that the vision of the School District at the time SOAR was created was for a centralized community center. **Board Member Carole Davis** stated the building was initially constructed with the idea of expanding it in the future. **Director Ward** stated that when it comes time to build a pool facility she hopes to continue the close partnership between the School District and SOAR as it will benefit the district considerably, as currently students must use and pay for pool facilities offsite to practice water sports.

Director Ward stated that SOAR is aiming for a January 1, 2009 timeframe for its name change with the first step being the need to hold a public hearing on the proposed change. **Councilor Weed** asked what the name change will mean practically speaking. **Board Member Malone** stated that a primary goal is for name recognition so community members realize that it is a program for all community members regardless of age. **Board Member Davis** stated that initially the program was about children but it has evolved into something more and now the organization wants to enhance the other programs it offers.

Councilor Merrill stated that in his opinion SOAR's proposed name change will be just as confusing as its current name. He suggested the board take a bigger look at Sisters Country and

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come up with a name that better describes what the district will provide as it involves an area far larger than the City of Sisters and will not be taking over City owned parks. **SOAR Board Members** did not agree and **Board Member Peggy Tehan** summed up the Boards position by stating that people have a general understanding of what a parks and recreation district is. **Mayor Boyd** stated that he feels it isn't about the name but about the public perception and that in order to minimize confusion SOAR will need to educate citizens and other agencies what it plans to offer. **Director Ward** stated that a public information campaign is slated in conjunction with the name change. **Board Member Long** stated that regardless of the name used there will always be some confusion as people do not always make the distinction between a city and a special taxing district. He added that it is easier to raise funds for needed public facilities as a parks and recreation district than as SOAR.

Councilor Merrill stated he would be unwilling to provide an endorsement without a written proposal from SOAR on the changes it is proposing. **Mayor Boyd** stated he did not feel SOAR needed the City's approval. **Director Ward** agreed that SOAR is not looking for the City's approval but was looking to share information. She added that when the time comes for the facilities to come online, state law requires planning agreements between the various agencies. **Manager Stein** encouraged the Council to read SOAR's strategic plan stating it provides a lot of detail with timelines relative to their critical goals previously discussed.

B. Public Facilities Plan for Sisters

Mayor Boyd stated that he would like to discuss the timeline and who will head up the process of creating a Public Facilities Master Plan. **Manager Stein** reported that a sub-committee of the Community Action Team of Sisters (CATS) had met after the April 19th Leadership Summit to discuss the process. She stated the group began with a brainstorming process to identify stakeholders. She stated that at an initial meeting of the stakeholder's objectives and outcomes would be identified. She stated that the group would collect successful models from other communities to see what they involve and to provide a framework. **Director Ward** stated that the Plan will be for the greater Sisters area and look into the future to determine where best to site the different community facilities.

Councilor Weed asked how the Public Facilities Master Plan will fit with the City Park Master Plan adding that the City has not been collecting appropriate SDC's since the master plan has not been updated in a number of years. She voiced concern with the City waiting for a Public Facilities Master Plan as it seems it will be a long term process and she does not want there to be a redundancy of work performed by the City and the stakeholders group. **Manager Stein** stated that as it relates to current parks the City has an obligation to operate and maintain its established parks and can continue to move towards implementing an updated Parks Master Plan. **Councilor Weed** suggested the City could start collecting SDC's towards a pool now even if there is uncertainty where it will be located adding that it seems shortsighted to not do so. **Manager Stein** stated that prior to collecting funds towards a pool everything would need to be in place as to who will

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operate the facility and where it would be located. **Mayor Boyd** stated that a methodology needs to be in place to justify collecting the SDC's and **Director Ward** stated it would make more sense for the Sisters Park and Recreation District to collect the SDC's towards a pool as it will have a broader geographic area to collect from. **Councilor Weed** stated she felt that the City should be updating its Parks Master Plan in conjunction with the Public Facilities Plan and **Councilor Bell** agreed that running a parallel process would be beneficial to both plans. **Manager Stein** stated that joint meetings are good for that purpose of integration of agencies.

Mayor Boyd asked who will be heading up the project since CATS no longer has a staff person in Sisters to head up the plan. **Director Ward** stated that a discussion on that matter centered on the need to hire someone to head up the plan which will be a complex project given the need for all agencies working together. She stated that the initial meetings will be to build that sense of cooperation between the agencies and consider financing options. **Manager Stein** stated that CATS received a \$9,000 grant from the Ford Foundation to support the cost of the Leadership Summit and that \$5,000 from that grant will be used as start up funds to hire someone from Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council (COIC) to coordinate meetings of the stakeholders, apply for grants and provide the necessary day to day work. **Mayor Boyd** stated a Public Facilities Master Plan presented an exciting prospect and that a coordination of agencies will produce a better end product.

C. Other Business

Councilor Bell stated that recently the Council had been given a presentation for an early childhood development center and asked how the board members felt about a second program in Sisters. She asked if the requested coordination on the part of the applicant from the Council had taken place with SOAR. **Board Member Malone** stated that there had been no coordination by the developer prior to an article in the Nugget Newspaper discussing the issue that stated SOAR would oversee the project. She stated there is no benefit to SOAR running two geographically separate child development centers in such close proximity and that no needs assessment had been performed by the developer. She stated that senior citizens don't want to be housed next to a child care center and that the lack of preliminary research seemed to present a naivety by the developer. **Board Member Long** stated that if the developer was really interested in building an early childhood development center it could be built on the SOAR campus.

Councilor Bell asked if there had been a backlash from the recent event, referring to an alleged rape that occurred at SOAR. **Director Ward** stated that SOAR had received calls from concerned parents that wanted to be reassured that it is a safe place for their children to be. She stated that since it was an isolated incident she strongly feels that it is a safe environment and that people still have confidence in SOAR.

Mayor Boyd suggested the Council and SOAR Board meet every six months to discuss whatever issues that have arisen. **Board Member Malone** thanked the Council and stated she agreed it

would be beneficial to continue to meet regularly. **Director Ward** also agreed and stated she enjoys working with Manager Stein and the other community leaders that make collaboration easy. She stated there is great spirit in the community.

The SOAR Board left the meeting at 9:12 a.m.

2. Preview 05/08/08 Regular Meeting Agenda

Manager Stein provided a preview of the regular meeting agenda for May 8th.

Mayor Boyd asked for additional information on the proposed ordinance to amend the contracting authority of the City Manager to \$50,000. **Manager Stein** explained that she is requesting the threshold be raised from \$25,000 to \$50,000 as it is currently too low for many Public Works projects and requires the City to go through the competitive bid process on projects between \$25,000 and \$50,000. She stated the current state limits are significantly higher. She stated the current limit ends up costing the City more as a bid packet needs to be created by the City Engineer and then advertised which also adds time to the bidding process. She stated raising the threshold will allow the City to get informal quotes as opposed to formal bids for projects in this price range. **Manager Stein** further explained that contracts over \$25,000 would still come before the Council for approval as the City Manager's spending authority will remain at \$25,000.

Councilor Bell asked if the City would lose any property with the termination of easement from the Forest Service. **Director Grimm** stated the amount of property was negligible and the termination reflected a movement on the Forest Services part to clean up their property before it goes through the sales process.

3. City Manager Update

Manager Stein distributed copies of a special event permit form for a Blues and Crawfish Festival, a new event proposed for Creekside Park. She stated the applicant was requesting to reserve the entire overnight park over 4th of July weekend and asking to double fence the entire park in order to have a beer garden. **Director Grimm** stated that five Oregon Liquor Control Commission (OLCC) officers will be monitoring the event and that all attendees will be given a wristband after determining if the individual is of a legal drinking age. He stated that the beer garden will comply with OLCC rules and regulations and beer will only be allowed within the event. He stated the applicant is also requesting that Jefferson Street be designated one way for the event.

Council members discussed the proposed event and decided to allow the festival and the reservation of the entire overnight park for the event.

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Manager Stein called the Council's attention to a letter they would have received from High Country Disposal, stating it was a more attractive offer but still not everything the City needs. **Councilor Merrill** requested that staff look at the letter and compare the offer with the proposed budget. **Mayor Boyd** agreed it is an intriguing offer. **Manager Stein** stated that the issues she sees that still need to be considered relative to the Refuse Fund and the proposal from High Country Disposal are staffing, commercial recycling and the recycling center.

Manager Stein reported that David Marlow, Planning Commission Chair has resigned citing his concerns with the new disclosures that are required as a part of the new State ethics requirements. She stated an ad will run for the next three weeks to find a replacement.

Manager Stein referred to an email she had sent the Council regarding a new idea for securing water rights for Well #3. **Manager Stein** stated that the Lazy Z surface water rights will hopefully be transferred to ground water rights in the future and stated the City will need to be more involved with managing water and water issues in general. She recommended the Council meet with Adam Sussman of GSI Water Solutions for a workshop to discuss water rights in general and the Water Rights Master Plan that GSI is preparing for the City.

Manager Stein reminded the Council of the first Budget Committee meeting later in the evening. **Councilor Weed** reported that she would be arriving late to the Budget Committee meeting and would not be in attendance at the May 8th budget meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:53 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Nelson, City Recorder

Brad Boyd, Mayor