



City Parks Advisory Board Workshop
January 7, 2015 – 4:00 P.M.
520 E. Cascade Avenue, P.O. Box 39, Sisters, OR 97759

City Parks Advisory Board Attendees:

Board Chair: Liam Hughes
Councilor: Wendy Holzman
Board Members: Dixie Eckford, David Magaret, Phyllis Lewis, Rory Peterson
Absent: Peggy Houge
Staff: CDD Director, Pauline Hardie, PW Director, Paul Bertagna
Recording Secretary: Carol Jenkins

I. CALL TO ORDER

Board Chair Hughes called the workshop to order at 4:00 p.m.

II. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a. Prep for City Council and City Parks Advisory Board Joint Workshop regarding the Campground.

Board Chair Hughes stated that he was handed a petition this evening that is going around from the residents regarding the issues for the Campground. He asked the Board to read the draft petition and stated that the draft petition will be added into the record at this time.

Board Chair Hughes stated that this is an outline of the problems for the Campground and a shows good picture of what the residents involved feel are the issues and their desired outcome.

Board Chair Hughes stated that he would like to give his thoughts regarding the Campground and has broken it out into two (2) categories. One are the statements that the Board has either heard, seen, or been made aware of, and then, the next part of this are the questions on things that the Board or someone needs to answer before a decision is made moving forward.

Board Chair Hughes gave examples of what they need to do when meeting with the City Council and let them know what the Board has done with an outline of the scope of work to this point.

Board Member Lewis stated that she felt it would be a good idea to include the number of meetings and the time span of the meetings for their information. *Director Hardie* stated that she would outline the dates, number of meetings, and what the Board has done to date.

A discussion took place on the highlights of the Campground and how it is being highly utilized during the summer season. Some of the items discussed was the need to submit a Site Master Plan to the Oregon State Parks as a Condition of Approval, the majority of the sites that are occupied by people in RV's and laying out the demographics of what is going on in the Campground. The majority of the campsites do not provide full RV hook-ups that may need power, water and sewer. The restroom was discussed as well as the events that may take place during these months. The neighbors voiced concerns about changes to the facility, the neighbors wanted to see the Campground removed or downsized, expressed opposition to any changes that would bring more RV's or an expansion, but may be receptive to some degree of change that would improve the experience to the neighborhood. There was also interest to keep the Campground exactly as it is.

Board Chair Hughes discussed the direct and indirect benefits to the City. He discussed the additional revenue and the revenue currently in the Campground and what it would mean to the average citizen of Sisters, and what services would this additional revenue allow the City to provide. He continued to discuss what are the effects to the visitors that stay in the Campground have on the local economy revenue to the local businesses and participation to the local events, etc. He addressed how the City Council views the primary functions and benefit of the Campground. He continued to say what is the goal are we shooting for when putting together ideas and suggestions, etc. Is this a revenue stream that funds services to the citizens of Sisters, is this to facilitated towards tourism, to bring people to town to stay, shop, go to the local businesses and be a part of the festivals and events, or is it a public facility for public enjoyment – are these the primary functions of this Campground. How it is weighed for the residents versus the tourists and how is it quantified.

Board Chair Hughes discussed the big question – does the City Council want the Parks Advisory Board to continue working on this project, and if so, – please give the Board some guidance and tell what they want the board to provide for the next steps. He stated that his hope is that the City Council will send the Board away with a very specific task to please do this and bring back on this date, etc.

Board Member Lewis stated that the Board started out because they needed to create this Master Plan. She asked if this was their function and are they supposed to be working on this Master Plan, or is there something else that has happened that has gotten the Board off track.

Board Chair Hughes stated that is correct and what we are here working on is on the Master Plan for the Campground, but what exactly is the plan.

Board Member Lewis stated that it needs to be clarified so that the City Council really understands that the Board is trying to do this, but now, we've run into these other things.

Board Chair Hughes stated that the City Council talked about whether or not they should get more involved in this process and it is the perfect time to go and ask them directly. The Board is willing to do the work on this and how to help, but at this point the Board needs more guidance.

Councilor Holzman stated that because this Board has heard a great deal from the community, and they have had a lot of people come to speak before us, it would be very valuable for Council to hear some of these concerns, etc. The Council did agree that they want to have a joint meeting to talk about these issues and talk about what the group has heard.

Board Member Eckford asked if the Council will have some background and information on all that has happened and discussed to this point. She asked if this is going to be a workshop, or for the Council to tell us based on everything that has been submitted to them what they think, or is it an interim step between what they expect of the Board.

Director Hardie stated that she will go over the deeds, the original Master Plan that was never approved by the State, the data that was presented to the Board, and the draft Master Plan that was based on the list of concerns so that they are 100 percent up to speed on this. Also, she will include the letters that have been received to date, etc.

Board Chair Hughes stated that he doesn't want to put anybody on the spot and wouldn't expect an answer from the City Council on that night. They may need to digest the information and questions being proposed, come back and have their own internal discussion, and then notify the Board on how to proceed.

Board Member Lewis stated that from the list Director Hardie presented to the Board and in doing some analysis there are three (3) areas that she felt came out of that list – neighborhood concerns, traffic concerns, and environmental concerns (washing dishes in the creek) etc.

A discussion took place at the possible alternatives and facts that need to be talked about on things like the current status, deed status, use analysis, future development, public relations, problems areas, economic costs and revenues, alternatives and objectives, etc. Also, looking at the time factor, cost factor, results, and having something concrete to base the decisions on rather just general feelings. The Board gives informed advice to the City Council for a proposed final recommendation.

Director Bertagna came forward and gave some numbers on revenues and expenditures for last year. He discussed the park fees/site fees, sewer dump station fees, transient room tax, expenses, salaries, benefits, labor, camp host costs, landscape maintenance, staff maintaining the eastern portion of the park, hours, and maintenance hours, materials and services (advertising and credit card fees – goes along with the reservation system), dump station lease, electricity, insurance, phone, IT, supplies, miscellaneous expenses, and paying a portion of the transient room tax out to the Chamber to run their operation. The general fund which has a lot of programs in this fund such as the parks program, the building maintenance program, the finance program, and planning all within the general fund.

Board Member Margaret stated that the City Council should understand that the park has really changed a lot over the last several years. The utilities have sky rocked and the RV's are getting bigger, and that is what most of the local people are worried about. He stated that he was concerned about the traffic and wanted to know if there was someone that could give some expert traffic advise maybe DOT, etc.

City Parks Advisory Board Workshop

January 7, 2015 – 4:00 P.M.

Prep for City Council/City Parks Advisory Board Workshop regarding the Campground

Board Chair Hughes stated that would be a really good question and where to find someone to help out with that.

Director Bertagna stated that ODOT manages the highway and is concerned about the highway. They are not as concerned about backup on local streets. If it is creating congestion on Buckaroo that spreads out to Desperado Trail in front of the Athletic Club, and down in front of the condos, etc. That is not their primary concern, but what they are concerned about is conflict maneuvers, conflict points, and crash data. He stated they have had many conversations with ODOT when the Athletic Club and Five Pine going in, the potential increase in crashes is why the turn lanes got put in help to mitigate that. It is a rural environment entering an urban environment. That being the most dangerous spot is high speeds not expecting 40-ft. campers taking a left. He stated that if the Board would like to get some ODOT dialog – he will reach out to Jim Bryant or someone at ODOT.

A discussion took place regarding the traffic issues, coming in and going out, passing the park and turning around and how to solve these problems.

Councilor Holzman stated that there are a number of Councilors who would like to get some input from this Advisory Board. She stated that she likes the idea of trying to lay out what problems have been seen, what solutions there might be, and how do they want to move forward on getting the bigger picture of how the Council sees the park and some possible solutions.

A discussion took place regarding how the City Council views the primary function of the Campground and the importance of these issues. If the primary function is revenue, then, that is the answer, but maybe wording it differently than primary.

Board Member Lewis stated that it is a situation from the deed dated June 1985 as well and it gets very complicated. Essentially, they gave the City a park and the park had two parts – the Campground was there and the park/park was there. That is what they wanted the City to do is maintain this park.

Board Chair Hughes stated that is a very good point and how does a plan get created and how do you create a plan that is not obsolete. The real goal of putting together a plan is something that will not only guide us today, but guides us into the future.

A discussion took place regarding the different types of grants, the process for the Master Plan, the number of hearings for the Planning Commission and City Council, sending information to the State, and the timelines for the City in developing the Master Plan, etc.

Director Hardie stated that the next City Council workshop will be within two weeks on Thursday and then, they will schedule the joint workshop with the Parks Advisory Board sometime in February.

City Parks Advisory Board Workshop

January 7, 2015 – 4:00 P.M.

Prep for City Council/City Parks Advisory Board Workshop regarding the Campground

Councilor Holzman stated that it will be an informal meeting and they will be able to discuss the concerns and issues that have been talked about in the workshops, and the solutions and different ideas discussed by the neighbors after hearing their concerns. Some of the issues for discussion might be the entrance to the park, making signage better, figuring out ways for the RV's to maneuver better, increasing the buffer between the streets, change the configuration of the Campground, screening camp sites a little better, maybe more landscape buffers, etc.

Board Chair Hughes stated that instead of doing this in phases to get it done, do it once and do it right.

A discussion took place regarding reconfiguring the Campground, increasing the buffer, bringing the camping spots up so it is away from the neighborhood, maybe adding more hook-ups, scale of the Campground and the demographics of the Campground, RV's and overall use, etc.

III. OTHER BUSINESS
None at this time.

IV. VISITOR COMMUNIATION

Board Chair Hughes asked if the audience would like to speak at this time.

Mr. Hull stated that they want something to be done right now. Put signage up to say that RV's and campers turn to the right. Test that over the next year while still working on all of these other things.

Steve Bryan stated that one thing that would be good to come from City Council is a one paragraph summary of the purpose of this park. The City Council could provide some things, but that has to be the very first part of this Master Plan. This is a park that has a small number of campsites that is designed to be quiet and suitable for the neighborhood - the 10,000 foot summary right up at the top of the Master Plan.

Tay Robertson came forward and stated that he is representing the neighbors that have mobilized about this issue. He addressed the petition, some of the impacts, he said that this is a good process and is important to the neighborhoods to have their input. He described some issues of living by a park, having interviews with the neighbors, awareness of the Campground, reasons for not moving the park, different uses by the RV's, the low level of trust from the neighbors in regards to the City, importance of reconnecting with the folks in town and get the trust back. It explains the reason there is so much controversy and why people are so upset. Issues he discussed were no additional expansion of facilities to the campsites, clean bathrooms, and the park doesn't get any bigger. The big theme is no more development. The big issues with the neighborhood are trust, visibility, and traffic.

A discussion took place regarding hookup and non-hookup sites, increasing more hookups, noise factor, landscaping buffers, trees, fences, exits and entrances, traffic control, park rules, open space, and no more improvements to the park.

City Parks Advisory Board Workshop

January 7, 2015 – 4:00 P.M.

Prep for City Council/City Parks Advisory Board Workshop regarding the Campground

Janet Baker came forward and stated that she enjoys what Mr. Robertson just said and hopes that it paints a clearer picture. She stated that she has become an expert in the park with the comings and goings of RV's, etc. In September that park exploded and she decided to rise up and be a voice regarding the RV's and the importance of the buffers. She asked if anything could be done to reconfigure the park pushing RV's to the creek and east. To try and get the RV's away from Locust and Tyee for the houses right across the street. It is a nice asset for the City and why she hasn't expressed her concerns and complaints – it is a nice revenue stream which enhances the other parks for all of the people in the City. Encouraging or developing any more in that park and adding anything more for that size of an area where it is right in a neighborhood really needs to be considered. She discussed the rumor of the weigh station and the entrance and exit that could be developed in that area, etc.

Board Member Lewis stated that the Parks Advisory Board has heard and listened to all of these concerns and tried to solicit solutions for these concerns. She asked if Ms. Baker felt there was a stopping point, or that the Board is not hearing what the neighbors are saying.

Ms. Baker stated that she is not sure herself if the Board is totally understanding the issues because her house is directly across from the park. She discussed the RV's missing the entrance, now there are full hookup on the street, and that they don't like looking across the street and seeing that. She stated that she would like to know about the City Council meetings, the joint meetings, and the workshops, etc.

Board Chair Hughes stated that this is a huge step forward that the residents have come together and formed a consensus because it is a much greater challenge for the Board to listen to 30 individual voices than one voice that has been collected and put together. He asked for the Boards permission to meet with the Mr. Robertson between the workshops to get further updates on what the residents feel and then report that back to the Board. The Board was all in agreement.

V. ADJOURN

Board Chair Hughes adjourned the meeting at 5:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Jenkins, Recording Secretary

City Parks Advisory Board Workshop
January 7, 2015 – 4:00 P.M.
Prep for City Council/City Parks Advisory Board Workshop regarding the Campground