



CITY PARKS ADVISORY BOARD **Agenda**

520 E. Cascade Avenue - PO Box 39 - Sisters, Or 97759 | ph.: (541) 549-6022 | www.ci.sisters.or.us

Wednesday, December 6, 2023 – 4–5 P.M.

520 E. Cascade Avenue, Sisters, OR 97759

Meeting is in person at Sisters City Hall, but also available on Zoom via this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81916946304?>

Meeting ID: 819 1694 6304

Passcode: 089784

- I. **CALL TO ORDER / DETERMINATION OF QUORUM / ADOPTION OF AGENDA**
- II. **VISITOR COMMUNICATION:** This is the time provided for individuals wishing to address the Board regarding issues that are not on the agenda. Please state your name and address at the time the Chair calls on you to speak.
- III. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
 - A. October 4, 2023 (Exhibit A)
- IV. **STAFF**
 - A. Review of 2023 CPAB Accomplishments
 - B. What to Expect in 2024 for CPAB
- V. **UPDATE FROM SISTERS PARKS AND RECREATION DISTRICT**
- VI. **OTHER BUSINESS/OPEN DISCUSSION**
- VII. **ADJOURN**

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City Parks Advisory Board – Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, October 4, 2023 – 4:00 P.M.
520 E. Cascade Avenue, P.O. Box 39, Sisters, OR 97759

City Parks Advisory Board Attendees:

Board Members: Eli Madrone, Emily Curtis, Molly Baumann, Emily Coonrod, Asa Sarver,
Doug Buell, Nancy Connolly
Council Representative : Gary Ross
Staff: Scott Woodford, CDD Director, Paul Bertagna, Public Works Director
Visitor: Jennifer Holland, SPRD Representative
Recording Secretary: Carol Jenkins

I. CALL TO ORDER

Board Chair Madrone called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm. A quorum was established.

Board Member Sarver made a motion to approve the agenda as presented.

Board Member Connolly seconded the motion. Motion passes.

II. VISITOR COMMUNICATION

Kellen Klein, 258 W. Heising Dr., Sisters, OR 97759

Mr. Klein stated that he lives in the Clear Pine neighborhood and wanted to say thank you for the idea of a dog park. He talked about the Forest Service property and has heard that four (4) dogs have gotten sick or poisoned from drug waste and feces in the forest. He wanted to add that from a personal and professional perspective, a dog park is an awesome asset for the community by making connections with people and their dogs, etc. He said that he thinks it is a good idea to test this and has seen it work successfully where you can put up fencing and see what the local appetite is for use of a dog park. He stated that this does not necessarily need to be a city park, discussed insurance policies, and undeveloped land that could be potential areas for a dog park.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - August 2, 2023

Board Member Sarver made a motion to approve the minutes for August 2, 2023, as presented.

Board Member Connolly seconded the motion. Motion passes.

IV. STAFF

A. Dog Park – Continued Work Session to get feedback from the Parks Board on potential locations for a dog park for a dog park facility.

Director Woodford stated that in the recently updated Sisters Parks Master Plan, dog parks “for off-leash play” was cited as a desired amenity by community members during community outreach efforts, also noting that it is a recreation trend around the country. Public involvement activities resulted in requests for secure public places where dogs are allowed off leash within the city. These facilities require high maintenance to keep functional, including routine turf establishment and repair. This can conflict with other sustainability goals unless existing, underused lawn areas can be repurposed or removed to offset sizable new lawn space without increasing water demand. Amenities should include picnic structures, fence in dog park area with signage and furnishings and the Plan identifies a construction cost of \$205,888 (based on a .75-acre site), which includes an extension of water to a site.

Director Woodford stated that the Parks Master Plan recommends considering several potential locations for dog parks, including existing parks and/or in newly constructed facilities in the future:

- Cliff Clemens Park: “Explore a fenced portion of lawn for an off-leash dog park use with bench seating, drinking fountain with dog bowl and close access to restrooms. Conditionally, include noise abatement strategies”.
- Creekside Park: “Explore feasibility of siting a small off-leash, fenced dog park”.
- Sun Ranch Park: “Study this site as potential for a fenced dog park”.
- Unidentified Future Acquisition: The Plan mentions looking at property that the city does not own yet to acquire, possibly in the potential expanded Urban Growth Boundary.

Director Woodford stated that in the Parks Master Plan and taking into consideration future growth, taking into consideration that we might want to increase the Level of Service Standard to a higher number which could equate up to 20 acres of additional parkland that we need to acquire at some point. Potentially, a dog park could be sited on property where we do not even know where that is going to be yet nor have identified.

Director Woodford stated that at the August 2, 2023, CPAB meeting, staff introduced this topic and there was general support for a dog park in Sisters, and support for doing an additional feasibility study to determine what that means. The standards in the Parks Master Plan, in terms of how big they should be and being a major determining factor, we took the time to contact Bend Parks and Recreation who are the experts that have most of the experience in building dog parks to see what their experience was, etc. We got a lot of good information back from them on what they have learned over time as they have built a few of these things.

Director Woodford stated that one of the things that came out of this is where would you site these things. Their recommendation that they only be sited in community parks versus neighborhood parks and smaller. Do not put them adjacent to residences, need flush restrooms, and dog parks are never big enough. The minimum size recommended is 2.5 acres for a dog park. This would consist of 2 acres for large dogs, and a separate .5 acre for small dogs separating the two. Their newest dog park in Alpenglow Park is 3.5 acres.

Director Woodford stated that they gave examples of construction for types of fencing, gate system, signage for rules and regulations, water spicket (frost free), and a minimum (2) stall restroom, 0.5-acre turf area with irrigation on both sides and leaving remaining areas in a natural state. In terms of the cost, the engineers estimate for 3.4 acres dog park construction was \$90,000, fencing is the biggest capital cost (about \$50/lineal foot), the Parks Master Plan estimates it would cost about \$208,000 for construction of a dog park based on .75-acre parcel. For maintenance, the natural spaces do not require too much work other than weed control, and they generally tend to leave them alone, but use a volunteer group to help with the weed control.

Director Woodford stated that there is a whole list of things regarding Maintenance Responsibilities that need to be considered both responsibilities of things that should be done as well as costs, etc. Also, what impacts this would have on the Public Works Department. Some of these criteria, especially the one if we are going to go on the premise that 2.5 acres is the minimum area for a dog park, we can use that to compare what the existing facilities can accommodate. In looking at the Parks Master Plan talking about certain parks such as:

- *Cliff Clemens Park*: The total acreage of the park is 2.3 acres, but that includes a playground and parking area. In terms of a potential dog park space, the most you would be able to yield is approximately .94 acres. It is also surrounded by residential on three sides. The advantage is that it is central, has parking, and has existing bathrooms.
- *Sun Ranch Park*: Total acreage is .50 acres, which would be too small unless it were just a small dog park.
- *Creekside Park*: The total park site is large, but the area that could be devoted to a dog park is small (around .30 of an acre).
- *East Portal*: This parcel is primarily being used as a multi-modal transportation center, but there is some remaining unused land that could potentially be used for a dog park. About 1.8 acres is leftover, but some of that is the labyrinth that is being retained.
- *Lazy Z Ranch*: This area is primarily used for disposal of wastewater effluent, but there is an area designated for public access that may be possible in the future.
- *School Property*: The high school contains a significant amount of open space to the west of the school. Staff contacted the school administration to see if there was interest in utilizing a portion of it for a dog park, but there is not broad support for that at this time.
- *USFS Land*: Staff contacted the local Forest Service Ranger about utilizing forest land for a dog park, like the Good Dog Park outside of Bend. Staff learned that that park is not administered by the USFS and there is no agreement to operate it as such and no fencing, but people are allowed to be with their dog off leash on USFS land (as long as they are voice control) and that there is a non-profit that provides the doggies waste bags and maintenance. They said that the Petersen Ridge, near the disc golf course and others already unofficial dog parks.
- *Future UGB Expansion Area*: The city is currently studying the need for an expansion to the city's Urban Growth Boundary, which could include additional land for residential and employment uses, as well as land for future parks. As part of the expansion, the city could stipulate that a dog park be included with a future annexation.

Director Woodford stated that projects recommended in the Parks Master Plan are generally paid for with Park's System Development Charges (SDC's) paid by developers and builders at the time of building permit issuance.

Director Woodford stated that he referenced some of the layouts of these parks that included the overall acreage, and with Cliff Clemens Park, he outlined it in blue to get an idea if using all the non-parking area in the restrooms for the dog parks, you would have about .09 acres there. In looking at Sun Ranch Park the total acreage by itself is only .50 acre and might be too small unless it is for just smaller dogs. Looking at Creekside Park, the acreage is .30 acres, and the total park area is quite large and there is an area that could be devoted to a dog park.

Director Woodford stated that some of the Board Members mentioned last time about East Portal which has 8 acres, and there is that possibility in having a Master Plan that has designated a large portion of that area for a multi-modal center, so quite a bit of that area is spoken for, but there are some remaining areas that could potentially be used for a dog park. The Lazy Z was thrown out there and there is a considerable amount of land out there and the land area is not the problem, but the area that could be devoted for dogs is not a part of the disposal of effluent and a smaller area that could be used for a dog parks. He said that it does not seem feasible now but may have potential in the future.

Director Bertagna stated that right now it is a DEQ regulated effluent disposal site – the entire 230 acres so it is going to take quite a process with DEQ as we enter the wetlands conversation with them to allow public access in there, and our engineers that have done it before so it is possible, but again, it is something that we cannot guarantee at this point and will be a several year discussion and planning to get that project underway. It could be in the future potential, but in the near future, he would say ‘no’.

Director Woodford stated that at the last board meeting, it was brought up about the school property because they own a lot of land behind the High School and what about a use for that land as a dog park. He said that he did approach the subject with the Superintendent, and while they have concerns about people using the ball fields for a dog park, but would love to have something that says, ‘take your dog here and not here’ right next to each other as an alternative, but he did not think at this time that the board would support it. He reached out to the local Forest Ranger about utilizing some of the forest land for a dog park – it is an unofficial dog park right now. He asked about the parallel “Good Dog Park” that is west of Bend on Forest Service land where there is no fencing and is pretty much take your dog, there is no leash required, etc. There is no agreement between the Forest Service and any other community, or any other entity other than there is a volunteer group that goes out and provides all the dog waste stations and does minimal maintenance, but you can have your dog off leash on Forest Service property but have them under voice control.

Board Member Baumann stated that as the Forest Service Development Recreation Manager there, are you talking about the snow parks. We do have something with dog pack that has their bags and can speak to the off leash as well.

Director Woodford stated that he is not talking about the snow park but talking about the “Good Dog Park” that is on the parcel just west of Bend that has access down to the river and a good parking area. Another potential option as mentioned earlier is this future parkland that the Parks Master Plan says it should acquire over time to meet our future parks needs and we anticipate that to be about 20 acres. It might now happen at all, but

Council needs to make that call about whether we go forward with the UGB amendment at all, but it could be a two-year process just to get the process to bring land into the Urban Growth Boundary and then needing to have a willing property owner, go through acquisitions, and if we move forward with this it would be a longer term situation, etc.

Director Woodford stated that this is the research that we did, an overview and comments on how this could be accommodated here in town. We wanted to get back with the Board to see what your thoughts are on this, see what questions you might have, and see if there is more information that the Boards needs for us to get in order to be able to make a call, etc.

Director Bertagna stated that there was a question from the Board about maintenance and what those costs would be like. After talking to Mike Duarte out at Bend Parks and Recreation those numbers are not too scary, most of them revolved around turf management and he did recommend having small turf areas in both the small and the large areas to play – that would be most of the cost of the maintenance. This is something that we could take over ourselves.

Board Member Buell asked Director Bertagna what size of fence they would use.

Director Bertagna stated it would be a 4-foot fence that they would use.

Director Woodford stated that the runway exclusion zone – that did not come up and you need to be careful that you are not designing a park so big that you create a large gathering area, and that is what the Oregon Department of Aviation regulates those kinds of zones and not creating large public assembly. Smaller areas of public assembly seem to be ok. The cut-off may be around 50.

Director Bertagna stated that it is not owned by the city but owned by the HOA that developed Grand Peaks at Sisters, and they do not even allow people into their private park. There are no public restrooms, no sewer line because it's daylight west of our well.

Board Member Baumann stated that the little parcel in Sun Ranch Park by the pumphouse, about 2-3 years ago before Village Green, we were going to do a pollinator park there. We were going through the motions, getting it all ready, and then halted it and ended up doing Village Green Park instead. In the process, she had a conversation with Benny Benson at the airport about the pollinator park and if he had any concerns about it because you have more insects which would attract more birds and it was not a concern at the time.

Board Member Connolly stated that she has never seen dog parks segregated because they are always combined – the small and the large and is there any reason or rational that a small dog park could not be at Cliff Clemens and the large dog park somewhere else.

A brief conversation took place regarding small dogs and large dogs and if they can be separated, the costs associated and amenities as a cost factor, etc.

Board Member Curtis stated that it does not seem like we currently have the park space that would be a good option to meet the size requirements. We are constrained by that size and the ideal for a large dog park would be 2-acres and then .5 an acre for a small dog park. It is not something that she would like to kick the can down the road on creating any dog park, so she thinks that we could consider as an initial project or a test project to do a small dog park only since we do have parcels that would accommodate that size. She stated that she would like to propose again the East Portal or the Northwest Crossing Park, both of which would be sizeable and a good size for a small dog park. Those are more on the west side of town which is where there are a lot of multi-family dwellings with people that do not even have a yard.

Councilor Ross stated that we do already have a small dog park in town behind the apartment complex. One of the amenities was to put a small dog park with gates for the people living there.

Board Member Connolly asked if the East Portal is an idea, will the East Portal restroom be open year-round in the future Master Plan, or is that an issue.

Director Bertagna stated that it would be open year-round. Originally, it was meant to be open during the time Hwy 242 is open – Memorial Day through October which is the way we have been running it, but when we turn it into a full transit center it will be 365.

Board Member Baumann stated that if this is something that the board wants to pursue, she would be supportive of the East Portal and not supportive of a maintained park such as Cliff Clemens, or Village Green Park in an area that has grass already maintained to take away from the limited open grass that we already have. Keeping it in a natural habitat is the best choice.

Director Bertagna stated that they did more research looking around at smaller options whether it is interim until we can get a well thought out community park, and there are a lot of places that have dog parks with co-mingle with small and large dogs. There are communities doing this on the smaller size. The numbers that we got from Bend Parks and Recreation are big brother and they work with different sets of numbers and different sets of acreage than we do. The eastside and the westside of the labyrinth are options and both are about .5 acre.

Board Member Connolly stated that going back to what the guest speaker said, it is a great location and not just for foot traffic with the Woodlands being able to cross the highway with the safe crosswalk that is coming and the apartments that are across the street. Vehicular traffic has it much easier and the whole south side of town can stay off the highway and use the main throughfare, the northside can cut through with the roundabout – it is a great location, it is a nice entryway for tourists that are coming into town where they can stop to go to the restroom and let their dog out and decide that it is just two blocks let's just walk downtown. It has a lot of potential and of all the parks that are available, it is the best option at this point.

Councilor Ross stated that is going to be an easier sell to the City Council in that location than some of the other ones that have been discussed.

Board Chair Madrone asked Director Woodford and Director Bertagna if they could do a trial down at the East Portal by putting up a temporary fence, etc., or is that something we just take to Council.

Director Bertagna stated that if there is a commitment from the Board and the City Council, we should forego the temporary solution just to save dollars – and just go for it.

Councilor Ross asked about construction timing on Phase 1 and is that about a year out. The reality is if we were to make a dog park, we would probably think about that at the same time.

Director Bertagna stated that we are looking at this time next year. He stated that we could front load it and anything is possible. It is going to go in the direction of the City Council and what they want to do. Phase 1 construction is significant, and you are going to gain some efficiency with a contractor that is already mobilized, and it will be cheaper.

Jennifer Holland with SPRD, asked if at the East Portal is going to have new parking along the side of Cascade Avenue.

Director Bertagna said yes. A portion of that parking could get rolled into the dog park construction. As we develop the design, we are going to look at our contracting community that is going to be interested in this, and quiz them – is this a potential staging area, could you construct around it, are there any safety concerns, any vandalism concerns, etc. We can get to that answer, but not sure what that is right now, but in the realm of possibilities.

Councilor Ross stated that as part of the construction that is planned in Phase 1, there would be an ability to get some water to, close to, or into that park, but might be one of the factors that affects when a dog park could go in.

Board Member Baumann stated that in the past, she has not been a huge supporter of a dog park in the city to be honest but will be very honest and say that with the plan of East Portal being a transportation hub and incorporating the dog park, those two would work well together and is in support of that. She would like to see that before we as a board are like 100 percent into this, to see a plan from the city on how you would be managing it and incorporate it on the map showing the acres and how it looks, a good basic idea before moving forward to see that information to make a good, informed decision.

Councilor Ross stated that he is familiar with the site and has walked it not long ago not thinking of a dog park, but thinking transportation and what is that going to look like and where things are going to go. It may be that when that is designed in around things that are there, it may not be possible to have a divided park. It is possible given the size of the slope and have it open to anybody with a dog and try to figure out how to manage it. It is not ideal, but we do not have the luxury of a ton of space to try and make something big enough to accommodate different sized animals.

V. UPATE FROM SISTERS PARKS AND RECREATION DISTRICT

Jennifer Holland, SPRD stated that this is basically the same update, but a different month. We have fall programs that have kicked off, we are prepping for two large community events which is the downtown trick or treating event that is on Halloween, the combined two new Sisters reformatted Holiday Parade and Tree Lighting all in one being held the Saturday after Thanksgiving. The Elementary School conversation, we were in the middle of getting the feasibility study completed and it has been completed and presented to the board of directors. The board just approved it and is going into a contract with an architect firm that is going to come in and do some site renderings. The next phase will be some contractors coming in and doing an outside use study. There has been a lot of interest in that space and want to make sure that we go through this process in a very inclusive way making sure that we hear from the community, but also plan a sustainable fashion and a strategic fashion. One of the goals for that site that will be welcomed by the community is that it will be accessible from dusk to dawn.

Board Member Coonrod stated that the Oregon Trail Alliance has been working very closely with SPRD on revamping the bike park that is adjacent to the current SPRD property. There is a public grand opening on Saturday from 11-1 and there are a number of helmets available for kids and they need to be present to be fitted for those helmets, but it is an exciting space, and it is going to attract a lot more attention now, and we are excited to have it in the community in a revamped way.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS / OPEN DISCUSSION

Director Woodford stated that there is one (1) open position on the City Parks Advisory Board.

Board Chair Madrone stated that there are people interested in the Community Garden and the pollinator park being a space available for the Community Garden, etc. He asked if it would be appropriate to do the same kind of exercise.

Director Woodford stated that there is a member here today (Janie Boyl) that is associated with the Community Garden, and they submitted a formal request or proposal with a very well-done site plan for the Sun Ranch/Pollinator Park location. Right now, we are evaluating it at a staff level first and trying to get our hands around it, asking questions about the arrangement for a private group utilizing public space and how does that work. Potentially, there is an example in Bend with one of their parks where they have a community garden on their park owned land. The idea is to make sure that we understand it and if it is feasible at a staff level, and then we would start working through the Parks Board, then through Council, etc.

VII. ADJOURN

Board Chair Madrone adjourned the meeting at 4:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Jenkins, Recording Secretary

