

Parks Advisory Board Meeting Minutes May 27, 2015

Chairperson Norma Hernandez called meeting to Order at 6:45am.

Present- Norma Hernandez, Jessica Schleif, Andrew Fick, Tammy Loughran, Eric Halverson, Joe Miltenberger, Drew Herzig, Jim Holen, Grace Laman, and Howard Rub

Absent- Peter O'Farrell

Guests- George Haag and Stephen Blaksley

Staff- Angela Cosby, Erin Reilly, Terra Patterson and Jonah Dart-McLean

Approval of Minutes

- A. March minutes were unanimously approved as submitted.
- B. Ms. Hernandez noted the following corrections to the April minutes:
 1. Item 4-What do you hear: Jessica Schleif gave the report on the community gardens, not Tammy Loughran.
 2. Item 5-Employee Recognition: Katie Junes was the April, not March, employee of the month.April minutes were unanimously approved as corrected.

Welcome New Board Member Drew Herzig

Ms. Hernandez introduced Mr. Herzig, noting that his membership on the Parks Board connected the Board with City Council.

Public comments

1. George Hague, 1 3rd Street, Astoria, said the public hearing on the Bridge Vista Area of the Riverfront Vision Plan had been scheduled for Monday, June 1, 2015 at 7:00 pm at the City Council meeting. He displayed a map of the Bridge Vista Area and noted the Astoria Planning Commission (APC) had already approved the plan. Buildings up to 35 feet tall would be allowed along the Riverwalk and taller buildings would be allowed on the south side of the Riverwalk. This would form a tunnel of buildings, blocking the trolley and views of the river. The existing zoning is worse, but approving the new regulations would still leave a lot to be desired. He encouraged the Board to read the information he provided and reminded that Astorians still have the opportunity to give input. He encouraged feedback to be emailed to the addresses he provided. The plan would make it difficult to enjoy the expanse of the river if development occurred. Some people believe development would be too expensive, so this would not be an issue. However, he believed that at some point, technology would advance to make this development affordable. Maybe not in his lifetime, but eventually the area would be built up with 35-foot buildings that block the views. A 40-foot gap would be allowed in between the buildings, but views of the bridge and river would still be blocked. The red area of the map would retain its historic character by allowing development no higher than the riverbank. However, views of the bridge and river would still be blocked. He asked the Board to read the plan and share it with others.

President Hernandez

- A. What do you hear- Ms. Hernandez heard comments that the movie in the park on Saturday night, a foundation fundraiser was a lot of fun. She also heard from a former employee that Erin Reilly had been a great boss. It was great to hear how Ms. Reilly inspires young people. She reminded that all of the fundraisers were hosted by the Astoria Parks and Recreation Foundation, not the Astoria Parks and Recreation Department. After the movie night was published in the paper, she received many phone calls from people asking questions about the fundraiser. It is important that people understand the Foundation is hosting the fundraisers. Ms. Schleif said she also heard from people who were upset that the event was for adults only because the parks are supposed to be for family events. The Board discussed how to respond to questions about the fundraisers. Mr. Herzig heard the Port had closed the road near the section of the Riverwalk at the roundabout. Ms. Schleif believed the road had reopened.

Employee Recognition

- A. Director Cosby recognized Ms. Reilly as the May employee of the month, noting her 5 years of service to the City and describing her accomplishments, including she had single-handedly started the Lil Sprouts Program.

Old Business

- A. Tammy Loughran gave an update on the Parks Foundation. The movie night on Saturday raised over \$750 in ticket and beer sales and donations. The next event will be the OK Run on June 14th.
- B. Director Cosby gave an update on the Astoria Column restoration, noting that work began on May 26th. The Column will be closed for the entire month of June.

New Business

- A. Director Cosby gave a review of the Herbicide Use Policy and Practices and recommended the Parks Board recommend that City Council adopt the policy. Ms. Schleif noted that the school district would no longer be using chemicals to kill weeds. The Astoria Parks Board unanimously voted to recommend adoption of the Herbicide Use Policy and Practices by the Astoria City Council.
- B. Director Cosby gave a review of the Department Scholarship Policy and Practices and recommended the Parks Board recommend that City Council adopt the policy. Ms. Schleif suggested asking for donations on park permit applications. Ms. Loughran suggested making the scholarship applications readily available to those who may not seek them out. Director Cosby said she hoped the policy would be adopted by City Council before the next fiscal year began, however it could be adopted any time. The Board and Staff discussed the availability of scholarship funds and the possibility of an increase in scholarship applications after the policy is adopted. Ms. Loughran was very concerned that the Foundation would not be able to raise enough funds. They also discussed revising the policy to offer scholarships just for specific programs instead of all of the programs. Other forms of financial assistance are available for child care and the scholarships should be used for activities that encourage health and fitness in the community. Director Cosby described the City's document retention and public records request policies that would pertain to the scholarship policy and answered the Board's questions about the details of the policy. The Board and Staff discussed fundraising by the Foundation, the need for a formal policy, and the best way to notify the community about the new policy. Mr. Miltengerger suggested a different fee structure for the aquatic center because senior citizens are paying the same amount as families. The Board discussed fundraising ideas and Director Cosby offered to request \$10,000 in start up money from City Council. The Board unanimously voted to recommend that City Council adopt the Scholarship Policy and

Practices with the following amendment: Scholarship funds may be used for all programs and services except child care and cemetery services.

- C. Stephen Blakesley, 6928 Ocean View Lane, Arch Cape, Clatsop County Public Health Department, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Smoking Ban. His presentation included an overview of tobacco control and enforcement, agencies throughout the state that have implemented tobacco and smoke free policies, statistics on tobacco use, information about the tobacco industry, and how to make an informed decision about such a policy. He explained how he could help the Astoria Parks Department create a policy and budget, noting that the County could assist with signage expenses. The Board, Staff, and guests discussed implementation and enforcement of a tobacco policy. The Astoria Parks Board unanimously voted to develop a tobacco control policy to be recommended for City Council adoption.
- D. Director Cosby presented the Annual Department Budget Review, which the Board briefly discussed. Ms. Hernandez suggested discussing the budget in more detail at subsequent meetings.
- E. Director Cosby reported on Parks maintenance projects. The Board and Staff discussed a recent increase in graffiti around town and what is being done to mitigate the problem.
- F. Director Cosby gave a report on the CHIP-in event at Ocean View Cemetery.
- G. Director Cosby reported on special projects. Volunteers for Run on the River are being asked to sign up online and show up for the event at 8:00 am. So far, 370 people have signed up to volunteer. The run, which raises money for scholarships, begins at 9:00 am. Volunteers will receive a shirt and lunch.
- H. Director Cosby presented the Lil Sprouts/Port of Play report.
- I. Director Cosby gave the Recreation Center, Programs, Fitness, and Athletics report.
- J. Director Cosby reported on the Aquatic Center.

Upcoming Events

- 1. Director Cosby updated the Board on upcoming events. Ms. Schleif noted some of the dates listed in the agenda packet were incorrect.

Non-Agenda/Miscellaneous Business

- 1. Director Cosby updated the Board on the sea lion barrier and traffic issues near Buoy Beer. Staff plans to install dead end signs to prevent drivers from driving on the Riverwalk.

Next meeting will be held Wednesday, June 24, 2015 at 6:45am at the Astoria Recreation Center.