

## **Parks Advisory Board Meeting Minutes January 23, 2019**

Chairperson Norma Hernandez called meeting to order at 6:46 am.

Present- Norma Hernandez, Jessica Schleif, Andrew Fick, Jim Holen, Eric Halverson, Michele Tompkins, Carla Oja, and Josh Saranpaa.

Absent- Howard Rub and Natalie Osburn

Staff Present- Tim Williams, Jonah Dart-McLean, Brianna Bowker and Matt Moritz.

New Parks and Recreation Director Tim Williams and new Parks Board members Carla Oja and Josh Saranpaa introduced themselves, noting their personal and professional backgrounds.

### **Public comments**

1. There were none.

### **Approval of Minutes**

- A. December minutes were unanimously approved as presented.

### **President Hernandez**

- B. What do you hear- Josh Saranpaa said it was nice to work with Mr. Dart-McLean when things came up. Michele Tompkins thanked Mr. Dart-McLean for taking her comments on the downed trees on the Column Trail while he was on leave. Chair Hernandez heard people were excited that Ms. Schleif would continue her work at Tidal Rock Park. Jessica Schleif heard a lot of feedback about the Riverwalk.

### **Employee and Volunteer Recognition**

- A. Director Williams and Brianna Bowker recognized Sherry Lions as the January Employee of the Month.
- B. Director Williams, Mr. Dart-McLean, and Quinton Bauer recognized Ed Wegner as January Park Partner of the month, who had also been awarded SOLVE's Volunteer of the Year award for 2018.  
Quinton Bauer shared information about SOLVE and their upcoming events.

### **Old Business**

- A. Jim Holen provided a brief overview of the Parks Foundation for the new members and guests. He noted upcoming events and fundraisers, and said the Foundation was working on their annual program review and goals for the year.  
Josh Saranpaa said he appreciated what the Foundation was doing for Coast Guard families. He believed their efforts inspired the Lil Sprouts' food drive.  
Andrew Fick added that the Astoria Co-op started allowing customers to round up their grocery bills to donate to animal assistance. He asked if the Foundation would look into other retailers that take donations through round ups. Chair Hernandez asked Mr. Holen to follow up with the foundation on a round up campaign.

Jim Holen noted that \$7,000 had been raised for a dog park. Since no land could be found for the park, half of the funds would go to support the Warrenton dog park and the other half would go to the animal shelter.

- B. Jonah Dart-McLean provided a brief update on Staff's efforts to implement the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The work was not substantial at the moment since there were so many staffing changes going on and budget season had begun.
- C. Director Williams updated the Board on recent and upcoming staffing changes, and introduced the new Grounds Coordinator Matt Moritz.
- D. Jonah Dart-McLean gave an update on the Astoria Scandinavian Heritage Association Monument. City Council accepted Mo's donation of two parking spots. Staff had a meeting scheduled with the Association to get an update on how the work was going and would provide the Board with more details at their next meeting.

### **New Business**

- A. Jessica Schleif presented the request to renew the memorandum of agreement (MOA) for Tidal Rock Park. She shared details about the grant that funded the work done under the original agreement. She recently spoke at the National Parks Nature Matters series held at Fort George, where she received a stipend and some donations that would serve as seed money for continuing the work at the park. She also solicited volunteers at the event. Board members shared comments about how much they appreciated her work at Tidal Rock.

The Parks Board unanimously approved the renewal of the MOA for Tidal Rock Park.

- B. Director Williams and Mr. Dart-McLean updated the Board on the expansion of the Maritime Memorial wall, which should be complete by Memorial Day for the annual ceremony. The expansion was being funded by the Maritime Memorial Fund. Staff answered questions about the need for the expansion, work done to date, and the location of the new portion of the wall.

Jessica Schleif noted that she had the original negatives of the cement relief tiles that line the memorial.

Chair Hernandez explained to the new members the role of the Parks Board and how it interacted with City Council and other boards and commissions. Director Williams added that he served as the Board's advocate with the City Manager and City Council.

- C. Director Williams shared details about the MOA with Astoria Scuba and Adventure Sports, allowing both groups to use tempered glass diving masks in the pool at the Aquatic Center. City Council unanimously approved the MOA, and he hoped to change the City's ordinance to allow tempered glass outright. He answered questions about the ordinance prohibiting glass in the pool, noting that amending the language to allow tempered glass would allow the Aquatic Center to bring in more revenue. He and Chair Hernandez explained why he was not able to present this MOA to the Board before the City Council meeting. Under normal circumstances, the MOA would have been reviewed first by the Parks Board so the Board could forward a recommendation to City Council.

The Board and Staff shared comments about issues related to the Board's role as an advisory board, their lack of authority, inability to provide input before decisions are made, and the desire of the Board to be updated and informed about what was going on in the Parks Department. Director Williams described his plans to increase communication between the

Board and Staff. He encouraged Board members to offer suggestions for process improvements.

### **Staff Reports and Upcoming Events**

The following reports were presented to the Board as part of the agenda packet:

- A. Maintenance
- B. Aquatic Center
- C. Recreation
- D. Lil Sprouts/Port of Play
- E. Communications/Marketing

Jessica Schleif requested the Staff reports explain increases and decreased in revenue. [Carla Oja](#) requested the public school's teacher work days be added to the calendar.

### **Future Meetings**

- February 22, 2019 at 6:45 am in City Hall, Council Chambers

### **Non-Agenda/Miscellaneous Business**

1. Director Williams confirmed for the Board that recruiting temporary summer employees would begin within the next three to four weeks.
2. Chair Hernandez welcomed the new Staff and Board members and said she was excited to have new thoughts and inputs.