

Parks Advisory Board Meeting Minutes June 24, 2015

Chairperson Norma Hernandez called meeting to order at 6:48 am.

Present- Norma Hernandez, Jessica Schleif, Howard Rub, Tammy Loughran, Eric Halverson, Peter O'Farrell, Drew Herzig, and Jim Holen

Absent- Joe Miltengerger, Grace Laman and Andrew Fick

Guests- Marie Laibinis

Staff- Angela Cosby and Janice O'Malley-Galizio

Approval of Minutes

A. May minutes were unanimously approved.

Public comments

1. Pamela Metz Macdonald, 801 Alameda Avenue, Astoria, said the Maritime Park was in total disarray before Memorial Day weekend. As a former Merchant Marine, she has a personal interest in the park. Astoria has a huge maritime community that depends on the memorial for recognition of those who have died and have plaques on the memorial. She cleaned for five hours and barely made a dent in the mess. A huge pile was left in the parking lot at the end of the red building. She called Parks and Recreation but the pile was never picked up. She went to City Hall and asked City Manager Brett Estes to have the pile picked up and have the memorial taken care of before Memorial Day. Many people in Astoria make their money from the maritime industry and she would appreciate if the City could do something about the Maritime Park. She confirmed for Director Cosby that she was most concerned with the vegetation on the side of the park. She weeded along the pathway and trimmed the rhododendrons. The lawn and trees also needed care.

President Hernandez

- A. What do you hear- President Hernandez heard that the OK was a great event. Peter O'Farrell heard that people thought the OK was a great idea once they understood the concept. Janice O'Malley-Galizio said the event required only a limited effort by Staff and she believed it would be a successful annual fundraiser. However, Staff could use some help getting the word out about the event. President Hernandez suggested the event be scheduled for a different weekend next year because many parents had scheduling conflicts with all of the dance recitals that were held the same weekend.

Drew Herzig said people are starting to realize that the communications tower will be built in Shively Park and they would like more details. Director Cosby explained this was presented to the Parks Board in January. The tower will be a monopole located on the southwest slope of the park. City Council will review the request in July or August. The Board and Staff briefly discussed the need for the tower and possible opposition from the community.

Jessica Schleif heard from someone that the Board was much more active with the last Column restoration in 1995. Director Cosby believed the entire City was less involved with this restoration, partly because the project was just presented to the City in mid-winter, so, the City is trying to catch up.

Employee Recognition

- A. Director Cosby recognized Janice O'Malley-Galizio as the employee of the month, noting that she would only be working for the City for another week and a half. President Hernandez thanked Ms. O'Malley-Galizio for her service. Ms. O'Malley-Galizio said she would miss her co-workers.

Old Business

- A. Tammy Loughran gave an update on the Parks Foundation. The OK made about \$2,000. Upcoming events include Capture the Flag and another movie night.
- B. Director Cosby and Marie Laibinis gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Astoria Column restoration, which included a history of the Column's previous restoration projects, results of structural research, conservation efforts on the artistic elements, details of the current restoration project, and recommended future maintenance. Progress reports will be given to the City as the project continues and restoration work should be complete by September. The Board and Staff briefly discussed how the necessary work would affect the timeline and possible closure of the Column.

New Business

- A. Director Cosby announced that the City had been selected to receive an AmeriCorps Rare position starting in September, which will allow the City to complete the full Parks Master Plan. She updated on the process involved for filling the position.
- B. Director Cosby gave an update of the Herbicide Use Policy and Practices. Amendments to the current draft are being made as Staff and the task force consider how the policy will affect other community groups that help maintain the parks.
- C. The Board and Staff discussed the possible addition of a Coast Guard representative on the Board, the Coast Guard's involvement in the community, their use of parks amenities and involvement in park events, and how the community and City would benefit from a more official relationship between the Parks Department and the Coast Guard. The Board directed Staff to work with the Coast Guard and the Mayor on the appointment of a Coast Guard member to the Parks Board.
- D. The Board discussed the possibility of changing meeting times. Drew Herzig said some members of the community believed the meetings were deliberately scheduled at an inconvenient time to discourage public attendance. The Board discussed how to communicate to the public that this was not the case and agreed no changes should be made.
- E. Director Cosby discussed vending in parks, noting that Staff received a request from a food vendor to sell at a specific park. Past requests for vending along the Riverwalk were denied. The Board discussed the pros of cons of allowing vendors and agreed the topic should be explored as part of the Parks Master Plan.
- F. Director Cosby gave an overview of the annual department budget, noting that in subsequent months, more specific details of the budget would be reviewed.
- G. Director Cosby presented the Board with the maintenance projects report.
- H. Director Cosby presented the Board with the CHIP-In program report.
- I. Director Cosby presented the Board with the special projects report.
- J. Director Cosby presented the Lil Sprouts/Port of Play report, noting that they hosted an art show fundraiser for scholarship funds.
- K. Director Cosby gave the Recreation Center, Programs, Fitness, and Athletics report. She discussed the lack of complaints and the increased number of compliments Staff has received from the community this year.

- L. Director Cosby presented the Board with the Aquatic Center report, noting Staff excelled during their most recent audit.

Upcoming Events

1. Director Cosby presented the Board with a list of upcoming events.
2. President Hernandez invited the Board members to participate in Capture the Flag. Board participation in Parks events would demonstrate to the community that the Board is committed to the Parks Department. Director Cosby listed the various ways Board members could participate in the event.
3. Drew Herzig asked if the Cathedral Trail clean up would be hazardous. Director Cosby said able-bodied people would work on the steep portion of the trail. Improvements will also be made at the top and bottom of the trail. Maintenance and Trail Staff will be assisting with the clean up, but more volunteers are needed.

Non-Agenda/Miscellaneous Business

1. Jessica Schleif said Matt Baum, Jonah Dart-McLean, and Director Cosby supported the community garden by doing special projects. She listed some of the donations made by various members of the community and described some of the projects at the garden.
2. President Hernandez reminded Board members to send notices of planned absences via email.

Next meeting will be held Wednesday, July 22, 2015 at 6:45am at the Astoria Recreation Center.