

**Northern Wasco County Parks and Recreation District**

**Board Meeting Minutes**

**October 18, 2023**

**602 W. 2nd Street, The Dalles, OR 97058**

Annette Byers called the meeting to order at 5:32 pm.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Brewster Whitmire, Annette Byers, Rachel Carter, Kacey McCullough.

**BOARD MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Marcus Swift.

**STAFF PRESENT:** Scott Baker, Todd Wheeler, Kailynn Elliott.

**STAFF EXCUSED:** None.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** District Council, Andrew Myers.

**GUEST PRESENT:** None.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Annette Byers asked if there were any changes to the agenda. Rachel Carter made a motion to approve the agenda as is. Kacey McCullough seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Annette Byers called for a motion to approve the September 20th minutes. Brewster Whitmire made a motion to approve the September 20th minutes. Rachel Carter seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**ORAL COMMUNICATION FROM THE AUDIENCE:**

None.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

The Lion’s Club Donation Request – The Lion’s Club has requested that the Parks District waive or donate back the money invoiced for the recent Car Show. In the past, the Rotary Club has run the car show and we did not charge a reservation fee for the event, we only charged for the hours of labor from staff in preparation for the event ($25/hour). This year, that labor was 22.5 hours and came to $560.00. The Lion’s Club is a big supporter of and donor to Parks and Recreation. Annette Byers asks for a motion to waive the fee for the Lions Club. Kacey McCullough makes a motion to accept the donation request for the fee to be waived. Rachel Carter seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**FINANCIAL REPORT:**

The District budgeted to have starting cash of $981,623 but started in a better position at $1,277,816. However this includes money donated towards Sorosis. November/December is when the District will see the tax collection start to come in. Most transient room tax has come in for the summer season and staff anticipates seeing that pick back up again in Spring 2024. Staff will be reviewing the end-of-season Aquatic revenue later in the meeting. Admin is on track, for example, in workman's comp, the District has saved $23k because carriers switched from SDIS to Saif and the District had a reduction in the experience modifier. In Parks, everything is on track. The Parks Department was able to meet its goal of aerating and fertilizing all the parks this year. Recreation will be discussed later in the meeting. SDC Fund currently has a balance of $161k. The Skatepark/Pumptrack grant is a reimbursement grant meaning SDC funds will be reimbursed after the project is complete. The Bond payment is coming up on December 15th.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT:**

There have been some recent developments since the Directors report went out. District staff met with County staff at Kramer Field to do an in-depth walkthrough. County staff has reached out to the Mayor and City Manager to request a portion or some amount of the transient room tax that comes to the Park District. County staff also expressed that there was a feeling that the Parks District undercharged Kramer Field users and felt that it should be a money-making opportunity and that we didn’t run it the way it should be run. Historically the Parks District would charge $5 per player, which was significantly under average, however, it was noted by the insurance companies that it opens up the District to liability by giving up the protections of the recreational immunity laws, they recommended not charging for field use, or raising the amount to be worth the risk. Active RX was successful. The District was able to secure the $40,000 scholarship funding for swim passes and swimming lessons for summer 2024.

**COMMITTEE REPORT:**

None.

**URBAN RENEWAL REPORT:**

Scott attended the Urban Renewal meeting last night. Brewster Whitmire makes a motion to appoint Marcus Swift to the Urban Renewal Board as representative of the Parks District. Kacey McCullough seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

None.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Aquatic Center 2023 Season Summary – Season Pass sales were down a bit this year. Daily Admissions were up, most likely due to the price increases. Pool Rentals were strong this year. Swim lessons were good this year compared to the past few years. All swim lessons were sold out. Depending on staffing next year, there is room to expand swim lesson hours. Room for improvement on concessions for next year. This year we scaled back the options to quick pre-packaged foods and went from 2 concession workers at a time to 1. It is felt by staff that there are some more efficiencies to be made next year so the intent is to implement those changes. Personnel costs were up significantly due to the wage increases to be a competitive employer.
2. Skatepark Lights & Landscaping – Brewster Whitmire makes a motion to direct staff to enter contracts with qualified electricians and landscaping contractors to complete the skatepark/pump track project. This includes authorization to spend system development charges and general funds up to $100,000. Rachel Carter seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
3. Park Rules Update Draft – Todd worked on a draft of new park rules that updates our current rules but also expands beyond the ORS reference and explains the rule. The board is presented with a draft of the updated rules along with the current rules in place to review and get feedback to be discussed at a future meeting.
4. Recreation Programming – The District has been unsuccessful at securing a qualified Recreational Manager. Scott presented for consideration trying to create new opportunities that the District focus on bettering and expanding the groups and programs that already exist and have been successful. Offering training opportunities and services for coaches, background checks, bringing in trainers from out of the area to run clinics, and using the rest of the funds to do scholarships. A few board members feel that taking the position full-time would increase the chances of getting a qualified applicant, others felt that they didn’t want to dedicate any more money to it. Hiring another full-time employee was not budgeted for in FY2023-2024. There is also a need to start establishing a Capital Repairs Fund for repairs that we see coming up soon.
5. Adventist Health Columbia Gorge MOU – AHCG has generously agreed to donate $50,000 over three years to the rehabilitation of the Sorosis Park walking path. They asked us to draft an MOU to memorialize the agreement and clarify how their donation would be publicized. Rachel Carter makes a motion to direct staff to enter into an agreement to receive Adventist Health Columbia Gorge’s donation of $50,000 over three years or in three installments. Kacey McCullough seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
6. Dave Neitling Recognition – Dave was a valued volunteer and community member. He donated thousands of hours and dollars to repair cracks on the Riverfront Trail over the course of a decade. He passed away on October 6th. Kacey McCullough makes a motion to direct staff to place a memorial bench in Dave Neitling’s honor on the Riverfront Trail. Rachel Carter seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**NEXT MEETING DATE:**

November 15th, 2023

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS REMARKS:**

Brewster Whitmire – Will be reaching out to the rest of the board in regard to Scott’s review coming up.

Rachel Carter – Wants to thank everyone who came and participated in the clean-up.

**FOLLOW UP ITEMS:**

* TreeTop Structure Options
* Engage in contract with Electrician for Skatepark Lighting

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Annette Byers adjourned the meeting at 7:31 pm.

Attested to:

Board Chair Board Secretary