

## **PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES**

**September 16, 2014**

The meeting was called to order by: Carrie Milroy, at 7:00 p.m.

**Members Present:** J.R. Rausch, Carrie Milroy, Bob Berbee, Emma Romine-excused, Betty Brewer, Larry Amrine-excused.

**Others Present:** Michael Andrako, Brodie Rockenbaugh, Steve Prothero, Julie Jones, Dixie Bowen

**Approval of Minutes:** The minutes from August 25, 2014 were approved as submitted. J.R. Rausch made a motion to approve the minutes as written, Mr. Berbee seconded. Ms. Milroy stated accepted.

**Report of Public Service Director:** Parks and Grounds Superintendent Brodie Rockenbaugh reported:

The tree at Eljer Park has been cut and removed from the site. The roof at McCarthy Park has been cleaned, the Maple trees have been removed, and Oak tree limbs that were on the roof have also been removed to allow adequate air flow. The graffiti under the bridge will need to be repainted and resurfaced. The post on the west side of the bridge will be replaced. If we can't find a bracket that will work, we will fill it in and place a spring bollard to restrict traffic flow with the exception of emergency vehicles.

We put a lot of our effort into Oakdale Cemetery last week and made great strides. Mowing continues to be addressed. Many of our athletic fields were fertilized when it was hot and then with all of the rain we have had to mow twice a week.

Hazardous Ash tree was removed from the Jim Simmons trail. We have received concerns from Jim Simmons trail users regarding the hornets' nests. These nests are located off of the trail, are not hazardous and do not pose a risk to trail users.

We met with the Master Gardeners last week and reviewed some of the walk about items at McCloud Park. The railroad ties along the east edge of Fifth Street was one of the items and we will work on removing those.

We had a site meeting at Aldersgate Park. We will have a community volunteer day in which we will clean the tree house up and also taking care of a few maintenance issues.

**Recreation:** Public Service Director Mike Andrako reported:

The Covered Bridge Festival will be held on September 19-21<sup>st</sup>.

Amanda is working on an Ad Hoc Committee to review Chapter 110 of the City Code which has to do with fees. We are looking to see if we need to make any revisions.

The Annual Dog Swim was well attended on September 2<sup>nd</sup>. There was an increase in attendance from last year.

### **Commissioner's Reports on Individual Parks:**

#### **Mill Valley Central:**

Mr. Rausch said the grounds look great and the park was in full use with soccer and football players when he visited last night.

#### **Mill Valley South:**

The urinal and hand dryer are on order. Mr. Rockenbaugh stated that the sensor on the urinal will need to be replaced not the entire urinal.

#### **Eljer Park:**

Ms. Milroy asked if the skate rail is in. Mr. Rockenbaugh stated that the rail was anchored today. He spoke to skaters this afternoon and they were very appreciative. Ms. Milroy said she knows they appreciate it. She asked if a curved rail was ordered. Mr. Rockenbaugh replied no, but we are looking at cost and will provide an update at the next meeting.

Ms. Milroy asked Mr. Andrako about paving at the skate park. Mr. Andrako said we received an astronomical price from the contractor, so it didn't make sense to complete the paving project this year. Ms. Milroy asked do we need to look at placing this in the budget for next year because my concern now is that it won't take place until August of next year. Mr. Andrako said eventually, we would like to move the features at the skate park before paving it. It doesn't need to be paved; it's just the thought that if we don't need to move these features again, maybe paving does make sense.

Ms. Milroy commented that we do need to get them moved because of drainage issues; getting figures and seeing where we are makes sense. Mr. Andrako agreed that the features should be moved now and pave in a couple of years.

Ms. Milroy asked if there are any plans to replace the dead trees that were removed. Mr. Rockenbaugh stated that two memorial trees are currently scheduled to be planted. The ones removed by the soccer fields, may be replaced with plants or trees. He will check with City Arborist Chad Morse.

Ms. Milroy stated that the rear portion of the net on the batting cage is off again. Mr. Rockenbaugh stated that it's a consistent problem and he will reinforce the net to correct the problem.

#### **McCarthy Park:**

Ms. Milroy said there are still concerns with the steps that lead to the playground. Do we need to add that to the budget? Mr. Rockenbaugh recommended removing the stairs due to lack of functionality. He will get quotes and look into possibly contracting the job out. Ms. Milroy agreed and stated that they are a safety hazard.

Ms. Milroy mentioned the concrete near the restroom that never settled and needs to be addressed. Mr. Rockenbaugh said he will take a closer look at the concrete.

Ms. Milroy commented that overall the parks look great and it's nice to see everyone in them.

**Lewis Park:**

Ms. Brewer stated that Lewis Park is looking fine. Ms. Brewer asked if the three trees that look like they are dying are Ash trees (located at the North end of the park). Mr. Rockenbaugh stated he would take a look and report back.

Ms. Brewer asked if the gravel near the blacktop will solidify when wet. She said that it seems steep. Mr. Andrako responded that it's the new paving with gravel berm that took place earlier in the week. Mr. Rockenbaugh stated that it will settle a bit. Mr. Andrako mentioned that the reason for using gravel rather than topsoil is due to safety precautions; eventually grass will grow through it. Mr. Rockenbaugh said it would be who of us to go ahead and add soil to it to create a better transition between the asphalt and berm area.

Ms. Brewer stated that a honeysuckle tree is growing over a 1947 monument on the South end. Mr. Rockenbaugh will stop by and see what he finds.

**McCloud Park:**

Ms. Brewer said there are several tree branches hanging over the shelters that are wearing on the shingles. Also, the flag is missing. Mr. Rockenbaugh stated that the rope snapped on him when he was raising the flag after Patriot Day. The rope will be repaired.

**Schwartzkoph Park:**

Mr. Berbee asked for an update on the slabs where the horseshoe pits used to be located. He asked if the slabs would be removed. Mr. Andrako said they would not be removed and there will likely be future corn hole leagues, much like the co-rec sand volleyball leagues.

**Mill Creek:**

Mr. Berbee said that Mill Creek Park looks good. He said there are trees that appear to be ash trees between the ball fields and asked if they will be removed. Mr. Rockenbaugh said he has been watching them for several years (as a citizen) and they have been slowly declining. They will need to be removed and replaced due to the significant loss of canopy. The trees provide a good amount of shade and replacing them will be a priority.

Mr. Berbee asked if there are any updates on the swing set replacement. Mr. Andrako said that he's meeting with the rep. from the company that provided the play structure at American Legion on September 18, 2014 and he will ask her for a proposal at that time.

**Citizens Comments Non-Agenda Items:**

Julie Jones, Master Gardener Volunteer/Intern stated that she wanted to come and discuss the Memorial Tree (located at McCloud Park) that has died and how to deal with removing it and notifying the family. They are not sure if any family members are still located in the community. Brodie Rockenbaugh is researching this.

Ms. Milroy asked Ms. Jones to describe the Master Gardener's program. Ms. Jones stated there are different projects in the Master Gardeners program that interns and active members are required to volunteer a certain amount of hours per project/ per year. We are trying to add some enthusiasm into the program and create community outreach. Regarding McCloud Park, they would like to do some brainstorming as to how to get the community to the park.

Ms. Milroy asked what other projects Master Gardeners are involved in. Ms. Jones replied Adopt-a-Pot and a vegetable garden program at CYOC. Mr. Andrako stated the City provided compost for this program. Ms. Milroy stated that she appreciates what Master Gardeners are doing at McCloud Park.

Steve Prothero stated that he will be volunteering at Aldersgate Park this weekend. He posted information on the Next Door website regarding this event. He has heard back from several people that plan on volunteering. He hopes to hear from a local Boy Scout troop to see if they can volunteer as well. Ms. Milroy asked are you mainly focusing on the tree house at the park. Mr. Prothero stated that the focus would be on the tree house as well as placing mulch and pulling up old railroad ties and cleaning the area; just spruce it up.

Mr. Prothero said that he moved in the area a year ago and his two sons loved to play there. It seems that this year, there hasn't been much activity. He loves the City and decided to step up and volunteer to clean up the park. Ms. Milroy thanked Mr. Prothero for his efforts and said we will try to get more maintenance at the park moving forward.

Mr. Prothero asked if the City has an ice skating rink during the winter. Mr. Rausch replied that the City used to have an outside rink at Schwartzkoph Park near Mill Creek. We haven't had the winters (until this past year) where we would have had the weather appropriate for an ice rink.

**Old Business:** None

**Agenda Items:**

**Dog Park Update:**

Mr. Andrako handed out an updated Dog Park map (see attached). Mr. Andrako stated that the active dog (large dogs) area is 4 acres and the less active (small dogs) area is 1 acre. He is very comfortable with this plan and the design; it will be usable and appropriate. The yellow line on the plan is an existing fence that will be re-used. The red line is a "farm fence" which is round posts driven so many feet apart with a wire mesh that's strung between the posts. This is the same type of fencing that metro parks use. It will match the landscape much better than a chain-link fence would. The green is the entry feature of ornamental fencing. It looks like the fence will approximately cost \$30,000.00. Mr. Andrako stated that he feels comfortable with the \$85,000.00 budget since the majority of the cost is fencing at \$30,000.00 and the path. Staff will be able to complete some work "in house" such as the walking path (with the exception of paving). There will be a few amenities added to the cost such as a drinking fountain, benches and a kiosk. He hopes to get some sponsorships. The purple line on the map is the walking path. Ms. Milroy asked if the paving would be complete next summer. Mr. Andrako said he plans for it to be complete in the spring; we won't piggy back on the paving program. Mr. Berbee asked if the asphalt path will be eight foot wide. Mr. Andrako stated yes.

Ms. Milroy asked if dogs must be approved/registered to use the park. Mr. Andrako said no. Every park he has been to, park goes police the park and has rules posted such as owners cleaning up after their dogs and dogs should be spayed or neutered. We will have phone numbers posted at the park for people to call (police after hours and the parks division during business hours). Mr. Andrako will compare the rules of other parks and get feedback from other municipalities

Mr. Rausch said previously staffing the park was brought up. He recalls Mr. Aslaner mentioning that if we did, the City assumes liability/responsibility. Mr. Andrako said every park he has visited, was not staffed. Mr. Andrako also said that with the park being located near the Maintenance Operations Center, we will likely have a parks and grounds employee visit the park a few times a day.

Mr. Andrako stated he's creating a list of individuals who want to be involved with the park plans. He would like input from people such as what type of water features, how many benches and where should they be located. He said that if anyone is interested in providing input to please email him.

Mr. Rausch asked Mr. Andrako when he plans on seeding. Mr. Andrako said late fall. He said there won't be a lot to seed and only a minimal amount of grading.

Ms. Milroy asked if Mr. Andrako spoke to Council about the Dog Park and the revised plan. Mr. Andrako said he gave a presentation to Council and explained the revisions. Mr. Rausch stated that both Finance Committee and Council has approved the park modifications.

#### **Assignment of Parks:**

Ms. Milroy said she believes rotating parks among commission members is a good idea. She suggested rotating the parks every three to four months. Mr. Berbee likes the idea of

rotating the parks. He asked should we wait until we have a full board present. Ms. Milroy suggested waiting until January to set up the rotation schedule. At that time, they may want to consider adding the Dog Park and Partners Park to the list.

**Comments of Citizens: N/A**

**Comments of Individual Commissioners:**

Mr. Berbee said that looking at the 5 Year Capital Plan, he recalls talking about the dugout shelters at Mill Creek Park. Can we look at placing inexpensive covers over the benches, not that the trees will be gone? Mr. Andrako asked if it's the same line item. Mr. Berbee stated no; dugout shelters are new and the swing set at Schwartzkopf is new as well. Mr. Andrako said yes we can look into doing something at the dugout shelters and the swing set. Mr. Rockenbaugh said that providing shade is important especially from a safety aspect. He has considered approaching businesses for sponsorships/donations for materials to build/repair shelters at Eljer Park.

**Adjournment:**

There being no further business to come before the Parks & Recreation Commission, the meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.