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**COOS BAY
PARKS COMMISSION MINUTES
FEBRUARY 18, 2021**

The minutes of the proceedings of a regular meeting of the Parks Commission of the City of Coos Bay, Coos County, Oregon, held at 4:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 500 Central Avenue, Coos Bay, Oregon.

Roll Call

Those present were City Staff, Randy Dixon, Operations Administrator; Kelli Burnette; Commissioners CoCo Sutton, Bill Davis, and Bill Otton. Attending remotely by teleconference were Commissioners Ariann Lyons and Sam Crawley. Also present, attending in person, was Henry Delaney from NW Fitness.

Approval of the January 21, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Chair Lyons called for a motion to approve the Minutes.

Commissioner Davis moved and Commissioner Crawley seconded the motion to approve the January 21, 2021, minutes as presented. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Citizen Input

Henry Delaney, NW Fitness came forward to address the Commission in follow up to the January 21, 2021, Parks Commission Meeting at which he presented a proposal to the Commission for the City to enter into a joint private/public partnership with Northwest Fitness to provide a full-size baseball field at Mingus Park in exchange for a contract to facilitate activities and maintain the grounds. Mr. Delaney stated he wanted to follow up on a few comments that were made after he left that meeting.

Mr. Delaney stated one of the first things they looked at was what it would look like in terms of access if the property was maintained by a private entity and what it looks like in terms of the master plan. Mr. Delaney stated he took the time to read through the master plan and understands there is not a definitive plan for a ballfield site at this time. Mr. Delaney stated in the evaluations of the city's availabilities in the master plan it listed two full-size public fields that there is access to – Southwestern Oregon Community College and Marshfield High School and that there are no other full-size ballfields in Coos Bay. Mr. Delaney commented that while those two locations are listed as resources and facilities that are available as public parks they are not public parks. Mr. Delaney stated for him to use the SOCC ballfield to host any event, it would cost him \$50 an hour, which is far from public use, and the Marshfield ballfields are substantially more and they are not even available. Mr. Delaney stated NW Fitness has a relationship with both of those facilities, so that is not the issue it's that they can't even get access to host an event there.

Mr. Delaney further stated the availability of parks has changed dramatically with the addition of the new little league ballfields which he believes will add nine little league fields as early as June. Mr. Delaney stated they already have fencing, everything's been cleared, they've planted grass, and access to softball size and little league fields will more than double, which again goes to the need for a full-size field in this area. Mr. Delaney stated that if NW Fitness were to manage the Mingus Park field it would be in their best interest to create a modular based path that would allow them to accommodate little league fields or a multi-purpose space.

43 Mr. Delaney stated the Mingus Park Ballfield is not strictly in a residential area, public events are
44 held at the park all the time, there is a public pool, and the location is one block away from what
45 is designated a highway. Mr. Delaney stated he does not feel this neighborhood can be exclusively
46 labeled residential – it is a park that is a buffer for the industrial and residential zoning.

47 Mr. Delaney stated they want to host little league, softball and other events. Mr. Delaney stated
48 the more events they can host, the more opportunities they can give folks, the better. Mr. Delaney
49 stated the way they would recoup their costs would be passed along the people utilizing the field,
50 they do not want to charge people to come watch the events, and they want local residents to come
51 and participate as a recreational activity. Mr. Delaney also stated they do not want to do
52 concessions, it's not to their interests, is not something they want to manage, but would rather
53 sublet it to one of the 15 food trucks in Coos Bay trying to make a living, which is something he
54 actually spoke to Debbie about, i.e., what would it look like to close down a street once every week
55 and host food trucks.

56 Mr. Delaney stated he researched the Medford Parks Department and the contract they have with
57 the Medford Baseball Club to manage the facilities for the city of Medford and it is zero dollars
58 for a ten-year annum, with a ten-year renewal for 100 years. Mr. Delaney stated this is because
59 they bring people into town and the baseball club is obligated to a certain number of events they
60 must host every year. Mr. Delaney stated they operate and maintain the facility and pay the city
61 nothing, and the city grants them up to a quarter million dollars a year for improvements to be
62 made and still be under the private contract to facilitate the activities. Mr. Delaney further stated
63 in Bend, the baseball club pays \$1 per year on a 10-year annum.

64 Mr. Delaney stated they're trying to give assets to the City on a 20-year term and then bring in up
65 to \$2 million per year to the surrounding businesses and residents to create atmosphere, industry
66 and tourism at no cost to the city.

67 Mr. Delaney further stated he would like to continue the dialog about his proposal and if they are
68 not able to renovate the Mingus Park Ballfield, he will build a stadium somewhere, they want to
69 make it work, and he is a big believer in the power of baseball to bring communities together. Mr.
70 Delaney stated he wants to be transparent, he is a business man, he is out to make money, he has
71 a love for this sport and community, which is not exclusive to him wanting to recover his
72 investments, and make sure he can pay bills. Mr. Delaney stated he believes he can pursue the
73 things that he loves, still provide for my family and create things for his community. Mr. Delaney
74 referenced their proposal and stated they would be willing to find a middle ground and mitigate
75 different factors, even if that comes down to just contracting dates, but he needs a facility that can
76 be booked out, before he can bring in 25 colliegent players every year to Coos Bay with two or
77 three that will have the potential to be professional baseball players that will come into our
78 community, leave here and make millions of dollars, and maybe come back here and invest those
79 dollars. Mr. Delaney stated millions of dollars can be put into this community by a very small
80 project and he feels the best way to do it is in a public/private partnership and make those changes
81 to a leased space.

82 Mr. Delaney thanked the Commission for their time and invited them to contact him with any
83 questions.

84 Chair Lyons thanked Mr. Delaney for providing the additional information and stated she looks
85 for to reviewing and discussing the proposal further.

86 **Mingus Park Skate Park – Requests to Allow Bikes and Scooters**

87 Staff Member Dixon reported that he has received numerous requests to allow bikes and scooters
88 at the Mingus Park Skateboard Park and that he wanted to get input from the Commission as to
89 whether or not they want to allow bikes and scooters or leave the rules and regulations as they are
90 which only allows skateboards. Staff Member Dixon stated our master plan does mention the need
91 for a BMX track and there are locations one could be developed, specifically in the same location
92 as the sports complex that is currently being discussed.

93 Staff and the Commission discussed damage caused by bikes and scooters, recent volunteer work
94 completed at the skatepark to repair damages done by bikes and scooters, the fact it was designed
95 for skateboards only, and the obvious need for a BMX track in the City.

96 Staff and the Commission discussed the fact that the current master plan does call for a BMX track,
97 which could be part of the sports complex development the Commission is currently discussing,
98 and that the existing skateboard park should remain for skateboards only.

99 Commissioner Otton stated he concurs with Staff and that from past experience there's only one
100 park he can think of that tried a multiuse skateboard park and that was Grants Pass and it didn't go
101 well. Commissioner Otton further stated that when the Commission was first looking into the
102 skateboard park, every other multiuse park they spoke to was adamant about the park being for
103 skateboards only. Commissioner Otton stated he believes the Mingus Park Skateboard Park should
104 remain 100% skateboards only.

105 Staff and the Commission discussed including the BMX track as part of the new sports complex
106 could be easier to design and wouldn't be a huge cost factor.

107 A discussion commenced regarding the fact that most kids/people follow the no bike/scooter rules,
108 but some do not. Staff Member Dixon acknowledged the volunteer who does the repairs and
109 upkeep and stated he can't continue to repair things that people tear up where it's not suitable to
110 be in. Staff Member Dixon stated there is a need for a bike track, that he has spoken to 10 families
111 on the phone recently that would be very supportive, and he thinks it should be part of a
112 development plan of another facility, such as the ballfields the Commission is considering and
113 keep the current skateboard parks for skateboards only as the rules outline.

114 Chair Lyons asked if there were any other comments. There were none.

115 **Proposed Sport Complex Location Discussion**

116 Staff Member Dixon reported there has been discussion about the proposed sports complex
117 location being at Empire Lakes and there appears to be a large "pull" for it and that he has been
118 asked to look into that possibility. Staff Member Dixon also reported there is a possibility the
119 National Guard will be vacating their facility in Empire and if that is true it is possible they would
120 offer that property to the local municipality. Staff Member Dixon commented that would be a
121 prime location for a building and facility for our parks, not only a sports complex, but maybe a
122 dog park and/or bike track. Staff Member Dixon commented there could be a lot of potential there
123 and if the City already owns the property and there is a LWCF grant, LWCF would look at the
124 property as match for the bigger picture and if the National Guard also donated their property to
125 the City it would solidify the grant moving forward on a much larger scale.

126 Chair Lyons stated that is interesting and exciting information and that anything that could increase
127 the use of Empire Lakes might help mitigate the other issues out there.

128 Staff Member Dixon stated he wanted the Commission to be aware that City Council might discuss
129 the possibility of the sports complex location being at Empire Lakes at the February 23rd work
130 session, along with the NW Fitness proposal.

131 **Commissioner Closing Comments**

132 Staff Member Dixon reported the SRTS project should be wrapping up next week, he will be
133 asking Rodger Craddock about hosting a ribbon cutting ceremony and will keep the Commission
134 informed.

135 Chair Lyons asked if the City will be doing an Arbor Day Activity. Staff Member Dixon stated
136 yes, we can do one this year wearing facemasks and adhering to social distancing. Staff Member
137 Dixon proposed incorporating the activity into the current 4th Street project which will have tree
138 wells opened up and ready for planting around Arbor Day which is April 30th. Staff further
139 commented we can work with the contractor and get some volunteers. Chair Lyons stated she
140 thinks that sounds great.

141 Chair Lyons asked if there were any additional comments.

142 Commissioner Sutton stated she really likes the Arbor Day activity idea and the idea of a multiuse
143 sports complex at Empire Lakes.

144 Commissioner Crawley stated everything discussed sounds good to him.

145 Chair Lyons stated she is excited there is so much renewed interest in our outdoor spaces/parks.

146 Staff Member Dixon asked how many Commissioners would be attending the February 23rd work
147 session with City Council. Four Commissioners reported they would be attending.

148 **Adjourn**

149 There being no further business to come before the Parks Commission, by consensus of the Parks
150 Commission, Chair Lyons adjourned the meeting at 4:31 p.m.

151 **APPROVED BY THE PARKS COMMISSION ON THE 18th DAY OF MARCH 2021.**

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Attest:


Kelli Burnette, Staff


dotloop verified
04/16/21 12:34 PM
PDT
RA62-30TR-DECG-FJE3

Ariann Lyons, Chair