

MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDING OF THE PARKS COMMISSION

APRIL 15, 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, Jim Hossley, Public Works and Community Development Director, and Kelli Burnette; Commissioners CoCo Sutton, Bill Davis, Carmen Matthews, and Sam Crawley. Attending remotely by teleconference were Commissioners Ariann Lyons, Patty Scott, and Bev Meyers. Also present, attending in person, were guests Tristen Reasor, Scott Cooper, Matthew Rhoat, Angelin M. Appel, Alex Gilbert, Daniel Hum, Rocco Appel-Brigham, Kale Borraz, Jaxon Jeffers, Ellaune Brigham, and Libbi Brigham.

Approval of the March 18, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Chair Lyons called for a motion to approve the Minutes.

Commissioner Davis moved and Commissioner Matthews seconded the motion to approve the March 18, 2021, minutes as presented. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Citizen Input (not related to agenda items)

There was none.

Coos Bay Skatepark – Discussion Re Allowing Bikes and Scooters

Libbi Brigham came forward providing information about her family's background in skateboarding and scooting and how often her family would frequent the skatepark to scooter. Ms. Brigham discussed the coping damage to the skatepark, the lack of maintenance to the park, the fact there is an ordinance sign hanging at the park listing the rules, and the fact the nobody has ever paid attention to it. Ms. Brigham discussed her experience with towns that only have one skatepark, the fact that they are for everybody to use, and do not exclude any type of activity. Ms. Brigham commented on how the city is growing, the need for the skatepark to expand to meet the growing needs and possibly having two parks – one for skateboards and one for scooters and BMX, or at least keeping the current skatepark maintained and opened to all types of users. Ms. Brigham commented on the lack of city funding, that she and others are more than happy to fundraise, and city staff would also like to see the park expand. Ms. Brigham commented that the original park was only built ¼ of the way, that the cement was poured wrong, which resulted in the going over budget and downsizing the park. Ms. Brigham provided history on how the Burnside Park in Portland was built by volunteers, without the permission of the city, and is now world famous. Ms. Brigham discussed how skateboarders have been treated in the past, that parks give them a place to go where they are not ridiculed and personal property is not damaged. Ms. Brigham stated she feels the park should be shared and if the issue is money, fundraisers can be done to help with expenses and she believes it is important to the city's commerce moving forward and stated she would bring statistics regarding the incline in the skateboarding industry to the next meeting.

Chair Lyons and Commissioner Matthews thanked Ms. Brigham for her presentation.

Chair Lyons asked all additional public comment be limited to 5 minutes or less per person due to time constraints and asked the next person to come forward.

Angela Nappel came forward thanking everyone for attending the meeting, explained that scooter and bike riders are hated just as much as skateboarders used to be, that her son hasn't been allowed to go in the skatepark, so she travels to take him to other parks in Reedsport or Roseburg. Ms. Nappel provided history regarding how the local skatepark was built, how skateboarders used to ride along streets and in parks where they were not acknowledged kindly by neighbors or police officers, and she feels the same thing is happening now to those riding bikes and scooters. Ms. Nappel further stated she has lived here for 11 years and that rule has never been enforced, discussed the impacts it has on her son as he is no longer able to scooter in the local park as he has been for so many years, that the city cannot choose when to enforce a rule and when not to, that this rule has not been enforced in over a decade, and that it is really impacting the kids who want to use the skatepark.

Chair Lyons asked the next speaker to come forward.

Tristen Reasor came forward and discussed his involvement with the Citizen's for Bay Area Youth and the building of the original skatepark. Mr. Reasor stated he agrees the city needs a facility to accommodate everybody and that he is the volunteer that came to the Commission last month introducing the non-profit skatepark association that has been formed. Mr. Reasor discussed the recent coping repairs he has made to the park to ensure the park remained opened and stated the park would likely still be closed due to the coping coming loose as a result of bikes using the park. Mr. Reasor explained the no bike and scooter rules were established because the skatepark was designed and built for skateboards. Mr. Reasor explained what the 'coping' is, that it is made out of a certain type of concrete that is extremely brittle and can be broken with a steel peg from a bike. Mr. Reasor further stated the reason the rules have not been enforced is because it was an agreement between the organization and the city that the users of the park would enforce the rules and that he personally voted for the rules to allow bikes and scooters at the time the rules were being established, but he was outvoted by the rest of the board. Mr. Reasor further discussed the current condition of the skatepark as whole, that there is 185 lineal feet of loose coping still needing to be replaced, which is a result of settling over the years, not the mixture of the concrete, that if the rest of the coping is not repaired and a bike hits it again it's going to break loose and the city will deem it unsafe and close the park. Mr. Reasor stated that is why he sits at the park every day and talks to people about the condition of the park, about the rules of the park, and asks them to follow the rules to try to keep the park open while the city builds a master plan. Mr. Reasor further stated he believes the rules should be kept in place, and that he would like to see the park expand to accommodate everyone. Mr. Reasor stated he estimates the cost of materials to repair the 185 lineal feet of loose coping to be \$4,460.00, that he is willing to volunteer his time to make the repairs, and that he is waiting to approach the city about the repairs until next budget year due to the lack of funding.

Commissioner Matthews advised there is a budget meeting tonight which is open to the public.

A discussion commenced regarding the numerous repairs needed to the park and Mr. Reasor explained his main concern is the repair of the coping in order to keep the park open.

A discussion commenced regarding whether or not the skatepark would open back up to everybody if the coping was repaired. It was noted a review board established the existing rules and that a review board will likely be required to change the rules in the future.

Mr. Reasor stated he recommends not changing the rules until the repairs are made and that he does support changing the rules once the repairs can be made, making it a safe place for everybody to use without it being damaged to the point where it will be closed.

Commissioner Sutton and Mr. Reasor discussed the fact the bowl cannot be retrofitted.

Mr. Reasor stated he would like to come back in the future and talk about the possible expansion of the park with a design that will accommodate everybody and develop a plan to move forward.

Chair Lyons asked the next speaker to approach the podium.

Matthew Rhoat came forward and explained his experience skateboarding, his role in the development of the park when it was originally built, his experience with skateparks in the Portland area and how they are built to withstand bikes, scooters and skateboarding. Mr. Rhoat explained some of the skatepark etiquette and culture in that there is a battle among biker riders, scooter riders, and skateboarders and that skateboarders typically win because they don't care. Mr. Rhoat stated he is a carpenter and has been helping Tristen make repairs the last few weeks, that he would love to see the skatepark expand and allow scooters and bikes without worrying about the park being damaged. Mr. Rhoat stated the existing park is not designed or built for bikes and scooters, and that if we design as skatepark that includes everybody and the rules reflect that, then users just need to respect and follow skatepark etiquette. Mr. Rhoat again stated he would love to see the park expand but understands it takes time and money.

Chair Lyons asked the next speaker to come forward.

Rocco Brigham came forward and stated he is Libbi and Angelina's son, that he has grown up near Mings Park, has always used the skatepark, has learned skatepark etiquette, and really enjoys scootering and skateboarding. Rocco stated he enjoys the park even though it's not the best for skateboards, some of the features are good for scooters and bikes, and that we would like to see the park expand. Rocco stated he believes the first thing that needs to happen is for other sports to be allowed in the park and everyone come together. Rocco stated he scooters at other locations after getting kicked out of the skatepark and ends up getting kicked out of those places. Rocco stated his mom takes him to other cities to scooter and explained the coping started to loosen so they pulled it up with their hands, and that the damage was not caused by them banging their scooters on it. Rocco commented the skatepark is actually perfect for scootering, the city is growing, and he just wants to be able to ride at the local skatepark.

Chair Lyons asked the next speaker to come forward.

Scott Cooper, Executive Director of Alternative Youth Activities, came forward and stated skateboarding falls within their mission scope, that he has discussed pursuing some potential grants this year with the city, and this past year they implemented a skateboard facility where you can build skateboards. Mr. Cooper stated they are trying to reengage the youth, that he is offering to pay for a good portion of the necessary repairs, and hopes to incentivize the youth to do the repairs. Mr. Cooper discussed the communities desire to expand the park, how fundraising can be successful, and how he can incentivize some of the youth through summer enrichment projects to develop the park.

Chair Lyons opened the floor for Commissioner comment.

The Commission and Mr. Reasor discussed how long it would take to replace the 185 linear feet of coping that currently needs repaired, approximately one month, and how there are so many users interested in seeing the park expand.

A discussion commenced regarding small repairs currently being made, trying to make the park better in the short-term until repairs can be made, the possibility of having Dreamland Skateparks build the expansion if the fundraising was successful, and the process for contracting with Dreamland Skateparks.

Commissioner Matthews stated there appears to be a lot of interest in the expansion of the park, that he believes it is great and is excited to see so many young citizens coming in and providing public input. Commissioner Matthews further discussed the current skatepark rules and the apparent need for usership

changes and that he sees an opening for a collaboration where we could do some fundraising as a community to get the park up and running without the park being permanently closed or having health and safety issues. Commissioner Matthews further stated he would love to see the expansion of the park and thinks the park is very important.

Rocco Brigham came forward and asked if BMX and scooter riders helped with the fundraising, if bike and scooter riders would be allowed in the park.

Commissioner Matthews stated that is part of the discussion, that the Commission heard from Tristen that if the coping was fixed and everything was stable, that it is something the city could consider, but with the coping being in its fragile state, it would be a danger.

A question was asked from the audience that if it is a risk factor for scooters and bikes, wouldn't it be a safety issue for all users.

Commissioner Matthews stated it is his understanding that the usage and the impact from pegs on bikes and scooters is larger than the impact from skateboards and the intended use and intended design are reliant on the impact of the user. Commissioner Matthews further explained he understands the issues regarding usership and maybe getting it fixed might get us to a place where everyone can use it.

Matthew Rhoat came forward and suggested users bring their own obstacles. Mr. Rhoat further explained that is how skateparks originally got built, that bike riders make their own obstacles as well, that he has a metal rail that is in the back of his truck all of the time for skateboarding and that it can be used by bikes and scooters as well. Mr. Rhoat referenced liability issues and asked if 'the city' would rather see them out in the streets making it more of a liability for businesses, etc., or in our own skatepark. Mr. Rhoat stated he would like to see users bringing in their own obstacles and use them, that he believes it is a simple solution that could help everybody use the current space.

Commissioner Matthews commented that it sounds like the deterioration was in part due to the multitude of users and if it can get fixed, it would serve as a "band aid" until we can get to the next level and available for all users.

Chair Lyons commented that it sounds like the ultimate goal and consensus is that everybody would like a facility that accommodates everyone and she would like to see a task force that includes skaters, scooter riders, BMX riders and some representatives from the Parks Commission to evaluate the location of the skatepark and expansion of the skatepark so future plans can be made.

Rocco Brigham came forward and stated he likes the idea of users bringing in their own obstacles and that he used to do that, but would get kicked out, so he doesn't understand how everyone would be able to all ride there, on their own obstacles, if they get kicked out every day, and asked if scooters are allowed to ride on the other side of the tennis court.

Commissioner Matthews responded that the Commission is not making that decision today.

Commissioner Matthews stated he would like to see fundraising start immediately, believes the community could raise \$4,500 pretty quick and get the park fixed before it deteriorates to the point where no one can use it, and that while the repairs are being made the city could discuss the usership issues. Commissioner Matthews asked Chair Lyons if the Parks Commission can approve that or if there would be another process.

Chair Lyons stated it would need to be discussed with city staff to confirm due to liability issues and that there would need to be coordination on the city's side that is well beyond the scope of the Parks Commission. Chair Lyons stated that after the meeting, the Commission will have a discussion with the

city and collect the information so the Commission can decide or move toward a decision at the next meeting.

Commissioner Matthews stated the Commission has another meeting in a month and feels that would be a good timeline for the community to work on fundraising and asked the Public Works Director if he had any input.

Jim Hossley, Public Works and Community Development Director, came forward and stated the city allowed Tristen to volunteer to make repairs in the past, he did the work, and the city provided the materials, so if the fundraising is successful, there shouldn't be a problem with getting volunteers to do the work. Mr. Hossley stated all volunteers would have to complete some paperwork for liability issues.

Scott Cooper came forward and reiterated that he is willing to donate the funds, approximately \$4,500 to make the initial repairs to the park.

A comment was made that the Commission would need permission to accept the donation.

Chair Lyons stated she believes the Commission would need a succinct motion for what that entails for the repairs and covering potential cost overruns. Chair Lyons stated Staff Member Dixon needs to be part of the discussion and recommended an emergency parks meeting to discuss the donation of funds and repairs prior to making a decision.

Commissioner Closing Comments

Commissioner Sutton asked about the status of the basketball hoop replacement and rock-climbing wall chain replacement at Mingus Park. Jim Hossley stated staff will have to follow up with Operations Administrator Randy Dixon and staff will let the Commission know the status.

Commissioner Matthews and Chair Lyons discussed scheduling an emergency meeting as soon as possible.

Commissioner Matthews commented that nutria are now in Mingus Park and need to be addressed due to their invasive nature.

Chair Lyons thanked everyone for their participation and commented this is how things get done.

Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the Parks Commission, by consensus of the Parks Commission, Chair Lyons adjourned the meeting at 5:01 p.m.

APPROVED BY THE PARKS COMMISSION ON THE 16th DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2021.

Attest:


Kelli Burnette, Staff


dotloop verified
09/17/21 9:27 AM PDT
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Ariann Lyons, Chair