

City of Milton-Freewater

Parks & Recreation Committee Minutes

Members: Jacque Barthel-Fox, George Gillette, John Mitchell, Danny Sanchez & Ryan Westman

Meeting Date/Time: June 4, 2024 / 5 p.m.

Meeting Location: Public Library, Albee Room – 8 SW 8th Ave, Milton-Freewater, OR.

1. OPENING

Chair Ryan Westman welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 5:00 p.m.

Committee member(s) present: John Mitchell, Danny Sanchez and Ryan Westman.

Committee member(s) absent: Jacque Barthel-Fox and George Gillette.

City staff present: Public Works Assistant/Project Aide Krista Gannon.

Citizen(s) present: Leanne Steadman, Brittany Freemantle and Jean Ann Mitchell.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes from the April 16, 2024 meeting were presented in packets to members prior to the meeting. **All present voted in favor of approving minutes. Minutes were approved and signed by Chair Westman.**

3. STAFF REPORT/BUSINESS ITEMS:

a. Summer Parks & Recreation Projects

Public Works Assistant/Project Aide Krista Gannon provided updates as follows:

- Pool:
 - The pool will be open until 7 p.m. rather than 6 p.m. Monday-Saturday.
 - Opening is on track for June 17.
 - Staff has been able to replace the pump on the vacuum and it is working great.
 - Staff will be working with the YMCA to ensure restrooms and the facility are in great condition and clean daily.
 - The YMCA has a lead front desk and concession staff member to help with customer service and quality assurance this year.
- Golf Course:
 - Staff is working to keep up with tournaments and mowing this time of year and it is quite a challenge.
 - Mothers' Day special allowed for Mom's to play at ½ price with a paying child. We are planning to run a similar special for Father's Day.
- Yantis Park Grant:
 - Currently we are awaiting eight more bags of rubber mulch to fill in around natural play area and the project will be complete.
- Freewater Park Grant:
 - Work has yet to begin with tearing out old tennis court to make way for the new multi-use sports court. Ms. Gannon explained that once the court is asphalted, it will have to endure weather for a good six to nine months (or more) to allow for the oil in the asphalt to stabilize and allow for coating and painting of the courts so it doesn't bleed through.

- o Other aspects will be the walking path on the north side to connect to the existing sidewalks on NE 8th around North Main along with ADA improvements to sidewalk ramps and restrooms as well as new natural play area where the old playground used to be.

John Mitchell asked if staff learned any lessons from the natural play area at Yantis for when the one is done at Freewater. Ms. Gannon shared that staff has learned a few pointers as can be expected with anything new we have never done before for the Freewater Park play area.

Since we had a citizen present from Little League specifically to address some business Chair Westman opted to redirect the meeting to outline Little League Representative being present and asking if they wished to speak so they could leave with their young child when they were done.

Skip to Agenda Item 5 – Chair Westman recognized Little League Representative was present and to allow her to speak so she could leave if she wanted once she was done.

5. OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO APPROACH COMMITTEE FOR ITEMS NOT ON THIS AGENDA

Brittany Freemantle (84585 Ringer Rd, Milton-Freewater) representing Milton-Freewater Little League was present and requested to speak. She shared she was there to speak about Rotary Sports Complex as well as Yantis Little League Field. She stated that the group is willing to work and put up some funding to fix and keep up the facilities, but they need to know who is responsible for what.

Ms. Gannon shared that historically ball fields are mowed, perimeter is weed sprayed and irrigation systems are maintained along with fences, fixed in place structures (restrooms and Yantis concession stand/announcer booth), dug outs, etc. Clubs have been responsible for infield maintenance and prep as well as chalking lines and setting up and providing bases, pitching machines and any other necessary baseball specific equipment.

- Yantis – Women's restroom sink has a leak below the faucet that gets you wet when you wash your hands. It is not a screen, yet something under the sink.
- Yantis – Neither the men's or women's restroom sinks have hot water.
- Yantis - Bleachers would be nice to have moved or added to the first base line (home dugout) if at all possible.
- Both Fields - The old wood bleachers could use some maintenance and replacement.
- Both Fields – dug out benches could use some fixes/replacement.
- Both Fields - Parking spaces could use marking to maximize the limited parking space available, especially for those from out of the area.
- Yantis - announcer's booth has a hole in the roof that leaks water in.
- Rotary – needs water faucet for spraying down infields and prep closer if possible. The only faucet is one frost free over by the bathrooms.
- Rotary – pitching machine outlets no longer work, so they are using extension cords and burying them along base line where it crosses to avoid tripping.
- Scoreboard @ Yantis – contact Pepsi who installed it for Little League specifically. This was not a city transaction.
- Yantis – concession building needs to have new locks. Many past users have keys and they have no inventory of who and how many keys they have. Little League would like to put a new key on them. Ms. Gannon shared that shouldn't be a problem, but they will want to make sure a copy is provided to the city and that the city may opt to put a chain on it with their own lock to lock through the Little League lock for joint access as needed for structure maintenance. She shared this is what was done previously between the school and city when the tennis courts were locked.

Ms. Freemantle once again shared they are willing to put together work groups and even some funding to help make necessary fixes with the city, but would like communication on who does what.

Ms. Gannon shared that she will share the concerns with staff and the leaking roof will be priority first thing in the morning and suggested that maybe staff and Little League schedule a pre-season walk thru of facilities to see what needs done in early spring of 2025.

RESUME DISCUSSION ON AGENDA ITEM 3

b. Parks & Recreation Committee Meetings

Ms. Gannon shared that it is important that the committee review and discuss their ideas of when meetings are held or cancelled as well as what constitutes a quorum as well as the agenda order of business. She shared that in the past, committees have opted to only meet when there is an agenda. She shared she has been questioned when meetings have been cancelled on why nobody was asked and it has been due to prior decisions that when there is no agenda brought forth by staff or members, then there was no need to hold a meeting where staff is having to be paid overtime.

Chair Westman stated he had just recently learned that the city code outlines that the committee shall meet monthly.

Ms. Gannon shared that they can recommend what they wish, but we don't need to hold a meeting if there is nothing to discuss, as it would be a waste of staff resources and time hence why prior committees had opted to only meet as decided specifically and/or when an agenda was brought forth in time to meet publication deadlines as required for public meetings requirements.

Mr. Mitchell felt the dates required to bring items forth were too far in advance. Ms. Gannon shared that we must advertise in our newspaper of record to hold any public meetings as required by law, but the agenda itself can be amended to add or remove items at the beginning of the meeting for instance or brought up during committee reports, but it is best to ensure proper publication and advance notice is given to not only other members, but the community and staff as well when at all possible.

Discussion ensued about procedures and public meetings.

Mr. Mitchell shared that he would like to set meetings whether there was an agenda or not.

Mr. Sanchez shared he would like to have meetings monthly over the next three to four months since so much was happening during the summer.

Members present were all in agreement of such. Ms. Gannon asked if they were officially making such business part of the record by a motion to communicate what is being requested. Members shared they wanted the meetings changed as discussed and a season end update on pool operations. Ms. Gannon suggested a motion be made to set them.

Mr. Sanchez motioned to meet July 9, rather than July 2.
Mr. Mitchell seconded the motion.

All voted in favor to move the meeting out one week from July 2 to July 9, due to the Fourth of July holiday and other commitments the week of July 2.

Mr. Sanchez motioned to meet August 13, rather than August 6.

Mr. Mitchell seconded the motion.

All voted in favor to move the meeting out one week from August 6 to August 13, due to other commitments that week.

Members present agreed to keep the September 3 and October 1 meeting dates as the first Tuesday of the month.

The committee shared that they would like to have an aquatic center season update with management of the City and YMCA in October.

Mr. Sanchez motioned to reprioritize agenda items in the following order:

1. Opening
 - a. Call to Order / Attendance
 - b. Adoption of Agenda
2. Approval of Minutes
3. Presentations
4. Staff Report/Business Items
 - a. Old Business
 - b. New Business
5. Opportunity for Citizens to Approach Committee for Items Not on this Agenda
6. Committee Reports/Business Items
7. Adjournment

Mr. Westman seconded the motion.

All present voted in favor to change the agenda order as shown above.

Next topic was deciding what rule would be in place for the Recreation Committee to define what a quorum is constituted as. This came about back in late January when Ms. Gannon asked former Manager Hall what we would need to do to hold a February meeting because members for three of the four current filled positions (at that time) terms were set to expire February 1, 2024 as outlined on the committee listing. Re-appointments weren't scheduled to be made until the week after the February recreation meeting for two of the three of those members in order to have a quorum and hold a meeting where action could be taken. Staff was directed to hold the usual meeting and carried on with business as usual with the assumption that expiring terms would be valid until the reappointment the second week in February. Since this had recently come about in discussion at a prior council meeting after Chair Westman provided the committee's concerns to council about the aquatic center and council asked why their concerns for summer 2024 were just now going in front of them by the Recreation Committee since they had it presented to them back in February, it was necessary to set a rule of what constitutes a quorum. Terms are set as four years and those are listed as expiring February 1 four years later.

All present agreed that a quorum is the majority of current Recreation Committee positions at such date and time of such meeting moving forward. If there is not at minimum three members on such committee in the future, there is not enough to hold any votes or take any action as you need majority, which would constitute at minimum, three members at any given time.

4. COMMITTEE REPORTS/BUSINESS ITEMS

- a. Ms. Barthel-Fox was unable to make it to the meeting, but had requested discussion about how we can get information out consistently in a common location for all events

related to parks and recreation for residents and visitors alike from school events to little league, pool hours/events, festivals, etc.

Members and audience members all discussed options and platforms currently used by others as well to publish and post them in a central location. Ms. Barthel-Fox had shared with Ms. Gannon that she is often asked by people what is going on in Milton-Freewater and what is there to do.

Everyone present agreed this is a great idea and will need some more research on how to accommodate the request between platforms and keeping everything updated. Leanne Steadman shared that the city web page and calendar is ideally city business just to keep all the required postings and city meetings and business clear.

Jean Ann Mitchell asked if the city had a public information officer or one person who coordinates communications.

Discussion ensued how a reader board would be great to put information out for all going by to see, but also recognized cost to install and maintain as well as who would keep everything updated. This discussion is planned to be looked into further at future meetings.

Ms. Gannon suggested a survey asking folks where they look to find out information such as web page, social network platform, newsletters, etc. to get a feel for the best coverage.

Jean Ann Mitchell shared that she was disappointed the pool would be open for such a short period of time and hoped that the facility improved from last season. She discussed how she didn't feel listened to and the many issues of cleanliness and staffing being late to lap swim, which shortened the time available to lap swimmers and also kept them waiting because staff hadn't even arrived at the facility until well after start time, let alone had the facility ready for the patrons.

Mr. Westman shared that he was at the May City Council Meeting with Walla Walla YMCA (YMCA) CEO Karen Hedline, whom both openly discussed issues and corrective plans in place for this coming season.

Mr. Mitchell shared he feels the issues are issues that keep happening season after season and aren't just from last summer and he hopes it is better.

Ms. Gannon shared she was at the council meeting and that the YMCA has provided written outline to the committee, staff and council for corrective action that is planned to be taken and at this time we must give them a chance to make such corrections because we cannot change what has happened in the past, but can certainly look forward. She advised members and citizens that if they see something, say something. A compliment and complaint box has been planned to be onsite this year for comments, concerns and suggestions. She stated that if there are issues needing attention at the time for patrons to request a manager or their new onsite lead for concession/front desk operations to voice their concerns to. If they don't have results to then contact Karen at the YMCA or Brian at Public Works if they don't feel that it was adequately addressed. She also advised them they can report to Council as citizens and advisors to the council at any time. However, if staff is not advised or allowed to identify and rectify issues, it would typically take longer to be addressed because they would then be directed to do such, when they could have already been working on it. She shared that the Public Works Superintendent is a hands-on department head and if they have issues, he would want to hear about it and speak with them directly. If they still don't feel improvements have sufficiently been made (allowing time for such to be looked into and a plan put in place) to

then possibly report it to the City Manager and then Council, or they can always report to Council as their elected officials, however, if you give operations the chance to rectify and address issues, it is usually a much more, timely result rather than to wait. She explained that some issues can be easily corrected while others may not be able to be corrected right away based on what it is and what it takes to fix it, but to rest assured that all hands are on board for a better season in 2024.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:33 p.m. by Chair Westman.

Approved as read this 9th day of July, 20 24.

By: Ryan Westman
Ryan Westman - Parks and Recreation Committee Chair