

# **City of Milton-Freewater**

## **Parks & Recreation Committee Minutes**

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

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**Meeting Date/Time:** April 2, 2025

**Meeting Location:** Public Library, Monahan Room, 8 SW 8<sup>th</sup> Ave, Milton-Freewater OR.

### **1. OPENING**

a. Chair Ryan Westman welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 5:03 p.m.

Committee member(s) present: Jacque Barthel-Fox, Danny Sanchez and Ryan Westman.

Committee member(s) absent: George Gillette and John Mitchell whom were both excused.

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

Citizen(s) present: Dave Fox.

b. Adoption of Agenda – Ms. Barthel-Fox moved to accept the agenda as presented. Mr. Sanchez seconded the motion. All present voted in favor and accepted the agenda as presented for the meeting.

### **2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Sanchez motioned to approve minutes from the March 4, 2025 meeting as presented. Ms. Barthel-Fox seconded the motion. All present voted to approve the March 4, 2025 minutes as presented.

### **3. PRESENTATIONS – N/A**

### **4. STAFF REPORT/BUSINESS ITEMS:**

Note: Prior to the meeting Ms. Barthel-Fox provided a list of questions to Chair Westman and Public Works Assistant-Project Aide Gannon whom shared that she also forwarded them to City Manager Morris to review prior to the meeting in order to provide updates at the meeting. Since Mr. Morris was unavailable to provide those updates those present will address those under business item number 6 COMMITTEE REPORTS/BUSINESS ITEMS below.

Ms. Gannon shared that City Manager Morris has been busy working on the City's budget and was in Salem the day before trying to get Milton-Freewater to stand out on the map hoping to get our funding needs on the radar in a very competitive legislative session. Ms. Gannon updated to the committee on behalf of the city as follows:

Ms. Gannon shared that Freewater Park construction commenced on Tuesday with Don Jackson Excavation. She stated that she received a call Tuesday morning from Don stating they had discovered a concrete slab under the asphalt court that was not initially known to be in place. Rather than issuing a change order and increasing the contract cost, Don agreed that if they were allowed to dispose of the concrete at the city landfill and place it in the designated concrete pile (not in the waste cell) along with the old fence posts (that were set in concrete that were already planned to go out there) he would do it at no additional cost. This could be considered an in-kind donation match for the added work if the contractor is

amicable to completing the donation forms for the allowed value as per the agreement. City staff had taken down the old fence the week prior in preparation for the demolition. Staff will pour the ADA ramps and sidewalk adjacent to Robbins to connect to the existing sidewalk along NE 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue once the walking path is complete. The natural play area materials have been in the carpenter shop and been worked on over the past couple months by staff as time has allowed, so it is nearly ready for placement and staff is wrapping up the finishing touches to bid documents for the new multi-use court fencing for Freewater Park.

Ms. Gannon shared that the announcer booth/concession stand at Yantis has had a new roof installed and work is complete and new combination locks have been installed at the restrooms for Yantis Little League/Tennis and Rotary Sports Complex for users to allow the city to change combinations after seasons rather than try to keep inventory on who all has keys, which is a task in and of itself when you have that many parties involved with coaches and users all having their own.

Parks staff has been aerating greens on the golf course beginning Monday this week and are hoping to finish up mid-week to move along to Freewater Park and other projects yet this week along with peak growing season kicking into full gear with mowing, spraying, etc.

#### **5. CITIZEN COMMENTS – (Note: brought forth toward end of meeting)**

David Fox asked if anyone knew what happened to the very top concrete steps of the Pioneers at Marie Dorian Park, as there are some missing that he found in the Frazier Farmstead Museum records that #199 is his families under Gene Fox. Ms. Gannon shared that the Frazier Farmstead Museum archives is a great resource of information and that she also recalls seeing those lists in her records at the office and could check around, but asked if it appeared that they had been removed or if it could have been maybe due to some erosion or other matter and he said it very well could have been erosion. He said there were about three or four at the top missing. She said she would pull the file and see if there were any notes, but in her tenure was not aware of the city having any that had to be reset due to erosion, vandalism or breaking but would check to see. Brief discussion ensued about the historical importance of the markers and the city's role of not performing maintenance due to them not meeting any kind of ADA requirement

#### **6. COMMITTEE REPORTS/BUSINESS ITEMS:**

As stated at the beginning of the meeting, below is an outline of the discussion pertaining to Ms. Barthel-Fox's E-mail Ms. Barthel-Fox provided a list of questions to Chair Westman and Public Works Assistant-Project Aide Gannon whom shared that she also forwarded them to City Manager Morris to review prior to the meeting in order to provide updates at the meeting. Ms. Barthel-Fox shared she was concerned that there was no representation from the city at the meeting to provide an update on the progress relating to the staffing at the Joe Humbert Family Aquatic Center for this summer.

**Ms. Barthel-Fox motioned that someone provide and update to the committee at their earliest convenience via E-mail relating to the staffing of a pool manager, certified pool operator and pool staff progress. Mr. Sanchez seconded the motion. All present voted in favor.**

Follow-up Question: Has staff had a chance to look into moving one set of the metal bleachers along the third base line at the little league field to the first base line on the west side of the dugouts? The committee would like an update on whether this can be done and if so, will it be done. There had been some discussion if they would fit, is there adequate space to get them moved over there.

Chair Westman inquired on the status of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan update and voiced his desire to begin reviewing and updating the plan and asked if it was included in the upcoming budget plan. Ms. Gannon shared that a professional service was not specifically outlined for this update, as the prior plan was bid and provided in digital format and the plan at that time would be for the city to facilitate community outreach and make necessary updates, at least for the bulk of the process at the time of development. She shared that would certainly provide this information with the City Manager and pointed out that there are areas within the budget that provide for discretionary items and services that are not necessarily called out specifically, but fall under these types of projects, such as professional services for instance.

**Ms. Barthel-Fox motioned for the Recreation Committee to begin the review and updating process of the City's Parks and Recreation Master Plan document. Mr. Sanchez seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.**

Discussion ensued regarding the master plan and projects. The status of the tennis courts came up and whether there was a plan in place to proceed with the replacement once the season is over at the middle to end of May. Ms. Gannon shared she wasn't aware of one at this point in time but it had been brought up in public conversation, but this would need to be deferred to Manager Morris. Those present shared that the tennis program is the only local sports program without a facility that is safe and user friendly in our community and the city and school along with community need to support this together to happen before next season.

**Ms. Barthel-Fox motioned for support of staff and council to develop a plan of action immediately to address the tennis court renovation/replacement. Mr. Sanchez seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.**

Chair Westman inquired if the city had a contingency plan in place for the pool at this time. Ms. Gannon shared last she had heard was that it had been discussed as a possibility that the City Manager was considering alternative back up plans in the case the city is not successful in recruiting enough staff for adequate coverage for the summer 2025 season but was not aware of any updates on how any recruitments were coming along or what may be in place or in process and that would need deferred to Manager Morris.

**Mr. Sanchez motioned for staff to develop a contingency plan with the Walla Walla YMCA for aquatic program staff in the event the city is unable to fully staff the facility for the summer. The motion was seconded by Ms. Barthel-Fox. The motion carried unanimously.**

Wrapping up Chair Westman reminded those present that the Sherwood Trust was hosting a Leadership Program in Milton-Freewater soon and shared his positive experience in going through the program himself.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by Chair Westman at 6 pm.

Approved as read this 7<sup>th</sup> day of May, 20 25.

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