

City of Milton-Freewater

Parks & Recreation Committee Minutes

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

Meeting Date/Time: September 2, 2025 – 5 pm

Meeting Location: Albee Room, Library, 8 SW 8th Ave

1. OPENING

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

Committee member(s) present: Jacque Barthel-Fox, George Gillette, John Mitchell, Danny Sanchez, Ryan Westman and Kate Winters.

Committee member(s) absent: none

City staff present: City Manager Chad Morris and Public Works Assistant/Project Aide Krista Gannon.

Citizen(s) present: Jean Ann Mitchell

b. Adoption of Agenda – Not applicable

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Barthel-Fox motioned to approve the minutes from the August 5, 2025 Aquatic Center Tour meeting. Mr. Sanchez seconded the motion. All present voted to approve the minutes. All present voted in favor and minutes were approved.

3. PRESENTATIONS – Summer 2025 Pool Season – Manager Russ Woodward

Pool Manager Russ Woodward gave a presentation on the timeline of the summer 2025 pool season. He shared the following challenges:

Short timeline to get the facility in order, staff hired and the doors opened for the summer

Challenges with hiring lifeguards.

Shortages of certified guards in area.

Competitive wages

Short season to align with college and school schedules for staffing and patrons.

Started the process late in the year overall.

Short timeline to get the facility in order, staff hired and the doors open

Many inexperienced workers to train.

Supervision and labor law compliance.

Onboarding and hiring processes were started late in the year and would like to begin promoting training and hiring earlier next year.

Promoting and training offerings were partnered with Pendleton as well as YMCA Lessons, aerobics, rentals and programming development

He went over the programs offered and shared how next season he is hoping to have 12 guards, rather than the 10 he ended up with. He shared the Athena pool breaking down helped out providing us with more staff. He shared Erica was a significant help with developing schedules and the lesson program. Overall, Russ shared that he was happy with the season and hopes to be back this next summer.

Members present shared their appreciation for Russ stepping in on short notice and getting the pool open for the community.

He hopes to further advocate for lifeguard training earlier and more this next year so we aren't faced with as many staffing challenges.

Discussion ensued.

4. STAFF REPORT/BUSINESS ITEMS

Freewater Park work continues with the painting of the court surface, striping will be done in the spring as weather allows for the specific uses. Restorative work on the irrigation system and landscaping is underway as well.

Little League Field irrigation valves in center field will be relocated over the winter.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Approved as read this 3rd day of December, 20 25.

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