

# City of Milton-Freewater

## Parks & Recreation Committee Minutes

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

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**Meeting Date/Time:** November 4, 2025

**Meeting Location:** Albee Room, Library, 8 SW 8<sup>th</sup> 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: Public Works Assistant/Project Aide Krista Gannon and Steven Patten, Public Works Technician, Mayor Mike Odman.

Citizen(s) present: None

No agenda was prepared or presented, as no items were proposed prior to the meeting other than Public Works Assistant/Project Aide Krista Gannon asking to discuss tennis courts and the feasibility of pursuing a grant that was coming up.

### **DISCUSSION ITEM – TENNIS COURTS – CONSIDERATION OF SUPPORT OF OREGON PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT LAND AND WATER GRANT APPLICATION AND DISCUSSION**

Ms. Gannon shared that initially there was \$300,000 put in the FY 2026 budget for tennis court improvements by the former City Manager with hopes of receiving a grant to fund it. There has been no grant applied for to cover this but one has come forth but will be closing by the 17<sup>th</sup> of November that would qualify for use to replace the tennis courts with tennis/pickleball courts.

Staff has no notes or records of discussions between the prior manager and Aaron Duff, M-F Unified School District Superintendent on what may have been discussed since this topic arose about two years ago.

Several numbers have been tossed out from \$100,000 to \$500,000 on what it will take to repair or replace the courts.

Currently there is a grant open accepting applications, but the deadline was upon us very soon that is for a 50% match, but was historically awarded in larger sums than the one in the spring that we have acquired for Yantis, Freewater and Marie Dorian Park improvements.

Discussion ensued about the timelines and if we would be able to meet such. Public Works Technician Steven Patten shared that he didn't feel his current workload and projects would allow for him to get it done in time when asked.

Discussion ensued about a possibly fault line in the vicinity of the existing courts as well as possible relocation as well as the fact that these courts have been around since 1961 and in 2007 the City

invested just under \$45,000 in repairs as a fix until such time funds could be sought after to replace them in their entirety.

Ms. Gannon shared the city's risks if the courts are allowed to be used without repairs as they are now since this has come up at several council meetings on the record by players and citizens as well as past visits from citizens to the Parks and Recreation Committee over the years that were in minutes passed along to the City Managers office. She shared that council has made discussion about even the thought of having to close them altogether at a past meeting due to their poor condition.

Mr. Sanchez was asked to explain the special rules that are in place when tennis is hosted in Milton-Freewater by Ms. Gannon. Ms. Gannon asked if it was true that the city as a whole has missed out on economic opportunities as well by not having the ability to host districts and tournaments, which was verified. He also shared that tennis players often pull weeds each year in the cracks to clean up the courts as they are in disrepair.

Mr. Patten shared there is another grant that comes open in the spring that would be more feasible to apply for since he already has enough projects of his own.

What the discussion came down to is that something has to take place and funding has to be sought between the city and primary users being the school but to also include pickleball, as it is one of the nations fastest growing sports for users of all ages and abilities and we are missing out on drawing people to town to use courts to play due to the high area demand for such. Safety was the primary focus and Mayor Odman shared he would be willing to get in touch with Mr. Duff and find out what he had as far as plans or notes from discussions on where this stands on their list as well to collaborate together and find a resolution to hopefully be able to cost share and offset with grants.

Discussion ensued and the consensus was that the committee as a whole recommend to the City Council that staff pursue grant funding in collaboration with the schools for the replacement and siting of new courts, as the concerns for safety and play have been something they have been asking staff to prioritize for some time.

**John Mitchell motioned to support and ask City Council direct staff to apply for the LGGP grant in the spring through Oregon Parks and Recreation Department. The motion was seconded by George Gillette. Motion passed 6 yes, 0 no.**

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

The committee agreed that they would like to meet on the first Wednesday of December next, being December 3.

A member shared that there is someone that walks on the path at Yantis with a Pitbull mix that is not on a leash that has outwardly acted aggressively toward other walkers. Ms. Gannon asked if they knew who the dog belonged to and they said they didn't know the person but knew the other walkers and shared their names. Ms. Gannon will pass this along to Code Enforcement to see if they can find out who the unleashed dog belongs to and let the owners know the park rules with keeping dogs leashed.

Ms. Gannon shared that the Freewater Park Improvements were nearly complete with irrigation repairs needing sprinkler heads installed along with two benches and sinks that have been received. The court will be striped with lines in the spring when weather allows for the multi-use court. The only remaining item is the doors and/or handles that Steven was working on.

## 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