

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: December 3, 2025

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: George Gillette, John Mitchell, Danny Sanchez, Ryan Westman and Kate Winters

Committee member(s) absent: Jacque Barthel-Fox (excused)

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

Citizen(s) present: None

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Mitchell moved to approve the minutes from September 2, 2025 and November 4, 2025 meetings as presented. Mr. Gillette seconded the motion. The motion carried 5 yes, 0 no.

3. PRESENTATIONS

N/A

4. STAFF REPORT/BUSINESS ITEMS

1. Freewater Park Update – Public Works Assistant/Project Aide Krista Gannon shared that the improvements specific to the Oregon Parks and Recreation Grant at Freewater Park are complete and staff will be working on closeout and final reimbursement tasks.

She shared that the swampy area that has sluffed off on the skate park identified in the walk thru of the park as well as the gravel around the perimeter of the skate park concrete will also be removed over the winter. The rocks tend to cause issues with the skateboard wheels based on complaints we have received.

2. Tennis Court Update – Ms. Gannon shared that Mayor Odman had shared he met with M-F School Superintendent Aaron Duff since our last meeting. She shared that Mayor Odman learned that Mr. Duff has a rough estimate but cautioned that it was dated several months for costs of materials. Mayor Odman shared that Mr. Duff believes the school district could fund approximately \$50,000 if the city could contribute \$50,000 and that the community and grants could fill the remaining funds needed. This would be a project to commence after the '26 tennis season ends, which is usually the end of May. No drawings were shared.

Chair Westman commented that it would be good to ensure that there are engineered plans and that it would be important to ensure the school and city were on the same page along with having proper project management and oversight when this moves forward. Several members voiced concerns of skepticism about the quality of four tennis court play areas with surface, fencing, lights and the remaining components being about to be done well for \$150,00 to \$200,000.

Mr. Sanchez shared he had recently resigned as the tennis coach for the high school after many years and he shared that the courts cannot have a crown such as a street would have for water runoff and must be flat or you are playing on an angled surface.

Discussion ensued. Ms. Gannon shared that staff intends to bring our interim City Manager up to speed on this and request Mr. Duff join them for a more detailed discussion and for him to bring plans if he has them to share. If this were to happen this next year after tennis season ends (end of May or beginning of June) it would need to be ready for demo and construction by mid-June or early July to have the courts complete prior to the fall when weather is not conducive to construction of surface materials and they are not available.

Mr. Gillette stated that he felt it needed to be prioritized and worked on soon with plans and updates in order to proceed.

3. Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update – Ms. Gannon shared that it is time to be thinking of reviewing the plan and updating. Mr. Mitchell shared he liked the public processes. Others shared that the process previously used was quite lengthy but some is necessary. Ms. Gannon shared that at this time, the updates intended for the committee would be to reacquaint with the plan as is, notate what had been done and also look at alignment with council goals and community priorities and update accordingly with their recommendations. Then the public engagement could be done as decided by management upon their recommendations upon initial review. Discussion ensued and members were told they would be sent the link of the master plan from the website to begin perusing over.
4. 2026 Meeting Schedule – Ms. Gannon asked the committee if they would like to set their meeting calendar for 2026. Members will be provided with the regularly scheduled first Tuesday of each month meeting dates and the time will remain at 5 pm. Locations may vary based on topics and on-site tours as requested. Members asked to have a work session on January 20 to review the master plan specifically.

Ms. Gannon shared that lastly, an item not on the agenda was the Little League irrigation valve relocation project. She shared that it is on the maintenance list to be done this winter after leaf collection and a couple other smaller projects, as previously discussed.

OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO APPROACH COMMITTEE

No citizens were present.

COMMITTEE REPORTS/BUSINESS ITEMS

Concerns about minutes not being posted on the web page and also making their way to the city council were brought forth. Members present agreed that they would like Ms. Gannon find out why and find a way to ensure their advisement was making it back to the council. This has been a concern for some time and they would like to make sure it is addressed. They shared that they feel there is no use for an advisory committee to the council and it seems like waste of their time if they aren't getting the minutes. Ms. Gannon assured the members that she would request clarification on how best to ensure this request is fulfilled through the City Council, Mayor and interim City Manager and would send such documents directly to Council and management until such direction is received differently. Members thanked Ms. Gannon for helping to ensure their voices are being heard by the Mayor and City Council.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Approved as read this 20th day of January, 2026.

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

George Gillette

