

City of Milton-Freewater

Parks & Recreation Committee Minutes

Members: George Gillette, John Mitchell, Danny Sanchez, Ryan Westman & Kate Winters.

Meeting Date/Time: February 3, 2026 / 5 pm

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

1. OPENING

Chair Gillette opened the meeting at 5:08 pm.

Members Present: George Gillette, John Mitchell, Ryan Westman, Kate Winters

Members Excused: Danny Sanchez

Staff Present: Krista Gannon, Public Works Assistant/Project Aide

Citizens Present: Wes Koklich

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Westman moved to approve the minutes from January 20, 2026 Ms. Winters seconded the motion. The motion carried 4 yes, 0 no.

3. PRESENTATIONS

N/A

4. STAFF REPORT/BUSINESS ITEMS

1. Public Works Projects Updates

- a. Freewater Park Ribbon Cutting – Ms. Gannon shared that we are anticipating having a ribbon cutting event for the improvements at Freewater Park in the spring once the court gets striped and the facilities are up and running for the season. More information will be presented to the committee to attend and be a part of the celebration of such great improvements for our community.
- b. Marie Dorian Park Update – Ms. Gannon shared that staff is moving forward with the planning of the Marie Dorian improvements, which includes the addition of security cameras, roof replacement of the restroom and shelter facility, new play equipment with a sidewalk that is ADA compliant from the parking lot and that also fit in to the current frisbee golf course at the park. Discussion ensued about the concerns with past vandalism at the park and everyone is hopeful the added security cameras will help curb future vandalism successfully.
- c. Walking Paths - Staff shared that there is certainly still interest amongst the community for future connectivity with trails within the community inside city limits and to remember when we begin working on updating the Parks and Recreation Master Plan to keep new and inventive ideas in mind and that she would also be able to share some past ideas that just never made it to development that would still potentially be feasible within city limits.
- d. State of the City Address - Ms. Gannon shared that staff is working on the first ever State of the City Address scheduled for February 24. Everyone was encouraged to attend and hear and see for themselves the exciting things upon us and also to learn about the past as well. Members and their friends and family are invited to celebrate the combining of the two cities of Milton and Freewater 75 years ago. She shared that Mayor Odman will give the address in the Mac-Hi auditorium scheduled to begin at 6 pm and there will be cake and refreshments in the cafeteria following the address until 8 pm. Flyers were sent to the members as well.
- e. Discussion came up about the pool and if Russ would be returning to manage the facility again in 2026. Ms. Gannon shared that Interim City Manager Johnson and

Human Resource Officer Wendi Daugherty were working on making contact with Russ to discuss the seasonal program in the near future. Members shared concerns with not having a recruitment already underway and the city falling into a similar situation as it was in last year by waiting until the last minute to hire and get staff on board. Ms. Gannon said management is well aware of this as well as Council and that it was their goal to get everything in line soon after the season end summary presented by Manager Russ.

2. Parks & Recreation Master Plan Review – The committee started discussing updating the Master Plan, which was recommended in the plan every five (5) years. **Committee members would like for staff to gather an estimated cost of what it would take to review and update the existing plan with items that have been completed since the initial publication.**

Discussion ensued about the master plan process and budget development.

The committee shared that they would like to learn how the city's budget works and even have a special meeting to be educated on this.

Mr. Westman motioned for the Parks and Recreation committee to hold a special meeting with appropriately designated staff to discuss the budget in order to better understand how the city's budget and the process of developing the budget works for parks and recreation programs specifically. Mr. Mitchell seconded the motion. The motion carried 4 yes, 0 no.

OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO APPROACH COMMITTEE

No citizens were present.

COMMITTEE REPORTS/BUSINESS ITEMS

Members present wanted a statement to be included in the minutes outlining their support of rehiring Manager Russ for this coming summer and exploring the possibility of a co-manager or lead support for him.

Mr. Westman and Mr. Mitchell both specifically requested a statement to be included in the minutes outlining their support of the addition of walking paths as a primary focus of the interest as serving on the committee and that they really would like to see these transpire which are also outlined in the master plan document as a high community priority.

The committee also requested that M-F Little League be invited to their next meeting to discuss field use and maintenance for this year as an effort to improve communication and collaboration. Ms. Gannon shared that she would reach out and invite them to attend the March meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by Chair Gillette at 7:45 pm.

Approved as read this 17 day of March, 20 26.

By: [Redacted Signature]
~~George Gillette~~ - Parks and Recreation Committee Chair
Kate Winters