

City of Milton-Freewater

Parks & Recreation Committee Minutes

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

Meeting Date/Time: July 21, 2026 / 5:00 pm

Meeting Location: Public Library, Albee Room

OPENING

- a. Chair George Gillette 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.

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

Citizens present: none

- b. Adoption of Agenda – The agenda was approved as presented.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Westman requested a typo on page two be corrected to change a word to “trust” instead of “truck”. With such correction, Mr. Westman motioned to approve the minutes. Mr. Sanchez seconded the motion. Minutes were approved unanimously.

3. PRESENTATIONS

4. OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO APPROACH THE COMMITTEE

Nothing identified.

5. STAFF REPORT/BUSINESS ITEMS

- a. Tennis Court Improvements Update

Ms. Gannon shared that the city received \$75,000 from the Sherwood Trust and \$20,000 from Wildhorse, with a verbal award of \$20,000 from the Milton-Freewater Area Foundation for a total of \$105,000 in grant funding toward this specific improvement. Ms. Gannon shared that staff submitted the grant to the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department in June for most of the necessary funding. She also shared that staff anticipates hearing on the status of that grant in late summer or early fall. She shared the scope of work for these improvements would be: demo of existing courts; installation of new base rock; installation of new asphalt courts; purchase and installation of court surface, nets and lines; installation of new lighting with a new electrical panel; installation of new fencing; and improvements to the sidewalk and ADA access.

Mr. Westman asked if the existing shop and racquetball court building would be torn down as part of this project. Ms. Gannon shared that this project would fall within the existing footprint of the tennis courts.

Mr. Mitchell shared that he had heard a rumor that the city was going to patch the courts. Ms. Gannon shared that patching was not part of the plan for this project. She shared that complete demolition and removal of the existing court was in the plan along with the installation of new base rock and asphalt.

Ms. Winters asked about the lighting. She asked if the lighting would be on a timer or auto on/off. Ms. Gannon shared that these specific details had not been shared with her, but the intent is to replace lighting, which would have some type of control to turn them off or on during evening hours to allow for longer play and be within the operating hours of the park.

Mr. Westman asked if there was a timeline. Ms. Gannon shared that the timeline would be contingent upon receipt of funds and seasonal materials availability, such as asphalt plants that close during the winter and usually open in mid-spring depending on the weather and their jobs.

Mr. Sanchez asked about a Press Release he saw on Facebook saying the city would begin working on the tennis courts this fall and stated that it did not match up with what Ms. Gannon reported. Ms. Gannon shared that the city must have funding in place in order to proceed with the project, and the majority of the funding is contingent upon the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) grant. Mr. Sanchez asked why the Press Release was sent out when spending was not yet approved. He asked if there was still a chance the funding would not be approved, and Ms. Gannon said yes, there is that chance until a notice stating we were successful recipients, followed by a contract/agreement, is fully executed. Mr. Sanchez asked why the city would do that to the public. Ms. Gannon shared she had not received the press release herself, or she would have shared the document with the committee. She stated that if the committee had further concerns, they could forward such through council, as they serve in an advisory capacity directly to the City Council, per City Code.

b. Marie Dorian Park Improvements Update

Ms. Gannon shared that the play equipment, mulch, ADA accessibility, and play area curbing and paths had been installed as part of the grant for park improvements through OPRD. She shared that the Umatilla County work crew had assisted staff in placing rubber mulch, and also had cleaned up debris along the hillside at the park. She shared that the roofer had been hired and was in the process of getting the roof replacement work done for the restroom and old power plant, which would consist of metal vs. the old shake-style roof. There was a question of whether there was a plan to install cameras. Ms. Gannon shared she had not had an update about what has been determined for options yet on cameras. Remaining tasks are the roof replacements, installation of a couple of benches, having one of the signs replaced outlining the history of Marie Dorian and the Oregon Trail, restroom improvements, and some of the final elements will be items like striping the parking lot. She shared that the grant expires at the end of the calendar year, but work was ahead of schedule.

c. McRae/Ireland Scoreboard Update

Ms. Gannon shared that the engineering had been completed with the specifications and design information received by the city from the structural engineer. She shared that staff hadn't yet had a chance to review and discuss the plans but would soon and evaluate the best method to get the base in place, whether it be done by staff or contracted out, as well as hiring our electrician to do the power connection and our electric department installing power to the new location in right field and hanging the sign upon the iron mounts.

d. Aquatic Center Update

Ms. Gannon shared that the pool was showing good attendance for June; however, until expenses come in to provide an overall season picture, one cannot say how the season is going with expenses vs. revenues but did remind the committee that the pool is very heavily subsidized by the general fund and recognized in our Parks Master Plan as one of our

biggest assets with parks and recreation by citizens. Mr. Westman asked why there wasn't any rate increase this year. Ms. Gannon shared she had done an analysis and drafted a fact sheet and provided it to the previous interim but was told it needed to be done during the mid-year analysis of all fees and rates. Some discussion ensued about rates and structures. Ms. Gannon shared this was on her list to bring back to the committee to review and provide a recommendation to council before next year. Members present shared they loved the lesson schedule and the later general swim hours this season. There was also the question about why we don't have a tap-to-pay option for admission, and Ms. Gannon shared that our current setup with our credit card payment system at the city is older, and you do not have that option at City Hall either.

There was a brief discussion on the upcoming retirement of the golf pro and the golf course franchise and how that was coming along. Ms. Gannon shared that the prior interim had shared that the city needs to look at a business model for the new franchise when George retires after the end of this year, but staff is waiting on direction from city council and getting a new city manager on staff. Some discussion ensued about automated software systems to book online, etc., and whether it was good or not, and there were two vastly different opinions shared. One was that online systems would be good to book and pay for tee times, etc., and the other was that software is expensive and doesn't accommodate all golfers, especially those that are not tech-savvy. Ms. Gannon shared this was on the list from the former interim's transition notes and that it may be coming forth in the future to the committee, but she was unsure, as this is something that hasn't come up before.

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS/BUSINESS ITEMS

Discussions ensued about the pool closures due to the recent wildfires and the Oregon OSHA rules and requirements for such, and where citizens could check for the air quality index levels, etc. Discussion ensued about what criteria were used, etc. Ms. Gannon shared that she would pull Walla Walla and Pendleton's policies and share this with council through a memo, as such policy is required to be implemented. Note: A memo was drafted 7/22/26 and sent to City Recorder Leanne Steadman to distribute to City Council as addressed. See attached.

7. ADJOURNMENT

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

Approved as read this 18th day of August 2026.

By: Kate Winters - Parks and Recreation Committee Co-chair