



## Parks and Recreation Committee Meeting Minutes

February 15, 2024 at 6:00 pm

**Recording:** Yes

**Attendees:** Dave Sukau, JJ Duehren, Ian Holzworth, Mike Sykes, Terry Brooks, Scottie Meinke, Mayor Joe Backus, Jeannet Santiago, Paul Fidrych

**Absent:** Bryan Hammond, Nathan Haner

### **Call to Order**

- The meeting was called to order at 6:00 by Chair Mike Sykes.

#### **1.1. Meeting Agenda**

- Approved

#### **1.2. Meeting Minutes**

- Approved

### **2. Old Business**

#### **2.1. Grabhorn Update**

- Dave gave an update on the Grabhorn update. He explained Council would not move forward until they could develop a larger strategy, given how expensive the park would be.
- JJ said she thought Council and the Mayor were waiting to see if the Grabhorn update was in line with the Parks Master Plan. She expressed that the City should still go for the grant based on the \$750k match, and simply prioritize spending based on that amount.
- Dave explained that the grant is only part of the problem, and that the City does not have funds to do basic amenities and infrastructure work. He suggested waiting until the City has enough money to get a higher grant amount using cash to match. Dave also explained that the amount of money the grant would provide would only cover very basic amenities like street improvements.
- JJ asked if the gas tax money could be used to build the road, and Dave said no, because it is a county road.
- Mike Sykes stated that Grabhorn was one of the SPRC's goals, and he wishes that the SPRC had been able to discuss the budget issues before it went to council, and that he feels that he wasted his time.
- Scottie stated that she was under the impression that Grabhorn wasn't entirely off the table, but that the City was going to wait in order to do the project right the first time.
- Jeannet Santiago responded by asking whether the map of Grabhorn shown to the SPRC in their meetings on Grabhorn was not the same as the Grabhorn plan included in the Parks MP.
- Dave clarified that was not true, and the plans were the same.
- Mayor Backus then responded to Mike that although the SPRC had advised moving forward on Grabhorn, the funds are not available. Council did not feel that they should take on debt



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at this point without prioritizing the projects in the Parks MP. There is still an opportunity to go for the grant using the purchase price next year (2025). Mayor Backus also explained that taking on debt to create the park would require a loan repayment of \$200,000, and there is no indication where that money would come from. They want to explore other options before going into debt.

- Ian stated that the SPRC has done a lot of work on Grabhorn, and encouraged Council to prioritize Grabhorn. He would like to see a plan with a timeline for completing Grabhorn.
- Dave stated that he is in agreement, and that is where the Council and staff are going with Grabhorn. If the City were to move forward with Grabhorn now, they would not be able to build anything else for 20 years until the loan is paid off.
- Paul stated that he disagreed that the design shown to Council was not the same design shown to the SPRC. While he was speaking, Dave showed screenshots of the SPRC meeting with the Grabhorn design, as well as the Grabhorn design shown to Council. They agreed it was the same image, and that Paul was incorrect. Paul also questioned why the roads and parking lots were so expensive.
- Mayor Backus asked if it was possible to do this project in phases, and whether it were feasible to apply for the grant based on the first phase of work, ex. a trail, part of a parking lot, and some dirt work, then going out for another grant for Phase 2, and so on.
- JJ agreed, and suggested that getting the park completed might depend on doing it in phases. She recommended that the City prioritize what they want from the park, and phase the project.
- Jeannet suggested that Council do a work session with SPRC once the Parks MP is completed.
- Ian stated that he would like to explore the two options, applying for the grant this year vs. doing the project piecemeal
- Mayor Backus clarified that the grant would deplete the City for many years until it is totally paid off. Doing the project in stages would allow for other projects to move forward at the same time.
- Mike said that he liked the idea of doing a trail, restroom and parking area at Grabhorn for now. He expressed that he would like the City to go for the grant for \$750k.
- Dave responded that the \$750k would not even cover the frontage improvements, let alone actual amenities. He explained that Council and staff had discussed putting disc golf on the site as a low-cost, short term amenity.
- JJ said that she wants the SPRC to be included in these discussions in the future.
- Dave responded that the SPRC is an advisory committee, and does not have to be involved with every single decision, nor are their decisions binding. They need to understand their role.
- Mike stated that their role is also to be advocates.
- Mayor Backus added that it's the SPRC's job to do tasks that Council assigns them, and that their advice is taken into account but not necessarily followed.
- Jeannet stated that Council values the input of SPRC, and stressed thinking outside the box and getting creative regarding the park, and working with the resources already at the City's disposal.
- Dave stated that the City has not recovered from Concomly, and new construction has slowed, so there is not a lot of SDC money.



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- Mayor Backus explained that going after a grant for part of the park is probably not feasible, and staff should wait until they can apply for the entire thing.
- The group agreed to have a work session and potentially scale down the project.
- Terry offered to do volunteer mowing at the Commerce property, but Dave clarified that that cannot be mowed because it is wetlands.

### **3. New Business**

#### **3.1. Earth Day and Outdoor Festival – JJ**

- EARTH DAY: JJ started off by stating that she is hearing back from sponsors right now, including Bi-Mart and Next Adventure, Columbia River PUD, Ace Hardware, Les Schwab for Earth Day
- The Mayor stated the PD is interested in serving hot dogs and hamburgers this year.
- The schedule for Earth Day will be a cleanup in the morning from 8-10, then the festival will begin at 10. Burgers and hot dogs will be served 12-3. Live music from The Decades.
- JJ asked if anyone would like to volunteer, and stressed the importance of volunteers.
- Jeannet asked if JJ would share the date and how to volunteer for the record
- JJ stated that there is a Facebook page, and the library is also promoting the event. She is planning on giving out swag bags for free, and the vendors will give out swag. There will be a giveaway for electric tools and an electric bike.
- OUTDOOR FESTIVAL: JJ confirmed that Outdoor festival is a go, and she will also be continuing Movies in the Park.

### **4. Announcements and General Discussion**

#### **4.1. Grants**

- JJ brought up the possibility of SPRC members writing grants for the City because Mike and JJ have experience with grant writing.
- Terry expressed frustration that he has tried to help the City but has been turned down at every turn, and he is not excited about writing grants.
- The rest of the committee stated they were willing to do this.
- The Mayor expressed that he would like to continue to look into this because it is a more complicated process, and that it may be possible for the committee to send grant opportunities to staff, but shied away from the committee writing grants themselves.
- JJ clarified that the SPRC form a grant writing subcommittee, and have Council approve it.
- The Mayor asked Dave how the grant process works.
- Dave stated that staff do follow up on grants, but that the search for grants needs to be focused, because not all grants fit the City's needs. Additionally, he stated that the previous City Manager was against committee members writing grants, but there is limited staffing and limited staff time to apply for grants. He welcomes the SPRC sending grants to staff, but asks that they be vetted before sending them.
- JJ put forth a motion that they form a grant committee, formulate a plan and take that to PW and City Council.
- Mike suggested that grant opportunities be brought to the SPRC during regular meetings for discussion.



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- Paul stated that some of the recreation grants are very simple. He applies for grants for his organization, and they are relatively short and simple. They may be time sensitive, but they are readily available.
- JJ again put forth a motion to form a grant subcommittee.
- The Mayor stated that he is not clear if they are able to form a subcommittee, but the SPRC can put an agenda item on Council's desk that would approve the SPRC to explore grants.
- Ian suggested simply adding an agenda item to all meetings going forward to discuss grants instead of forming a subcommittee.
- Scottie agreed, given that the SPRC is a small committee.
- JJ made a motion to form a subcommittee for grant writing within the SPRC again. She stated that she does not think they are required to go to Council to create a subcommittee.
- Mayor Backus balked at this and stated he would research whether or not subcommittees could be formed by a committee.
- The group agreed to keep the grants discussion within the wider committee and not form a subcommittee.

#### **4.2. General Discussion**

- The conversation went back to pickleball. Paul stated he would send Dave some resources, as well as touch base with Dave re: disc golf opportunities. f

#### **4.3. Next Meetings**

- March 21, 2024
- April 18, 2024
- May 16, 2024

#### **Meeting Adjourned at 7:42 pm.**

For questions about these minutes, contact Charlotte Baker, 503.543.8404 [cbaker@scappoose.gov](mailto:cbaker@scappoose.gov)  
The SPRC conducts its meetings in an ADA accessible room. If special accommodations are needed, please contact City Recorder Susan Reeves at 503.543.7146. TTY 503.378.5938