

Public Works Director David Vorse opened the July 18, 2012 Park Board Meeting at 6:07 p.m. In attendance were Park Board Commissioners: Linda Moody and Roy Henson. Also present was Public Works Secretary Barbara Roller.

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Henson made a motion, seconded by Moody to approve minutes of the February 15, 2012 Regular Park Board meeting. By roll call vote, unanimous Aye.

Riverfront Trail Enhancement Project

Vorse detailed the Riverfront Trail Enhancement Project. An application has been submitted to the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) for a Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) – Trails grant. The final presentation of this grant application will be in Olympia on August 15th. Project evaluations will be available in September. This project will add .63 miles of new trail and amenities to enhance the pedestrian and bicycle experience on the Riverfront Trail System. This is a grant to improve recreation opportunities.

The Riverfront Trail Enhancement Project is a combination of 4 enhancements on the Riverfront Trail System.

Two are trail extensions:

1. The Westside Trail Extension includes development of 3 acres on the west side of the Cowlitz River into a nature area with a meandering gravel trail which will accommodate a leisurely stroll or a picnic. Other elements include viewpoints, picnic shelter, interpretative signage and a bench. Environmental enhancement components are not eligible for funding with this recreational trails grant.
2. The Exit 49 Trail Connection will provide a connecting link to the Riverfront Trail System. This trail segment will be highly visible from our uptown business district at I-5 Exit 49. This trail extension will connect to the trail system at Cowlitz View Court with a switchback to street elevation. Parking for this new trailhead is readily available across the street at the WSDOT Park and Ride. A kiosk and picnic shelter will serve to entice visitors to take a break, grab a bite and possibly venture a stroll along our beautiful trail system. Once discovered this could easily become a regular destination.

The other two are restroom improvements:

1. The North Trailhead Improvements will add a restroom to this popular Riverfront Trail access site. Utilities were previously extended to the restroom site. Other elements include a picnic table and bench to sit and enjoy the view of the deep green Cowlitz River & watch for a fish to roll.
2. Riverfront Trail / Bike Park Improvements will add a 2 stall vaulted restroom at this central location. This element includes finishing touches such as paved parking with access driveway, bike racks and landscaping.

In response to a question from Commissioner Henson, Vorse clarified that the Park Board and Chamber of Commerce will be asked to collaborate on design of welcoming features at the Exit 49 Trail Connection. A 'Welcome to Castle Rock' sign may be installed or painted on the side of the existing pump house. A landscaping design that incorporates the Park and Ride will be needed. WSDOT limits signs along state routes to one for each direction (1 northbound and 1 southbound). Design of the Exit 49 Connection components should strive to inspire travelers to visit our community. The site is located on WSDOT property which the city maintains. However, WSDOT will lease this property to the city if awarded WWRP funding, as required by RCO. Plans incorporate a picnic shelter and kiosk with an informational map that includes streets and the trail system. Sponsors could have business details identified on the map. Commissioner Henson expressed support for this component.

WSDOT Pedestrian and Bicycle Program

Vorse detailed an application submitted to the Washington State Department of Transportation for a Pedestrian and Bicycle Program grant. This program provides funding for alternative methods of transportation. Elements of this application include:

- The Exit 49 Connection which connects the trail system to the west side of I-5, across from the Park and Ride.

This project also includes pedestrian / bicycle improvements on the east side of I-5 along both the north and south sides of Mt. St. Helens Way.

- The asphalt path on the south (Gateway) side will be next to the curb.
- The asphalt path on the north (Burger King) side will have a median separation from the street.

Skate Park

Vorse reports that an application submitted to the Association of Washington Cities Risk Management Service Agency for a Loss Control Grant was awarded \$500 to purchase surface panels for the skate ramps.

Christian Church Youth Pastor Joel Royce and the youth group has completed assembly of the Hipped ¼ Pipe Ramp. This ramp still needs to be set in its' final position. This group, under Royce's leadership, has completed numerous community projects this year. They weeded the Community Garden, painted Hatties and completed various projects for the Fire Department.

Memorial

Commissioners concurred that they would like a tree with a memorial plaque planted along Memory Lane at Michner Volunteer Park to honor Park Board Commissioner Lynda Frantsvog. The exterior, vandal resistant plaque is approximately 4" by 6". Commissioner Moody suggests contacting Lynda's son Daniel to discuss the inscription on the plaque. Vorse will contact the Mayor to ascertain if the city can contribute towards this purchase.

Park Board Representatives

Public Works Director David Vorse specified that the Park Board remains two members short. Vorse requests names for the Mayor's consideration to fill this vacant position. Roller noted that Tom Byrne, Jeff Skeie and Pete Meyers were suggested for consideration to fill the vacant positions during a previous meeting. Commissioner Henson hopes to encourage a woman or young person to join the board.

Word has been received that the High School Representative to the Park Board has moved away. A new student representative will be appointed this fall.

Events

- The Fair parade will be held on Thursday.
- Vorse reports that Mountain Mania will have a farmer's market theme this year. The car show will be held at The Rock Church. Numerous entertainers are scheduled to perform. A few out of town vendors will provide snacks. Meals will be available at five local eateries which will advertise event specials on outdoor laminated menus. Seven eateries were offered this option.
- The America In Bloom Judges Reception will be held on July 30th. The judges will provide an outside perspective on this community inspiring achievement aimed towards attracting visitors.
- The Rock-n-Bloom Tour will tour an abundance of blossoms at 5 or 6 local residences.
- A ladies bicycling group will hold a Ladies Training Camp at the Bike Park on August 4th. Bicyclists will be coached on and have the opportunity to practice various skills. It is anticipated that this will become an annual event. Approximately 200 women plan to attend the 2 day camp next year.
- The Bike Park Grand Opening will be held on Saturday September 22nd. Growlers Gulch Racing will demonstrate park features. Youths will be invited to play and rewarded with stickers and ribbons. The North County Recreation Association will provide lunch and speak. Bike Park Coordinator Jim LeMonds is organizing the event. Growlers Gulch Racing has also been busy working on Trail 211 around Coldwater Lake. With more trails riders are inspired to stay longer.

2013 Budget

Vorse noted that he is working on 2013 budget. Commissioners are requested to bring their Park Plan to the next meeting to help determine possible projects for the upcoming year.

Benches and Water Fountain

Vorse specified that a new water fountain was installed on Cowlitz Street W at Front Avenue. Cowlitz County Health Department Health Educator Jenn Schapman secured funding for this donation.

In response to a question from Commissioner Moody, Vorse specified that 5 new benches will be installed on Cowlitz St W. Cascade Natural Gas is partnering with the Senior Center to purchase one of the new brown benches. The memorial benches that were removed for the Cowlitz St W Revitalization Project will be placed along the trail. The memorial benches were purchased by individuals who also had the 4" by 6" plaque engraved.

Riverfront Trail Extension Project

Vorse clarified that a few items remain for completion of the Riverfront Trail Extension Project:

- A bench will must be installed at the platform.
- A couple more "windows" need to be cut.
- Students will perform restorative work on Janisch Creek.

Lions Pride Park

Vorse reports that on June 19th vandalism damage was discover at Lions Pride Park. Approximately 2000 feet of #6 copper ground wire (from The Rock to the bridge) was stolen. Commissioner Henson pointed out that the perpetrator(s) must have use a truck and winch to accomplish this extensive of a theft which would require a significant period of time. Vorse clarified that insurance will reimburse for the damage. Hamer Electric has been awarded the contract for repairs. For this type of repair, the remaining wires must be pulled and the whole system rewired, per Labor & Industry requirements. To access the wire, the perpetrator(s) defeated the tamper resistant screws which damaged 19 electric boxes. One "hot" wire was also cut. In response to a question from Commissioner Henson, Vorse estimated the damage at approximately \$8,000 to \$10,000. Vorse explained that police assessed that the wire was gone about a week before it was discovered and most likely bartered like a commodity until it reaches a community where it can be sold as scrap metal.

Commissioner Henson thanked Public Works for a great job preparing LPP for the Fourth of July. Trees have been trimmed around the electric sensors that control the lights. Commissioner Moody added that tourists have compliment on how beautiful LPP is.

Metropolitan Park District

Vorse noted that he continues to meet with Cowlitz County Maintenance Director Ron Junker, City of Kalama Public Works Director Carl McCrary and City of Longview Park and Recreation Director Richard Bemm on park funding options. A 501c3 nonprofit group may be eligible of grants and can make donations to parks and park projects. Pathways 2020 is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of life in Cowlitz County with a mission to promote and improve the health and wellbeing in Cowlitz County. We may collaborate with this organization of park projects.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Vorse adjourned the meeting at 7:06 p.m.