

Parks Advisory Committee Minutes

April 08, 2013

Members Present: Pat Hoover, Damien Gilbert, Larry Dunlap, Carlos Alvarez
Members Absent: None
Staff Present: Mike Russell, Howard Schussler, Sam Fox
Guests Present: None

Committee Chair Pat Hoover called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

- I. **Public Comment** – No public present.
- II. **Approval of Minutes, Announcement/Agenda Modifications** – Committee member Larry Dunlap disagreed with a prior meeting statement which said “all members approved and supported fee changes as discussed” in the February meeting. At that time, Sr. Budget Analyst, David Stockdale presented the committee information which showed several suggested changes to the current fee structure for LCP. One of those items included a robust discussion related to discounts allowed to disabled military Veterans and the options for future changes in those fees or discounts. Much information was provided by both staff and committee members, with the Parks Manager stating that he and Mr. Stockdale will take all of it under consideration. At the close of that discussion, committee members were comfortable giving their support of the proposed fee structure changes. During tonight’s meeting, Mr. Dunlap again requested clarification regarding proposed changes to Veteran’s discounted parking passes. After further discussion, Mr. Dunlap was satisfied that his comments had been acknowledged and would be considered by LCP staff before further actions regarding fee changes.

All committee members in attendance were in agreement to approve meeting minutes for November and December 2013 as well as the minutes from January and February 2014, and made a motion and voted to support Parks department fee changes beginning in the 2014 season if approved by the County Commissioners. The March meeting was cancelled therefor there are no minutes for March 2014.

Motion: Larry Dunlap

Second: Damien Gilbert

No further discussion.

Motion passed unanimously (4 in favor, 0 opposed)

III. PAC 2012 Accomplishments & 2013-2014 Work Plan – The 2012 list of accomplishments and 2013-2014 work plan (PAC Committee Goals) was reviewed with suggested changes made. A motion was made to approve the 2013/14 work plan.

Motion: Damien Gilbert

Second: Larry Dunlap

No further discussion.

Motion passed unanimously (4 in favor, 0 opposed)

IV. PAC Tour – Several suggestions were made for the annual Parks tour which typically replaces the June scheduled PAC meeting. Locations suggested included the Meadowlark savannah restoration area at HBRA and coordinating the tour with the Friends of Buford Park, a tour of Camp Lane, and a visit to the Three Mile Prairie area in Florence. After discussion, it was suggested that the tour be postponed until September in hopes the committee would be successful in filling the three currently vacant committee positions so new members could be involved in visiting the Park system, and also if the coastal locations were chosen, destinations such as Camp Lane would be at full occupancy during June and unavailable to tour. It was agreed that the June meeting would be a regularly scheduled meeting to take place in the Goodpasture Room at the Customer Service Center and the park tour would be discussed in more detail at that time.

V. Staff Reports

- **PAC Vacancies** – Mr. Russell has continued to contact Commissioners Stewart, Farr, and Bozievich and has offered to place advertisements to fill the vacancies on the PAC committee, however, he has not seen much movement so far. Mr. Russell will continue to work with the Commissioners to accomplish this goal.
- **2013 Calendar of Upcoming Events** – Mr. Russell presented a handout to PAC members of the Parks website detailing a calendar of large events which will be happening during the 2013 season. The calendar represents some returning venues such as Faerieworlds and Dirty Dash, as well as two new events, and one additional event currently in contract negotiations for later this summer. Committee members are encouraged to check the Parks website at www.lanecounty.org/Departments/PW/Parks/Pages/ParksEventsIndex to learn more about upcoming events.
- **New Campground Reservation Software** – Mr. Russell discussed the new campground reservation system that Parks is working on. The new system is called CAMAVA and is currently being tested on office staff. Staff is working with the software developer to design a system that is more up-to-date and user friendly, while also being a secure system for credit card transactions. The new CAMAVA system will also enable Park Rangers and other campground staff the use of the reservation and point-of-sale system and better assist our customers outside of office hours.
- **Fee Changes** – Mr. Russell handed out a proposal summary of fee changes effective July 2013 and went over the proposed changes with the committee. During this discussion, Chair Hoover asked for an overview on the staff visit to Salem in February where various park district

representatives throughout the state are requesting a more equitable distribution of recreational vehicle fees between state parks and other districts such as Lane County. If the distribution were reworked as hoped for, the amount directed to Lane County could be as high as \$120,000 annually. Mr. Russell explained that this additional funding is not currently calculated into the proposed budget since nothing has been voted on or approved at this time. If funds do become come through, Mr. Russell said he would like to allocate monies to increase park maintenance services and begin to restore staff levels in order to better support the Lane County Park system. Mr. Dunlap asked if current funding will allow for adequate compliance staffing to canvas park locations to monitor whether park users display a parking pass indicating that they've paid to use the park and issue violation notices when necessary. Mr. Russell confirmed that compliance staffing is part of the annual budget each year and the benefits of having this presence in the parks is crucial not only for revenue funding but also to provide a visual presence which helps to enforce a safer environment for park users.

Ms. Hoover also asked for an update on the St. Vincent De Paul (SVDP) program which is working with parks staff to place individuals in the SVDP homeless camper program as camp hosts within Lane County parks that benefit from having a security presence at the site. Mr. Russell suggested this item be placed on next month's agenda since the six-month contract time limit is about to expire and he would be able to give a more detailed update at that time. PAC members were in agreement with postponing discussion on this topic until next month's meeting. Ms. Hoover also asked for an update on Whitely Park since the alcohol ban has been in effect for several months now. Mr. Russell advised that although there have been a couple of reports of park users drinking alcohol at the park in spite of the ban, he reported that once approached by a Ranger, the person complied by pouring out the drink. There have not been any reports of repeated offenses. Ms. Hoover asked if there had been interest shown by any neighborhood groups to help with maintenance. Mr. Russell said that he had not been contacted by anyone, nor had heard anything via park Rangers or parks staff who routinely clean and canvas this park. Mr. Russell did offer that the Whitely location may be a good place to set up a camp host through the SVDP program as a security presence but that provisions would need to be made at that location to accommodate an RV since there is no water or electricity available there.

- VI. Good of the Order** – Park Manager Mike Russell reported that approximately 40 personnel from the US Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) recently conducted an inspection and training exercise of the Fern Ridge area Corps parks locations which are leased to Lane County Parks (LCP). The Corps inspected the campground, day use areas, caretaker house, sewage lagoon and tower, and the marina, and although there were a few minor issues that needed to be addressed, the inspection resulted in an excellent review from the top inspectors.

Chair Hoover inquired whether LCP had addressed any of the security concerns that were presented by moorage holders at the fall meetings such as bathroom lighting and vegetation issues. Mr. Russell replied that considerable time had been spent at Orchard Point last month clearing trees and other vegetation, and replacing all of the bathroom roofs and removing obscured skylights which will also help

avoid maintenance problems and leak issues, and also added electrical wiring that allowed for upgraded lighting to the restroom areas. A marina host location was also created with the electrical upgrade and LCP has signed a contract with a volunteer host to live at the site and provide a security presence around the marina and restroom area, help clean the bathrooms, pick up litter, greet the public, and sell parking passes as needed.

Mr. Dunlap brought up the suggestion of supplying uniforms and hats to park volunteers and committee members so that as park users enjoy the parks they can feel comfortable approaching someone in uniform or identified as a park volunteer to share ideas or comments about the parks. The concept of Park Watch, which is a program offered through the Mt. Pisgah Arboretum, where volunteers from the community donate their time to canvas parking lots to provide a security presence, document observances during their shift, and answer questions and provide directions as needed, was explained to the committee. Howard Schussler suggested providing a LCP hat and reflective orange vest to volunteers similar to Park Watch for others who desire making themselves identifiable and approachable in the parks. Mr. Schussler and Mr. Russell also cautioned that not all park users have favorable or complimentary responses to someone wearing a uniform so the idea of a hat and vest was more favorable to Mr. Dunlap's suggestion rather than a Park Ranger uniform with badge, etc.

VII. Adjourn – The meeting was adjourned at 7:12 p.m. The next meeting will be May 13th.