

W. D. C.

Memorandum Date: March 18, 2010
Order Date: April 7, 2010

TO: Board of County Commissioners
DEPARTMENT: Public Works/Parks
PRESENTED BY: Todd Winter, Parks Director
AGENDA ITEM TITLE: Discussion/In the Matter of Options for Discount for Disabled Veterans on Annual Park Passes

I. MOTION

Discussion/In the Matter of Options for Discount for Disabled Veterans on Annual Park Passes.

II. AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

This is a discussion item that explores the options of the Lane County Parks Division implementing a discounted fee on park passes for Lane County's annual park passes – All-Parks and Howard Buford Recreation Area (HBRA) passes for disabled veterans.

III. BACKGROUND/IMPLICATIONS OF ACTION

A. Board Action and Other History

The Board of County Commissioners and the Parks Division have received feedback from veterans over the past several years asking why Lane County does not provide a discount to disabled veterans on annual park passes. Parks staff was asked to explore the possible options and impacts each option could have on the Parks Division budget if implemented. As a starting point, research was done to find out what other recreation agencies, the Oregon Department of Motor Vehicles and the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife is providing in the way of a discount to veterans. Research found that:

Currently, the Oregon Parks & Recreation Department under OAR 736-015-0035 (4) (b) waives the day use parking fee to U.S. veterans with a service connected disability or active duty U.S. military personnel on leave as provided in ORS 390.124. According to OPRD's policy and procedures, documentation by a Federal agency such as the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs or military issued I.D. has to be provided at time of issue and must be done in person.

The Federal Government, under Bill H.R. 3283 passed in December 2004, allows the National Parks and Federal Recreation Land agencies to issue veterans with permanent disabilities a free lifetime pass to federal recreation sites. Documentation by a Federal agency such as the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has to be provided at time of issue and as to be done in person at a facility that sells/issues America the Beautiful – National Parks and Federal Recreation Lands Passes.

Currently, the Oregon Department of Motor Vehicles has multiple programs for disabled veterans. Under ORS 805.100, disabled veterans may qualify for discounted vehicle registrations. The special registration provisions include a one-time registration fee for veterans with a service-related disability who have been discharged or released under honorable conditions from the Armed Forces of the United States, and whose service was for not less than 90 consecutive days or who were discharged or released on account of service-connected injuries or illnesses prior to the completion of the minimum period of service. A person qualifies as a disabled veteran under this ORS if the person presents a letter from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs or any branch of the Armed Forces of the United States certifying that the person is a disabled veteran.

Each household with a disabled veteran is eligible for one registration/registered vehicle per disabled veteran. The department may suspend or revoke any registration issued under this section if the department determines that the vehicle is owned by a person not qualified for registration under this section or the vehicle is a kind not qualified for registration under this section.

Currently, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) under OAR 635-010-0157 offers no-fee hunting and fishing licenses to veterans who have a 25% disability rating from the Veterans Administration. Under this program, the license remains valid so long as the veteran remains an Oregon resident.

Currently, per Lane Manual 18.115 (6), the Lane County Parks Division issues a 50% discount to seniors who have obtained a Senior America the Beautiful – National Parks and Federal Recreation Lands Pass. The pass has to be provided at time of purchasing either a Lane County Parks All Parks or Howard Buford Recreation Area pass to receive the 50% discount and as to be done in person at a facility that sells Lane County's passes.

B. Policy Issues

Policy and practice has historically been to maintain fees as low as possible as that access to parks remains available to all residents and visitors regardless of one's ability to pay. Options for discount for disabled veterans are being presented

due to feedback from disabled veterans in Lane County. Per Lane Manual 18.115 (6), the Lane County Parks Division provides a 50% discount to seniors. If implemented, a discount for disabled veterans would be similar and consistent with the senior discount program.

C. Board Goals

The possible implementation of a discount for disabled veterans on park passes is directly related to #2 of the Lane County Goals for 2008-2010. Goal #2 is to provide outstanding customer/constituent service. Staff is presenting options due to the direct feedback from disabled veterans in Lane County. The request to consider options for a discount for disabled veterans is consistent with strategic plan element D2 (a). The options consider that Lane County Government will assure that fair and reasonable user fees are established and collected where the usage of the service is affected by consumer choice.

D. Financial and/or Resource Considerations

Staff does not believe that this discount, and possible revenue losses, will negatively impact park operations.

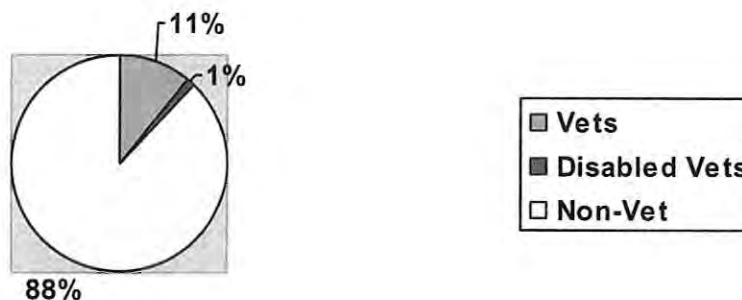
E. Analysis

2009 Lane County Veteran Statistics:

According to Lane County Health and Human Services, Division of Veteran's Services, for 2009 approximately 38,000 veterans live in Lane County. Of those, approximately 10% have service-related disabilities according to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Based on that assumption or estimate, approximately 3,800 veterans in Lane County may qualify as being disabled.

Each veteran that has disability status receives a letter from the VA. The letter is titled "Entitlement Letter" and issued to each veteran individually with specific information about their disability. The letter is issued on U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs letterhead. Other agencies such as ORPD, the DMV, and ODFW require a veteran to provide written certification from the VA or any branch of the U.S. Armed Forces that they are disabled, and if needed, what percent disability rating has been issued by the VA.

Lane County Veterans Population



2009 Lane County Annual Park Pass Sales:

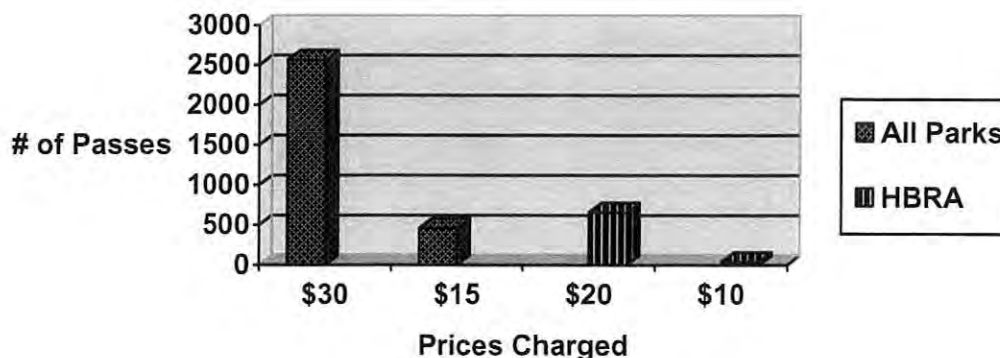
To calculate the percentage of each type of pass sold by the Lane County Parks Division for 2009, actual sales data were used.

For 2009, the Parks Division sold the following for annual passes:

- 68.9% of passes sold at \$30 All-Parks passes
- 12.4% of passes sold at \$15 All-Parks passes (50% Senior Discount)
- 17.7% of passes sold at \$20 HBRA-Only passes
- 1.0% of passes sold at \$10 HBRA-Only passes (50% Senior Discount)

Total Revenue from Passes = \$97,358.00 (per Parks Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for 2009)

2009 Lane County Park Passes Sold



F. Alternatives/Options

The following options are listed for consideration after researching what discounts are provided by other agencies.

1. A 50% discount on Lane County's annual passes offered to disabled veterans with at least a 25% disability rating. One per household for each disabled veteran in the household. Passes available for purchase from the Lane County Parks Office in person only. Documentation by a Federal agency such as the VA stating disability rating must be presented at time of issue.
2. Free Lane County annual passes issued to disabled veterans with a 100% disability rating, AND 50% discount on Lane County's annual passes given to disabled veterans only with at least a 25% disability rating. One per household for each disabled veteran in the household. Passes available for purchase from the Lane County Parks Office in person only. Documentation by a Federal agency such as the VA stating disability rating must be presented at time of issue.
3. Make no change to the current policies and fees.

IV. TIMING/IMPLEMENTATION

If the Board of County Commissioners selects option 2, implementation for the public will be immediate with Lane Manual changes included in attached Board Order. If the Board of County Commissioners selects another option, staff will implement as soon as possible subsequent to direction.

V. RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends option 2, which was also supported by the Parks Advisory Committee and the Finance and Audit Committee. The following items were considered when making this recommendation: Impact to the overall 09/10 and 10/11 Parks budgets, fees and discounts already implemented by the Parks Division, the cost of each option, ease of implementation, and public perception.

VI. FOLLOW-UP

If the Board of County Commissioners selects option 2, implementation for the public will be immediate with Lane Manual changes included in attached Board Order. If the Board of County Commissioners selects another option, staff will implement as soon as possible subsequent to direction.

VII. ATTACHMENTS

Board Order
Lane Manual Changes

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF LANE COUNTY, OREGON

ORDER NO. 10- _____

IN THE MATTER OF AMENDING CHAPTER 18
OF LANE MANUAL TO ADD DISCOUNTED
ANNUAL PARKS PASS PROVISIONS FOR
DISABLED VETERANS (LM 18.115)

The Board of County Commissioners of Lane County orders as follows:

Lane Manual Chapter 18 is hereby amended by removing and substituting the following sections:

REMOVE THESE SECTIONS

18.115
as located on pages 18-3 through 18-4
(a total of 2 pages)

INSERT THESE SECTIONS

18.115
as located on pages 18-3 through 18-4
(a total of 2 pages)

Said pages are attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference. The purpose of these substitutions is to add discounted annual parks pass provisions for disabled veterans. (LM 18.115).

Adopted this _____ day of _____ 2010.

Chair, Lane County Board of Commissioners

APPROVED AS TO FORM

Date 3/15/10 Lane County

OFFICE OF LEGAL COUNSEL

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Bold indicates material being added

Strikethrough indicates material being deleted

18.115

Lane Manual

LEGISLATIVE

FORMAT

18.115

Monthly.....	\$ 68.00
Weekly.....	\$ 23.00
Daily.....	\$ 8.00
Double Berth (10' wide)	
Seasonal.....	\$ 355.00
Monthly.....	\$ 95.00
Weekly.....	\$ 33.00
Daily.....	\$ 11.00
Double Berth (12'6" wide)	
Seasonal.....	\$ 415.00
Monthly.....	\$ 113.00
Weekly.....	\$ 39.00
Daily.....	\$ 3.00
Single Berth (10' wide)	
Seasonal.....	\$ 415.00
Monthly.....	\$ 113.00
Weekly.....	\$ 39.00
Daily.....	\$ 13.00
Richardson Park	
Single Berth (8' wide)	
Seasonal.....	\$ 335.00
Monthly.....	\$ 89.00
Weekly.....	\$ 31.00
Daily.....	\$ 10.00
Single Berth (9' wide)	
Seasonal.....	\$ 335.00
Monthly.....	\$ 95.00
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Daily.....	\$ 13.00
Use of Pump Out Station.....	\$ 2.00

(g) Special Use Permits

Administrative processing fee\$ 20.00

(2) The Board delegates to the Parks Manager the authority as the Board's duly-authorized agent to negotiate with groups and organizations the payment of user fees on a lump sum or flat rate basis in lieu of the established fee schedule as long as such payment provides revenue at least equal to that which would accrue through application of the fee schedule. The Parks Manager has authority to negotiate a lesser fee with non-profit youth service organizations in exchange for services within the park system. (Revised by Order No. 00-2-9-4; Effective 2.9.00; 03-4-30-4, 5.7.03; 05-12-14-11, 12.14.05; 06-3-15-10, 3.15.06; 07-3-21-6, 3.21.07)

18.115 Parking Fees.

(1) Parking fees shall be charged year round for all hours for which the park is open, in accordance with the fee schedule described in LM 18.110 above.

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18.115

Lane Manual

LEGISLATIVE
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18.115

(2) A parking fee shall be paid for all vehicles, including motorcycles and motorbikes, entering a park except as follows:

(a) Vehicles belonging to the Corps of Engineers or Lane County, its agents and concessionaires (including their personal guests),

(b) Vehicles belonging to an agency providing public transportation service to a park,

(c) Vehicles exhibiting a weekly or monthly moorage rental receipt,

(d) Vehicles exhibiting a valid Lane County campsite rental receipt,

(e) Vehicles exhibiting a season or group event parking permit,

(f) Vehicles parking at designated roadside safety rest area parking spaces and in compliance with posted time limits.

(3) The following parking permits will be issued:

(a) Season Pass - Allows admission to all County parks. Pass must be affixed to vehicle windshield or clearly displayed on dashboard. Howard Buford Recreation Area Season Pass is valid only at Howard Buford Recreation Area.

(b) Group Event Parking - Organizations holding group picnics or other events may choose to pay parking for their members. Permits will be purchased in advance by the organization and distributed to the group. Payment will be made in advance of the event in accordance with the number of permits purchased. All vehicles will be required to display a valid parking permit.

(4) No refunds are given for season passes.

(5) Replacement season passes will only be issued upon written notification to the Parks Manager detailing the circumstances under which the pass was lost, destroyed, or stolen. The pass holder will certify that the replacement pass will not be transferred to another party and that the replacement pass will be returned to the Parks Division if the original pass is found.

(6) A discount of fifty percent (50%) will be credited to the person paying for a season pass if they provide a valid Golden Age Passport issued by the federal government. The person paying for the season pass must present the Golden Age Passport to the park staff at the time of purchase to receive the discount.

(7) One or more persons may perform pre-approved volunteer services for the Parks division and receive a seasonal vehicle pass. A minimum of 15 hours per vehicle pass shall be documented by and furnished to the Parks division to qualify for this pass.

(8) Free annual pass issued to disabled veterans who have been awarded a one hundred percent (100%) disability rating from the U.S. Veterans Administration, and a discount of fifty percent (50%) on an annual pass credited to disabled veterans who have been awarded at least a twenty five percent (25%) disability rating from the U.S. Veterans Administration. One annual pass per household per year for each disabled veteran in the household. Passes available for issue/purchase from the Lane County Parks Office in person only. Documentation by a Federal agency such as the Veterans Administration stating disability rating must be presented at time of issue/purchase.

(Revised by Order No. 00-2-9-4; Effective 2.9.00; 03-4-30-4, 5.7.03; 06-3-15-10, 3.15.06; 07-3-21-6, 3.21.07; 07-8-1-3, 8.1.07)

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