



Clackamas County Parks and Forest Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes, Tuesday, June 20, 2023

Barton Park
6pm

Members Present: Rob Smoot, Justin Ostrander, Bill Street, Dan Green, Louise Lopes, Walter Hull, Tom Hester, Mike Ferrell

Members Absent: Dana Hindman-Allen, Eric Pfeiffer-Robinson, Molly McKnight, Morgan Parks, Don Morgan, Brent Keller, Chad Parker

Staff Present: Tom Riggs, Mark Shaw, Sandy Weijland, Thomas Gray, Chris Dannenbring, Andrew Dobmeier, Lisa Harman, Dan Johnson

Commissioners Present: Commissioner Mark Shull

Citizens Present: Oksana Bell

I. Call To Order

Justin Ostrander called the meeting to order at 6:11pm

II. Community Input

None, but Tom Riggs said mostly positive reports from our “Happy or Not” surveys, and a feature in the ClackCo magazine regarding new campsites, disc golf, and the new parking passes.

III. Meeting Minutes

Justin called for a motion to approve the minutes from previous meetings. The Forestry Advisory Board did not have a quorum to approve minutes. There was a call out on the Parks Advisory Boards minutes as the property discussion with Dan Johnson did not make it into the minutes. The minutes will be edited and approved at the next Parks Advisory Board Meeting. No minutes were approved.

IV. Joint Board Discussion Topics – Tom Riggs

Parks and Forestry Division Structure Ideas and Goals – At the basic level, parks and forestry is one division and helps each other, but also two when it comes to organizational charts and budgets. There are 9 people to oversee 4,200 acres of land, and over 200 campsites. It is a small and hardworking team and appreciative of board input. Last fall, the Dump Stoppers Program Coordinator resigned. The position was temporarily filled with a long-time parks employee, but the financial outlook of the program has not been good. Forestry has been subsidizing Dump Stoppers with about \$70,000 per season, and very little of the work was actually being done on county land. There were struggles with grants and funding so the decision was made to shut down the program. Dan Johnson added – We lost state and federal funding, but we have a county wide contract with rapid response, and there will still be people available to clean up dumps on county-owned lands. Tom Riggs – The Sustainability and Solid Waste Department will still fund clean-ups, but going forward only on county lands. Sustainability has been funding Dump Stoppers for many years. Forestry- Sena vacated her Engineering Tech position, and Andrew wanted to leave the position vacant and hire summer interns instead to help defray costs and influence future forestry professionals. There was a question regarding whether interns will earn school credit. Andrew Dobmeier – yes the experience will help them graduate, one is Mt. Hood community college student. Parks – Shifted to Ranger Coordinator and full time Park Ranger. Goal is to have 4 permanent full time field staff. Tom Riggs explained that the organizational chart is circular to represent the importance of team members delivering services. Although Parks and Forestry are

separate entities, there is a lot of crossover. Forestry also subsidizes parks around \$30,000, some of which is Andrew's forestry expertise on dealing with trees in the Parks. It can cost \$10,000 to have an outside vendor take down one tree. Andrew takes care of hazard trees and maintains forest health. Parks and Forestry share equipment also. Teaming up saves the taxpayers money. Forestry provides money to County Parks on an ongoing basis – cash transfers from the proceeds of timber sales this year will be \$400,000. Financial support is critical. Stone Creek was made possible by an accelerated timber harvest within Forestry. Tom Riggs and Chris Dannenbring have salaries that are split between the departments. A comment was made that this seems to be working and staff is doing a really good job. Commissioner Shull asked if we could sustain that kind of money from Forestry and Andrew noted the last timber sale was for 2 years, so the next budget might not be as much. Chris Dannenbring clarified that it ebbs and flows, and we look for grants to pay for capital projects, but the grants often need a match, and sometimes that match can come from Forestry. Dan Johnson – Transferring money to Parks was to activate a match from metro of 5.3 million. Question – Is that money designated? Tom Riggs – Yes as of 2019 bond it is designated to parks. Parks plans to utilize the metro money but must do some more public outreach. We are working with a consultant through PGA to do public outreach about the projects that the metro money will be spent on. The outreach project will cost around \$75,000, and County Tourism will help contribute to those costs. Next fiscal year we will have forestry money to leverage – primary focus will be the Feyrer park overhaul and then the Barton master plan. We want to make sure the public approves of how we will be spending it. Land acquisition is another possibility for the money. Question – If they knew we had a 180 acre plot to be developed would metro approve of that? Tom Riggs – Yes that is another possibility.

Roles of Forest Advisory Board, Parks Advisory Board, and Timber Sale Advisory Council

Forest Advisory Board (FAB) and Parks Advisory Board (PAB) differences – To serve on the FAB you must have forestry experience, while PAB members can be anyone with an interest in parks. FAB is small but there is a lot of deep technical knowledge. The PAB has 12 positions and all are filled. The role of both is to provide citizen perspective on management decisions. The Timber Sale Advisory Council (TSAC) advises only when Timber sales happen and is comprised of two Parks Advisory Board members, two Forest Advisory Board Members, and one citizen from the area where the timber harvest will take place. Three potential citizens are on a list and the individual living in the closest proximity to the sale will be invited to the meeting. The citizen provides feedback on the sale following the management plan. We appreciate this input.

Future of Parks and Forestry

What would Advisory Board members like to see?

Ideas included:

- More money/funding
- more acquisition of forest land
- enhanced risk mitigation – over our lifetime threats have changed from natural threats to social threats. For forestry, the tree we plant tomorrow will have to be able to survive in a climate 40 years from now that might be different than the climate today. It is a challenge to consider how to deliver long term revenues.
- In forestry, naturally think in 50 year increments. May need to consider more heat tolerant trees or sourcing seedlings from more heat tolerant areas, bigger question is do you change species?

Andrew Dobmeier – Doug Fir has a very wide range of growth and is very adaptable to climate change – usually we plant seed sourced from the same elevation that we are planting, Doug Fir will grow out of straight rock – we will be looking at fir that is more adaptable – the Cedar we planted is having a harder time surviving because cold winters are not killing off the beetles. We have not had those freezing temperatures in the last 5 years. We need to think and analyze and are thinking long term, even 200 years.

Justin Ostrander – How can we diversify the board to represent the people of Clackamas County, and have partnership to achieve the goal of representation? Louise Lopes Question – North Clackamas is separate yes? Tom Riggs – Yes. We do share ideas, and once had a joint services agreement where we shared an operations supervisor and a planner. We still interact with them but not in any official capacity. Resource sharing is more complicated and requires a more formal agreement.

Dan Johnson – Are we surveying people coming to the parks at all? Tom Riggs - We calculated that 21% of visitors were from out of state – recently a company showed me a product and could show a map of where people were coming from and it was all across the metro area. Some goals for County Parks are to

Additional ideas:

- install electric vehicle charging stations
- promote some additional marketing (particularly the new campsites at Metzler)

The Metzler sites are booking well so far, and the focus at Barton will be revenue producing facilities.

- Can we maybe build some yurts? Would that attract newer people or people living in apartments who don't have a lot of camping gear?

Bill – Is there a different recreation demand on the parks from the urban vs. rural population? Bill – We must cut trees to buy more land to grow more trees – fiber is revenue for parks and forestry. Urbanized populations view what we do very differently than rural populations.

Question – Can we promote low usage times at a discount to generate more revenue?

Comment – Would like to see Dump Stoppers come back – People from the County are the ones that are dumping on BLM and USFS land – if we don't get it back in a few years then we will be back where we started. Comment

Justin Ostrander and Tom Riggs – Conversation with residents is important.

Tom Riggs – We are implementing new parking fees, and Barton Area 6 will have picnic tables with shade umbrellas instead of the tent.

V. Accomplishments – Chris Dannenbring

Parks and Forestry have been busy with capital projects at Barton – The East Campground paving project was 50% funded by a grant from state. The asphalt crack seal at Barton Boat Launch was 75% funded through the Oregon Marine Board. We installed a new septic system on the Overlook property and at Eagle Fern., and we are wrapping up Boones Ferry Marina boarding dock also funded primarily with grants. We're only paying \$37,000 on project that is over \$300,000, thanks to funding from ODFW and the State Marine Board. Tom got Tourism funding to develop 15 sites at Metzler that are now open. Forestry got the Wild Trout timber sale moved forward to contract and we received the first deposit and are expecting another one – the sale came in over what Andrew's estimates were. \$1.1 million over the next 2 years on that sale – a lot of effort. We lost Dave and Sena, so there was a lot of reshuffling, and he has worked $\frac{3}{4}$ of the year on his own. Forestry now has spraying and pre-commercial thinning contracts in place.

Budget – Budget was approved – Dan said process was great – \$3.4 million for parks budget, one major capital project – Feyrer Park roadway improvement 50% funded through Oregon State Parks. Forestry is \$5 million including possible land sales of timber holdings that don't fit our portfolio and we are looking at selling. Wild Trout sale, \$400,000 transfer to parks, and some possible capital projects. Andrew's budget is simple, mostly timber sale, tree maintenance and tree planting.

Question from Bill – Are we are looking for more forestland? Chris Dannenbring – We do have funds in our budget to purchase property if we find some that fits. Dan Green – Forestry purchases are not annual but periodic and you must be set up to move when the market allows it.

Mike Ferrell – Dump Stoppers – are there penalties? Is there enforcement? Chris Dannenbring – It is hard to catch people, sometimes we have used cameras to get a plate number or something. It can be hard to identify who is doing the dumping. Dan Green – Dump Stoppers used to have a deputy, and he tracked the citations, and then they were put through the court system, but often we were not able to get money from them. Andrew Dobmeier – People are shooting on Clackamas County property when they can't get to the USFS shooting area because of snow. They are shooting tree tops and even shooting and knocking over larger trees. People are also brining out appliances to shoot at and not picking up their trash. Justin – Awareness is key and making people invested in the land is a more sustainable solution.

VI. Forestry Operational Updates – Andrew Dobmeier

We did well on our timber sale, as it was purchased by a pole buyer and the trees are more valuable as poles than as saw logs. We are finishing up salvaging last year's hazard trees. It doesn't make a whole lot of money, but gets things cleaned up and is used for a purpose, and prevents danger to the public. Spraying 177 acres due to Riverside and Beachie Creek fires – certain species of plants that come back with a vengeance after a fire, like scotch broom. We need to take care of scotch broom and blackberries to protect the young trees. We are pre-commercial thinning 139 acres, stands 12-15 years old; spacing will give the trees more sunlight to grow. We can thin them again in 50 years and let them grow to 80 to 100 years old. We are also doing some Alder and Cherry hardwood release. They grow really fast the first 20 years and they can shade out the rest of the trees. If we take them out at 5 years it gives the conifers a better chance. PGE salvage will be going through the Clackamas Quarry area. It will be a shared contract with PGE. PGE's trees are larger than ours. Summer help – 2 Mt. Hood CC interns, 1st and 2nd year. They will be doing stocking surveys, as they had some issues with survival; trees had too much vegetation and not enough root systems. Doing stand exams – timber cruising, roadside brushing, construction stuff to do. Andrew has a drone, have interns fly it to get some recent photos. Working to reforest quarry area – spraying weeds and planting.

VII. Parks Operations Update – Mark Shaw

Trail Keepers of Oregon – had a campout and brought out people for a work party and finished .5 miles of trail in one weekend at Metzler. We will likely have another event like that, and it was low impact on the park.

The new camping area at Metzler turned out very nice. Had room to space them out, very pretty with creek in the back. New docks at Boones Ferry are in! Should last for 30+ years.

Seasonal staff hiring is in the upper 60's low 70's percentage wise, but not all are started yet. We made some changes that helped, and are still tight for staffing, but much better this year. We have almost finalized new hire for Parks Maintenance Coordinator.

Mobile payment options – we are going to use Flowbird to people can pay their fees through their phones. It will be low impact for staff and will be easier to enforce things and encourage payment. Andrew Dobmeier – Will fees be passed on to customer? Sandy Weijland – We will not lose money on fees. Question – How did we pick them? Tom Riggs – They are our current vendor, so we already have a contract with them. Sandy Weijland – They have an app option or pay by text.

VIII. Good of the Order Called by Justin Ostrander

Louise – Dan’s name is spelled “Don.”, correction needed to minutes.

Justin Ostrander – Appreciates getting both groups together and is wondering if we can share meeting minutes with both groups so that we can read through both?

Comm Shull – \$1.8 billion budget – this Thursday will be final approval and no changes are expected. Courthouse is coming along. Tolling – Commissioners are still fighting tolling. Portland Water Bureau plant – Portland wants to put it in on farm land which is a problem. I will promote parks more and contact leaders in Portland to remind minority groups that Clackamas County has great parks. I appreciate what everyone in Parks and Forestry does.

IX. Adjournment – Justin called for an adjournment at 7:57pm.