1 **COOS BAY** 2 PARKS COMMISSION MINUTES 3 January 16, 2020 4 5 Vice Chair Crawley opened the work session on the above date in the City of Coos Bay Conference Room located at 500 Central Ave., at 3:00 p.m. 6 7 Members Present: Carmen Matthews, Bev Meyers, Sam Crowley, Bill Otton, Bill Davis and 8 Arian Lyons. 9 Members Absent: Patty Scott and Shaun Gibbs. Staff Present: 10 Operations Administrator, Randy Dixon, and Kelli Burnette 11 **Guests Present:** Jim Behrends 12 13 Staff Member Dixon provided the Commission with an update on current projects, noting the Empire ADA curb ramp project is finishing up with the last few ramps, the Empire striping project 14 has not yet begun due to weather, City Council has approved the 4th Street Pedestrian Safety Project 15 to move forward, and the Eastside Safe Routes to School project will be going out to bid in 16 February, with construction hopefully beginning in March. 17 18 19 **DISCUSSION – PARKS MASTER PLAN PROJECT STATUS** 20 21 Staff Member Dixon reviewed the Parks Master Plan Capital Improvement Plan Table with the 22 Commission and showed park and City owned properties on a map. 23 24 Staff Member Dixon reported the City has retained Heather Laird for grant writing services on the Mingus Park pond dredging project, and that plans are underway for the design of the new Mingus 25 Park playground area and restrooms. Staff Member Dixon explained that the dredge material from 26 the pond would be used to raise the elevation of the new park area, and a vault and storm water 27 pump would be installed, etc. Staff Member Dixon stated he will continue working on and 28 29 developing the project while the grant writing is taking place. 30 31 Commissioner Meyers asked about damage to the trees in the new playground area. Staff Member Dixon stated that all of the trees would be removed and new species replanted and that he would 32 33 come to the Commission with a proposed design for comment and approval. 34 35 Staff Member Dixon explained the dredging aspect of the pond, invasive vegetation and that the 36 City is and will be working with Coos Watershed and the selected contractor to address those 37 issues. 38 39 Commissioner Matthews commented on the proposed vault being designed like a rain garden and 40 making it look like a natural stream. 41 42 A discussion commenced regarding the pond dredging to include the small pond, existing drainage 43 and a pre vault filter tank for treatment going in up by the tennis courts, and replacing the fountains. 44 45 Chair Lyons arrived at 3:35 p.m. 46 47 A Discussion commenced regarding park property and city owned property as shown on the maps 48 presented by Staff Member Dixon. 49

The Commission and Staff discussed looking at City owned property to develop for parks and recreation or looking at property to purchase for development.

A discussion commenced regarding property more centralized in the City, specifically noting the Water Board property, the existing access to that property through the Timberline neighborhood and adding a sports and neighborhood park/trail system in that area, possibly with a city shop.

A discussion commenced regarding the possibility of "swapping" properties with the Water Board given the nature of the neighboring locations and the fact the Water Board acquired the property from the City. Staff Member Dixon stated he would research property restrictions, contact the Water Board and discuss options with the City Manager.

A discussion commenced regarding focusing on developing community parks or neighborhood parks. It was noted that a community park with a sports complex would pay for itself, and that adding cabins to rent could generate income. The consensus of the Commission was to focus on one large community park vs. smaller neighborhood parks. Staff Member Dixon commented the first step is to obtain property information, make a design, and get citizen input, etc.

 Chair Lyons moved and Commissioner Matthews seconded the motion to focus on a centrally located community park, where Staff Member Dixon looks as possible acquisition of property and/or Water Board property, pros and cons. A discussion commenced regarding listing the amenities, sports complex, bike trails, etc., desired until after property is acquired. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Chair Lyons commented on a recent presentation she heard at the Planning Commission meeting regarding rising sea levels, flooding, and existing City infrastructure, stating she was really impressed and would like to have the presenter also present to the Parks Commission. It was noted that there is interest for the same presentation to be given at a Council meeting.

Chair Lyons closed the work session portion of the meeting and called the regular session to order at 4:10 p.m.

## APPROVE THE NOVEMBER 14, 2019 MEETING MINUTES

Chair Lyons called for a motion to approve the minutes.

 Commissioner Matthews moved and Commissioner Meyers seconded the motion to approve the November 14, 2019, minutes as presented. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

### PUBLIC COMMENT/CITIZEN INPUT

 Citizen Jim Behrends was introduced, but did not wish to provide comment at that time.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

5.1 John Topits Bridge. Staff Member Dixon provided a brief recap on the Empire Lakes bridges and stated there needs to be justification for replacing the bridge. A discussion commenced regarding having a master plan just for Empire Lakes, the decrease in park visitors since the bridge went down, increasing usability, looking at the entire park, and replacing the SOCC bridge.

 Staff Member Dixon explained if the Commission proceeded with putting in the bridge, there would be opposition given the cost and location of the existing trail. It was proposed to have a meeting just to focus on developing a master plan just for Empire Lakes.

A discussion commenced regarding the Parks Commission and City Council having a combined work session and the Parks Commission attending the Council meeting when the water surge presentation is presented.

Commissioner Matthews moved and Commissioner Crowley seconded the motion to schedule a combined work session with the Parks Commission and City Council to discuss the parks master plan. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

5.2 Mingus Pond Fishing Pier – Staff Member Dixon presented the Mingus Pond Fishing Pier design from ZCS which is now 100% complete and ready to go. Staff Member Dixon explained he is meeting with Civil West and ZCS on Friday to discuss the design of the southern end of the park, and will come back to the Commission with the design once received for review.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

As discussed above in work session.

# COMMISSIONER CLOSING COMMENTS STAFF CLOSING COMMENTS

Commissioner Davis and Chair Lyons commented on the water surge presentation at the Planning Commission meeting stating they believe it is a good tool that can be implemented. A discussion commenced regarding vaults and existing inactive aquifers.

The Commissioners expressed their excitement for the master visioning for a new park asset and a master plan for Empire Lakes. Staff Member Dixon commented that proposing the development of a new park asset will likely receive some opposition as there is lack of funding to maintain what the City already has, but the idea is to develop a self-sustaining asset. A discussion commenced regarding financial data on sports complexes. It was noted the 2009 two-week softball event brought in approximately 3 million dollars for the City.

The Commission and staffed discussed potential for grants, the rails to trails connectivity from Coos Bay to Coquille, and local bike shop owners assisting with training kids, staff and parents on the new Safe Routes to School project in Eastside.

A Discussion commenced regarding having work sessions prior to all Parks Commission meetings.

Chair Lyons moved and Commissioner Otton seconded the motion to have a one-hour work session prior to all Parks Commission meetings starting at 3:00 p.m. until further notice. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Staff Member Dixon advised the Commission of the recent Mingus Park swimming pool inspection. Staff Member Dixon reported meeting with pool management to discuss the inspection which consisted an illegal lifeguard chair, doors being locked during business hours with no emergency exit components, not cleaning the deck, gutters and bottom drain, and the side gate being unlocked without staff on deck. Staff Member Dixon also stated the City will be purchasing

a new lifeguard chair and putting in new doors with panic bars to the main entry to get up to code and that pool management is on board with updating their protocols to come into compliance.

Jim Behrends, Citizen, stated he is mostly concerned with the upper and lower lakes at Empire Lakes and he will wait and see what the Commission comes up with for a plan. Mr. Behrends also stated he believes the City has too much park land to maintain, that he understands the sports concept, he lives in the Community, and referenced the business generated in Reedsport with their baseball tournament with four fields. Mr. Behrends suggested partnering with the community college and look at trying to do a sport complex at Empire Lakes. Mr. Behrends stated he believes the City has too much park land and has difficulty maintaining what it currently has.

Staff Member Dixon went over the National Parks and Recreation standards and a discussion commenced regarding difficulty keeping up with the maintenance and coming up with a sustainability process.

A discussion commenced regarding funding options for new park land, bonds, grants, etc.

Mr. Behrend stated he is concerned with Empire Lakes and how to get it back to a point where people want to use it again. Chair Lyons stated that is a big concern of the Commission and Staff. A discussion commenced about the number of issues Empire Lakes has and why people don't want to use it any more. Mr. Behrend stated again he would like to see the master plan the Commission puts together for Empire Lakes. Commissioner Matthews asked Mr. Behrend if he had any input for the master plan and Mr. Behrends stated he thinks putting the bridge in is a waste, that it is a good location for a sports complex or residential development, which if the City sold the property for residential development then the City would have money to finance other things. Staff Member Dixon stated the property cannot be sold because of the donation it is under.

Mr. Behrends stated he recently visited a community where he had to pay to use park amenities and suggested that could be an option for the City. Staff Member Dixon commented that park entry fees may not be supported in our community.

A discussion commenced regarding a sports facility on the Port property in Eastside. It was noted that property was looked into several years ago, it's in wetlands, the Port didn't want to sell, there would be transportation issues, and Snowy Plovers are now in that area.

#### ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Parks Commission, by consensus of the Parks Commission, Commissioner Lyons adjourned the meeting at 5:08 p.m.

APPROVED BY THE PARKS COMMISSION ON THE 20th DAY OF AUGUST 2020.

192 Attes

194 Kelli Burnette, Sta Ariann Lyons

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Ariann Lyons, Chair