

CITY OF YACHATS
PARKS & COMMONS COMMISSION
SUMMARY MINUTES

January 7, 2025

The regular meeting of the Parks and Commons Commission was called to order Chair Meg Simans at 2:00 PM in the Civic Meeting Room of the Yachats Commons. Members present Co-Chair Dan Sterling, Ron Simans, and George Giroux.

Audience: 15

Opening Remarks

- Acknowledgment of Service: Joanne was recognized for her 31 years of dedicated service to the board. She expressed her willingness to remain available for consultation on specific matters if needed.
- Committee Involvement: Joanne reaffirmed her continued participation in the Boardwalk Planning and Master Plan Advisory Committees, underscoring her commitment to ongoing projects.
- Appreciation Statements: Members of the board and attendees shared their gratitude for Joanne's leadership, emphasizing the positive impact of her contributions on the community.

Citizen Comments and Concerns

- Community Events Feedback: Citizens praised recent community events, particularly those held on January 1st, which were described as fantastic and well-organized. Gratitude was expressed for the efforts of volunteers and organizers.
- Pollinator Garden Discussion: Questions arose regarding the inclusion of a pollinator garden west of the pavilion in the master plan. While the idea had been discussed, clarification was provided that its implementation would depend on the outcomes of the master planning process.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

- Clarifications on Notes on projects like the pollinator garden were addressed. It was clarified that the garden idea is currently under consideration within the broader master plan framework.
- Commission members requested the Commons Coordinator to elaborate on the monthly reports, and to include the information on the sound and lighting improvements, stair installations, and other updates mentioned in the previous city manager's report.

4. City Manager's Report

- Engineers have been engaged to evaluate current systems and propose upgrades to enhance usability and energy efficiency.

- Challenges with the existing sound system, such as its complexity and reliability, were highlighted. Plans include a more user-friendly, modernized setup suitable for diverse events, from weddings to concerts.
- Designs for new stairs leading from 101 sidewalk to the Commons have been completed. Efforts are underway to contract qualified vendors to execute the project.
- The design aligns with the master plan's objectives and was developed through consultation with engineers and designers.
- The city manager emphasized the importance of aligning all projects with the forthcoming master plan, which will serve as a strategic guide for city improvements.

Trails and Public Works Updates

- A new set of stairs was successfully installed, with significant contributions from volunteers, particularly George, whose efforts were commended.
- Preparations for a grant application to the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) are underway. Legal approvals and public hearings, including compliance with FEMA regulations, are required before submission.
- Discussions included potential impacts of changing FEMA guidelines on walkway designs and timelines.
- Requests for additional tools and budget increases were made to facilitate ongoing trail maintenance and construction.
- A liaison role between Public Works and the Trails Committee was proposed to streamline project coordination and resource delivery.

Commons Report

- The goals are to enhance the Commons as a welcoming and inclusive space for community activities and gatherings.
- Introduce diverse programs, such as art workshops, yoga, Pilates, and other recreational activities. Efforts to recruit instructors for these initiatives were discussed.
- Organize and optimize storage spaces, including the janitor's closet and stage areas, to improve functionality and ease of use.
- Propose the construction of a community fire pit to enhance safety and facilitate communal gatherings during events.
- Volunteer Coordination:
- Efforts to recruit volunteers for organizing Commons storage were initiated. Several attendees volunteered to participate in these efforts.

New Business

- The commission discussed experimenting with a new format for public input during meetings. The goal is to balance efficiency and inclusivity by allowing structured input at the start and conclusion of agenda items. Feedback from attendees

1 indicated a preference for the traditional format for the current meeting, with plans
2 to revisit the approach in the future.

- 3 • The city manager and mayor provided a detailed overview of the commission's role
4 in supporting city goals, emphasizing the importance of clear communication and
5 alignment with city council directives.
- 6 • A visual organizational chart was presented, outlining the workflow and interaction
7 between city staff, commissions, and the council. This framework clarified how
8 commission recommendations feed into city operations and decision-making.
- 9 • The outdated ordinance guiding the Parks and Commons Commission was
10 identified as needing revision to better reflect current governance structures and
11 responsibilities.
- 12 • Suggested areas of focus included budgeting, community engagement, and
13 program development. Emphasis was placed on starting with a blank slate to
14 redefine the commission's role in alignment with city needs.
- 15 • Creative initiatives, such as supporting senior citizens and addressing
16 homelessness through community programs, were proposed as potential areas for
17 the commission to explore.

18 **Candidate Interviews and Outcome**

- 19 • Interviewed John Pravel, Dan Wright, and Adam Altson, candidates for three open
20 commission positions. Each candidate presented their qualifications, relevant
21 experience, and vision for contributing to the Parks and Commons Commission.
- 22 • Discussions focused on candidates' understanding of community needs, proposed
23 initiatives, and alignment with the commission's objectives.
- 24 • After deliberation, candidates were selected to fill the vacant positions. The
25 decision was reached through a consensus, with the chosen individual's skills and
26 vision aligning closely with the commission's priorities.
- 27 • The selected candidate's appointment will be formally approved during the next
28 city council meeting.

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31 The last item covered; the City Manager Bobbi Price provided an update on the
32 preliminary draft idea aimed at securing grant funding for the bathroom. The commission
33 members expressed the need for more public input and stakeholder involvement in such
34 projects going forward and proposed establishing clearer criteria and processes for
35 reviewing and, approving capital improvement projects.

36 The meeting was adjourned at 4:18 p.m.

37 By Kimmie Jackson Recorder