

The City of Columbia City

In Columbia County on the Columbia River



PARKS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2026 - 6:00 P.M. CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS – 1840 SECOND STREET

Present:

Lyle Bluhm, Committee Chair
Sally Ann Marson, Committee Member
Karen Shervey, Committee Member left at 6:30 p.m.
Nell Harrison, Committee Member
Jim Wills, Committee Member
Kim Karber, City Administrator
Micah Rogers, Public Works Superintendent

Absent:

Jack Hruska, Committee Member
Katrina Claridge, Committee Member

Chair Bluhm called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

- **Harvard Park Grant**

Kim reported that the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) did their technical review and provided some feedback on items to update. Those items have been updated, and the grant has been resubmitted. She said the next steps will be an OPRD committee meeting in late September/early October to rank the applicants, then that committee will present their rankings to the OPRD Commission in mid-November, so we should hopefully know by the end of November whether we receive any grant funds. Micah asked if we knew how many funds were awarded during the grant cycle. Kim said she did not know off hand, but did explain they have three different tiers to apply for: \$50,000 and under, between \$50,000 and \$100,000, and over \$100,000 and up to one million. The City applied for \$100,000 to use towards playground equipment, parking spots, and adding ADA accessibility.

2 Parks Committee Meeting September 8, 2026

- **Bench Donation**

Kim explained that Colleen Calkins family would like to do a memorial bench at Pixie Park for Colleen. She also noted that when she and Micah went to look at Pixie Park there are no ADA benches or paths that could lead to one. Micah explained that we looked at the first picnic table area to the left (when facing the river). The thinking was to add an ADA bench on the concrete area where the picnic table is currently located, move the picnic table to the edge of the concrete and maybe upgrade that picnic table to an ADA picnic table since there is currently none there. There would then be an ADA path installed to that area. Chair Bluhm asked if there were any issues with it being located there and if it was up to us. Kim explained that bench donations are usually brought to the Parks Committee for feedback. Micah added that the person donating it has an idea of where they want it to go, but this request was just for Pixie Park. Kim mentioned there are already benches and picnic tables, but none are ADA accessible and Pixie Park is a popular park and that ADA updates would be a good addition. No concerns or issues were heard from the committee.

- **Park Updates**

- Pixie Park – Micah explained that public works has been working on the entry pilings. The main pilings have been concreted in, the angled pilings on the right-hand side (if you are facing the river) are secured, the angled pilings on the left-hand side are currently being worked on. The 2X6 across the top of the main pilings that said 'Multnomah Chapter of the D.A.R.' has been removed and will be replaced by something else, maybe a piling that matches the others, but the top of the two main pilings is rotting so that will need to be fixed first. A lift will need to be rented so they can get up there and see how far the rot goes. Chair Bluhm inquired on the timeline. Micah said they hope to finish getting the pilings set this week or next week, then they will move onto the top, but the nice weather is quickly disappearing.
- Rivers Walk Trail – Micah said they will try and get down to Rivers Walk to do some maintenance and they have some gravel stockpiled for it.
- Micah said the County work crew has been a big help this season with helping keep up on things. Sally Ann added she received at least a half dozen calls on how lovely the entrance park looks. They have been coming on Fridays this year and usually have 4-6 workers which makes a big difference. Kim asked how much longer the work crew will be helping. Micah said we might use them one more time this season.
- Otherwise, everything in the parks is status quo. Things are starting to wind down with the grass mowing as we move into fall.

- **Other Business**

- Nell inquired about the sign that was requested last year as a thank you to the Garden Club and all the volunteers for their help with the maintenance of the Veterans Park. Nell thinks that if people see a thank you for volunteer work,

3 Parks Committee Meeting September 8, 2026

they might be a little more interested in working. Kim stated we could put the signs up in all the parks since volunteers help in all the parks.

- Chair Bluhm opened the meeting up for public comment.
 - Paulette Lichatowich asked if the Parks Committee has been approached in 2023 or later about discussing the donation of part of Bundy Park for a fire station. Kim and Chair Bluhm replied they are not aware of what was discussed before they were part of the committee and that it had not been discussed since they had joined the committee. Paulette then commented that she thinks that is an issue and thinks it is part of the Parks Committees job to review those types of things. She also stated that in the Parks Master Plan there is no mention of reducing the size of the park for the fire station. She talked about the time that was spent back in 2023 discussing the donation of land for the fire station and signatures that were collected against it and how it is currently being discussed again and there were signatures again collected and that we do not know the status at this point. Kim replied the discussion is currently in Council's hands. Paulette said the parks have been highlighted and talked about for a while now and thinks it is an opportunity for people to be invigorated to volunteer and work with the City to make things better. Kim stated that the Parks Master Plan was worked on before the Mayor and Council worked on their goals and objectives.
 - Katrina Clift suggested we check with OMIC/PCC to see if maybe their students would help us with some of the thank you signs as a project. She voiced her concern with the arborvitaes on Penn and 6th Place and described how kids sometimes work their way through them and if cars are driving by, they might not see them when they shoot through. She also noticed the bark needs to be replenished and hopes that the grant comes through, so we get a new safe playground. Katrina said there were also some trees that were of concern, when she walks by them some of the branches hit her, and to be careful with building stuff on the corners so there is not a vision clearance issue. Micah said that we are looking at making some changes there, including the trees, with some off-street parking spots including an ADA spot, and a new path to the play area with ADA accessibility. She also encouraged mowing of the park before the weeds go to seed.
 - Cora Lee Aho added that the arborvitaes are getting too tall, kids wedge their way through them, and she has had to slam on her breaks because a child ran through. She asked they be removed or cut way down. Micah replied that if they are not completely removed there is something else that can be done to mitigate the safety concern.

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, October 13th, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:36 p.m.