



## City of Salem Salem Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

Rob Romanek's Zoom Meeting November 9, 2023

5:30 p.m.

Online ([Zoom](#))

Si necesita ayuda para comprender esta información, por favor llame 503-588-6211.

Para asistencia en español, llame al 503-540-2489.

### PARTICIPANTS

#### Board Members

Dylan McDowell, Chair; Keith Norris, Vice-Chair; Alan Alexander; Woody Dukes; Rick Hartwig; Alan Holland; Joan Lloyd; Debbie Miller

#### Staff

Jennifer Kellar, Parks and Recreation Division Manager; Rob Romanek, Parks Planning Manager; Becky George, Recreation Supervisor; Milan Davis, City Urban Forester/Parks Supervisor III; Aaron Kimsey, AIC Assistance City Engineer

### AGENDA

1. Welcome and Call to Order
2. Approval of July 2023 Minutes
3. Public Comment – Appearance of persons wishing to address the board on any matter other than those which appear on this agenda.
4. Council Liaison Updates
5. Board Items/Presentations
  - a. Bond-Funded Park Paths and Trails Rehab and Replacement –  
*Aaron Kimsey*  
**Recommendation:** Information and discussion. Staff is seeking feedback on the process to select locations.
  - b. Bush's Pasture Park Heritage Tree Designation – *Milan Davis*  
**Recommendation:** Endorse staff recommend designation of an approximately 10-acre grove of *Quercus garryana* (Oregon white oak) in lower Bush's Pasture Park.

- c. Introduction to Parks for All (a multi-year project to update the Salem Comprehensive Parks System Master Plan) – *Rob Romanek*  
**Recommendation:** Information and discussion. Staff is seeking feedback on SPRAB's role.
- d. 2024 Work Plan Development  
**Recommendation:** Information and discussion.
- 6. Board Member Updates
- 7. Information Reports – verbal
  - a. Parks and Recreation Division Report
- 8. New Business
- 9. Adjourn

**Next Meeting: December 14, 2023**

This meeting is being conducted virtually, with remote attendance by the governing body. No in-person attendance is possible. Interested persons may view the meeting online on [YouTube](#). Please submit written comments on agenda items, or pre-register to provide Public Comment on items not on the agenda, by 5 p.m. or earlier one day prior to the day of the meeting at [salemparks@cityofsalem.net](mailto:salemparks@cityofsalem.net).

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## City of Salem Salem Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

October 12, 2023

[Online Meeting](#)

**Minutes - Draft**

### **Council Liaison Present**

Councilor Micky Varney

### **Members Present**

Keith Norris  
Woody Dukes  
Rick Hartwig  
Debbie Miller  
Alan Alexander  
Alan Holland

### **Members Absent**

Dylan McDowell  
Joan Lloyd

### **Staff Present**

Rob Romanek  
Jennifer Kellar  
Milan Davis  
Becky George  
Billy Powers  
Melinda Moon

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### **1. Welcome and Call to Order**

Welcome and call to order by Vice Chair Norris at 5:31 p.m.

Dylan McDowell and Joan Lloyd were marked absent.

### **2. Approval of Minutes**

Member Miller requested a correction to the September minutes regarding the formation of a subcommittee to draft a letter to City Council to bring back to the Board at a later time.

**With this correction, Member Miller moved to approve the minutes from September 14, 2023. Member Dukes seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

### **3. Public Comment**

Pamela Garland, Salem Seekers asks about an updated version of the Salem Comprehensive Park System Master Plan. Vice Chair Norris responds that updating the plan should begin in 2024.

### **4. Council Liaison Updates**

SPRAB's City Council liaison, Councilor Micky Varney, shared information from the City Council:

- September 25 – Deliberations to remove overlay zones along Commercial Street to allow mixed use.
- Received an application to divide a property of 20.5 acres that contains 487 trees, into three parcels. Worked with an arborist to save as many trees as possible, resulting in 86% of the 487 total trees being saved.
- October 3 – Public Works Operations building opening.

- October 5 – The first commercial flight out of our airport with Avello.
- October 9 – Latest city council meeting
  - i. Presented the proclamation for National Walk to the Park Day to Dylan McDowell
  - ii. October 10 was National Walk to the Park Day
  - iii. Also at the October 9 council meeting was the proposed unified development code amendment to comply with the new state requirements for the climate friendly and equitable communities.
- October 16 was the Volunteer Recognition event.

Vice chair thanks Councilor Varney and thought the proclamation was great.

## **5. Board Items/Presentations**

### **a. Salem Parks Foundation Presentation**

Carol Snyder, President of Salem Parks Foundation presented an annual report highlighting the following:

- Annual report based on the Foundation's fiscal year, which ended September 30.
- The Foundation's focus is a neighborhood park grant program that is offered annually to Salem's neighborhood associations for improvements to their local parks.
- The Foundation is in the process of raising money to restore the Eco-Earth Globe in Riverfront Park with a deadline at the end of 2024. They were not successful with their \$150,000 grant application to the Cultural Resources Economic Fund (CREF).
- Efforts with the neighborhood park grant project continues, as does the advocacy mission.
- The Foundation also produced three newsletters filled with park information, along with donation requests.
- The Foundation held the 12<sup>th</sup> annual Pino for the Parks wine tasting event, for which proceeds go to the endowment fund with the Oregon Community Foundation.

Vice Chair Norris thanked Carol for the updates and asked for clarification on the overall costs for the Eco-Earth Globe restoration. Carol clarified, the overall costs for the restoration is closer to \$400,000, of which the City has pledged \$112,000.

### **b. Mission Street Parks Conservancy Quarterly Update**

Maureen McGee shared information from the Mission Street Parks Conservancy:

- Woodland Garden project in Bush Park continues and is on time. They hope to complete it by the end of this calendar year but are prepared for it to continue into the beginning of next year.
- Discussions of underway to identify new opportunities for bringing in additional partnerships for volunteering in the park.

Vice Chair asks if the funds have been raised to complete the Woodland Garden? Member McGee responds that they are short of their goal, but are confident the project can be completed with what they have been able to raise.

### **c. Summer Recreation Programs Overview/Recap**

Melinda Moon shared information from the Summer Recreation Program:

- Overall, a good season with participation up 23%, ~30% receiving fee waivers.
- All-comer track meets returned this summer.
- Tennis camps continue to be popular, increasing in participation.

- Stride events finished in October, with increased participation believed to be due to school running clubs.
- Movies in the Park changed from Saturday nights to Friday nights, averaging over 1200 each night.
- Adult pickleball at Orchard Heights and Woodmansee courts on Thursday nights. Both locations were full each night.
- Summer Parks Program eliminated the Highland location, moving participants to Englewood.
- Held a new class that offered tree climbing at Silver Falls.

Vice Chair Norris thanks Malinda and asks what she thinks the increase was from. Malinda responded that she believes the increase was due to the all-comer track meets returning and those are an even that the community has been requesting.

Vice Chair Norris asked if 30% of participants typically receiving fee waivers year over year? Melinda responds that since Recreation moved to Public Works, fees have increased. Factoring in the increase in participation, the amount of fee waivers being given seems to stay consistent. Vice Chair Norris thanks Malinda for the additional clarification.

Billy Powers shared information from the Softball Program:

- Overall, softball had 177 teams this year which is about the same as last year.
- Monday October 9<sup>th</sup> was the last night for play, Monday and Tuesday night teams still had one full night remaining, but with a vender being scheduled for field maintenance, those teams will receive a refund.
- Spring and Summer – Monday teams had several weeks of rain in April.
- Fall season started early August and had several cancelled days and are behind in finishing the season.
- League games were up due to teams playing double headers. Six weekends were cancelled due to weather conditions between Spring and Fall.
- USA Softball and Alliance Fast Pitch at the end of July.
- Late August, we ran the men's slow pitch D and E Western Nationals, added the Women's Northwest Open National Invitation Tournament, with 28 teams from August 25<sup>th</sup> to the 27<sup>th</sup>.
- USA Softball girls 10B and 12b in 2024.
- Tournament bids in Oklahoma City.
- Hosted City tournaments – Five fast pitch tournament invitationals with 140 teams this year in five weekends.

To clarify, Vice Chair Norris asked if all the games were held at Wallace Marine. Billy replied: Yes, 99% of the games are at Wallace Marine, with some of the tournaments at Orchard Heights. Bush Park is also utilized, but there is only one field.

Member Hartwig asked about the makeup of the leagues. Billy shared that the church league is run by the Churches at Churches. Adult softball runs Sunday through Friday nights. Co-ed play one game two nights a week with a mixture of advanced and intermediate teams. Men's league runs Tuesdays and Thursdays, with Tuesdays always being sold out. There's also a senior league, and a Thursday night kick-ball league.

Member Hartwig asked about the development of more fields. Rob Romanek identified that the City has a park property held in reserve in Northeast Salem off Hazelgreen Road, which is scheduled to begin a master plan next year but is likely several years until more fields are developed.

Vice Chair Norris thanks Billy for the update and all the work put into the league and acknowledges Board member Alan Holland has joined the meeting.

**d. Revised FY 2024 City Budget**

Vice Chair Norris discussed a draft letter to City council regarding city budget revisions. Member Hartwig comments t the letter was very well written and her supports it.

**Member Miller moved to authorize the Chair to send the letter to City Council on behalf of the Board. Member Dukes seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

**e. Discussion of Board's Strategic Planning Survey**

Rob Romanek shared that SPRAB's work plan for 2023 identified an opportunity to conduct a survey of board members to help in form next year's work plan.

Vice Chair Norris asked in terms of development and distribution of this survey, is that something the Vice Chair and Chair should work on? Rob shared that if Chair and Vice Chair can create a starting point, staff can take it from there.

Vice Chair Norris asked if the city have a platform in terms of how the survey will be delivered and filled out? Rob responded that the city has an online survey software that will meet all requirements.

Vice Chair Norris responded that he will work together with Chair McDowell and will coordinate with Rob.

**f. Discussion of SPRAB Annual Report**

Rob Romanek shared that the Board provides a report annually to City Council that includes two components, one being a PDF, and the second being a presentation delivered by the Chair to City Council. Rob asked for feedback on SPRAB actives and work to highlight in the report. He anticipates a spotlight on the outreach to the Neighborhood Associations.

Thoughts from the Board:

- Member Holland – How are the wild animals in the parks being managed? What's the policy/practice of handling them as their numbers increase? Vice Chair Norris responds, it's a good topic that can be investigated for a future board meeting and can provide feedback into the strategic planning survey for next year's annual report as a topic to be explored further.
- Vice Chair Norris – Last year's report had done a bit of reworking it to previous year's report, organizing the report around Council priority areas. Asks to share last year's report with all members and allow a week for members to submit thoughts/questions on any edits. Rob agreed to send out the report following the meeting
- Member Miller – Would Council like to know what SPRAB is up to, is that the

purpose of it? Vice Chair Norris responded that's correct. It's a Parks Board annual report that gets submitted to city council as a PDF and as a presentation to notify them of all the activities we've held and provided throughout the year as a Parks Board, different from Parks Department and the park staff in terms of their annual reporting and efforts.

## **6. Board Member Updates**

- Member Miller shared that she has a meeting with Grant Neighborhood Association in November, the last one scheduled.
- Member Alexander made a presentation to the Sunnyslope Neighborhood Association Board and had lots of questions about SPIF.
- Member Hartwig finished presentations and realized not all neighborhood associations are equal. How could we help those associations that need the help?
- Vice Chair Norris thanks member Hartwig and agrees in terms of involvement in the neighborhood associations and connecting with them. Also had a presentation at South Central Association of Neighbors with several items of follow-up. He will contact Rob Romanek to make sure some of those questions get answered.
- Rob Romanek commented that there are two pending presentations, and one to follow-up on with member Holland.
- Vice Chair Norris shared that Walk to a Park Day was successful. Thanks to member Rick Hartwig for being there with Chair McDowell, on behalf of the board and representing the council and the mayor, as well as all the fifth graders that attended the event. The Statesman Journal had photos and an article about it.

## **7. Information Reports (reports provided as written reports ahead of the meeting.)**

### **a. Urban Forestry Update**

Milan Davis provided the following verbal updates:

- We were awarded the IRA USDA Urban and Community Forestry Resiliency Grant, receiving \$1 million in funds.
- Heritage tree nomination – he will be meeting with the members tribal governments to discuss the nomination of the lower Leffelle Oak Grove and will have more information on that in November.
- Progress on the Year and a Half Ice Storm Restoration Project continues, almost meeting goals within a year.
- The Community Development planners pushing for more tree protection on city projects.

### **b. Parks & Natural Resources Planning Update**

In addition to the written report, Rob Romanek shared that the City's Facebook page has a video highlighting the National Walk to a Park Day event. November's agenda will have a presentation on the parks system master plan update.

### **c. Parks Operations Update**

Jennifer Kellar provided the following verbal updates:

- A letter with information about SPIF was sent out to all neighborhood associations in September with a reminder letter sent out a week or two prior to the October 31 deadline. Direct questions from the neighborhood associations relative to SPIF to Jennifer Kellar.
- There is a Parks and Recreation organization chart that will be published on the Community Services web page, but it can be sent out as a separate document.

- The City of Salem has the Charitable Giving campaign, which runs through the beginning of November for Community Services. The Parks Foundation will be receiving some additional donations and funding.
- Member Miller asks for link to the Parks and Recreation organization chart, that could be shared with the neighborhood associations. Vice Chair Norris asks Rob Romanek to add that to the post meeting documents alongside the previous year's annual report.

**d. Recreation Services Update – Becky George**

- The new building move is occurring in phases, with Parks and Recreation moving the weekend of October 27.
- It has been confirmed that the holiday tree lighting is being pushed to Friday, December 8. It is the same Friday as the Jingle Bell Relay. The holiday parade by Salem Main Street Association, has moved the parade to December 1 and we didn't want to conflict with that event.
- The Salem Art Fair and Festival has been confirmed for September 13 through the 15 of 2024 to try and avoid the heat of the July dates now that the event is in the meadow off High Street.

**8. New Business**

Nothing to report.

**9. Next Meeting**

The next scheduled meeting will be held on November 9, 2023.

**10. Adjourned at 7:08 p.m.**