



Board of Directors

April 6, 2021

District Office Building | 799 SW Columbia | Bend, Oregon



To support Governor Brown's recommendation for social distancing, the Board of Directors conducted the regular board meeting by video.

The board meeting can be viewed on the website:

<https://www.bendparksandrec.org/about/board-meeting-videos/>

BOARD PRESENT

Nathan Hovekamp, Chair

Ariel Méndez, Vice Chair

Deb Schoen

Ted Schoenborn

Jason Kropf

STAFF PRESENT

Don Horton, Executive Director

Michelle Healy, Deputy Executive Director

Julie Brown, Manager of Communications and Community Relations

Lindsey Lombard, Administrative Services Director

Matt Mercer, Director of Recreation

Sheila Reed, Executive Assistant

Sarah Bodo, Park Planner

Rachel Colton, Park Planner

Henry Stroud, Trail Planner

Brian Hudspeth, Development Manager

5:30 p.m. MEETING CONVENED

VISITORS

Bo Johnson: Ms. Johnson commented that there should be better publicity on future surveys. She pointed out that one of the top priorities on the latest survey was trail walking, running and biking. MS. Johnson requested that the board add the COID property to an agenda item to discuss purchasing the property to put aside as a park.

Melissa Chelf: Ms. Chelf supports keeping Columbia Park river access open. Ms. Chelf was part of the neighborhood organization petition that was signed and sent to the board in support of reopening the access point. She said the overcrowded parking at McKay is prohibitive to watercraft access and asked the board to consider this in the decision. She said having a local access that neighbors can walk to is preferred. Ms. Chelf complimented staff on the work that they have done to be receptive to her and the neighbors on this issue.

WORK SESSION

1. River Habitat Restoration and Access Plan Update – *Sarah Bodo and Rachel Colton*

Ms. Colton shared the community outreach process for the River Habitat Restoration and Access Plan. She said the following tools were used to engage the public:

- Website
- Social media (Twitter, Facebook in English and Spanish)
- Press release
- Email notifications
- Virtual community meetings
- Focus group meeting on dog off-leash water access
- Survey that received nearly 1,000 responses

She said the survey responses have been summarized as the following:

- Most common neighborhood for respondents –River West (19%), SW Bend (12%) and Southern Crossing (10%)
- Most popular activities -trail walking, running or biking (84%), paddling the river (50%) and visiting a park along the river (31%)
- Parks most frequently visited -Farewell Bend Park (77%), Riverbend Park (70%) and Drake Park (64%)
- River access satisfaction -75% indicated they were satisfied, 13% indicated they were dissatisfied and 12% had no opinion
- Every project received majority support

Ms. Colton next reviewed each project summary:

- Cedarwood: Majority of respondents supported no changes to the parking in this area.
- Farewell Bend: Majority of respondents provided feedback regarding support for additional parking. This was the most popular project by a significant margin and ranked as the most important project.
- Riverbend Park Permanent Dog Off-leash Access: Majority of respondents supported a permanent access point.
- Miller’s Landing: Respondents supported closing the downstream access and improving the boardwalk access.
- Columbia Park: Significant public comments in opposition to closure of access points.
- Pioneer Park: Support for removal of the rock wall was limited.

Overall, Ms. Colton said the most important projects identified include:

Farewell Bend Park–installation of additional parking and loading zone:26%

Spanning the river–installation of signage and kiosks: 15%

Riverbend Park–permanent dogs off-leash water access:15%

River dog off leash areas received mixed support, at this time no additional areas are being proposed. Ms. Colton reviewed the challenges to locating dog river access areas.

- Proximity to residential units
- Limited park property depths
- Conflict with existing uses in heavily utilized parks
- Impacts to habitat areas
- Dog safety

Ms. Bodo reviewed the staff recommended project changes:

Cedarwood Trailhead Parking Options: Remove project from the list, resulting in no change to the parking area

Farewell Bend Parking Project: Change priority from low to medium.

Seasonal DOLAS: Remove seasonal DOLAs at Riverbend and Farewell Bend beaches from the project list.

Columbia Park: Maintain designated access point, close user created access point.

Pioneer Park: Remove project from the list

Next steps

April-June: Development of draft plan

Summer: Focus group, staff, community and board feedback on draft plan

Fall: Finalize plan and bring to the board for adoption

The board discussed the staff recommendations. Director Méndez suggested a district policy on parking that directs staff on when to add parking, and makes considerations for charging for parking and addresses other parking issues. Executive Director Horton said staff is beginning to look at parking standards, he said it can be difficult to determine parking needs at inception of some projects, remarking that it is easier to determine parking needs for sport fields. He further commented that equity in access needs to be considered with parking. The board supported the idea that equity and public access must be considered in a parking policy. Some comments from the board ranged from making parking safer at Farewell Bend Park with added and diagonal parking to shared concerns about encouraging more traffic and the harm to the environment.

The board supported keeping the Columbia Park access open if able. There was a discussion around some of the negative behaviors related to the access point and the board expressed support for the city to restructure the bridge to prevent bridge jumping in that area. Executive Director Horton shared with the board that by increasing positive activity in the area, it can help discourage the negative behaviors. Ms. Bodo added that the river access will remain closed this summer and likely next summer as well.

The board supported the rest of the staff recommendations on the river projects. The board commended staff for the well thought out recommendations.

2. Trails Update – *Henry Stroud*

Mr. Stroud explained the existing urban trail system. There are 108 miles, 89 are primary trails and the district maintains 67 miles. He said the district comprehensive plan and city of Bend transportation plan help the district to develop trails.

Mr. Stroud spoke about the Level of Service for trails and discussed the following:

- Priority
 - Develop new metrics to evaluate the level of service
- Completed in 2020
 - Expanded “walkshed” analysis to trails
 - Worked with Collective Impact Bend to research equity mapping
- Next Steps
 - Establish target metric for walkshed analysis
 - Continue supporting Collect Impact Bend’s equity mapping project

Mr. Stroud said the Equity Mapping and Trial Planning is in the early phases and spoke about the following:

Possible indicators

- Aggregate equity score
- Specific indices: transit dependency, population density

Likely outcomes

- Help prioritize investments in trail projects
- Influence design decisions
- Fine tuning existing trail plan map

Mr. Stroud said staff has been working on the following:

City of Bend coordination:

Completed in 2020

- Drafted trail maintenance IGA
- Bend code review and recommendations
- Drake Park Bridge replacement grant application

Next Steps

- Continue to coordinate low stress network and district trail projects
- Safe routes to parks planning

Trail outreach and Wayfinding

Priority

- Improve usability of trail system

Completed in 2020

- Updated printable trail maps and trail description on website

Next Steps

- Update Adventure Planner
- Update website with more detailed accessibility information
- Inventory existing trail wayfinding signage

Trail Crossing inventory

Priority

- Evaluation safety of all existing trail road crossing

Completed in 2020

- Developed evaluation methodology based on AASHTO guidelines

Next Steps

- Complete evaluations, prioritize intersection upgrades based on results.

Mr. Stroud reviewed the following projects with the board:

Deschutes River Trail North

Priority

- Extend trail to Riley Ranch Nature Reserve, waiting on an easement
- Enhance parking/access to trail

Completed in 2020

- Safety upgrades at Mt. Washington Road crossing

Next steps

- Secure remaining rights of way
- Explore options for additional parking
- Pursue parking and trail upgrades through private land development
- Coordinated with city on Archie Briggs crossing update

Manzanita-Outlook Trail Loop

Priority

- Complete the Manzanita-Outback Trail Loop

Completed in 2020

- Opened the Outback Trail connecting Discovery Park and Shevlin Park
- Acquired several easements/key properties
- 1.9 miles of the Manzanita Trail constructed

Next steps

- Secure remaining easements
- Finalize permanent alignment of the Outback Trail

North Unit Canal Trail

Priority

- Complete the trail between Canal Row Park and Yeoman Road

Completed in 2020

- 0.4 miles of trail constructed
- Title research for all the parcels in trail corridor
- Construction plans for Canal Row trail connection

Next steps

- Secure trail easements from all private land owners
- Enter into managing partner agreement with NUID/BOR
- Ensure safe crossing of Deschutes Market Road

CO Historic Canal Trail West

Priority

- Improve conditions between DRT and Reed Market Road

Completed in 2020

- Awarded 64k grant for crossing upgrades
- Crossing upgrades to 3rd street

Next Steps

- Complete crossing upgrades
- Formalize proposed improvements to existing trail

CO Historic Canal Trail East

Priority

- Extend trail to Hansen Park

Completed in 2020

- 1 mile of 15th Street connector trail constructed
- Began construction of Alpenglow Bridge
- Safety Upgrades to 15th St, Crossing

Next Steps

- Continue coordination with DSL and other developments
- Pursue remaining rights of way/explore alternative alignments

Arnold Canal Trail

Priority

- Study feasibility of trail between Caldera High School and Baker/Knott interchange

Next Steps

- Coordinate with ODOT on IAMP and Lava Butte Trail development

Mr. Stroud explained the overall next steps:

- Continue implementation of planned trail projects
- Continue to develop new level of service metrics and equitable trail planning strategy
- Compile "Trail Action Plan"
- Continue close coordination with COB on development of Urban Trail System and Low stress Network

3. Recreation Update – *Matt Mercer*

Mr. Mercer said Deschutes County is moving out of the yellow guidance and back into the orange (high risk) status. He explained that the two-week grace period does not apply to the county with this movement. This Friday, district operations will be reduced in capacity for the next two-weeks. He expressed concerns if the level continues to go up. He said another challenge is frontline part-time staffing has been an issue. The district has posted hiring notices in many and various places. This will impact the district's ability to serve the community. He mentioned staffing for childcare and lifeguards as the biggest staffing problems in the district. Mr. Mercer said a lack of lifeguard staffing limits the ability to open up more pool opportunities at Larkspur Center. He said some of the causes are lower employment rate of high school and college aged students nationwide, unemployment payments exceed part-time pay, cost of living is too high for a part-time wage, competition for employment in the area, and the district pay equity practices does not allow for wage increases.

Mr. Mercer said he has good news to share as well. On Friday, staff wrapped up the Team Up program, ice season ended on Saturday and Larkspur Community Center opened yesterday. Summer programming has been completed and will be ready to offer to the public this month. Tours have been offered for the Larkspur Center and over 900 people have toured the facility. There have been about 900 people that have used Larkspur Center in the first two days. Lap swimming has opened up to two people per lane, increased the time and serving more people. Patrons are impressed with the new facility and excited to use it. He said it was a team effort by all areas of the district to make the opening run smooth.

Team Up has ended, he said it is important to celebrate this need that the district provided to the community that was outside of normal operations. He said there were 400-500 kids in the program at any given time, with two thirds of the participants on financial assistance. CARES money and district funds were used to support this program. The district built a lot of positive relationships in the community for the work and financial support of the childcare program.

Mr. Mercer said ice season wrapped up and despite the restrictions, served more people than any other year. The community wanted things to do and trusted the district to have a safe program. The Wally Cup ended the season with 150 teams participating. Ice is being removed and roller sport season will begin.

Spring sports have started, the district has 1500 registrations for the various sports. Spring is busiest field use season. Summer registration will be offered April 20. A digital Playbook is in development. He said there have been many big milestones and events that are happening, and staff is working toward offering all the services to the community.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Minutes 03/16/2021

Director Schoenborn made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Director Méndez seconded. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0. Director Kropf did not vote.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director Horton thanked everyone for participating in the opening of Larkspur Center. He thanked staff and the board for supporting him while he was away. He said the city put out a call for the community to be a part of the transportation bond and asked the district to be a participate. Henry Stroud will likely be the district representative.

PROJECT REPORT

BOARD MEETINGS CALENDAR REVIEW

GOOD OF THE ORDER

- Director Kropf said he appreciates staff that created and put together the Team Up program for the community.
- Director Schoen said she walked the COID property with a group recently, she said she looks forward to further discussions.
- Director Schoenborn said it is a privilege to attend and listen to quality presentations. He commended staff for their professionalism.
- Director Méndez would like the board to consider input on a redraft on the MUTCD (Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices), the manual that provides standard guidelines for road designs across the United States. He explained some examples of how he thinks it effects the park district. He mentioned other local agencies that are interested in writing a letter as well. He added this document could promote pedestrian safety. He suggested waiting to see what the city council decides on the issue tomorrow evening.
- Director Hovekamp shared a thank you card that was sent to the board. The card thanked the district for Riley Ranch. He also commented on staff presentations remarking the outstanding quality.

ADJOURN 9:11 pm

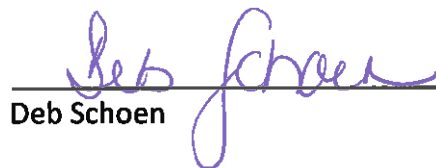


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