

**Parks & Recreation Advisory Commission  
Meeting Minutes – October 13, 2021**

**DATE OF MEETING:** October 13, 2021  
**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Laci Knudson (remotely), Dan Witkowski (remotely), Ali Brown (remotely), Fiona Corner (in person), Ali Burton (remotely), Kathleen Kelleher (remotely)  
**OTHERS PRESENT:** Parks & Recreation Director Case, 4 members from the public  
**LOCATION:** Meeting was held at the Council Conference Room and Remotely

**CALL TO ORDER –** Commission Chair Harrison called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

**MEETING MINUTES -** The meeting minutes from the September 15, 2021 meeting were approved as written. ***All in favor.***

**CITIZEN COMMENT ON NON -AGENDA ITEMS –** Three people spoke about the importance of building a new skatepark in Ellensburg. They spoke about the need to provide better recreational opportunities for skaters, that skaters will travel from city to city to skate, often times staying in hotels and the importance of locating a skate park at a city park facility with amenities like a playground in order to make it a more family friendly experience.

**NEW BUSINESS – Community Survey Review – Staff reviewed survey results from** a March 2020 online community survey which a total of 360 people responded to and consisted of 16 closed and open-ended questions about parks and indoor recreation facilities.

The results of the survey were not surprising, the overall theme is that many of our parks and indoor recreation facilities need updates and, in some cases, we need to invest in developing new facilities. All city indoor recreation programs are housed in buildings that are at least 40 years old. Many of our park playgrounds need to be updated, specifically the playgrounds at Mt. View Park, Kiwanis Park, West Ellensburg Park, and Veterans Memorial Park. Below are a few of the survey question responses:

*Question #2 What are the reasons you/your family use the City of Ellensburg recreational facility(s) checked above?*

Location 24%    Activities Offered 67%    Cost of Service 23%    Hours 18%

Summary - 42 open ended responses - This question pertains specifically to our four indoor facilities. The most common reason for people using the facilities is that they are the only ones available in Ellensburg and that there isn't anything else in town for people to do during the winter months besides use city facilities.

*Question #4 Thinking of the City of Ellensburg recreational facility(s) and what is currently offered, what indoor space would you like to see available that currently isn't? (open ended question)*

Summary - 337 open ended responses – This question garnered the most comments of any of the survey questions. The wish list had a very wide range of responses, many of which were facilities typically provided by the private sector, including bowling alley, skating or ice rink, arcade/fun center (putt-putt golf, go carts), and children's activity museum. Among the amenities mentioned that more traditionally provided by municipal parks & recreation departments were

new recreation center, indoor basketball and soccer fields, indoor walking track for winter walking, indoor climbing wall. New pool facility. Space for fitness, yoga, and senior exercise programs.

*Question #7 What are the barriers to using City of Ellensburg parks more or using other parks?*

Location 11%                      Activities Offered 20%    Hours 9%                      NA 53%                      Other 21%

Summary - 76 open ended responses – There were few factors mentioned frequently. The most common response was outdated playground equipment. Many people noted that the equipment is old and run down and there is a lack of diversity with the playground areas. Bathrooms were also mentioned frequently, lack of winter access to condition and cleanliness. Our weather plays a role as well. In the winter people said it's too cold, the Ellensburg wind was mentioned a lot, as well as lack of shaded areas around playgrounds. Park safety is a concern, whether it's car prowls while you are using a park, needles at the park, homeless, or unfriendly dogs.

*Question #8 Thinking of the City of Ellensburg Parks, what outdoor space would you like to see available that currently isn't? What would you like to see improved? Open ended question.*

Summary - 329 open ended responses- A splash pad or outdoor water park was by far the most popular answer. Updated play equipment, more off leash areas, updated skate park, more swing sets, tennis courts/pickleball courts. There were only a few requests for more trails, which is interesting because in our Park Plan trails are the most popular and requested park amenity.

*Question #9 Do you/your household members participate in activities offered by Parks?*

Yes 67%                      No 29% Other 4%

Summary - 13 open ended responses – kids sports, pool – very little consistency in answers

**COMMISSION MEMBER ADOPTED PARKS** – A practice of the Commission is for members to adopt parks that they can then report back to the Commission about, whether that be the amount of community use they see at the park or concerns they may see at the park. Below is the list of Commission members and their parks:

Ali Burton – Mt. View Park, Palouse to Cascades Reconnection Route  
Laci Knudson – North Alder Street Park, McElroy Park  
Dan Witkowski – West Ellensburg Park, Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park  
Fiona Corner – Reed Park, Kleinberg Park  
Ali Brown – Kiwanis Park, Wipple Park  
KT Kelleher – Paul Rogers Park, Veterans Memorial Park  
Nikki Pollock – Rotary Park

## **OLD BUSINESS – PROJECT UPDATES**

Staff provided an update on Unity Park, Pearl Street Promenade, and Reed Park

## **ITEMS FOR NOVEMBER 10, 2021 MEETING**

Fee Review

Potential Skatepark Follow up

### **COMMISSION MEMBER REPORTS**

Commissioner Burton said that someone approached her about the fact that there weren't any full-sized swings in Ellensburg, only tot swings. Staff stated that there are two full sized swings at Mt. View Park but that people have commented about adding more swings. Siting swings can be difficult because they need a large open space due to the large safety zone they require.

**STAFF REPORT – 1.** The city will have access to school district facilities and has started registrations for boy's youth basketball. Girls basketball will begin in winter, coed volleyball in the spring. **2.** Park winterization will begin in the next few weeks. This includes closing flush restrooms, irrigations systems, and the closure of the Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park (IRRP) access road. The city will continue to provide portable restrooms at a variety of park facilities including, Mt. View Park, North Adler Street Park, Rotary Park off leash area, and the boat launch at IRRP. The vault toilets at Paul Rogers Park and IRRP will remain open. **3.** The Ellensburg Racquet & Recreation Center has expanded operating hours. Field repair work on the ERRC indoor soccer field is currently underway. Work includes replacing the netting and repairing sections of field turf. Tennis lessons will be offered through the Ellensburg Racquet & Recreation Center starting November 1<sup>st</sup> through a contracted services agreement with a local resident with experience coaching college tennis. **4.** Department staff will be serving on a panel discussion at the Northwest Sport Management Summit being held at CWU on October 21, 2021.

**ADJOURNMENT -** The meeting was adjourned at 7:00pm