



Parks & Recreation Advisory Commission Agenda
5:30pm – May 10, 2023
City Hall Council Conference Room & Remotely

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84166200906>

Meeting ID: 841 6620 0906

- I. Call to Order
- II. Approval of Minutes
 - a. April 12, 2023
- III. Citizen Comment on Non-Agenda Items
- IV. New Business
 - a. Rotary Park Master Plan Stakeholder Meeting Review– Jackie Adams
- V. Old Business
- VI. Items for June 14, 2023 Meeting
 - a. Poetry Pole and Wind Phone Proposal for Wippel Park
 - b. Commission Community Impact
- VII. Commission Member Reports / Other Business
 - a. Letter from Commissioner Kelleher
- VIII. Staff Reports
- IX. Adjournment

Guidelines for Citizen Comments on Non-Agenda Items and Public Comments:

Purpose: Allow the public to address the Commission on subjects not on the regular Agenda at this particular meeting. Comments must concern the City's business or a matter over which the commission has control.

Procedure for Public Participation:

- When recognized, please state your name, and the subject to be discussed.
- 3 minute time limit for citizen comment on non-agenda items (without interruption). Commission will not act on issue.
- 5 minute time limit for the introduction of new business items, unless extended by a by a majority of Commission members present.
- Submit written comments to Staff representative.
- Speakers are cautioned not to make comments of a personal, impertinent or derogatory nature.
- The Commission does not take action at the meeting at which a subject is first introduced during the public comment period. You may wish to concisely state your concern and request placement of your matter on a future agenda.
- On agenda items each speaker's comments will be limited to 3 mintues.

**Parks & Recreation Advisory Commission
Meeting Minutes – April 12, 2023**

DATE OF MEETING: April 12, 2023
MEMBERS PRESENT: Jackie Adams, Frana Milan, Nick Zentner, Ali Brown
OTHERS PRESENT: Parks & Recreation Director Case, Council Liason Monica Miller, three members of the public
LOCATION: Meeting was held in the City Council Conference Room and Remotely

CALL TO ORDER – Meeting called to order at 5:30pm

MEETING MINUTES – Meeting minutes from the March 15, 2023 meeting were approved as submitted.

INTRODUCTION OF COMMISSION MEMBER – Frana Milan introduced herself to the Commission. Frana worked in the parks and recreation field for over 20 years and brings to the Commission a wide breadth of professional experience.

CITIZEN COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Pat Kelleher asked about signage placed at Reed Park that included information about the park plan update and a QR code. Staff stated that the signage had been in place at the park since Fall 2022.

NEW BUSINESS

Naming of Pollinator Garden at Wippel Park – Jack Carpenter – Jack Carpenter, Ellensburg Rotarian and spokesperson for the pollinator garden at Wippel Park, recommended to the Commission that the pollinator garden planned for Wippel Park be called the Wippel Heritage Pollinator Garden. The name will have consistencies with the Wippel Community Garden, which will share space at Wippel Park and be connected via common path.

A motion and second was made to name the pollinator garden at Wippel Park the 'Wippel Heritage Pollinator Garden'. Motion passed all in favor.

Pet Relief Stations – Ryan Kellogg, EDA Board Member – Mr. Kellogg presented to the Commission the idea of creating a pet relief station in downtown Ellensburg at the intersection of 4th & Pine. The purpose of this project is to create a designated place in the downtown where visitors and residents with pets can take their pets to use the bathroom. By the end of 2023 there will be over 180 apartment/condominium units in downtown Ellensburg, many of those residents who own a dog currently use the corner garden nodes or tree wells, which has a negative impact on the health of downtown trees and beautification program. This project would repurpose a unadopted 300 square foot garden node into a pet friendly area of anti-microbial turn, drainage, a mutt mitt dispenser and signage.

Staff added that the Unity Park plan includes an additional pet relief station and depending on the success of the 4th & Pine project, that there may also be interest in locating something on publicly owned property near the intersection of 5th & Main, where over half of the downtown apartment units are located. The anticipated cost of this improvement is \$5,300.00 and will be paid for and installed by the EDA. Anticipated installation date is within the next 60 days.

The Parks & Recreation Commission supported the project as it moves on to Council for final approval.

Appointing a Commission Member to Serve on the Rotary Park Stakeholder Committee – Jackie Adams volunteered to serve on the Rotary Park Master Plan Update stakeholder group on behalf of the Parks & Recreation Commission. All in favor.

ITEMS FOR MAY10, 2023 MEETING

Rotary Park Master Plan Update

COMMISSION MEMBER REPORTS/OTHER BUSINESS

STAFF REPORTS – 1. A \$7million funding request submitted through Congresswoman Schrier's office for the Rotary Park fieldhouse has been selected to move forward in the appropriations process along with 15 other projects from Washington's 8th District. The selection at this stage means it will be submitted to the House Appropriations Committee with a request that it be included in the FY2024 appropriations bills as one of 15 projects from Washington's 8th District. There is no guarantee that our project will receive this funding as both chambers in Congress will need to pass funding bills that can be signed into law this year. 2. On Saturday April 22nd the City will be celebrating its 40th year as a Tree City USA community. The event will take place from 10am-1pm at Irene Rinehart Riverfront Park and will include kids' activities, ceremonial tree planting, and a food truck. 3. Staff will be meeting with board members on April 20th to discuss the Reed Park master plan and options to address concerns Legion members voiced at the March 7th Council meeting. 4. The field lighting project at the Rotary Park youth baseball/softball complex is completed. The addition of the field lights will not only have a positive impact on the local youth sports programs but for the 10 youth baseball tournaments scheduled to take place at Rotary Park in 2023. 5. The city, along with community partners, will be hosting the 'Ride to Renslow', a 18-mile roundtrip bike ride on Saturday, May 20th. The ride will leave Unity Park at 9am, with a stop at the Kittitas Train Depot, then crossing the Renslow Trestle over Interstate 90. A free shuttle will be provided back to Ellensburg for those interested. In addition to the Renslow Ride, there will be shorter 5.38-mile ride from Unity Park to North Alder Street along the Palouse to Cascades Trail Reconnection Route. 6. There is currently one open commission position with another seat up for reappointment May 31, 2023. Applicants will be going through the appointment interviews over the course of the next few weeks for the open positions.

Meeting adjourned at 6:05pm.

PRESENT (P)

Steering Committee

(P) Stephanie Bala	Ellensburg Youth Baseball & Softball Association
(P) Mitch Cook	Kittitas Valley Junior Soccer Association
(P) Cole Kanyer	Ellensburg School District
(P) Jackie Adams	Commission Member, City of Ellensburg Parks & Recreation
(P) Jeff Hashimoto	Ellensburg High School Running / Cross County Skiing
(P) Christopher Nicolai	Ellensburg Pickleball Club
(P) Jim Pendley	Kittitas County Railroad History Association
(P) Bob Ford	Ellensburg Youth Rugby
(P) Daniel Burnson	Ellensburg Disc Golf
(P) Jeff Greear	Central Washington Park Foundation
(P) Arlo Evasick	Sports Tournament Organizer

Others Present

(P) Brad Case	Ellensburg Parks & Recreation
(P) Shawn Jensen	Bruce Dees & Associates

PURPOSE

The purpose for Steering Committee Meeting #1 was to kick off the project and to receive program information regarding how the facility has served the various user groups over the years and if there are any specific needs or concerns from each user group regarding potential future development of the site .

DISCUSSION

Brad explained the background of the current project and the intended purpose of today's meeting which is a listening session where the representative of each user group will be given 8 to 10 minutes to talk about their programs and any needs or desires from their group regarding future expansion of the facility. The discussion today will serve to identify potential elements to be shown on master plans expansion that will then be used in outreach to the community. Based on the results of today's meeting and community outreach, a series of three alternative concept plans will be developed that will be presented for further review and comment.

These alternative concept plans will be narrowed to a preferred concept plan that will serve as the updated Master Plan for future development of the site in the coming years. Brad explained the current drivers for the project are the need for a new large indoor recreation space in the city due to the fire in early December 2022 that destroyed the Ellensburg Racquet & Recreation Center.

Brad advised that today's meeting is the time for the Steering Committee to share their needs and concerns regarding future development at Rotary Park. He then called on each representative to share their thoughts. Comments from each representative in the order received are summarized below.

NEEDS & CONCERNS

Ellensburg Youth Baseball & Softball Association – Represented by Stephanie Bala

- The new field lighting has gone well for the two days it's been in operation so far
- Parking is a big issue and with the fields now being lit it will become a concern
- Would like to see 6 new fields be added
- Power for pitching machines
- Lighting of additional fields should be considered
- There are strong numbers for the beginning rookie and t-ball league participants

- The grass infields mentioned on the previous master plan should be skinned
- With up to 1,000 new lots being developed in the city bringing in new residents the need for additional fields is there
- Feels the existing multi-purpose fields that are shared for both soccer and t-ball are good
- For common amenities that are needed, parking is a big one
- Mentioned that with lots of equipment being used by the various programs there is a need for additional storage spaces or sheds throughout the site

Central Washington Park Foundation – Represented by Jeff Greear

- The new rugby field and pickleball courts recently constructed at the adjacent West Ellensburg Park site should be shown on the updated Master Plan

Ellensburg Youth Rugby – Represented by Bob Ford

- The 20-year timeline should consider any adjacent or other rural properties that could be developed into fields is essential as programs grow
- Would like to see more storage spaces included for the various user groups which makes the fields more functional for groups running programs
- Currently they have 160 student athlete rugby users and expects that number to grow rapidly
- The ability to use soccer field spaces for rugby is appreciated
- Having more field space would help draw in additional users and improve recreational tourism
- Having a large indoor space is vital and essential for year-round activities and could be an anchor facility for park expansion
- They have hopes to eventually remove the perimeter fence at the recently constructed rugby field to enhance its connection to Rotary Park as a whole
- Long term maintenance considerations with program growth along with the importance of taking care of what we have
- Parking needs as programs grow and being mindful of the impact to the surrounding neighborhood and being strategic about access points
- Likes the variety of activities that are provided at Rotary Park and the flexibility in recreational spaces that can be used by multiple user groups should be a high priority

Brad stated that secondary access to the site from the south will be needed with the addition of an indoor Field House facility and is one of the elements that will be included in the updated Master Plan. The City has been in communication with Winco, who is the developer to the south, and they are supportive of a shared access into the south side of Rotary Park off of Anderson Road. Having two access points into Rotary Park will help in minimizing impacts to the surrounding neighborhood.

Kittitas Valley Junior Soccer Association – Represented by Mitch Cook

- Rotary Park has served them well, the multi-purpose "soccer" fields are popular
- They've added spring soccer and their numbers are up with currently 700-800 kids participating in their programs and they expect growth to continue
- Would like to see a couple of lighted, synthetic turf soccer fields added at the south end of the existing grass field area that could also be used for baseball (include incorporating the existing adult softball field into the expanded synthetic turf field)
- They currently operate out of one container located at the north end of the fields and would like to see additional storage space with concession, meeting spaces, and restrooms incorporated within

Kittitas County Railroad History Association – Represented by Jim Pendley

- Would like to develop a 7.5" gauge riding railroad at Rotary Park using one of three potential track layouts that they have submitted
- 1/8 scale buildings representing historic facilities to be located at "Destination Easton" in the southwest corner of Rotary Park would be lighted and visible from Interstate 90 drawing visitors to the facility

- They would ask that the county high school and middle school teams and clubs be allowed to provide food and snacks to waiting railroad passengers as self-funding drives to support the teams and clubs needs
- Using the results of the survey done at the Kittitas County Fair in 2021 and the daily average number of riders at the Skykomish Railroad, which is a same scale system, they estimate that ridership could grow to 200 riders per day on the weekends in the first year of operation and double that in the second year
- As ridership grows, they hope to form an alliance with Hope Source to provide shuttle bus service from the train depot to the Railroad at Rotary Park to reduce on-site parking needs
- They hope to operate from 2pm to 9pm on Saturdays and from 10am to 5pm on Sundays on the second and fourth weekends of the year from April through October with potentially one special weekend in December where they would run Santa Claus trains
- They would need an indoor facility approximately 30 x 70 such as a pole building for train maintenance and storage with power and security that could also be used for indoor construction of the 1/8 scale historic buildings to be located along the train tracks
- Their priority list is to form a 501(c)3 non-profit, obtain sponsorships and grants, build trains and tracks, provide fun for entire families
- Purpose is to provide educational opportunities and inform the community of the 139 years of railroad history in the area that began in 1884 by incorporating as many volunteers and kids as possible in participating in building the tracks and operating the trains as engineers
- Similar 7.5" gauge railroads are nothing new and exist in several parks around the country

Ellensburg High School Running / Cross Country Skiing – Represented by Jeff Hashimoto

- They use the soccer field area and the adjacent flood plan for high school running and cross country skiing
- Would want any added turf fields to include space around the perimeter to continue to provide a safe route for the running and cross country skiing route
- Suggested that the area south of the soccer field area and west of the softball fields could be used to add a "hill" to provide some vertical elevation components to the running and cross country skiing course
- With many people walking the paths within the park he feels that a 10 foot wide paved perimeter walking and biking path around the entire park would be a welcome addition
- Would like to see additional access paths to the adjacent floodplain paths integrated with the Rotary Park if possible

Ellensburg School District – Represented by Cole Kanyer

- Agrees with comments made by Jeff and Mitch regarding incorporating synthetic turf surfaces into Rotary Park and would like to see a larger focus on implementing them within the site
- Wet infields are a challenge in the spring and synthetic turf surfaces can help to alleviate these issues and provide for useable fields over an extended period
- Synthetic turf also brings in additional sports such as lacrosse that isn't a big user group yet but it could be coming
- Would like to see a restroom facility located between the baseball fields (currently using porta-potties) that could also be used by the rugby field users
- Mentioned tennis courts as a possible option but realizes that there has been discussion of these being located at other City parks
- Thinks the addition of field lighting is awesome and would like to see additional fields lighted as they add to the attractiveness of the facility and provides a benefit to the schools, the community, and the youth to have fields available into the evenings
- Echoes Jeff's comments on the cross country course and would also like to see more up and down elevational changes included
- Feels bathrooms, turf fields, and lights would benefit schools the most

Brad commented that with regard to tennis, the last master plan update in 2012 included robust discussion on tennis courts at Rotary Park but with wind being a problematic issue at the site it was felt that tennis courts would be better served by other park facilities within the City that offer better wind protection.

Ellensburg Disc Golf – Represented by Daniel Burnson

- Likes that there are a lot of activities available at Rotary Park
- Mentioned that disc golf currently has a nine hole course at the end of Irene Reinhart Riverfront Park and that in March they had 74 rounds played that were recorded on the scoring app that players sometimes use but he personally had played multiple rounds that were not scored so the actual use of the course is likely higher than what may be recorded
- The limitations on the current course are that it is only nine holes, is on gravel, and it is isolated at the far end of Irene Reinhart Riverfront Park
- They hope that a full eighteen hole course can be included at Rotary Park in some of the perimeter or in between spaces where appropriate
- Disc golf likes to be away from other uses to avoid interference with those activities, hole lengths are typically less than 300 feet and preference would be to throw discs away from fields
- Terrain variations on the course are preferred to enhance the playability so the idea of a "hill" mentioned earlier is intriguing
- Disc golf could be seasonal and flexible to work within the available space
- An eighteen hole course at Rotary Park could provide opportunity for disc golf tournaments to be held with food trucks brought in
- Disc golf is a rapidly growing sport in addition to pickleball
- Disc golf doesn't want to take away space from any other user group and could use removable baskets so that they can be moved or taken down during the off season

Sports Tournament Organizer – represented by Arlo Evasick

- If fourteen fields were available in one location it is unheard of in the six states where he has held tournaments and would provide opportunities for larger tournaments
- Started doing tournaments in the City last year with 2 youth and 3 high school tournaments held
- There is a huge demand for tournaments in the area with not enough fields available
- GSL Tournaments started in Tacoma and has grown over the last eight years
- Wants to grow tournaments and access to baseball
- They are running 8 youth and 6 high school tournaments this year, events are sold out almost every weekend and there is a waitlist because the facilities are very well maintained, they are nice complexes, are clean, aesthetically pleasing and are nice places to be
- Rotary Park is centrally located between Maple Valley, Tri-Cities, and Yakima
- Things that are needed: there are not enough fields in general, particularly 13-14 yr old fields
- Would like to see new fields built to accommodate 90 foot baselines
- Parking is a big issue with tournaments when there are 50 teams trying to find space
- Lighting and synthetic turf would be preferred to allow for extended field usage into the evenings and during less than ideal weather
- Concessions and additional restroom spaces should be included in each field complex
- Hotel availability was also mentioned as an issue for tournaments
- They run 6 indoor baseball tournaments in Centralia and that facility is booked 52 weekends out of the year (for basketball, volleyball, wrestling, expos, etc.), so adding an indoor facility would be an attraction that would be well used

Ellensburg Pickleball Club – Represented by Christopher Nicolai

- The current facilities on the adjacent West Ellensburg Park meets their needs with respect to having a place to play with four courts on site
- With pickleball being the fastest growing sport in the country they would like to see an additional four courts be added to allow for the ability to host tournaments

- Pickleball is a very accessible sport that occupies a fairly small footprint
- Adding at least four additional courts at Rotary / West Ellensburg Park and possibly adding court lighting and nearby restroom and parking facilities is desired

City of Ellensburg Parks & Recreation Commission – Represented by Jackie Adams, Commission Member

- Agrees with a lot of what others have mentioned, excited to see the lighting in effect this year
- On the soccer side of things having more options for that such as additional storage, restrooms, and concessions spaces over there is important
- Having more dedicated walking spaces around the park and the connection to Irene Reinhart would be nice
- While she doesn't use the dog park area herself but does see that it is busy so if there are opportunities to create better spaces for that if there is a big need there
- Having an indoor recreation space is a tremendous need to allow for places to play during inclement weather
- Looking into ways to combine the amenities at Rotary Park and West Ellensburg Park would be nice to bring awareness to the facilities available at both sites

SUMMARY

Brad wanted to address Bob's point regarding future plans, and shared that the City has neighborhood park needs in the northwest part of town and south of Mountain View which are two areas that are currently underserved. When it comes to athletics specifically however the City has remained focused on co-locating the various activities at Rotary Park to provide those needs all in one location for those users who may participate in multiple activities without having to travel to multiple locations.

Shawn thanked the participants for sharing their thoughts on how Rotary Park has served their needs since its inception and their ideas on what improvements or additions would help facilitate the success of their programs into the future. There are many elements that work well at the site now and finding ways to increase the number of facilities and improve the functioning of the park has a whole is an exciting challenge that the City is faced with today.

NEXT STEPS

There will be a follow up meeting with the Steering Committee after the concept plans are put together based on information shared today and supplemental information gathered from the community outreach efforts over the next few weeks.

NEXT MEETING

Next meeting is to be determined.

These are the minutes, as we understand them. If there are any additions or corrections, please contact Bruce Dees & Associates immediately.

Parks & Recreation Commission

I am not seeking re-appointment for this Commission and would like the below reflected in the minutes.

During the Commission meeting on 2/8/23 a motion was made to bring Reed Park Option 4 forward to the City Council for approval. I requested an amendment to add signage with QR codes to the park. During discussion, I was challenged as to why and I indicated the need for improved communication for our community. I reminded the commission twice that we had previously discussed this exact feature with Staff only months prior during our Fall meeting (9/14/22). I included that this idea for the QR code was Commission Member Harrison's idea originally in September and I am bringing it forward again to assist in addressing outreach to our community.

Despite this, my amendment failed with a 3-2 vote. The 3 being: Harrison, Adams, Polluck and the 2 being Zentner and myself.

We have this exact feature of signage with QR codes at Reed Park **right now**. We have had this in the Park since Fall of 2022. This failed amendment illustrated two things:

- 1.) The Commission Members have not been to Reed Park in months. As a reminder, the Commission has proposed a \$2.6M renovation at this park
- 2.) The Commission Members will vote against **reality** if I am the one to request it

This was further confirmed in an email response from Parks Director Case saying *"I didn't understand the reluctance either based on the fact that we've had signage at the park since last fall"* (email 3/16/23).

Additionally, during our 11/9/22 meeting a letter was presented to ban hostile architecture written by commission members Harrison & Brown. My research indicated no other municipality in the US has banned hostile architecture. During the discussion I asked repeatedly for a definition of "hostile architecture" be provided as all research indicated the subject to be ambiguous. No definition was provided, no proof of coordination with City Staff, no safety implications, no plan to address current hostile architecture, no due diligence. Regardless, the Commission voted 4-1 to send the letter "City Pledge" imploring the Council to "please pledge not to install any hostile architecture in any public outdoor spaces of the City of Ellensburg." Consequently, I provided my thoughts to the more discerning minds at City Council where they voted 7-0 against the hostile architecture letter (mostly because of aforementioned points).

The dysfunction and inability to have conversations rooted in reality make any effort within this Commission futile.

Sincerely,

KT Kelleher