

# **City of Yachats**

## **Parks and Commons Commission Meeting**

### **January 21, 2101 - 2:00 p.m.**

#### **I. Call to Order**

Chair Dawn Keller called to order the January 21, 2021 meeting of the Parks and Commons Commission at 2:00 p.m. on Zoom. Members present were: Linda Johnson, Dean Shrock, Craig Berdie, Dawn Keller, & Michael Hempen. Missing was: Scott Gordan. From Trails Committee were: Joanne Kittel & Bob Langley. And from the City Office were: Kimmie Jackson and Heather Hoen. Don Groth was also present from the Finance Committee

#### **II. Reports**

From the Trails Committee, Joanne Kittel and Bob Langley presented a written report. Commissioner Johnson commented on seeing new fence-work along the 804 Trail. New fencing was being considered along the trail and will be looked into by the committee. Chair Keller requested that the Trails Committee plan on making a budget plan for capital funding requests for the coming year. Member Kittel gave an update on the Betty Bahn Memorial and stated she would like to have plans for this finalized by March. Member Langley also mentioned that Trail Map signs are to be here within a few weeks.

From the Little Log Church Committee, Carl Miller gave a brief report on some of the gifts/bequests that have been given to the Little Log Church.

Facilities Manager Hoen spoke on the current situation regarding budgets for reservations and answered questions from Commissioner Johnson regarding the signs for both the Commons and the 501 Building. Newport Signs has yet to give estimates on these signs.

Commissioner Berdie gave an update on the Visitors Amenity Fund and stated that expenditures were “overly cautious” in that the commission and the city had plenty of room to invest in the Commons building and grounds. At this time, the Commons Capital Reserve had \$145,000.

#### **III. New Business**

Chair Keller brought up the need for Planning/Goal Setting (Desired Outcomes)/Capital Projects and requested ideas from the group. Commissioner Berdie and Facilities Manager Hoen spoke about the need for a commercial dishwasher and having the interior of the Commons painted during this time when it was not being used. Berdie also suggested the possibility of having an interior designer come in to make sure that the colors of paint would match other colors to be used, e.g., carpeting. Commissioner Johnson questioned how the use of the building would affect how the rooms were to be painted. For example, would the paint color/texture be different if the building were used for YYFAP and/or other groups.

Chair Keller then questioned the function of how the Parks & Commons Commission saw its work in relation to the City Council. Is the Commission to see itself primarily in an advisory role or should it take on more of a hands-on, organizational role? Especially during this time of

Covid and during the (gradual) reopening of the facility. She then suggested several changes to how the Commission operates.

First, she recommended that the Commission allow (but not necessitate) having two commission members from outside the city limits (instead of the current one member). Second, she suggested that the Parks & Commons Commission function much like the Library Commission in that the commission would take on a more managerial as well as advisory role. Finally, she posed questions about the Commons office space being turned over to YYFAP and asked how visitors to the building would be directed if there were no city council or facilities office in the Commons.

Commissioner Berdie expressed disagreement stating that the Commission, at its last meeting, had voted 5-1 to have YYFAP be allowed to occupy the office space. (It was discovered that this last vote was not forwarded to the City Council due to the transition between Chairs. Deputy Recorder Jackson said that this resolution passed by the Commission would still need to be written up and submitted to the City Council at its next month's meeting.) Chair Keller said that Mayor Vaaler, having attended the December meeting, was aware of the recommendation and was waiting to receive it unless the Commission wished to reconsider, which the Commission did not. Commissioner Berdie expressed his understanding that the City Manager currently oversees the day-to-day operations of the Commons to which Chair Keller stated that the City Manager does not currently oversee the operations of the library.

Commissioner Johnson expressed her wish that the Commons be reenvisioned as a community center with YYFAP being a part of this but not to have adult and children contact due to current Covid considerations. Commissioner Berdie stated that, for him, the intergenerational aspect of having both adults and children in the facility was at the heart of having a community center. Commissioner Hempen said that he leaned more towards Berdie's belief that Covid restrictions would be decreased and that the Commons would be opening sometime in the autumn. He added that historically, there had been little problem with having both adults and children co-exist in the building at the same time. Commissioner Shrock agreed adding that the county and state would be guiding the opening of facilities. Chair Keller concluded this part of the discussion by saying that the Commission could not move forward until the City Council rules on the recommendation related to the office use.

Next, the Commission agreed that painting the Commons (interior and exterior) was necessary and a priority. Facilities Manager Hoen said that, pre-Covid, the estimate for painting the exterior was \$15,000 but with rising prices she believed the estimate could come in between \$15,000 and \$20,000. She added that the interior painting estimate should come in around \$20,000 to \$30,000.

Commissioner Johnson suggested that local artists could be utilized to use their talents and showcase individual styles in specific rooms. Commissioner Shrock said he was open to having an interior decorator to help coordinate community efforts and talent. Commissioner also expressed enthusiasm for Johnson's idea and suggested that the colors to be used should be narrowed down to a specific range of colors and not be totally random. Chair Keller thought display areas for local artists could also be made available. Further discussion ensued.

Chair Keller offered the idea of constructing outdoor bathrooms for public use. Facilities Manager Hoen stated that estimates were unavailable at this time. Commissioner Hempen questioned whether the Parks and Commons Commission or the City Council should take on this project and added that this had been looked into previously. This idea was set aside for the time being.

Commissioner Hempen continued by suggesting that the Commission take a holistic perspective when looking at the Commons and grounds. He did not believe a piecemeal approach would best serve the community. Commissioner Hempen offered the idea that the Commission, with the help of designer(s), take the next few months to think about the whole facility and that various committees should gather ideas from the Commission as well as the community, make proposals, line up bids, and perhaps write grants to help fund proposed projects. Chair Keller confirmed Commissioner Hempen's ideas and asked how volunteers could make up such committees. After some discussion, it was decided that Commissioners Hempen and Johnson (with the assistance of Trail Leader Kittel) should focus on the exterior of the Commons. Commissioners Berdie and Shrock volunteered to concentrate on the Park Grounds while Chair Keller and Facilities Manager Hoen would look at the interior of the Commons. (There was some discussion on the need for a commercial dishwasher and under what fund this item would be purchased. Don Groth was helpful giving guidance on this issue.)

Chair Keller then asked that the Commission discuss and vote on a change of rules regarding the Parks and Commons Commission. First, she requested that the City Council allow two (instead of one - see rule 5.21) Commission members from outside the city limits. This would allow two of the possible seven commission members come from outside the city limits. A motion was made and was passed unanimously.

Second, Chair Keller asked whether the Parks and Commons Commission operate more like the Library Commission, able to coordinate activities for the Commons. This resulted in a lengthy discussion regarding Facilities Manager Hoen's job description and what was expected from her especially in regards to taking reservations, guiding users of the Commons, opening and locking up the building, etc. Chair Keller offered the idea that perhaps a studio apartment could be made available for a custodian/gatekeeper/security person who would then be able to assist Facilities Manager Hoen with the above-mentioned tasks. The county would need to be contacted regarding the building code and the possibility of having a city employee use a studio apartment for the objectives enumerated. There was much discussion regarding this idea and most of the commissioners expressed the thought that the idea had merit. The commission directed Facilities Manager Hoen to look into what building permits would be necessary (and possible) and what insurance and legal considerations need to be examined. They requested that she take a holistic approach and gather information so that a possible proposal made be made to the City Council sometime in the future.

Commissioner Hempen then requested suggestions for landscape designers he could consult with to obtain bids for the exterior of the Commons. Commissioners Berdie and Shrock offered names. Facilities Manager Hoen also suggested that the scope of the project would influence any financial considerations and that a detailed plan would best be utilized in getting estimates.

Finally, Commissioner Hempen brought up the possibility of forming a 501 (3) c organization to help with getting grants for the projects involving the Commons and its grounds. Discussion followed and Facilities Manager Hoen said that a new organization (to replace Friends of the Commons) would need to be privately applied (and funded) for. Chair Keller said that this is currently being worked on.

Commissioner Berdie then requested clarification from the Trails Committee regarding the cost of the proposed boardwalk. Trail Leader Langley offered information.

As the meeting was drawing to a close, Chair Keller asked for input regarding the date/time of the Parks and Commons Commission meeting. After some discussion, it was unanimously agreed upon to change the meeting time from the third Thursday of the month to the first Tuesday of the month. With this change, the Commission could be in a better position to communicate more effectively to the City Council as well as be able to offer articles explaining commission business to the community using the newsletter. This being passed, the next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 2nd at 2:00 p.m.

After some discussion regarding how the Zoom meetings are set up, the meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.