

**City of Rainier**  
**Parks, Recreation and Education Committee Meeting**  
**June 21, 2021**  
**6 p.m.**  
**Rainier City Hall**

Chair Levi Richardson called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

**Committee Members Present:** Kristi Cole, Scott Cooper, Terry Deaton, Randall Johnston, Sharon Jump, Jason Nulph, Gary Rice

**Committee Members Absent:** Tiffany Hatley, Laura Tretheway and Denise Watson

**City Staff Present:** Sue Lawrence, Public Works Director; W. Scott Jorgensen, City Administrator

**Flag Salute**

**Visitor Comments:** Mayor Jerry Cole welcomed the committee members. He said that the thought of having a Parks Committee first came up when City Administrator W. Scott Jorgensen started last September. The committee is chaired by Councilor Levi Richardson and there is another spot on the committee for a councilor. The intent wasn't to have council run the committee, but to have a seat at the table. When issues involving parks come before council, they can be sent to the committee for input and recommendations. It's similar to how the Planning Commission works. The city currently has a great park. He is challenging committee members to develop more pocket parks and trails.

**New Business**

- a. City Council Priorities for the Committee—Richardson went over the memo that was included in the packet. Terry Deaton asked what the committee's objectives are. Jorgensen said he would like the city to become attractive for working professionals with families. One of the things that keeps those professionals from living in small towns is the lack of anything for their children to do. Gary Rice suggested that a survey be done to find out what citizens would like to see at the parks. Jorgensen said a survey could be put on the city's website, the mayor's Facebook page and in utility billing statements. Randall Johnston suggested having a booth at Rainier Days. Jorgensen suggested that committee members develop questions for the survey and get those back to him. Public Works Director Sue Lawrence gave a presentation on city owned properties. There's a three-acre area at the top of Fernhill that's very steep but could possibly be developed. Johnston said that used to be a city dump that closed about 50 years ago. Lawrence said

- the city owns a portion of the property under the C Street bridge. Deaton said that's a nice area. Lawrence said a dog park has been recommended for that location. Deaton suggested that frisbee golf may be a good use of that property. Lawrence said she's been working with the Estuary Partnership to replant the stream corridor and eliminate noxious weeds in that flat area. Richardson said there are houses nearby, but they are higher up. Lawrence said there's a one-acre parcel at the intersection of West First and Westcott that is owned by the city. There are also areas on both sides of the city's water treatment plant. One could be used for a bike park and the other can be a splash pad. Deaton asked if a splash pad may make more sense in the current city park. Richardson said he likes the concept of a splash park at the plant. There could also be a picnic area and adequate parking could be added. Jorgensen said that the committee's next meeting could be a tour of some of these sites. He and Lawrence could visit some of the sites beforehand that they are less familiar with.
- b. Fox Creek Park Concept—Lawrence said she's had a discussion with Pastor Paul Rice about doing a project where his church and the city owned area by Fox Creek converge. Parking could be added, along with playground equipment.
  - c. Pickleball Court at the City Park—Lawrence said she received a request to stripe the tennis courts for pickleball. It would overlay the lines that are currently on the court. Pickleball tournaments could be held with eight courts. She recommends doing the striping on one of the tennis courts as a pilot project. The city doesn't want to take away from the tennis courts. Deaton asked how often the tennis courts are used. Sharon Jump said they're mostly used for pickleball. Richardson said having pickleball wouldn't prevent anyone from being able to play tennis. Lawrence verified and said the lines are colored differently. Richardson suggested having the pickleball supporters tape the court so the committee can better understand what they have in mind. Jorgensen said that could be included as part of the committee's tour.
  - d. Pathway Expansion—Lawrence said that the plan is to take the old metal walking bridge that's at the park, remove the rotting decking, build abutments and have it connect the park to the new riverfront trail. She's received a request to pave the gravel section of the walking path between the tennis courts and the boat launch. Lawrence recommends going ahead with the paving. Jump agreed. She said it would connect seniors to the park. Lawrence said the area is about eight feet wide. Richardson moved to recommend the pathway expansion to council. That motion was seconded by Deaton and adopted unanimously.
  - e. Gazebo Donation—Lawrence said a citizen has offered to pay for a gazebo to donate to the park. She has an estimate of what the gazebo would cost but has yet to hear back from the contractor. Richardson asked if the donors have a preference on location. Lawrence said not

that she's aware of. She showed committee members a couple of locations. Scott Cooper said he'd like to see it by the trees. Lawrence said the city needs to have a method in place to accept donations. Richardson asked about the standards for memorial benches that other cities have. Lake Sacajawea in Longview was suggested as a model. Lawrence said she would like to see those standards include a center rail.

- f. Park Reservation Deposit Policy—Jorgensen said that council passed an ordinance establishing rules and regulations for the park. People can now reserve portions of the park and the forms are online on the city's website. Some cities charge a deposit for the reservations to ensure that users pick up after themselves. There was some discussion about having a fee for reservations. Cooper asked what it costs public works, in terms of time, to prepare a site for reservations. The fee could cover that, and a credit card can be used to cover any damages.

Richardson adjourned the meeting at 7:49 p.m.

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Levi Richardson, Chair

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W. Scott Jorgensen, City Administrator