

**Park Commission Meeting  
November 10, 2009**

**Present:** Bob Christiansen, Mike Interbartolo, Joan Bell, Frank Olivieri, Phil Friel, Tom Friel, Bill Gardiner, John McLaughlin, John Mercer

Mike I. introduced the Park Commission and GMC. He outlined that the plan for the meeting was for the Commission to go through the final report on the Feasibility Study done at Mt Hood by Beals and Thomas. Representatives from Beals and Thomas were present to answer the Commission's questions. The public will be allowed to speak, each once and for three minutes max. Mike I. gave a short history of the reasoning for the Feasibility Study.

Mike I. noted that:

Stage 1 of the Feasibility Study was to locate, size wise, enough space at Mt Hood to put an athletic field. Golf improvements, more safety for golfers and pedestrians and passive recreation were also of concern to the Commission. The final report will be on the city's website ([cityofmelrose.org](http://cityofmelrose.org)), and at the library or the public may purchase a copy for \$50 from the Park Dept.

Stage 2 was for the Commission is to look at the area(s) of a potential field. The area would be surveyed as far as topography and conservation concerns. What can be done and at what cost needs to be determined. In addition to these surveys the Commission has committed to doing a traffic study. Once all of these steps have been done the Commission will decide whether or not to move forward. If the decision is to move forward then bid documents would go out for designing and developing the project.

Mike I. introduced Beals and Thomas consultant, John Benzen. John gave an overview of preparing the Feasibility Study to date. He reported that the only location they found that could fit a field was along the existing 17<sup>th</sup> hole. The 11<sup>th</sup> hole area was explored, but, has too many issues. John spoke to the access issues and the wetland studies that need to be done. Beals and Thomas has estimated the costs of preparing the land and building the field. It is in their final report.

Mike I. requested that Beals and Thomas come up with a cost estimate for the environmental study that would need to be done in the spring.

**Motion:** By John Mercer to open Public Participation.

**Second:** Bob Christiansen

**Vote:** Unanimous

**VII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Myron Dittmer, 93 Altamont Ave., representing the Mt Hood Park Association group made 5 points against building anything at Mt Hood.

David Valade, 38 Goss Ave., scheduler of Youth Soccer and parent of youth that plays soccer. He is a former member on the Conservation Commission. David commented on

his recollection of the Big Dig problem years ago. There are over 900 children in Youth Soccer and has been severely impacted by the lack of fields. He believes the Commission is doing the research correctly and that they should pursue the project. He suggested an alternate plan that he had thought up.

Allan Schwarz, 16 Stillman Rd, asked if the Conservation Commission's decision could trump the Park Commission's decision. Mike I. responded that Conservation would have to give an order of conditions on how to move forward with the project under their conditions or agree that the project will not impact the wetlands. Allan hopes the project will not go forward.

Michael McDonough, 35 Sears Ave, asked if golf would ever be cancelled on the back nine because of a game and that he is worried about a sinking problem. Mike I. stated that golf would not be cancelled and that the issue of sinking would be covered in one of the studies.

Tanya McSorely, Slayton Rd, asked if the Feasibility Study is being done with Slayton Rd as the only access road. Mike I. responded that due to all research done Slayton Road is the only access road available.

Rod Eddy, Melrose Towers, believes that something that is not broken should not be fixed. He feels Mt Hood should not be touched. He also would like to see the tower area cleaned up and he would like the Commission to please consider a memorial for the Major that crashed his B52 on Mt Hood. Mike I. commented that at the last meeting the Commission approved a plaque for the Major. Joan Bell noted that the tower area has just been cleaned.

Dave Dickerson, Orris St, resident and president of Ell Pond Committee thinks that it is a big mistake to blast and change Mt Hood. It has been held in trust for many years and should be kept the same. He would work with the Commission to do a similar project on the East Knoll that was done on the West Knoll to eliminate flooding.

Melissa Lucas, 22 Slayton Rd, wanted to know if there any plans to do traffic study before the project would proceed. Mike I. said yes.

John McGrath, 78 Lynde Ave(?), wanted to know if the Commission considered building a regulation track. Mike I. responded that the study covered this and the cost and size would be prohibitive. John McLaughlin added that the Pine Banks Trustees are looking into building a regulation track at Pine Banks.

Mike Oster, Burlington, owner of 36 Slayton Rd, has approval to build on this land and would like to let the Commission know of their family's intent.

Dana Jewel, 100 Lynn Fells Parkway, asked for clarification of where the field would actually be. He is not in favor of clearing trees and woods.

Tom Weaver, 30 Slayton Rd, a member of the Inner Club, understands the need for a field, but thinks it an awful idea to build one at Mt Hood. He thinks golf and a field should not be put together.

Keith Canario, First Street, parent of 3 children, wants the investigation to continue, as some of the fields (East Knoll) that Melrose uses are an embarrassment. Melrose needs to investigate any possible areas for a new field.

Ellen Walsh, 2 Mt Hood Terrace, would like to see money spent on improving some of the other fields in town.

Rebecca Bloomenthal 50 Stillman Rd, chose Melrose a year ago because it is a fabulous town. Every town can't have everything. Not all towns have the beautiful land like Melrose has and we should do the best that we can with what we have.

John McDonald 219 Laurel St, worries about urban open space and wildlife habitat. He believes that years ago it was promised that if a field was built then the access would be from Rte 99. He asked again that the Commission review that promise. He also thought that at the last meeting the Commission promised to ask the consultants to come up with a cost of making the access road on the Rte 99 side. Mike I. responded that the topo study will help to come up with information on this access possibility. John explained his thoughts on moving holes and safety issues at the course.

Peter Mortimer, alderman for the ward, said that the 4 million dollar figure for a field could be used elsewhere better.

Pete Hickey, Prescott Street, is concerned about the health and safety in relation to an artificial field. He hopes the field will not be built.

Joe Sullivan, 10 Birch Hill Rd, spoke to his research on using funds from Mt Hood elsewhere. He has found the answer to be no in his research.

Douglas Viner, Clover Circle, plays golf at Mt Hood. He sees wildlife all the time at Mt Hood and feels we should not take that away by building a field.

**Motion:** By John Mercer to close Public Participation.

**Second:** John McLaughlin

**Vote:** Unanimous

**Motion:** By Bill Gardiner to accept the Feasibility Study from Beals and Thomas and to make it public (library, internet, \$50 per hardcopy)

**Second:** Bob Christiansen

**Vote:** Unanimous

**Motion:** By Bob Christiansen to authorize Beals and Thomas to move forward with the topographical survey with a projected fee of \$14,500.00

**Second:** Bill Gardiner

**Vote:** Unanimous

Mike I. again asked Beals and Thomas for a proposal on the environmental study with a rough cost estimate. They agreed.

## I SIGNING OF WARRANTS

Warrants were reviewed and signed.

## II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**Motion:** By John Mercer to approve the minutes of the meeting 10/5/09

**Second:** John McLaughlin

**Vote:** Unanimous

## III. RECREATION DEPARTMENT REPORT

### A. Status Report on Revolving Fund Account FY10

Frank's budget reflects fall and winter programs except for Travel and MBA basketball. Travel and MBA will be presented next month. Mike I. had a question about the Navigators Camp revenue and how did the recreation get up to over 1 million dollars on munis? Joan said she would look into that.

### B. Update on Recreation Admin.

Susan Tsoukalas is working 18 hours per week till the end of February. The city will then reevaluate her position. Mike I. would like Frank to bring Susan to a meeting.

### C. MBA Summary

There are about 600-650 kids this year. This is about a 150-200 child drop off this year. Economy, the price increase and the large number of travel team options for kids probably accounts for this drop off. John McLaughlin would like a breakout of which age groups had the biggest drop off.

### D. Travel Basketball

Practices have been going for 2 weeks. Uniforms are coming in. Schedules are all in. All travel teams get out of gyms by 9:30pm this year. There haven't been any complaints.

### E. Winter Tennis Program

Frank is considering running a winter tennis program at the Marcoux gym. He has had great success with James Renier's tennis classes and is looking into continuing them.

### F. Gym Rental Fee Summary

Frank went to a conference and sat with other cities (Reading and Swampscott). Swampscott uses their fields as leverage. If the school wants to charge for gyms then the city would charge for the fields. Swampscott schools agreed to let the recreation department into the schools. Reading is dealing with similar issues. They decided to pay the school a \$25,000 up front payment. This allowed recreation to get into the gyms Monday through Friday up until 9:00pm free of charge. They do pay a custodial fee of \$35/hr on weekends. Right now Frank is looking at over \$60,000 for the year for gym fees. Discussion was had about the cost of the Mowing and Maintenance

Contract and the permits that the school takes out. Joan pointed out that maybe it is the school committee that needs to be addressed about the gym fees.

#### IV. MOUNT HOOD REPORT

##### A. Mount Hood

###### 1. Report on membership list for 2009

No changes. Mike I. would like GMC to review the membership package that is to go out for 2010, so that it can be voted on at the next meeting. Joan will email it to GMC.

###### 2. Outstanding Gift Certificates

\$ 29,100 balance

###### 3. Monthly Financial Report on Golf Course

Down YTD about \$12,000. Have to bring in \$50,000-\$60,000 between Nov and Dec to catch up. Food is ahead of last year by about \$\$34,000. The pro shop is down about \$12,000. Majority of that is the junior golf schools that did not get filled.

###### 2009 Total Golf Revenues:

MTD \$106,492

YTD \$1,428,391

###### 4. Marketing Plan Update

Mike Farrell reported that they are doing a lot of work to update the website and are still doing some email blasts to get in players.

###### 5. Report on General Operations of Golf Course

###### a. Report on staffing

There is currently 11 staff on hand.

###### b. Copy of Maintenance Log and Current Certification

A copy was submitted and is on file.

###### c. Update on AC

Joan has a meeting Friday morning with Mercury Mechanical. Mike Farrell is going to go over hours of operation for coordination of the work schedule. The alternate that was picked will be 2 visible units added in the function hall. Could the defunct radiators be used? More discussion was had.

###### d. Discussion on Feasibility Study

See above

###### e. FAA's Tower Lease

See summary that Joan B. included. Joan noted that the PC has an agreement with the Fire and Police that does not produce revenue. Mike I. questioned the Antennae Revenue on the budget of \$6700. He would like to know how often this is received. There are 2 leases that produce revenue, the FAA lease and the Cell lease. Joan will find out when the monies are actually received, she believes it is quarterly.

On a side note, Joan reported that on the FY11 budget the interest on the Enterprise Account will be broken out. Interest rates are very low.

f. Tower Report

Mr. DiLullo came out and went through the tower and the top stairs that need renovating. Mr. DiLullo roughly estimated \$120,000 to repair/renovate the tower and surrounding area. Joan and the Commission will rethink what needs to be fixed vs. what they would like to be done. Bob C. thinks the tower area looks great after GMC's cleanup and would recommend this to be the place where the pilot's plaque be placed. Joan noted that she has had a lot of people speak with her about the event and remember exactly where it happened. There may be opposition to not putting the plaque exactly where the plane crashed.

g. Update on Hydro Raking first Pond

Aquatic Control will start at Towner's Pond tomorrow. They will not be at Mt Hood till Saturday or Monday. Mike Ford is going to put the rocks back until he hears that they are coming. Joan went to the Conservation meeting and they are content with the area chosen to dry out the pond material. Joan has spoken with Bob Beshara and will be sharing trucking costs. It will probably be done on a Sat or Sun by DPW.

Mike I. asked Joan to check on the Conservation meeting that Perry went to.

h. Update on Wind Turbine Study

James Simard, from EAPC Wind Energy Co., came up on 10/27. They approved Mt Hood for the desktop study to see if we could go to the next step. Two spots they looked at were not good. Two he liked. He liked the meadow area, in back of the 11<sup>th</sup>, and between the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>. He said the turbine takes up only 18 inches on the ground. He has to check with the FAA to see what their restrictions are since there is a microwave beam that goes through the meadow area. They will also have to speak with Bob Beshara about the electrical load that can be carried. When Joan spoke later with James he said that they really liked a corner of the meadow area. There is still a lot to do before we get an answer as to if we can move forward.

B. Report on requests for rental of club house, league play and golf tournaments

See report

C. FY10 Budget

The Friels asked for an update on the Kitchen Renovation. Joan replied that four architects responded to the RFQ. Mike asked Joan to make copies of them for the Friels. The architects were not asked to submit pricing, so Mike asked Joan to get back to them to request prices.

There is a request in to the BOA for a supplemental budget for the AC for \$45,000. Mike requested that additional costs be added in for the Topographical Study (\$14,500), the Environmental Study, a Traffic Study, and for the Kitchen Architect. Mike I. would like GMC to start to think of a schedule for kitchen renovations. It may not be ready to happen in the down time of this year. Laura Farrell, function coordinator, needs a timeline though. This will be continued at the next meeting.

**Motion:** By Bob Christiansen to request from the BOA up to \$100,000 in a supplemental budget for the following: AC project, Topographical Study, Environmental Study, Traffic Study and a Kitchen Architect design.

**Second:** John Mercer

**Vote:** Unanimous

## V. PARK DEPARTMENT REPORT

### A. General Park Dept. Report

#### 1. Fall Clean Up

Fall cleanup has started in the Parks. The Common Tot Lot renovation is done. The walls are repaired. The fence is up. The graphics have been painted on the ground.

Fence repairs are done at Conant Park and Lincoln Park.

Irrigation is being shut down for winter.

Scope of work to be done is out on Morelli field infield. Joan should have the pricing by Friday.

Lewis Monk had volunteers and DPW do some work on the baselines last weekend.

Soccer nets are coming off this weekend. Joan is working with Bob Beshara on the East Knoll to shoot some grades to see if any areas can be brought back to natural grade before the winter to alleviate problems. The East Knoll did well in the summer, but, did have issues in the fall. Joan thought a drain had maybe collapsed, but, investigated and it had not. She believes the East Knoll is below natural grade and is her next field to work on.

#### 2. Permits

All are finished for fall. She is starting on spring permits in December. Things went fine with Pine Banks this fall. Adding a track at Pine Banks will be brought up at the spring meeting for Pine Banks.

#### 3. Melrose Dog Society Waste Stations

They would like to put up waste stations at the 3 parks they were interested in as green dog parks. Discussion was had. Mike I. would like a motion that approves dog waste stations at all parks, and if the Dog Society can only put them at some parks then the Commission will choose which parks they should be put at.

The BOA meeting is on November 16. Joan asked if anyone could attend with Mike I.

### B. Mowing and Maintenance Contract Renewal

Mike I. asked if Bob Beshara or John Scenna would be attending the December meeting. Joan said she would put in the request.

Mike I. asked if Joan ever got the letter from John Scenna saying that Roosevelt Field is safe from sewerage. Joan will pursue this. Bob Christiansen did return to the field and the smell was not as bad. John McLaughlin mentioned that the culvert needs to be cleaned out periodically to help with water issues.

C. FY11 Budget

Joan said budget discussions will have to begin soon. Due to the economy certainly nothing will be added to the budget. It will be more of what can be cut probably.

Mike told Joan to remind Frank to put something in his recreation budget for community activities up at Mt Hood. Joan has spoken with Patrick D. and she is going to put a line item under Mt Hood Misc for recreational activities at Mt Hood.

**Motion:** By John McLaughlin to adjourn

**Second:** Bob Christiansen

**Vote:** Unanimous