

WKNA Board meeting  
Sept. 2, 2021 6 p.m., Carol Phipps patio  
Submitted by Carolyn Homan, Secretary

**Attending:** Carol Doerfler, Carol Phipps, Rhonda Rich, Art Mauer, Gary Blake, Carolyn Homan, Dennis Phipps

**Absent:** Robb Witters

**Guests:** Colm Willis, Marion County Commissioner  
Jessica Stanton, Marion County Commission staff  
Matt Lawyer, member of Keizer Parks Advisory Board

**Call to Order:** Carol Doerfler, 6 p.m.

Carol introduced the Board members to the guests and explained that the guests were here to present an idea for an amenity at Keizer Rapids Park.

Matt Lawyer, of the Parks board, introduced the idea with a recap of work underway on the Master Plan for Keizer parks. WKNA has been very engaged in providing input regarding the neighborhood and the community and general in terms of park needs and priorities. He said the parks fee has made completion of the city's 3-5-year plan for parks improvements possible ahead of schedule. The biggest component of the Master Plan is KRP and the version of the plan OK'd 10 years ago is a bit of a hodge-podge, he said. In the new proposed plan, things have been moved around some and the idea for a soccer field there is on the table. The idea came from Commissioner Willis. Matt will be taking the idea and Willis' vision, along with WKNA's input, on to the Parks Board. From there, any proposal would go to the full City Council.

Commissioner Willis explained the background of the idea, which arose three years ago. At that time Oregon State University Extension had a 4-H program running a soccer league for kids, predominantly children of area farmworkers. About 700 kids were involved and it was an affordable recreation option but OSU cancelled it. To replace it, local soccer clubs were called to see if they would take over running the program. Only Keizer said yes and the county moved the money that supported the program to Keizer. The funding pays part of the salary for a program director. All coaches are volunteer.

The arrangement has hit a snag in that the Oregon soccer association is requiring a turf field (the new artificial turf version.) Finding existing fields that are eligible is difficult. In addition, the local youth football program also would like a turf field. Commissioner Willis talked to Matt and the idea of building something at KRP came up.

Location was discussed. Other questions included who would be in charge of maintenance; parking; number of people/cars that could be expected per game. The WKNA Board favored putting a field up closer to Chemawa, rather than south of the Big Toy. Expanded parking in KRP was seen as a must to avoid people parking in the Tate neighborhood just east of KRP. There is no easy exit from that small neighborhood without turning around in someone's driveway.

Commissioner Willis said the cost of maintenance would be borne by the clubs in return for prioritized use on weekends. The field would be open to other users as well throughout the week. The project could cost \$1 million or so. Federal pandemic relief funds are a source. (American Rescue Plan Act, or ARPA, money to the county can be used for infrastructure projects.)

The issue of field lighting also arose. Willis said the plan is to add lights but they would be on an

auto turn-off and games should be finished by 8 p.m. or so. Given that the city rule is park closure by dusk, it was acknowledged that the rule would have to be amended. That probably would happen anyway if the Little League fields get lights, which has been suggested.

Rhonda asked that a fire hydrant be added to KRP given the ongoing drought and the increased activity the field would generate. Matt said he thought it was Marion County Fire jurisdiction but he would talk to Chief Cowan. One issue is a source for water.

In general, the Board favored the plan for soccer and definitely favored soccer over the previous idea for a softball field or fields. Carol told the guests that the Board would talk the plan over and get back to them. She thanked them for the presentation and added that we want to support all the kids who want to play.

Carol then called the regular Board meeting to order, starting with approving the minutes from Aug. 5. Rhonda noted the need to correct Jim Trett's name and the date to Aug. 5. Art moved approval as corrected; Gary seconded. Motion approved.

**Budget** – Carol bought two brochure boxes and stands at a cost of \$95.35. That is the only expenditure so far. Carol will check with Tim Wood about the budget total that was approved -- \$550 or \$500?

**Newsletter** – Carol thanked Robb, Carol P. and Carolyn for their work producing the first WKNA newsletter, distributed about mid-August. Carol P. put some hard copies in the various brochure boxes and distributed it to the WKNA email list. There has been no feedback.

**Keizer Times, Keizer Chamber, KMUZ, Salem Reporter** – Carolyn said meeting notices had gone to all outlets. She has replaced the SJ with Salem Reporter. The SJ calendar log-on keeps changing and wouldn't work the last few attempts (not even the "change your password" option.)

**Brochures and signs** – Art said supplies are fine. Carol D. said Robert Johnson, Parks manager, had OK'd putting a brochure box at the Tate entrance to KRP. New Cummings Principal Andy Kronsor also OK'd putting a box at the Cummings entrance and Carol P. has installed one there. Carol reminded everyone to get their meeting signs out for the General meeting.

**Little Free Library, Website, Facebook** – Carol D. said all are going well. Barb Smith put a link to the newsletter on the website.

## REPORTS

**Parks** – Carol P. and Dennis did a walking tour of W. Keizer parks (all but Palma Ciega). Matt Lawyer's work party did a half-day clean up there recently. They said the teeter-totter at Wallace House had been fixed (Carol D. had emailed Robert Johnson.) The Council's parks tour will be Monday, Sept. 13, starting at Claggett Creek. It proceeds to Northside and then Palma Ciega. They should arrive at P.C. around 7 p.m. Carol D. said it would be good if WKNA Board members could be there to share thoughts about that park. There is a picnic table there now. Carol put in a request to Matt when he was there with the work party.

**Food barrels** – Carol commended Dennis for his work picking up the food donations. He said it had been a good week with 125 pounds donated. August total was 315 pounds and \$40. He said Jim Johnson at the food bank told him the food bank was having trouble getting enough volunteers to keep the food bank open. Distribution happens at 4:30 on Monday and 8:30 a.m. on Thursday. Carol D. said she would post the need for volunteers on the website and FB page (as

well as Keizer Community Bulletin Board FB.)

## **Discussion**

**Cummings School Cleanup** – Carol P. has taken this on, cleaning up the front planter bed. She also now has a key to the water spigot and there are hoses that can be used for watering. She moved the blue pots to the front door and cleaned out the flower bed area near the east-side entrance that was mainly just weeds. WKNA meeting sign can go by that entrance and a brochure box as well. It all looks great! Carol P. said she feels keeping it neat and tidy teaches respect for property.

Carol D. said she talked to Principal Kronsor about the cougar mascot mural that was covered in part during the new construction. She is going to check around for someone to repaint the section that is covered by a steel girder.

**National Night Out/John Knox Presbyterian event** – Carol D. hasn't heard from Mary Jo Emmert about a contact at the church to talk to about combining the NNO with the annual church potluck and collaborating with WKNA on a joint event.

**List of speakers** – Carol P. to send a reminder to Interim City Manager Wes Hare, who is to speak Sept. 9. Carol D. will send a reminder to Principal Kronsor.

October speaker Tom Rohlfing has confirmed he can be there. Group discussed having a speaker to address traffic in November. Carol D. said this needs to be a topic of some discussion at every meeting. She suggested using the fall to plan a strategy to address the issue of traffic and then hit it hard in early 2022.

For November, the Parks Master Plan was suggested as a topic. Another suggestion: someone to talk about city permits for sidewalks and other things. There was concern that November might be too late to talk about the Parks plan, depending on when it was approved to go to Council. We might need to schedule that for October. Carol D. will email Robert about when the plan is scheduled to go to Parks Board for approval. If the Master Plan has to go on the October agenda, we will ask Tom Rohlfing to hew to a strict time limit for his talk.

Re: the traffic campaign in January, discussion centered on using it as a "forum" to get people's input. There was a suggestion to get extra signs to alert neighbors and solicit their help in an anti-speeding campaign and entice them to attend meetings to provide input.

## **Roundtable**

**Soccer field** – Carol D. said she felt the proposed plan deserved a cautious yes, but she wants WKNA involved at every step so that what was said tonight ends up on the Master Plan.

Carol P. said WKNA needs to be at the Parks Board meeting when the plan is discussed. Gary agreed WKNA needs to stay involved. The group discussed wording for a possible resolution reflecting the WKNA Board's stance:

***The West Keizer Neighborhood Association Board agrees to support the plan for a youth soccer/football field at Keizer Rapids Park in the area just east of Walsh Way near Chemawa Road that was discussed at the Sept. 2 WKNA Board meeting with County Commissioner Colm Willis and Matt Lawyer, Keizer Parks Advisory Board member. The support comes with the provisos that:***

- 1) the need for more parking at KRP is addressed,**
- 2) that WKNA is actively involved during the entire process of ongoing planning for the project and that**
- 3) the WKNA Board is informed of any changes to the plan presented Sept. 2, 2021, as well as the reasons the changes were made.**

Rhonda asked about talking points for Palma Ciega to share during the Council's parks tour Sept. 13. Among them are clearing brush to create some kind of rough path to the river but keeping the park as a natural area for birds and wildlife. It also needs to be on a regular mowing schedule.

Carolyn noted that the scheduled bird walk at KRP, held in conjunction with Salem Audubon Society, has been cancelled. Due to the recent surge in Covid cases, Audubon has cancelled all bird walks until at least November.

Meeting adjourned at 9 p.m.

**Next meetings:**

**WKNA General, 7 p.m., Sept. 9, City Hall**

**Keizer Council Parks Tour, 6 p.m., Sept. 13, starting at Claggett Creek**

**WKNA Board Meeting, 7 p.m., Oct. 5, location TBD**