



Monthly Executive Summary July 2010

City of Spokane
Leroy Eadie
Director of Parks and Recreation
August 9, 2010

Department highlights for the month include:

- Grand Opening at the Dwight Merkel Sports Complex was a magical day – thanks to all the Parks Staff that made that happen.
- Taylor, Garrett, and Leroy had a productive meeting with the Emerson Garfield Neighborhood regarding Corbin Park. New lighting will go into the park this fall and Parks is committed to improving communications with the neighborhood and the homeowners association.
- Pamela, Garrett, and Leroy participated in a presentation in Olympia on an application for a Washington State ALEA (Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account) one million dollar grant. The presentation was done jointly with Spokane County Parks (Doug Chase and John Bottelli). Pamela, Garrett, and John did an excellent job on the application and the presentation.
- Big congratulations to Gary Lindeblad for qualifying for and playing in the U.S. Senior Open in Sammamish Washington. Gary we are very proud of you!

Recreation/Entertainment Services:

- Planning and preparation for the opening of the new **Merkel Sports Complex** was a priority during the month of July. In addition to everyone's normal duties, a team was assembled from staff at Recreation, Riverfront Park and Park Accounting to help prepare for the opening on August 1.
- The new mini Rockin' Tug amusement ride began operation at Riverfront Park.
- 800 attended the International Association for the Identification Conference dinner in Riverfront Park's Lilac Meadow, which featured a western mining town theme.
- 55 people attended the Trail Build Day at Dwight Merkel on July 10.
- Hillyard Senior Center celebrated their annual "Strawberry Social Special Event". The event brought in nearly 80 participants and featured entertainment and dancing from the Dixie Dandies.
- The Corbin Players performed Mousetrap for 155 attendees who also enjoyed complimentary wine and hors d'oeuvres.

Golf/Administration: Report not available.

Finance:

- Staff worked to hire staff, assist with contract preparation and cash handling for the opening of the Merkel Sports Complex.
- Held budget meetings and prepared 1st draft of 2011 Proposed Budget.
- Finished up final acceptance on contract for Aquatics Centers.

Marketing/Communications:

- Twenty news releases including: Please Don't Feed the Ducks; Reminder to Vote for Rose Hill; Reserved Seating for 4th of July Fireworks; Riverfront Brief Closures for Maintenance; Riverfront Park Entertainment; No Cuts Here – Full 20 Minutes of Fireworks at Riverfront Park Sunday; Riverfront Park Thanks to Sponsors; Sekani Adventure Day 2010; Rosauers Open; Free Tour of Rose Hill Garden in Manito; "Mousetrap" Performed by the Corbin Players; NEYC Car Wash to Send Kids to Camp; Sounders Soccer at Merkel; Kyle Kelly Wins Rosauers Open; Mini Rockin' Tug Debuts at Riverfront Park; National Carousel Convention in Spokane; Please Help NEYC Recoup Stolen Funds; Last Trail Building Day for Dwight Merkel to Riverside State Park; Mayoral Proclamation Recreation & Parks Week; Join us for Merkel Ribbon-cutting August 7th.
- Significant Background information has been assembled and posted regarding the Dwight Merkel Sports Complex grand-opening and ribbon-cutting August 7th. Daily updates to the Aquatics section of the web site have been made regarding donors, safety, hours of operation, training of lifeguards, etc.
- Printed invitation to the August 7th Grand Opening distributed July 28.
- Banners recognizing donors currently in production. Each of the aquatic centers will have a banner, as will the Dwight Merkel Sports Complex. A list of donors will be posted at the ribbon-cutting site, and a poster about "Dwight Merkel" the man has also been created and will be onsite for the ribbon-cutting and later in City Hall.
- The August program will feature "Friends of Manito's 20th Anniversary & Fall Plant Sale" (Steve Nittolo interviews Lee McIeron, president of TFM) and Moore-Turner Heritage Gardens (Lynn

interviews Richard Hartlage, the landscape designer for the restoration who plans to submit the gardens for a national award.

Park Operations:

- Staff had a progress meeting with Spokane Public Schools on athletic field improvement projects at Shadle Park. Parts of irrigation system will be automated and separated from the rest of the park. There is small portion of the park that is not maintained by the School District will still have a manual watering system that will need upgrading in the future.
- There were two responses to an RFP for repairing water leakage in Cannon Hill Park pond that were reviewed by staff. Both proposals are significantly more expensive than original cost estimates. As a result, the RFP for the project will have to be put out again and advertised as appropriate. Both proposals recommended using a membrane liner to eliminate the water loss. This will require draining the pond and come excavation and will be more disruptive to the pond but should provide more reliable results.
- There has been a number of improvement projects started this month in Manito Park. A new sidewalk connecting sidewalks along Grand Boulevard to the picnic shelter area has been completed. A fence and landscaping along the top of the new retaining wall in Duncan Garden have been started. Demolition of an old greenhouse and construction of its replacement is well under way. This new greenhouse should complete projects funded by the 1999 Bond Issue. A new rock retaining wall and landscaping is getting installed along Tekoa Street and some landscape work has been completed around the recently relocated Washington Monument across from the Park Bench café.
- A privately owned, unofficial website for Manito Park continues to cause some problems. The website is misleading for the public and has led a few individuals into thinking they had a park reservation when in fact they did not. The City Attorney's office is looking into the situation and possible recourse.
- Staff worked with Civil Service on establishing an eligibility list for the Park Facilities and Grounds Foreperson position. Unfortunately, many employees who qualified for the position were unaware of the testing because the job announcement did not get sent out. Proper notification was done and a second testing conducted and the issue got resolved.
- Staff had several meeting to look at ways to reduce expenditures or increase revenues and prepare input for the 2011 budget. Park Operations is already stretched pretty thin and is also dealing with the added responsibilities of increasing park usage and new facilities. The budget reductions being considered will impact service to the public with slower response times to issues and more deferred maintenance.
- The weather this year has been conducive to growing weeds. We are trying to keep up with spraying and cutting on both developed and undeveloped park land. There seems to be a lot of clover in park turf this year, which has been particularly hard to control.

Planning/Project Management:

- Completed three Boy Scout projects including: renovation of ball diamond at Mission Park; developed and approved mile marker project for Fish Lake Trail; continuation of the interpretive signage system at High Drive for the mapping of trails and a display of natural history – this portion of the project Scout's younger brother who is also a candidate for Eagle Scout Status.
- Logan Peace Park will have additional concrete work and sidewalk repair done at the Neighborhood's request this summer.
- Work on the basketball court planned for Mission Park has not yet started.
- Waiting on delivery of park furniture for installation at Fairview Park.
- Commemorative plaques for the new Aquatic Centers have been received and will be installed this coming month. Work will include the reinstallation of historic plaques that remain from past pool renovation projects.
- Two commemorative benches have been ordered for installation at Comstock Park and the view pullout on High Drive. The benches and installation work are being donated by private individuals. Installation will be done this fall when participants return from summer trips.
- The Polly Judd Park pancake shelter has been funded. An architect has been contracted to design and supervise the construction of the shelter. Meetings with the Neighborhood will occur on site this month.

- An architect has been chosen for the North Bench/West Central shelter. Staff is waiting for the Neighborhood's Park Committee to meet and provide design input.
- Corbin Park lights have been ordered. The contractors who submitted construction proposals are reluctant about the possibility of long term damage of tree roots and that the responsibility for damage that may show at the following growth season. A contract has been written. The low bidder will begin installation work of the area lights in two weeks.
- Site walked the Dog Park to determine a fence line based on a level route for the circumference of the dog area. There was a slight reduction in area from the Master Plan but the area is large enough for a workable enclosure. Plans now include laying out the fence up to the retaining wall below Government Way. The wall will be the west boundary of the dog run area.
- All equipment ordered for the Dwight Merkel Sports Complex arrived prior to the grand opening on August 7. The materials and machinery seem to be very suitable to the Complex's operation.
- The Ben Burr Trailhead renovation is under construction. Initial work will be the approved removal of trees at areas where the trail bed will expand to 12 feet. Plans are currently being reviewed by the Urban Forestry Department.
- The Riverwalk project in Peaceful Valley has been approved by Community Development and the contract has been approved with construction beginning next week. The Department of Ecology has granted \$20,000 to the neighborhood for native plant introduction and restoration. Paperwork is being completed naming the Parks Department as the recipient and we will monitor the project development and execution. Conversations with the design firm that developed the Riverwalk Plan with the intention of changing plans to include planting areas along the riverbank.
- The Overlook Project in the Coeur d'Alene Neighborhood is going well. There was a brave effort to remove an active bee hive from a dying street tree. Elaborate plans were developed, coordinated and executed without a single bee sting incident by staff, bee keepers and an arboriculturalist that were willing to do the job to save the valuable hive. The bees stayed in the 10 foot long section of the tree trunk that was cut into a log.
- Accurate and attractive Graphics and signs were designed and ordered for the Merkel Opening. Gate decorations and balloon displays added to the opening's success.
- Garret Jones created the graphics for a PowerPoint presentation that was presented in Olympia for a grant application that would provide funding for the site restoration of the YMCA property in Riverfront Park.
- Base plans have been provided to Stormwater Management. These plans included all maps for Parks facilities that have material storage and activity on the paved surfaces that would contribute to storm water contamination if flooded.
- Contact with the Disc Golf Group has been low however there has been a lot of activity at all of the courses.

Urban Forestry

- A new Temp/Seasonal arborist will begin in September. His/her duties will include street tree licensing, permitting, code enforcement, sign clearance pruning, and inventory.
- Continued revision of the Vegetation Management Plan.
- Continued participation in Interdepartmental Discussion group. A policy product and guidance on infill planting of narrow parking strips is expected to be completed in August.
- Continued participation in GP RED Roadmap to the Future process.
- Three vacancies remain on the Citizen Advisory Committee: Historic Preservation, Community Assembly and Member-at-Large.
- Developed utility bill insert to promote our donation program which will launch in September. Website information page and other media releases are in development.
- Awarded a \$30,000 grant from WDNR and USDA Forest Service for urban forest resource inventory. Funds will be used to purchase an additional TreeWorks™ license and hire temporary staff to collect data. This grant is separate from the \$10,000 awarded by the same agencies for a public education project.
- Joined the Alliance for Community Trees *NeighborWoods* program. Invitations to all Neighborhood Councils to participate in the program will be sent in August.
- Joined the Community Canopy tree education partnership.
- Continued consultation on Youth Baseball Field construction projects and Overlook Bluff park construction in Browne's Addition.
- Attended Engineering briefing on expected 2011 Street and Water projects.

- Root evaluations/pruning for the Thurston St. and Lincoln St. project.
- Pruned trees within and on the south side of the Japanese Garden for clearance and crown-cleaning.
- Cleanup in the parks related to a wind storm that occurred July 12. Mostly minor incidents; no whole tree failures.
- Removed one large branch from an Elm tree at 4009 E. 37th. This was a severely damaged private tree from the wind storm. Failure of the limb was imminent.
- Part of a large Black Locust at 2427 E. 4th (Street Tree) failed and UF was called because the remaining stem (20"DBHx60') was in the process of failing. The UF crew removed the remaining stem and the street department cleaned up the debris.
- Met with Avista regarding clearance issues on Upriver Drive and Centennial Trail.
- Trees at Fire Stations 8 and 4 were inventoried.