

PARKS,

continued from Page A1

"Based on the current year budget, it's a status quo budget (for next year)," Lawyer said. "Robert and I looked through where we are expenditure wise. One top need we identified is a tennis court resurface at Wilamette Manor Park, which will cost about \$11,000. That was out of capital money, with about \$4,200 left. That's in addition to the matching grant program, which is staying at \$14,000. So there would be another \$4,200 available for capital improvements. If you go with no new tennis court, you will have about \$15,000. We had some other needs this year. The No. 1 priority for next year at this point is the tennis court."

Johnson said the current cracks – deemed "horrible" by Parks Board member Richard Walsh – would be cleaned out and filled, with the court then resurfaced. Walsh also asked if nets could be installed to make the basketball hoops useable again, to which Johnson replied affirmatively.

"For the board, are there any other improvements or re-

placements you'd like us to get a cost on for doing next year?" Lawyer asked.

Walsh asked if a sports court at Keizer Rapids Park is still in the plans for the year ahead.

"Undecided," Lawyer said. "And here's why: Big Toy. We won't know for a while what our ultimate financial obligation (as a city) will be. That's the real challenge right now. We know how much has been raised. If we assume the worst and not another dollar is raised, we know what it will be."

Walsh would like to see a path from Chemawa Road to the Big Toy in the KRP orchards area, preferably connected to the existing path.

Lawyer noted a problem is the farmer with the orchard land.

"We want to be courteous to him," Lawyer said. "They need to go over smooth, clean ground. The pathway is unworkable for them. It might have to be a dirt path at first."

David Loudon, chair of the Parks Board, asked what will happen with the remaining money left in the new-for-this-year matching grant program. Currently the fund has about \$7,600 left in it.

"Typically it goes back into the general fund pot to re-

distribute next year," Lawyer said. "If the board wishes to do something different, it can make a recommendation to the city council. Parks funding is unique. We have additional funding for the lease of the orchard and the cell tower (at Bair Park). By resolution, those revenue streams in excess of 2.5 percent in parks funding go in the general fund."

For this year, the parks capital improvement fund had \$15,000 in addition to \$14,000 for the new matching grant program. As a result, Lawyer said funded projects have typically been smaller ones as opposed to large ones.

"For example, take the (proposed) indoor sports facility," Lawyer said of the project added to the KRP master plan by the Keizer City Council last year. "If you want to build it next year with the parks funds, I will say timeout and there's no chance to do it. With other projects, let me put the effort into costing things out and I'll see how much we can get done."

Councilor Marlene Quinn, liaison to the Parks Board, noted members of the board are assigned two or three parks. Quinn suggested Parks Board members go to their respec-

tive parks and coming up with a potential wish list.

"I would need a final list next month," Lawyer said. "There's another pot, system development charges. That money can only be used for building improvements and is growth driven."

Parks Board member Dylan Juran noted he's heard some grumblings from dog owners using the dog park at KRP that having lights would be nice.

"Parks close at sunset," Lawyer said. "Our rules say no lights except for little league fields. I would say come to the Parks Board and make the case, then it would go to council. It would take a grassroots effort. My recommendation would be putting limits on the lighting."

Louden seconded Quinn's recommendation for Parks Board members to go to their parks and come up with possible projects.

"We need to have recommendations at the next meeting," Loudon emphasized.

Lawyer said any needs at the 18 parks in Keizer could be fair game.

"If you find something you think will be expensive, don't be afraid to e-mail me so I can come up with cost estimates," he said.

More donations come in for Big Toy project

The budget gap for the Big Toy play structure is closing.

As mentioned in the *Keizer-times* last week, a decision this month called for a wood fiber surface to be used instead of a rubber surface. The rubber surface will still be sought down the road via grants, but for now going with the wood fiber surface saves about \$105,000.

Other fundraising efforts are moving forward. E-mails from former Keizer Mayor Lore Christopher indicate Jerry Walker, owner of the Salem-Keizer Volcanoes, has agreed to pay up to \$7,500 to sponsor a volcano slide, which will have to be incorporated into the Big Toy design.

There have also been recent donations of funds and in-kind services from Portland General Electric, D&J Dog Grooming and private citizens. Project leaders have noted more donors are expected to finalize their contributions.

In a Feb. 19 e-mail, Christopher noted Salem-Keizer Transit District general manager Allan Pollock is open to the idea

of having a bus stop at Keizer Rapids Park, where the Big Toy is scheduled to be built by community volunteers in June.

"He thinks it could be feasible to add one more stop at Keizer Rapids if the buses could turn around there," Christopher wrote. "We also spoke about driving into Walsh Way and around the parking lot as a potential turnaround without any additional cost or engineering/designing."

Richard Walsh, co-chair of the Big Toy fundraising committee, feels that would be a big boost for the project.

"This is an important step to ensure Keizer Rapids Park and the Big Toy are assets for every family and every child in Keizer," Walsh said.

The Big Toy is being undertaken with collaboration from New York-based consultant Leathers and Associates, which has been designing such facilities around the country for more than 40 years.

More information on the project can be found at www.keizerbigtoy.org.

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