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By John Baker

Janie Malloy wonders if Canby will ever have its own funded parks and recreation district.

A levy or two have been put before voters before to establish a parks and recreation district in Canby, but those measures have gone down to defeat.

Now, the Canby Area Parks and Recreation District is planning to try again and Malloy, who is a member of CAPRD, position 3, is hoping things will be different this time. She says they have to.

“We understand that the parks and recreation district has tried to pass levies to fund the district before and has not succeeded,” she said. “We are an unfunded district. What has happened in the past is that when the levy failed, nothing happened. It’s to the point now where something needs to happen.

Right now, Malloy and other members of CAPRD are working on a levy proposal for 2010, which will include a community center and plenty of programming. Though a dollar amount has not been determined, Malloy and other district members have been studying other facilities to see what they have and what Canby might be willing to pay for.

It’s a long process, but one that Malloy hopes will bear fruit in the end.

“This is basically our last chance to have our own funded district in Canby,” said Malloy.

“What that means is we get to determine how much we get to spend, what kind of programs we offer, what kind of facilities we have and we will be able to maintain local control.”

That, she said, is important. The North Clackamas Parks and Recreation District has made overtures to CAPRD about coming in under their umbrella, but Malloy said CAPRD would like one more chance to create its own vision and direction in Canby, rather than be part of a county-wide network.

Malloy said the current hope is that CAPRD can get a levy approved that will allow for a community center with a pool attached and athletic fields.

“That’s our most desirable option,” she said, “and we’d like to keep local control.”

If the levy fails, annexation into NCPAR would be the next plan. Joining with North Clackamas would tie Canby’s parks and recreation needs into the county’s 54 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value formula. Malloy said that may not be enough to fulfill the vision CAPRD is currently trying to bring to a reality.

“It may be enough to keep the pool going and do some minor improvements, but not enough to do what we want to do and our hands would be tied for the future,” she said.

The last option, she said, should a levy fail, would be opening the door to a private entity like the YMCA.

“There aren’t a whole lot of supervised activities for kids to do in Canby, in my opinion, outside of school, Canby Kids and maybe some church activities,” said Malloy. “Having a community center where you can have teen nights or midnight basketball – it just seems like the community needs something more than what we have now and not just for teens.”

Plans are in the preliminary stages, said Malloy, but CAPRD is “at the point where we need to start forming some ad hoc committees to study fields, study election levy possibilities, trails, programming, funding and the community center concept.

“At this point we want to price out a community center and see how much it would actually cost,” she added.

The chance to weigh in on the proposed levy will arrive Tuesday from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Canby Adult Center at 1250 S. Ivy St. when CAPRD holds a forum to review community center and sports fields progress.

Canby Area Parks and Recreation board members have toured numerous community centers and have compiled a list of preferred amenities with cost estimates. The group wants to share its findings and discuss the information with its stakeholders.

To get involved or for more information, view CAPRD’s Web site at www.caprd.org.