

MEETING MINUTES
WHATCOM COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
Thursday, July 21, 2022

Hovander Homestead Park – Group Picnic Shelter
5299 Nielsen Road
Ferndale, Washington

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Committee Vice Chair Pete Coy at 6:06 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

PRESENT

Commissioners: Joe Hashmall, Pete Coy, Frank Boteler, Terry Terry,
Sonja Max

Staff: Christ Thomsen

EXCUSED

Brian Estes, Kristen Fagen

GUESTS/PUBLIC

Mary Anderson (Whatcom Transit Authority), Tim Wilder (Whatcom Transit Authority), Jackie Yereance, Leah Wainman (Public Health Advisory Board), Daniel Probst

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS

- A.** Tim Wilder, the Planning Director of Whatcom Transit Authority, provided information on WTA Transit to Trails. WTA currently services Lookout Mountain, Lake Louise, Lake Whatcom, Stimpson, and most parks in Bellingham.
- B.** Jackie Yereance – The route has been flagged and the portion on state property has been okayed and is now going to the environmental people for state for approval. Jackie advised they need WC Parks to inspect the route so they can move forward.

IV. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

- A. Franklin Boteler – Identifying Funding Opportunities to Support the County Parks System** – A subcommittee will be created for fundraising.
- B. Franklin Boteler – Advising the new Parks Director of parks, recreation, and senior service issues in a proactive fashion** – Commissioners will begin using the commissioner comments portion of the commission meetings to share their thoughts, suggestions, and observations with the director and staff.
- C. Franklin Boteler – Advising the new Parks Director of parks, recreation, and senior service issues when reviewing proposals for “acquisitions, plans, programs, policies and funding for parks and open space”** – Frank requested that, when feasible, items requiring approval from the commission be

presented to the commission for input prior to being signed and approved by the Executive.

- D. Pete Coy** – Pete Coy asked if there was a list of all Whatcom County owned park properties, including undeveloped areas, so the commissioners can begin thinking more long term and possibly looking for large private donations to help develop parks. Christ advised there is a list of all park properties in the Comprehensive Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan which is available on the department's website.

V. AGENDA

A. July 21, 2022

MOTION: Pete Coy moved to add a discussion item about a Fundraising Sub Committee to the July 21, 2022 agenda (New Business, Item B) and approve the agenda as amended. Joe Hashmall seconded. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

VI. MINUTES

A. June 16, 2022

MOTION: Pete Coy moved to approve the June 16, 2022 minutes as written. Joe Hashmall seconded. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

VII. STAFF REPORTS

A. Interim Director's Report – Christ Thomsen

- i. County Council Items** – An Interlocal Agreement between Whatcom County Parks & Recreation Department and the Point Roberts Park & Recreation District to run the kayak program at Lighthouse Marine Park is going to council for approval this week. Tenants have moved in to the residential rental located in Samish Park and that Residential Lease Agreement is also going to council for approval.
- ii. 2023-2024 Operating Budget** – Staff have been working on the 2023-2024 Operating Budget that is due to the Executive August 3rd. Christ met with the Executive's Office to discuss budget priorities and the focus is on staffing and equipment resources necessary to meet core service needs. The Executive will review the proposed budget, return it to the department, and then it will be voted on by the council in November. Christ will share the budget with the commission at the October meeting and will look for ways to have the commission more involved in the budget process in the future.
- iii. Staffing** – Recruitment of a Design and Development Supervisor continues. The position has been vacant for one year and staff are currently reassessing the roles and responsibilities of the position. The Accountant position will be vacant August 5th and will open internally for

recruitment. If there are no applicants, the job will be posted externally. The Point Roberts Park Ranger position was filled this month by a seasonal employee. Recruitment continues for seasonal positions. COVID illness continues to significantly effect staffing levels.

- iv. **Operations Update** – Park services are in high demand with Silver Lake campground being booked all weekends and most weekdays through the end of the season. Lighthouse Marine Park campground has a few spots available, but is also very busy. A contractor is working to convert the coin operated showers at Silver Lake Park; they should be finished by tomorrow.
- v. **Maple Creek Shower and Restroom Facility** – The delivery of the septic pumps has been delayed again. Currently there is no estimated delivery date and as a result, the Maple Creek Shower and Restroom Facility will not open this year.
- vi. **Plantation Rifle Range HVAC and Roof Replacement** – The secondary HVAC system for the office and classroom at the Plantation Rifle Range is backordered six weeks. The contractor and staff are considering getting the main HVAC system functioning so that the range can be opened prior to the secondary system arriving.
- vii. **Birch Bay Beach Park** – WC Park staff began work on the Birch Bay Beach Park yesterday.
- viii. **Raptor Ridge Trail** – Mike McKenzie walked the proposed Raptor Ridge trail routes and will schedule a meeting with Jackie Yereance and Christ to discuss the project. Jackie advised she would like to have Dan at the meeting. Christ advised the department is still committed to working on the project, but because it is an unplanned project, there aren't any resources allocated to it. Sonja volunteered to do whatever she could as a commissioner to help the project move forward and asked if the project was considered funded because Jackie offered to pay for it and have the work completed by volunteers. Christ advised he would like to be sure all involved parties are aware of the totality of costs associated with the project (permits, signs, maps, etc.) and that there needs to be assurance that all required costs will be covered.
- ix. **EH1 Trail Construction** – EH1 Trail Construction has begun.

VIII. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

IX. **NEW BUSINESS**

- A. **Leah Wainman – Public Health Advisory Board Membership Expansion** – Leah Wainman asked if the commission would be interested in appointing one or two commissioners as representatives of the Parks and Recreation Commission to the

Public Health Advisory Board. Commissioners are free to attend a PHAB meeting to see if it is something they are interested in.

B. Fundraising Sub Committee – Franklin Boteler, Joseph Hashmall, and Pete Coy volunteered for the Fundraising Sub Committee.

X. ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

XI. NEXT MEETING DATE, TIME, AND LOCATION

The next Whatcom County Parks & Recreation Commission meeting will be held at 6:00 p.m. on August 18, 2022 at the Lummi Island Grange Hall, 2215 North Nugent Road, Lummi Island, WA. There is an option to meet at 5:30 p.m. for a tour of the Lummi Island Beach Access, 2198 North Nugent Road, Lummi Island, WA.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Transcribed by: Kristin Lunderville, Clerk IV

Approved by: Christ Thomsen, Parks Department Interim Director