

**MEETING MINUTES  
WHATCOM COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
Thursday, June 21, 2018**

**Silver Lake Day Lodge  
9006 Silver Lake Road  
Maple Falls, Washington**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Jeff Margolis Committee Chair at 6:04 p.m.

**II. ROLL CALL**

**PRESENT**

Commissioners: Brad VanderWerff, Sonja Max, Richard Sturgill, Jeff Margolis, Susan McClendon

Staff: Michael McFarlane, Christ Thomsen, Rod Lamb

**EXCUSED**

Commissioners: None

**GUEST(S)**

Mrs. VanderWerff

**III. PUBLIC COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS**

None

**IV. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Jeff Margolis, Richard Sturgill, and Brad VanderWerff commented on how beautiful Silver Lake Park looked and thanked the staff for doing a great job.

**V. AGENDA**

**A. June 21, 2018**

**MOTION:** Richard Sturgill moved to approve the June 21, 2018 agenda as presented. Sonja Max seconded. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

**VI. MINUTES**

**A. May 17, 2018**

**MOTION:** Sonja Max moved to approve the May 17, 2018 Minutes as written. Brad VanderWerff seconded. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

**VII. STAFF REPORTS**

**A. Director's Report – Michael McFarlane**

- i. **Commission Positions** – There are two Commission positions open. Kenneth Kiesner tendered his resignation a week and a half ago, so there is an opening in District 1 and an opening in District 4.
- ii. **State Auditors** – The Washington State Auditor’s office came out to Parks today and met with Christ, Shannon, Bette, and Mike. The auditor will be reviewing how the Parks Department operates as a whole, in addition to the regular auditing of cash handling, deposits, etc. The auditor has been very accommodating in processing the Parks Department audit first so that the process doesn’t conflict with Parks’ budget preparation and the busy season.
- iii. **Budget** – Budget instructions come out next Thursday and there is a budget meeting on Friday. The Parks budget needs to be submitted by August 1<sup>st</sup>. Christ has been working diligently with Park Rangers, Maintenance Crews, and Regional Park Supervisors to pull preliminary information together. Shannon has been working on things from the administrative standpoint. The Departmental push this year will be on the continued maintenance, operation, and improvements within the parks and staffing. There is a need for additional Park Attendants and the continued recruitment and retention of seasonal extra help.
- iv. **Puget Sound Energy** – The County Council approved the Puget Sound Energy easement request to move their poles on one side of Mount Baker Highway by the East Whatcom Regional Resource Center. This is a highway safety project, but will also provide space for an off road trail if the Columbia Valley continues to pursue that project.
- v. **Grant Resolutions** – Rod, Reid, and Christ have put together a number of recreational and competitive grant resolutions. The Council approved the following resolutions: Birch Bay Beach Park Development, Lookout Mountain Forest Preserve Trail Development, Lake Whatcom Park Trailhead and Trail Development, and the Maple Falls Park Trailhead Development. Later this summer, Parks will go to Council to try to get funding for a bridge to cross Hutchinson Creek at South Fork Park. This bridge would link South Fork Park to the Nessel Property.
- vi. **Presentation to the Natural Resource Committee** – Mike gave a presentation to the Natural Resource Committee. It included 2017 Park Visitation information, a summary of Park Services and Properties, 2017 Volunteer hours, and Friends and Partner Groups/Organizations of Whatcom County Parks. Mike also shared the results of the Senior Services survey and went over Capital Projects.
- vii. **Canyon Lake Community Park** – Whatcom County Parks met with Whatcom Land Trust and the Department of Natural Resources regarding road access to Canyon Lake Community Forest. DNR will provide Whatcom County Parks with information by the end of next week as to

whether they would like a road permit, easement, or cost sharing agreement. As soon as this part is worked out with DNR, Whatcom County Parks will meet with Sierra Pacific to get Sierra Pacific's 300 yard parcel connected to the existing easement into the community forest. Whatcom County Parks has offered to cost share road maintenance and improvements with both DNR and Sierra Pacific.

## **B. Planning & Development Report (Rodney Lamb)**

- i. Silver Lake Road & Electrical Improvements** – This project is almost done. Striping of the main roadway and parking lot will be done Friday morning and then the project will be wrapped up. The Whatcom County Parks crew will complete some final items next week.
- ii. Lighthouse Marine Park** – The contractor has completed all of the work and a final invoice was received. The Whatcom County Parks crew will be repairing and reinstalling the playground at a location closer to the renovated boardwalk later this summer. The crew will also be doing some concrete paving and adding barbecues and picnic tables to the main day use area.
- iii. Maple Creek Bridge Replacement** – The Maple Creek Bridge was installed yesterday. The trucker arrived with the bridge at 8:00 a.m. and Ness Crane had installed by about 10:45 a.m. Once the abutments are backfilled and the trail is realigned, that project will be complete. This should happen by the week of the Fourth of July.
- iv. Lummi Island Overlook** – The Lummi Island Overlook and stair replacement is complete. The Whatcom County Parks crew will be installing a new entrance sign and finishing some remaining landscaping items.
- v. Hovander Maintenance Shop** – The preliminary site plan for this project is complete. There was a meeting scheduled with the Fire Marshal today, but it was cancelled. The plan is to wrap up the design, engineering, and permitting for this project by the end of this year so that it is ready to bid by January 2019.
- vi. Semiahmoo Restroom/Concessions Building** – The engineering is complete to make this space more usable for a variety of concessionaires. The Whatcom County Parks crew will start this remodel after the building permit is obtained. Once the project is complete, the Parks Department will prepare a Request for Proposals (RFP) and solicit private concessionaires for proposals to utilize the space. There will most likely be some additional upgrades needed to accommodate the selected concessionaire who will finally occupy the space.

## **C. Operations Report – Christ Thomsen**

- i. Staff Updates** – It was challenging to fill seasonal staff positions this year, but they are all filled. Interviews were held for extra help at the Plantation

Rifle Range to help with scheduling flexibility; references are being checked. The South Region Regional Park Supervisor position was filled, but the West Region position is still open and has been reposted for recruitment. The Maintenance and Construction Supervisor left employment with the County; that position was posted and interviews are scheduled for next Friday.

- ii. **Current Operations** – Operations are pretty typical for this time of year with the mowing of properties and cleaning of facilities. Seasonal preparation is a little behind schedule because of the struggles in hiring seasonal staff and the fact that full-time staff has been dedicated to working on Capital Projects.
- iii. **Samish Deck** – The Samish Deck is substantially complete and was inspected by Whatcom County Planning & Development Services. There are a couple of things that need to be fixed, but the deck is open and being used by the public.
- iv. **Lookout Mountain Forest Preserve** – The Lookout Mountain Forest Preserve road repair project will be closed out, as the road is complete and has passed final inspection. This project looks like it will come in under budget, but a final invoice will not be received from Puget Sound Energy for three to four months.
- v. **Lookout Mountain Trail Construction** – Lookout Mountain Trail Construction kicked off on June 1<sup>st</sup>, the first day work could be done in the watershed and National Trails Day. Over sixty volunteers came out to work on the trail. Some Whatcom County Parks and Recreation partners in attendance were: Whatcom Trails Association, Whatcom Transit Authority, REI, and Whatcom Mountain Bike Coalition. Whatcom Trails Association and Whatcom Mountain Bike Coalition are running volunteer work parties throughout the summer and people can sign up to volunteer through the Whatcom County Parks and Recreation website. Whatcom Transit Authority has donated bus passes that allow volunteers to ride the bus to and from the trailhead for free on the day they are volunteering. Whatcom County Parks has hired a Washington Conservation Corp crew to help construct the trail and that crew will be working four days per week on this project. Backwoods Contracting, a local trail building company, was awarded the bid for the earthworks portion of this project. Whatcom County Parks is looking at putting a bus shelter at the trailhead at Lookout Mountain.
- vi. **Plantation Rifle Range** – The Executive and Council gave Whatcom County Parks and Recreation \$836,000 in budget authority to replace the roof, remove the HVAC system, and put in a ground-based air handling unit at the Plantation Rifle Range. The consultant for this project has provided a cost estimate for the next phase and it will be started shortly.

**VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

NONE

**IX. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Governors Point** – Governors Point is a 125 acre piece of property that has been slated for development for many years. It was purchased at auction by a couple of Canadian businessmen who plan to build 16 homes. The City of Bellingham has agreed to extend water service to these homes. The property owners have had discussions with the Whatcom Land Trust in terms of what they'd like to see as far as development and preservation, but Whatcom County is not involved in these discussions at this time.

**B. County Council 2019-2020 Budget Priorities** – The Executive and the County Council created a list of their individual budget priorities. One priority that comes up every budget cycle from Council Member Brenner is to combine Parks and Public Works. This proposal has been considered in prior years, but is not beneficial to County operations and is not supported by the Executive. Whatcom County Parks' budget is due August 1<sup>st</sup> and the first meeting with the County Executive is September 10<sup>th</sup>.

**X. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

NONE

**XI. NEXT MEETING DATE, TIME, AND LOCATION**

The next Whatcom County Parks & Recreation Commission meeting will be held on July 19, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. at Lighthouse Marine Park, 811 Marine Drive, Point Roberts, Washington.

**XII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

Transcribed by: Kristin Lunderville, Clerk III  
Approved by: Michael McFarlane, Parks Department Director