

MEETING MINUTES
WHATCOM COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
Thursday, April 18, 2013

Welcome Senior Center
5103 Mosquito Lake Road
Deming, WA

PRESENT: Commissioners: Gordon Rogers, Jeffrey Margolis, Janet Boyhan, Theresa Sygitowicz. Kenn Kiesner arrived at 6:36 PM

Staff: Michael McFarlane, Erik Axelson, Rod Lamb, Ted Olsen, Pat Fisher

ABSENT: Commissioners: Paul Woodcock

GUESTS: Public

Prior to a call to order, Ted Olsen provided the Commission with a brief description of the activities at the Welcome Senior Center and his responsibilities as Senior Center Assistant.

The Center member activities primarily consist of card games, pool tournaments and other weather related, outdoor activities. The Center members provide a pot-luck, noon day meal on Thursdays. Every third Thursday the volunteer fire department conducts blood pressure screening for members. General Center attendance is between 15-32 persons.

Ted explained that he opens the Center, making coffee & tea, turning on the heat, etc. and cleaning up & turning off as he leaves in the afternoon. He also performs general light building maintenance, such as furnace filters, and some weather related items. He discussed how much he enjoys his position at the Center, mostly because of the members and the community it provides. Mike stated that Ted's involvement in the Welcome Center makes it a success in terms of keeping the building and the program up and running.

The Welcome Center activities are funded by revenue generated from public rental space in the Center. Ted explained that funds that are not used on Center activities are funneled back into community agencies such as the local libraries and volunteer fire department.

There was some discussion regarding the County involvement and responsibilities for the Center's building in terms of capital projects, maintenance and landscaping.

The Commission thanked the Welcome Center members for providing this venue for the community and Ted for his involvement in that process.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Commission Chair, Gordon Rogers at 6:15 P.M.

Gordon called for introductions of those present.

Prior to moving on to the Agenda items, Gordon asked to speak to the role of the Commission as advisory to the County Executive. He stated that items discussed and considered for recommendations are Park's management and operations issues and at times, specific requests from the County Executive. He went on to explain that the Commission does not hold

public hearings and is not obligated to take public comment however, the Commission has always supported an open public meetings. He invited input from public but requested that comments be short and preferably in the form of a question.

I. AGENDA: April 18, 2013 Agenda

- A. Agenda Items:** Gordon called for a discussion regarding the development of the agenda and the protocol for adding items to the agenda.

It was discussed that the agenda is generally developed by Parks' staff but is open to input from the Commission and public. If items are to be added to the agenda it is best to notify either the Commission Chair or Parks' staff. This practice avoids excessive or undue communications and / or the possibility of confusion.

Mike asked that if the addition to the agenda is an action item that these requests be received at least 48 hours prior to the meeting in order to provide proper Commission and public notification and to properly track changes. If it is an information item or general discussion those items can be added at any time.

There was a question as to whether the Commission meetings follow open meeting rules. Mike stated that the he spoke to the County legal staff last year regarding this issue and was informed that the Commission is subject to the public open meetings laws.

Gordon asked if Mike could provide an update on open meeting laws.

ACTION: Mike to check with County's legal staff to update the Commission on meeting rules for County advisory meetings.

- B. Agenda Approval:** It was moved, seconded and passed unanimously to approve the agenda as written.

II. MINUTES: March 21, 2013 Minutes Approval. It was moved, seconded and passed unanimously to approve the minutes as written.

III. PUBLIC INPUT/COMMUNICATIONS:

- A. Van Zandt Park:** Jeff Margolis thanked the Parks' staff for the removal of the hazard trees at Van Zandt Park.

- B. Donation:** The South Fork Valley Community Association donated three dozen chairs to the Opportunity Council for use at East Whatcom Regional Resource Center.

- C. Jet Oldster's/Ferndale Senior Activity Center Request:** Mike distributed a copy of a letter that he received from the Jet Oldsters. The Whatcom County Council on Aging (WCCOA) has proposed three changes to the operation of the Nutrition Program at the Ferndale Senior Activity Center. The Jet Oldsters do not feel that any of these alternatives are workable and is asking input from the County for a viable solution

Mike explained that WCCOA administers a federally funded contract for the San Juan Nutrition Program that provides service to San Juan, Whatcom and Skagit Counties. Due to a possible 4% Sequestration cut from their total program revenue, WCCOA may

need to make some adjustments in services that they currently provide to the Ferndale Senior Center. As a result they have suggested three possible options for involvement of the Jet Oldster's in the Center Nutrition Program.

The options are as follows:

1. In addition to the current support provided in the dining room, it is requested that the Jet Oldsters also provide table set up, serve the meal, prepare the salad bar, cook the vegetable and clean up.
2. That the Jet Oldsters pay WCCOA \$10,500.00 annually.
3. That the Jet Oldsters cover the repair and replacement on half the equipment.

Mike explained that there is a contract in place between the Jet Oldsters and the WCCOA that defines the nutrition program and the responsibilities of the WCCOA and the Jet Oldsters. This item is on the County Council agenda for Tuesday, April 23, 2013.

The Ferndale Senior Center receives less support from the City of Ferndale than other County senior centers receive from their respective cities. The Jet Oldsters has approached the City of Ferndale for additional funds but were informed that there are no additional funds available at this time.

The County's provides funds for the operation and maintenance of the building, with the exception of some utilities that the City of Ferndale pays. The County Parks Department does not currently have funds designated for the Senior Center Nutrition Program.

In addition, the Jet Oldster's does receive revenue through building rentals.

IV. DIRECTOR'S REPORT – MICHAEL MCFARLANE:

A. Invasive Aquatic Species Inspection. County Public Works has asked the Parks Department to consider assisting them with the Invasive Aquatic Species boat inspections at Lake Samish. They have offered financial compensation of \$10,000.00 annually to cover the costs of staffing and technical administration.

It was determined that the costs to facilitate this request would exceed the amount offered by Public Works and that the logistics of administering the program is not yet defined.

The Parks Department does not have the hardware, technology, staff or the necessary contracts from Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) in place that would allow for effective on-site administration of the inspections.

County Parks has offered to help disseminate information in an effort to educate the public but after a great deal of discussion and consideration Parks has notified Public Works that it will not be able to provide assistance for this program at this time.

Mike informed the Commission that this is an item for discussion at the next Council meeting and that there will be several upcoming public meeting on the subject. There is also information regarding the proposed program on the City of Bellingham web site.

- B. City of Ferndale Tractor Loan.** The City of Ferndale is interested in a long term loan agreement on older tractors that are in storage at Hovander Park. These will be used for display at Pioneer Park and possible other defined uses.
- C. Nooksack Loop Trail Meeting.** There was a Park and Recreation Foundation meeting that Mike and Rod attended to field questions. Mike stated the meeting was very positive and was well received by the attending public.

The County Executive has asked the Parks Department to facilitate work on a small segment of the trail that is located on the City of Bellingham Parks' property. There is a bridge in this segment that was previously funded for a Public Works bike/ped study.

It is anticipated that those funds can be re-designated to support this project for a multi-use trail.

- D. Foothills Broadband Project.** Mike attended a meeting regarding the expansion of broadband services in the Foothills area. A consultant is working with the Foothills Chamber to identify the needs in this area. Mike discussed Parks' connectivity needs at Silver Lake Park, the East Whatcom Regional Resource Center and communication with maintenance staff while in their vehicles.
- E. Lake Whatcom Reconveyance.** The Reconveyance is scheduled for action by the Board of Natural Resources in Olympia on June 4, 2013. If approved, the Reconveyance will be moving forward with the mechanics of completing the transaction.

Based on conversations with Department of Natural Resources (DNR), they are planning land surveys of the common property boundaries between State property and what will be County property.

A petition has been filed with the Growth Management Hearings Board. It will be several weeks before the hearing comes up for consideration with the Growth Management Hearing Board. There was discussion to clarify that this is a petition and not a legal suit. The petition is an appeal to the Board that this was a land use action and as a result County Council could not move forward with approval.

- F. South Fork Park Connector – Department of Natural Resources (DNR).** There is a meeting with DNR next week to move this project forward.
- G. Warnick Bridge Access – Nooksack River.** An individual that has questioned the use the small parking area on the west side of the river for the removal of river rafts. This parking area is currently being used by the Nooksack Tribe as access to a salmon enhancement project site. A commercial contractor has negotiated with the Nooksack Tribe to park one vehicle there to remove his rafts.

Mike contacted this individual and explained that public use of this site would not be available at this time. He explained that there is not enough room with the Nooksack project located there to safely provide access for private vehicles without the possibility

of damage to vehicles or project equipment. River access may be allowed on a limited basis once the Nooksack Tribe has completed their project.

- H. Opportunity Council Contract Amendment.** The Opportunity Council (OC) has asked to use a portion of the rental revenues received from the general public and the Head Start Program to purchasing operating supplies and assist with program support.

An amendment to their current contract was drafted, reviewed by the County Finance Department and is currently with OC for their review.

Once the amendment has been returned from OC it will be forwarded to County Council for approval.

- I. Supplemental Budget Requests to County Council.** There are currently two requests that have been submitted for approval:

1. Lookout Mountain: Funding for a Restroom with partial funding from Whatcom Land Trust (WTL).
2. Roof vent at Hovander Homestead main house with a donation of funds that are currently held by the Whatcom Parks and Recreation.

Both of these requests are before Council for approval to accept the funds, add them to the current Parks' budget and approve the use of these funds.

- J. Point Roberts Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) Improvements Request – Point Roberts CAC** has requested the following improvements to the Light House Marine Park area.

1. Improvements to the shoulder along Lighthouse Marine Park for public safety.

Mike said that there is a consideration to provide an off road path that would parallel the road and remove the need to walk on the road.

2. They would like additional directional signage to all four parks on the Point.

Rod Lamb, Parks' Design and Development Manager, developed a proposal that was accepted by Public Works but not CAC. CAC will need to discuss their request further with Public Works.

3. Parking for Maple Beach.

There is parking across the street and on the road that is adequate but the local residents do not want street parking in front of their homes and have built mail boxes, etc., encroaching on the area. The proposal is to request that the residents relocate the encroaching items in order to provide parking there. Because this issue involves public roads it fall under the jurisdiction of County Public Works

A suggestion was made to increase the general public information on the web site regarding the Park and its special parking considerations. This was thought to be a good idea. Erik stated he would look into rewording and adding to the web site.

ACTION: Erik to review the web page for Maple Beach to increase general public information and awareness.

V. OPERATIONS REPORT – ERIK AXELSON

A. Hovander Homestead House – Improvements. The first phase of the project to improve conditions and ventilation at Hovander House was the removal of a colony of brown bats. All but a few access sites were sealed up, providing bats a way out prior to sealing off access. A nighttime observation was conducted to assure that all access sites had been sealed and that no bats returned. The addition of a sonic bat repellent and increased attic lighting was installed to discourage any future infestation. It is not anticipated that they will be able or willing to return. No bats were killed or injured in the exclusion process.

The next phase will be the installation of a 2,000 CFM exhaust fan in the attic roof that will vent stagnant air and remove particulates from the house. This, with the addition of period-style pedestal fans on the main floor, will improve ventilation for visitors, volunteers and staff.

The fan installation is being funded by an anonymous donor through the Whatcom Parks and Recreation Foundation. This donation was referenced in the Directors Report, Budget Supplementals.

B. Food & Beverage Request for Proposal (RFP). An RFP for food vendors interested in operating in selected parks has been released and will close April 23, 2013.

The response showed strong interest at Hovander, Tennant Lake and Samish Parks. The interest at Samish Park is the ability to use the existing kitchen in the Day Lodge to serve light meals. It is hoped that there will be interest in Silver Lake and Lighthouse Marine parks, as well.

Updates will be shared with the Commission as proposals are reviewed.

C. Geese Abatement at Silver Lake Park. Canada geese deposits on the lawns and in the lake is a growing public health concern and is rendering the swimming beach, picnic areas and lawns, and play area in the park's day use area unusable. These areas of concern include the site where a new playground will be installed in May and June. Relocating this flock of resident – not migratory – geese or otherwise abating the growing problem of defecation is a reasonable prerequisite to installation of the new \$130,000 playground and adjacent picnic area and beach renovation.

County Parks has requested a survey of the resident flock of about 80 birds by USDA Animal Services, the federal agency that is responsible for nuisance wildlife. After the survey is completed USDA is expected to submit a proposal for the County's consideration of a roundup. No decision has been made, and County Parks is also looking at other methods to abate the goose problem. It should also be noted that Canada geese are federally regulated wildlife, which limits the management that can be taken by County Parks without assistance by a federal agency or using a federal permit.

There was discussion regarding the techniques for roundup. Roundups have been successful in other areas in reducing populations of nuisance animals and reestablishing

balance to specific habitats. Unlike at other locations such as Tennant Lake, geese and waterfowl are not subject to a hunting season at Silver Lake.

Jeff Margolis asked what herbicides and pesticides were used in lawn maintenance and requested that this topic be added as an agenda item for discussion at a future Commission meeting.

ACTION: Add as an agenda item in a future Commission meeting the discussion of Parks' use of herbicides and pesticides in lawn maintenance.

- D. Fragrance Garden to host a volunteer group from Ferndale Lions Club.** County Parks will host volunteers from the Ferndale Lions Club on April 20th to weed, mulch and plant two ornamental trees, various shrubs and perennial plants that they have donated.

Longtime volunteer Candice Ambrosio will be also provide a historical and horticultural background on the Garden. We hope this will mark the beginning of an ongoing partnership with the Lions Club, as a main purpose of Fragrance Garden is to provide a multi-sensory experience for the blind and sight-impaired. Our thanks to Candice and Lions President Nancy Knapp for taking the lead in organizing this volunteer event

- E. Hazard trees trimmed and removed at Josh Vander Yacht Park.** The maintenance staff pruned surrounding trees and felled two hazardous trees that were in danger of falling on the handball court.

As a point of interest, the boom that was rented for this purpose was also used to remove dangerous limbs at Hovander Park, clean the kiosk at Hertz Trail and perform tree maintenance at the Headquarters site.

- F. Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Annex Renovations.** DNR is consolidating several field offices at the DNR Annex that is adjacent to the Parks Headquarters office. They are upgrading computer connections, flooring and office furniture.

Our Outside Worker crew is repainting the inside of the building and the maintenance staff will top dress and roll the gravel parking area that serves this building and our own.

DNR rents the building from the Parks Department and has been a great tenant and neighbor for many years.

- G. Change out of tri-fold paper towels to pull down roll towel dispensers.** It has been determined that the change from tri-fold towels to roll out towels will save money and staff time and eliminate waste. The change out includes selected parks and senior centers. An order for towels and 40 new dispensers has been placed and the project should be completed in the next two weeks. Immediate installations will concentrate on locations with the highest use of multi-fold paper towels, including Bellingham and Ferndale senior centers, Hovander and Tennant Lake parks, and Plantation Range.

There was discussion regarding the cost effectiveness of this change out and whether installing hand dryers would be more beneficial. Erik stated that many of our parks currently have hand dryers and that the additional installation for several other selected parks is being considered as a capital project in future years. Not all parks and senior

centers are good candidates for a future change to hand dryers, as toweling is needed for the activities at these sites, or other technical obstacles such as flooding exist.

There was discussion that the use of hand towels can reduce the spread of infectious germs that have become increasingly more dangerous and whether or not the cleaning products that are currently used should also be reviewed.

Erik explained that cleaning products used by the Parks Department meet the sanitation requirements and in areas where food is served, such as the Senior Centers, the cleaning procedures are more rigorous. This will also be the case if and when food services are added to any of our parks.

He also discussed that the Seasonal Extra-Help staff have a mandatory training on cleaning procedures and product use.

VI. DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT REPORT – ROD LAMB:

- A. Lighthouse Boat Ramp Renovation.** The permitting and design processes are complete.

Bid documents are currently being assembled and will be released April 30, 2013. Once the successful bidder has been selected a contract will be drafted and submitted to Council for approval.

The in-water work portion of the project to replace the pilings cannot begin until July 15 due to various fish windows that need to be observed.

There is also a marine mammal monitoring requirement that consists of a 300' radius on site scan prior to and during any pile driving activities to identify any marine mammals that may be in the area. If any protected marine mammals are spotted work will need to be stopped. The former Parks Operations Manager, Lynne Givler is a marine biologist and has volunteered to conduct the monitoring process. This will be a tremendous cost saving for the Parks Department.

- B. Hovander River Trail.** The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has determined that a Hydraulic Project Approval is not required on this project.

Reichhardt & Ebe Engineering is assembling the final bid package for the grading and gravel surfacing work.

There is a permit condition that requires mitigation of the impacts to the riparian vegetation. The Parks department is conducting an in-house planting by the Outside Worker Crew of approximately \$10,000 worth of plants to meet the requirement.

It was suggested that the local high schools could be contacted for volunteers as each senior must complete some community service as a graduation requirement.

- C. Samish Dock.** The docks are currently being manufactured but at present there is no timeline for the arrival of materials.

Staging to remove the existing docks prior to the busy season has begun but work cannot begin prior to June 15 due to a seasonal restriction imposed by WDFW.

The new dock structures have a life expectancy of 50 years and have low maintenance requirements

- D. Lily Point Marine Park.** There is one more interpretive panel to install at this location. This panel was created in collaboration with the Point Roberts Historical Society with a theme focused on the history of the cannery and fish nets that were installed at one time in Boundary Bay.

The project is complete with the exception of the extension of a guard rail at the southern viewpoint to eliminate safety concerns for the unstable bluff.

Warning and trail closure signs and plantings have been installed between the north and south viewpoints in an effort to discourage the use of informal trails.

- E. Lookout Mountain Trail Head.** There were 13 bids submitted for this project. Faber Construction was low bid and was awarded the project.

The 29-car parking lot trail head with restrooms is located directly off of Lake Louise Rd. This trail head will act as the major access to the Reconveyance property.

The project ground work will begin after June 1st due to watershed seasonal, earth disturbing closures. It is anticipated that this project will conclude in approximately two months.

This project is on the April 23, 2013 Council agenda for approval.

- F. Silver Lake Playground.** The Hearing Examiner issued the shoreline permit. There is a short appeal period prior to the project beginning. It is anticipated that the project will be completed by fall 2013. This playground will mirror the new Hovander Park playground.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- A. Comprehensive Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan.** Parks has contracted two firms, one to facilitate public meetings and one to conduct public surveys. The purchase orders are in place and the Letters of Agreement have been mailed to the contractors for signatures.

Due to a limited budget the number of survey participants that the contractor will contact has been reduced from 300 to 200. There will also be an on-line web based survey and a park-site customer service survey.

It is anticipated that with this wide range of surveys, Parks will be able to identify many recreational trends and desires within the community. The survey questions will remain relatively the same as the initial Plan survey and will provide a comparison to show any changes in trends.

There will be meetings with stakeholders, user group and local communities.

The project will wrap up with open houses in Bellingham and the completed plan will be made available on the web site.

By next month's Commission meeting there should be a completed template of survey questions available for Commission review, the Letters of Agreement in place and the schedule for the outreach meetings set.

In an attempt to reduce costs, much of the survey data entry will be completed by Parks administrative staff.

There was some discussion regarding the objectivity of the questions in order to assure that a true cross section of Whatcom County's recreational wishes is determined.

Mike stated that except for a few questions that are no longer relevant, the current questions will be based on the last Comprehensive Plan's questions. These questions can be reviewed on the Park website.

It is also thought that because there will be an online survey, an onsite customer service survey and a mail-out / telephone survey, the results should provide a broad range of contacts to assure a true cross section of Whatcom County is obtained.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Glacier Community Trail Design Grant.** The Glacier Community Trail is part of the Bay to Baker trail and runs from Glacier to the Douglas Fir campground. Mike provided a map of the route that is included in the grant request.

The planning grant is approximately \$280,000 and is a Federal, State and local, joint grant application to install an 8-12' wide multi-use trail. There is a good chance that these funds will be awarded as this trail will provide safe public routes.

It is the County's strategy that, because this is along a State highway, the Department of Transportation will plan, oversee project management and build the trail and that the Foothills Chamber of Commerce will undertake the maintenance and upkeep.

There was some discussion regarding the lack of public notification of community meeting dates. Mike stated that if there were any community meetings regarding this project that he was not aware of them. He discussed that this is a grant application and that the County signed as a sponsor along with the US Forest Service. The US Forest Service is working with the Washington Department of Transportation for input on the planning and design.

Mike stated that the County Executive's office has a copy of the grant that is available for public review.

- B. Comprehensive Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan – Discussion of protocol for the introduction/addition of projects that are not included in the current Plan.** Janet Boyhan requested input from Parks' staff on the proper steps to take to include a suggestion for a park or recreation project into the Comprehensive Plan and then how it moves through the government process to acceptance and completion.

Gordon Rogers was recognized and shared his experience in the planning and execution of the Coast Millennium Trail. This was an ambitious project with a large following to facilitate a lengthy process of approximately 12 years to date.

Gordon stated it is his experience that any process that includes government involvement and funding requires each agency or department involved to sign off and accept responsibility for different portions of the project.

These agencies were invited to all the planning and public meetings. The meetings were mostly facilitated by the private citizens that spearheaded the project. The meetings helped to keep those involved up to date, exchange ideas and requirements to complete the project and keep everyone on board and in agreement and / or aware of any roadblocks or disagreements that may come up.

Prior to actually starting a project there is a lengthy process to identify funding sources, site acquisition, permitting, coordinating agency involvement and then taking responsibility for the proper management of funds. This is such a lengthy bureaucratic process that many projects are abandoned through discouragement alone.

Mike stated that there is not one specific formula or pathway to seeing an idea to fruition. Each project is unique in terms of the planning and execution. The political process weighs heavily in each project along with the community wishes but it is important to have the idea identified in the Comprehensive Plan

He explained that funding can come from not only grants or other government funding; it can also come from community funding which can eliminate the need for some of the political process.

In conclusion, it was discussed that often times an opportunity to acquire a property or that designated funds will become available and provide a clear path to a project but that it will still include a certain amount of political process.

- C. South Fork Nooksack River Recreational Use – Discussion regarding South Fork Valley citizens use of this area.** Jeff Margolis stated that for generations people have been coming to and using the river as a recreational venue. He is concerned that the County has not wanted to expand on or manage this recreational opportunity and that because there has been no local representation requesting the need for management that chaos has ensued.

Jeff stated that he was told about a local citizen's meeting that included invited County Council members and the Sheriff's Department to discuss closing the South Fork of the Nooksack River to the public. He sent a letter to the Commissioners to express his concern that this special interest group does not express the wishes of the community as a whole.

He stated that there is a need to acknowledge responsibility to manage and control this recreational venue that is getting out of control and that perhaps river access for recreational activities might be conjoined with the South Fork Park in order to provide the needed management.

Theresa Sygitowicz stated that she was not at the meeting but did discuss the content of the meeting with individuals who were. The meeting was organized by local

concerned citizens and property owners who invited the Sheriff's Department and County Council members to discuss increasing funds to the Sheriff's budget in order to continue past enforcement practices during the summer.

The main concern is that the uncontrolled and illegal activities, trash and the frustrations of the local property owners has escalated in the past few years resulting in an environment does not allow for the safe and enjoyable use of the Nooksack.

An additional and important concern for safety is that the uncontrolled parking in the area impedes the response time of the fire department and EMT's in the case of an emergency or fire.

Those local community individuals discussed with Theresa that they were informed in the meeting that due to decreased funds, the Sheriff's Department would not be able to provide the same level of service as in previous years.

Gordon weighed in that this does not appear to be a County Parks and Recreation Commission issue but rather an enforcement concern.

Theresa stated that it is a citizen safety issue and that until now there has not been a concern expressed by local residents.

Kenn Kiesner asked if the County lot in Acme could be utilized to solve some of the parking problems. Mike explained this lot belongs to County Public Works and that County Council did not want the County to take the responsibility involved with the public use of the lot.

Mike stated that the County Council is aware of the concerns that the local residents have, as it is raised annually. County Parks explored possible solutions in the recent past but Council has indicated that this does not fall under our jurisdiction.

Jeff stated that he felt because the Parks Commission is a pathway to the County Council and the Executives Office and that the issues regarding river activities on the South Fork of the Nooksack should be a continued topic of conversation for the Parks Commission in order to keep the issue in the forefront.

MOTION: It was moved by Jeff Margolis and seconded by Kenn Kiesner to place the continued discussion on the recreational use and management of the summer activities at the South Fork of the Nooksack River on the May 16, 2013 Agenda.

Gordon called for discussion:

Janet stated that her interest is to become more educated regarding the impact that these activities have on the community. She would like to determine if this is a Commission concern and if not who should be responsible for community and water recreational interest.

Kenn asked Mike if he knew of any other communities that were dealing with this issue. Mike stated that County ordinances state that the river is considered navigable water and supports the use of waterways by anyone wishing to use it. The County

does have a prohibition on limb propelled flotation devices on the South Fork of the Nooksack River between Edfro Creek and the Acme Bridge, between the dates of June 1st and October 31st.

Ken stated that he is not sure this is a Commission issue and for the record he is opposed to removing a resource such as a free flowing body of water from the public. This is limiting on certain public liberties.

Theresa stated that she did not feel that the topic was in the scope of the Parks Commission.

Janet asked the guests if they have a continued plan to protect the river and address the safety of the local community.

It was stated by an attending guest that a river that goes by private property is no different than a road. If there is access to private property via any route and a crime is committed the enforcement of the law is not the responsibility of the park department. If the County Parks is providing an avenue to that route and accepting responsibility for the activities then management of those activities becomes the responsibility of the department.

Additional public comment included the impact on the fish and wildlife in the area in terms of trash, increased use, etc. and that this discussion may also be a concern of the local tribal authorities. Theresa suggested that an invitation could be extended to the land owners and the Lummi and Nooksack Nations.

Gordon stated that he is totally against that idea. He pointed out that there are other venues for this information to be shared such as County Council and local community meetings. He reminded members that the Commission is an advisory group and does not hold public hearing or take public testimony even though the meetings are open to the public.

Gordon called for a vote

Motion passed by a Vote: (3 yeas) (2 Nay) (1 absent)

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

A. NEXT MEETING: Thursday, May 16, 2013, 6:00 PM. The meeting will be held at Hovander Homestead Park.

X. ADJOURNMENT: Since there was no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:37 PM.

Transcribed by: Pat Fisher, Clerk III

Approved by: Michael McFarlane, Parks Department Director