

MEETING MINUTES
WHATCOM COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
Thursday, April 19, 2018

Van Zandt Community Hall
4106 Valley Highway
Deming, Washington

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Jeff Margolis Committee Chair at 6:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

PRESENT

Commissioners: Jeff Margolis, Kenneth Kiesner, Sonja Max, Susan McClendon

Staff: Michael McFarlane, Christ Thomsen, Rod Lamb

EXCUSED

Commissioners: Chad Perrin, Brad VanderWerff, Richard Sturgill

GUEST(S)

Michael Savatgy, Max Ducan, Heather Swanson, Amy Moller, Rainbow Medicine Walker

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS

Michael Savatgy thanked the Commission for opposing ORV facilities in Whatcom County and asked for a long term commitment by avoiding any support for future ORV development in Whatcom County.

Max Ducan thanked the Commission for supporting not docketing and opposing ORV's.

Heather Swanson thanked the Commission for taking a stand in opposition to ORV's in DNR's Recreation Plan. She explained past history of issue and stated she and other residents will continue to oppose any future efforts to allow ORV's.

Amy Moller thanked the Commission for opposing ORV's and supports a ban. She would like ORV plan references to assist development be removed from the county's comprehensive plan.

Rainbow Medicine Walker thanked the Commission for opposing ORV's.

IV. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Susan McClendon asked when the Commission took up this issue with ORV's, as she must have missed the meeting. She asked why DNR stacked the planning committee with ORV interests.

V. AGENDA

A. April 19, 2018

MOTION: Kenneth Kiesner moved to approve the April 19, 2018 agenda as presented. Sonja Max seconded. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

VI. MINUTES

A. March 15, 2018

MOTION: Sonja Max moved to approve the March 15, 2018 Minutes as written. Susan McClendon seconded. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

VII. STAFF REPORTS

A. Planning & Development Report (Rodney Lamb)

- i. Silver Lake Road Improvements** – Eight bids were received for this project, ranging from \$515,000 - \$680,000, with a median bid of \$625,000. The project was awarded to the lowest bidder, Oceanside Construction, for \$514,448.95. Oceanside is a local contractor located on the Mount Baker Highway. There was a pre-construction meeting on April 11th and the contractor started work on April 12th. The contractor has forty work days (Monday through Friday, not counting the Friday before the opening day of fishing season) to complete the project, which puts them finishing about June 8th. There was a contract amendment on day one of construction and thirty-two additional trees were added to the tree removal work. Originally, it was thought that these trees could be saved, but upon closer inspection, it was determined that the trees needed to be removed so that they wouldn't cause damage to the road in the future. Planning and Development Services gave final approval on Friday, April 13th. The contract amendment adds four work days to the project.
- ii. Lighthouse Boardwalk Renovation** – HB Hansen completed this project today. The entire deck was reframed and trex composite decking was installed. The crew will renovate the existing play structure and move it closer to the boardwalk. They will also be installing new barbecues and may install concrete paving under the two picnic shelters to provide a more durable surface for the picnic tables. New barbecues will also be installed and the bike racks may be replaced.
- iii. Maple Creek Bridge Replacement** – Fish and Wildlife initiated the HPA (hydraulic project approval) on Monday. Planning and Development Services signed off on the Shoreline and Substantial Development Permit and submitted the paperwork to the Department of Ecology on April 11th. There is a twenty-one day comment period where people can protest the approval of the project. If there isn't any protest, work will start May 2nd.

The concrete bridge abutments will be contracted with a private contractor and the bridge should be set the first week of June.

- iv. **Lummi Island Overlook and Stair Replacement** – The contractor has completed this project. The aluminum stairway was installed in March and the change order was completed to install new joist hangers. The deck on the overlook was replaced with Ipe, a tropical hardwood, and looks fantastic. The aluminum sign with reflective graphics arrived from Correctional Industries today and will be installed by the Whatcom County Parks and Recreation crew. The WCPR crew has already built a frame for the sign with cedar poles that are fashioned to look like a ferry landing dolphin since it's the old ferry site. After that is installed, the only thing left will be some landscaping improvements.
- v. **Hovander Maintenance Shop** – This project got delayed because of language in the contract, but the contract is now at the Executive's Office for signature. Work will start as soon as it is signed.
- vi. **Semiahmoo Restroom/Concession Building** – The engineer is finalizing calculations and drawings for this project. Once that is finished, the building permit will be submitted to the City of Blaine. The WCPR crew will complete this project in the fall.

B. Operations Report – Christ Thomsen

- i. **Hovander Park Herbicide Use Question/Update** – Rod Lamb confirmed that herbicides have not been used in Hovander Park.
- ii. **Preparing for the Season** – Seasonal cleanup is going on throughout the parks. This includes picking up winter debris and painting restrooms. The Lighthouse Marine Park dock is being prepared for installation in May. The boats will be in the water at Silver Lake and Lake Samish before Memorial Day weekend.
- iii. **Project Updates** – The entrance fence at Hovander Park is being replaced and the Samish deck replacement started yesterday. The Regional Park Supervisor and the Ranger up at Silver Lake are providing Silver Lake Road Construction support. The basic site plan has been completed for the Hovander Shop project and it is being transitioned over to operations. WCPR crew will be providing construction support for the Maple Creek Bridge installation. As soon as the deck is completed at Samish, the fence at South Fork Park will be installed; once South Fork is completed, the fence at Hovander Park will be installed. The Fragrance Garden and Lummi Overlook projects need to be closed out and landscaping needs to be done at the Bellingham Senior Activity Center. The Semiahmoo remodel will begin this fall and a lead management program needs to be implemented at the Plantation Rifle Range.

C. Director's Report – Michael McFarlane

- i. Senior Services** – Discussions continue with the Whatcom County Council on Aging regarding the cost, management, and programming of the smaller senior centers. The Bellingham Senior Activity Center is dealing with a number of homeless issues, including disruptive individuals, weapons, and vehicles needing to be removed from the parking lot. The City of Bellingham has put a dumpster and a Sanican in the park just to the south of the center. There is also concern about the possibility of opening a low barrier center within a couple blocks of the senior center. A number of seniors have indicated they no longer feel safe in the parking lot or outside the building and may stop using the center if these issues aren't alleviated. Bellingham Police have been good about responding to the incidents and the security group hired for afterhours patrolling has done a good job of moving the homeless out of the stairwell and the front of the building. The WCOA Board of Directors will be meeting to discuss these issues.
- ii. State of the County** – The County Executive is giving a state of the county on Tuesday, April 24th. He will be focusing on the county's various customer service programs and what is forthcoming in the budget.
- iii. Capital Projects** – Capital projects are projected out over six years and include larger maintenance and development projects. WCPR staff will meet with the County Executive on May 1st to discuss 2019-2020 projects. The Executive and the County Council have the option to fund these projects in the operating budget or move them to a different year. Other funding sources for these projects are REET I and REET II; some projects are grant eligible.
- iv. The Budget Process** – There are two parts to the budget, Capital Projects and the Operating Budget. Capital Projects are influenced by the Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan (updated every 8 years), the Comprehensive Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan (updated every 6 years), the 6-Year Capital Improvement Plan (updated every 2 years as part of the budget), and the Whatcom County Economic Development Strategy (updated every 2 years). The WCPR staff prepares the capital project requests, the Parks & Recreation Commission reviews them, and then the requests are turned in to the Executive. The WCPR staff goes through the requests with the County Executive and budget team to decide which projects to move forward with. The Operating Budget follows a little different schedule. The County Council has a retreat in May to discuss priorities and programs. Budget instructions are released at the end of June and each county department is tasked with preparing their budget. Departmental budgets are due August 1st and then each department's staff meets with the Executive's Budget Team to go through their individual budget. The County Executive releases his recommended

budget to the Council on October 18th and then the Council meets with all of the different county departments, programs, and agencies. The budget is approved on November 20th.

- v. **Samish Bridge Replacement** – Conversation has started with Public Works regarding the replacement of the bridge at Samish. The replacement will probably occur in 2021 and it is unknown how long the Samish Park will need to be closed to facilitate that bridge replacement.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NONE

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. Review 2018 Grant Proposals – Grant Proposals are matching funds that take a lot of time and effort to prepare and are very competitive.

- i. **Birch Bay Beach Park Acquisition & Development** – \$1,000,000 in funding was awarded to the County to reimburse on the acquisition of Birch Bay Beach Park. There is another \$500,000 for acquisition and \$500,000 for development that can be applied for. This project has been pushed to 2021 for development on the capital list (engineering, design, and permitting) and then to 2023 for construction.
- ii. **Lake Whatcom Trails** – More funding is being requested on this project. To date, getting state funds for these trails has been unsuccessful. WCPR has been told that there will be some funds available, but what that means is unclear. This is a capital plan, so the numbers will be reduced if state funds are not received.
- iii. **Lake Whatcom Trailhead Development** – This project is on the capital improvement list. The plan is to upgrade the restrooms and make the parking area bigger. The design, engineering, and fieldwork will be done in 2019-2020.
- iv. **South Fork Park Trail Development** – The biggest challenge for this project is funding for the bridge to cross Hutchinson Creek. Once the bridge is in, a foot path will be installed, the trail will be widened, and a connection will be created into the Nessel Homestead.
- v. **Maple Falls Trailhead and Trail Development** – This property was purchased several years ago as a community park. The plan is to install restrooms and a parking area so that the park can serve as a trailhead in Maple Falls.

B. Review Budget Supplementals – There are three budget supplementals going to the council.

- i. **Stimpson Family Nature Reserve Bridges** – This is a donation of \$2,000 from the Rotary Club to do the Reserve Bridges in the Stimpson Reserve.

- ii. **FARR – Range HVAC & Roof** – WCPR received a grant several years ago for the HVAC replacement at the Plantation Rifle Range. It was then determined that the HVAC should be removed from the roof and put on the ground for safety and functionality. This means the roof will need to be replaced and increases the cost of the project significantly because of lead contamination and asbestos. An additional \$541,000 is being requested to complete this project.
- iii. **Road Repair Lookout Mountain** – The road failure on Lookout Mountain is going to be a difficult fix. In order to assure it is done properly, an additional \$100,000 is being requested. This means funds allocated for trail projects at Lookout Mountain will not need to be used for this repair.

X. ANNOUNCEMENTS

NONE

XI. NEXT MEETING DATE, TIME, AND LOCATION

The next Whatcom County Parks & Recreation Commission meeting will be held on May 17, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. at the Roeder Home, 2600 Sunset Drive, Bellingham, Washington.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

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