

MEETING MINUTES
WHATCOM COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
Thursday, August 15, 2019

Van Zandt Community Hall
4106 Valley Highway
Deming, Washington

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. ROLL CALL

PRESENT

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

Staff: Rod Lamb, Christ Thomsen, Michael McFarlane

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS

None

IV. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

None

V. AGENDA

A. August 15, 2019

MOTION: Sonja Max moved to approve the August 15, 2019 agenda as written. Richard Sturgill seconded. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

VI. MINUTES

A. July 18, 2019

MOTION: Sonja Max moved to approve the July 18, 2019 Minutes as written. Susan McClendon seconded. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

VII. STAFF REPORTS

A. Planning & Development Report – Rod Lamb

- i. Maple Creek Campground** – Williamson Construction continues to make good progress at Maple Creek Campground. The asphalt paving is complete and the necessary patches for the utilities are finished. A small section on Loop 2 has been replaced due to subgrade deficiencies. The

last contract work date was scheduled for August 15th, but has been changed to August 27th to allow the contractor to complete additional work requested by Parks. The Parks crew has mobilized on site to complete trail maintenance and upgrades, trim trees for fire safety, and install campground signage. The first reservations are Friday, August 30th. Parks has started reviewing consultant qualifications for the new shower and restroom facility for Red Mountain Campground.

- ii. **South Fork Park** – Parks met on August 5th with several tribal representatives and the Department of Natural Resources to review a proposed Hutchison Creek bridge crossing. No agreement was made, as the tribal representatives need to consult with other tribal members before they can provide any comments.
- iii. **Lake Whatcom Park** – Parks is preparing a budget supplemental request for Council to allocate funding for design and engineering services for trailhead improvements at Lake Whatcom Park. The improvements include expanded parking capacity, new flush restroom facilities (septic and well), a picnic shelter, security lighting, signage, pedestrian and circulation improvements, and site furnishings.

B. Operations Report – Christ Thomsen

- i. **Staffing** – The Repair Maintenance III position has been reposted. There were some great candidates from the last posting, but unfortunately they didn't have the carpentry skills necessary for the position. Parks had interviews for the Maintenance Construction Supervisor position last week and one candidate is coming back for a second interview.
- ii. **Silver Lake Community Meeting** – WC Parks had a community meeting at Silver Lake on July 31st regarding lake levels and beaver activity. WC Parks applied for and received a five year programmatic maintenance permit from the Department of Fish and Wildlife to manage the water level through beaver dam and beaver population management. Parks also has a permit from Whatcom County Planning & Development Services.
- iii. **Lighthouse Marine Park Playground** – Rod completed his portion of the Lighthouse Marine Park Playground and the Parks crew has moved in to install bike racks, a donated bench, and a new drinking fountain. The crew is currently re-siding the bathrooms and chow hut and will build wind walls at the shelter on the boardwalk later this fall.
- iv. **South Fork Park** – The fence installed last year at South Fork Park received two coats of stain.
- v. **Lake Whatcom Park** – Lake Whatcom Park trail construction is moving along well. The contractor has finished the earthwork and Parks crews will have the trail completed by October 1st. The trail is compacting nicely and should open soon after completion. Crews will be installing fencing at

stream crossings on the Hertz Trail to keep people and dogs out of the streams while the Kokanee are running.

C. Director's Report – Michael McFarlane

- i. **Lummi Island Heritage Trust** – Mike met with the Lummi Island Heritage Trust to discuss the Aiston Preserve, a 105 acre piece of property on Lummi Island that was purchased by Whatcom County. The property boasts 4,000 feet of saltwater frontage, a rock quarry, pocket beaches, eelgrass beds, rare plants, and beautiful views of Mount Baker. There is a lot of industrial equipment and debris left over from the rock quarry that will be removed next year. The park will be managed by the Lummi Island Heritage Trust with Whatcom County having a public access and conservation easement on it. The preserve is not currently open to the public, but will eventually have parking, restrooms, trails, beach areas, and mooring buoys. The County Executive will determine what role the County will play in the development of the property. Richard Sturgill requested an aerial picture of the property.
- ii. **Canyon Lake Community Forest** – There is a meeting at WC Parks Administrative Office on August 29th with Sierra Pacific Industries, Western Washington University, Whatcom Land Trust, and Department of Natural Resources to talk about Canyon Lake access.
- iii. **Washington State University** – The agreement with Washington State University for the Master Gardener Program is being reviewed by Whatcom County legal staff.
- iv. **Regional Indoor Sports Facility** – A community panel of recreation leaders, key players for Whatcom County Cities, and some local non-profits is doing a feasibility study on a regional indoor sports facility (soccer fields, sports courts, etc.) that could potentially be located at Smith and Northwest. The next meeting is in September.
- v. **Special Events Policy** – WC Parks is making changes to the Special Events Policy and would like to review it in September with the Commission. The Special Events process is very lengthy. Things to discuss include: agreements, insurance requirements, fees, time restrictions, liability/risk, and the permitting process.
- vi. **Tower Easements** – The three tower easements are either in final stages or are out to the Commercial Vendors for approval.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

IX. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Review 6 month Park and Center Use** – A handout with 2019 Park/Trail Attendance through July was shared with the Commission.

B. Review 6 month Revenues and Expenditures – A handout with 2019 Revenues and Expenditures through the end of June was shared with the Commission. Revenue is down for camping because the Maple Creek Campground was closed for renovation. Revenue is also down for the Plantation Rifle Range.

C. Josh VanderYacht Park Maintenance – Mike shared the contract between Whatcom County and the South Fork Valley Community Association for the operation of the Van Zandt Community Hall and Josh VanderYacht Park. The County's role in these types of agreements is typically to purchase the property and then work out an agreement with a non-profit/Park District/etc. that takes on the maintenance, development, and fundraising for the facility and/or park area.

X. ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

XI. NEXT MEETING DATE, TIME, AND LOCATION

The next Whatcom County Parks & Recreation Commission meeting will be held on September 19, 2019 at Silver Lake Park, 9006 Silver Lake Road, Maple Falls, WA. There will be a tour of the Maple Creek Campground at 6:00 pm with the meeting immediately following in the Day Lodge.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

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