

**MEETING MINUTES
WHATCOM COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
March 24, 2011**

**Bellingham Senior Activity Center
315 Halleck Street, Room 1
Bellingham, WA**

DRAFT

Present: Commissioners: Gordon Rogers, Walt Lockwood, Jr., Theresa Sygitowicz, Patricia Lierman, David Wright

Staff: Rod Lamb, Mike McFarlane, Darla Smith,

Guests: Daniel Tepper, WC Parks Foundation

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Commission Chair, Gordon Rogers at 6:36 p.m.

I. AGENDA: March 24, 2011 Agenda Approval.

There was a motion to approve the agenda as is by Theresa Sygitowicz, and seconded by Patricia Lierman. The motion passed.

II. MINUTES: February 17, 2011 Meeting Minutes Approval.

A couple of corrections were noted. A motion to accept the minutes with noted corrections was made by Theresa Sygitowicz, seconded by Walt Lockwood and passed.

III. PUBLIC INPUT/COMMUNICATIONS:

A. Executive's office received one application for position District III, Parks Commission.

IV. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A. Staff changes. The last of the layoffs and bumping will be completed by April 1st.

B. Council Meeting in Acme was held Feb. 22. It was a little disturbing to hear that the adjoining property owners weren't notified of the process. We have the mailing list and all the sign up sheets that would indicate that not only did they receive notices initially when we started the 2007 process but also attended, I think, virtually all the meetings that we had. There was no action taken. This was just a town hall meeting to hear comments.

The Backward Horsemen made a nice presentation on what they prefer to see on that development site. They would like to see a separate equestrian camping area. That project is on hold. There is no action before the County Council to act. We are waiting for the State to take whatever action it is going to take on either the easement or reconveyance and both are going to take some time to do.

C. City of Blaine has a good diagram showing all the utility easements at Semiahmoo. Over the last several years, there has been quite a bit of work with the treatment plants' rerouting water, the new treatment plant and waste water that they are going to re-use for the golf course. We felt it was getting a little out of control and far as where the lines were going and they were trying to fit everything in with the treatment plant. It is under review with the RCO (Recreation Conservation Office).

D. Operations Manager position. We are doing interview the week of April 3. We had 33 applicants and a pretty solid group of applicants. Hopefully, by the end of the month we'll have an offer out there and getting someone on board soon after.

E. Lake Whatcom Reconveyance Presentation. Originally, this was an arrangement by the County Executive and the Commissioner of Public Lands to do a land swap with the Lake Whatcom Watershed. There is a RCW that allows the county to go through the Reconveyance process and take forest lands back for Park purposes. It's very specific for that purpose. It also will provide a network of trails and also benefit the watershed. It includes Trust Lands that the State (DNR) would continue to manage. The overall goal is to let the forest mature and to provide recreational opportunities.

VI. PARK OPERATIONS' REPORT:

A. Blaine Senior Center Contract. Has been all completed and approved at the last County Council meeting. Lynden and Bellingham Centers will be through the Whatcom County Council on Aging and Ferndale Senior Center which will be through the Jet Oldsters. They will all be going through the Council on the 29th. We should meet that deadline of April 1 of having those all transition to the non-profits or the municipalities. Blaine & Lynden were interlocal agreements with the cities. Council on Aging (Bellingham) and Jet Oldsters (Ferndale) were the result of "Request for Proposals" because those are non-profits.

B. We have a staff member that has been certified for septic inspection. This will be a substantial savings as opposed to contracting because we have some 20 systems out there.

C. Some trees were salvaged along Mt Baker Hwy. The highway started to give way along a narrow corridor that we own between the river and road and utilities were leaning over the river ready to go in. The trees were salvaged and will be sawed into planks which will be used for trail bridges.

D. Request for Proposal for the Haying and the Farming Licenses in the Parks. We've been on a 3-year rotation basis and might extend it to 4 or 5 depending if planted pending legal review.

E. RFP Campground Host for Silver Lake Park. We are working on a RFP for the Silver Lake Campground Host this summer and will have that out in a couple of weeks.

F. Extra-Help Staff. We have an April 13 closing date on summer help. Applications can be found on our website.

VII. DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT REPORT

A. Olson Nature Reserve. PDS issued a threshold determination of non-significance for the project. There is a 2-week public comment period starting March 23, 2011. In the meantime we have comments from the Engineering Department at PDS that our consultant is addressing. We will resubmit our drawings tomorrow or early next week. After the public comment period ends and there isn't an appeal, PDS can issue the Land Disturbance permit. We will advertise for bid following permitting.

B. Samish Dock Replacement Project. We have hired a structural engineer to assist with design of the docks and shore side attachment of those docks. We will likely build the docks this winter and install them in 2012.

C. Hovander Playground Modifications. We are revising our drawings and addressing comments from Planning & Development Services. We will resubmit those drawings probably middle-April to procure our Land Disturbance permit for that project.

D. Lighthouse Marine Dock. The technical completion date for our grant application is March 25, 2011. We will present the proposal to the evaluation committee in Olympia on April 23, 2011.

E. Silver Lake Lodge Repairs. The lodge repairs are nearly complete. Following substantial completion a punch list walk through will be scheduled. Final completion is expected mid April, 2011.

F. Bay Horizon Playground. We are working on a commemorative sign that said it was a partnership project between the District and the Parks Department. The Parks District is planning an Open House possibly in April but a final date has not been set.

G. Dike Trail at Hovander. We met with Planning and Development Services (PDS) March 2, 2011 to walk the alignment to address any concerns they had about impacts to riparian vegetation. They are now going to produce a letter that provides us with guidance with what our next steps will be in the permitting process.

H. Lily Point. Two community meetings are scheduled for next week: Wednesday at Pt. Roberts and Thursday in Bellingham. We will be presenting plans to the community that describes the proposed park improvements. There is a strong desire from the community to include a second beach access near Cedar Point, in the northern portion of the park. The second beach access presents significant challenges due to the erosive bluff. We will evaluate public comments and incorporate design modifications as appropriate into a final park improvement plan.

VIII. RECREATION AND SENIOR SERVICES' REPORT: No report this month.

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

A. NOOKSACK LOOPED TRAIL – DANIEL TEPPER

A timeline handout was passed out. A Letter of Support was requested. Also, a meeting with the Bay to Baker owners which is the first targeted area where we will want to have some

discussion with property owners and Commission members are encouraged and invited to come to. No dates are set yet. Mike will draft a Letter of Support by June.

X. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Title 23 ADA Results. People with mobility disability and motorized device use on trails. The burden is on the agency to determine how to approach. The National Trails Association has a webinar, ada.gov for more information. Mike will send a link and will have guidelines by next month.

XI. ANNOUNCEMENTS: The April 21 meeting will be at Hovander Homestead Park. The walk will begin at Tennant Lake Interpretive Center at 5:30 p.m. and the meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m.

XII. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Transcribed by: Daisy C. Hansen, WC Division Secretary

Approved by: Michael McFarlane, WC Parks Director