



PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

March 8, 2023, Meeting Minutes

PRESENT: Maggi Kriger, Michael Kutcher, John Blethen, Asa Deane, Ray Dellecker, Jeannie Gilbert, Jed Holmes, Zarah Manju, and Steve Walker

ABSENT: Thor Beck and Jessica Sankey

STAFF: Gina Austin, Peter Gill, Nicole Oliver, Bree Park, Laine Potter, Caryn Regimbal,

VISITORS: Brian Bressler, Jono Warren, and Skip Williams (Council Rep.)

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 am by Chair, Maggi Kriger.

- I. **AGENDA REVIEW:**
There were no changes made to the agenda.
- II. **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**
There were no announcements.
- III. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**
Ryan Pflueger informed the board that he will be presenting information at the next meeting in April, regarding the Scramble Nature Playpark.
- IV. **FEBRUARY MEETING MINUTES:**
A motion was made to approve the meeting minutes. Motion passed.
- V. **OLD BUSINESS:**
 - a. **Greenways Program:**
John Blethen announced that there was a Greenways Levy meeting, and their group is very motivated. These meetings are on the first and third Tuesday of each month at 7pm at Explorations High School. Skip Williams added that the Greenways Levy group has an assigned treasurer and a new website being developed. The Greenways Annual Report was brought to the City Council last month and went very well.
- VI. **NEW BUSINESS:**
 - a. **Sunset Pond Loop Trail:**
Gina Austin presented an update to the group regarding the Sunset Pond Trail. She provided the project overview, estimated timeline and the design details. A motion was made to consider aluminum bridge options for the Sunset Pond Loop Trail. Motion passed.
 - b. **Bellingham Bells Interlocal Agreement Pilot:**
Melissa Bianconi updated the group regarding the success of the pilot program with the Bellingham Bells that began last year. This program is to allow their group to take over the daily operations of Joe Martin Stadium and to increase recreational access and use of the stadium.

VII. DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

a. Lake Padden Recreation Feasibility Study:

This study is to better understand how people are using the Lake Padden recreational area. The consultant for this study will assess the existing recreational activities on site, evaluate the recreational facilities for access, and provide the potential improvements or options for the future.

b. Pacific Street Operations Center:

The ribbon cutting ceremony was performed for the new Pacific Street Operations Center. This new building will include Public Works, Natural Resources, and the Parks Operation department. The Parks Operation division will be moving mid to late March.

c. Civic Complex Feasibility Study:

The consultants presented preliminary findings for the study that included environmental constraints. They will continue into the Spring to confirm a couple of their findings, as they look at all deed restrictions, land supply and zoning. In addition, a sub-consultant gave an in-depth analysis of athletic facilities. A full report is expected to be completed and presented next month.

VIII. MEMBERSHIP:

a. Candidate Interviews:

Brian Bressler is a lifelong resident of Bellingham, where he grew up accessing all outdoor parks & recreation facilities. He previously served on the Cedar Tree Montessori Board and is currently involved in Bellingham Grassroots Cyclocross. Jono Warren has a bachelor's degree in Small Business Development and Community empowerment. He has a deep passion for the outdoors and community spaces in Bellingham. A motion was made to recommend to the mayor the appointment of Brian Bressler. Motion passed.

b. Field Trips:

The Parks & Recreation Advisory Board will be joining the Greenways Advisory Committee for all field trips in the near future. Field trip details to follow once finalized.

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

The committee adjourned to Executive Session at 9:19am. The meeting was called back to order at 9:23am. A motion was made to pursue due diligence on property #1. Motion passed.

X. ADJOURNMENT: The March 8, Parks & Recreation Advisory Board meeting was adjourned by consent at 9:33 am.