



# PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

## November 8, 2023, Meeting Minutes

- PRESENT:** Maggi Kriger, John Blethen, Brian Bressler, Asa Deane, Ray Dellecker, Jeannie Gilbert, Jed Holmes, Zarah Manju, Jessica Sankey and Steve Walker
- STAFF:** Gina Austin, Peter Gill, Steve Janiszewski, Nicole Oliver, Bree Park, Laine Potter, Jonathan Schilk, and Lauren Woodmansee
- VISITORS:** Joan Banel, Todd Ellsworth, Neil Schaner, Shannon Taysi, and Skip Williams (City Council Representative)

The meeting was called to order at 7:32 am by Chair, Maggi Kriger.

- I. **AGENDA REVIEW:**  
There were no changes made to the agenda.
- II. **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**  
The Greenways V Levy has officially passed. Ray Dellecker announced that the Arroyo Bridge project looks great.
- III. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**  
Joan Banel provided pictures and statements regarding the destruction from the Cornwall Cross event at Cornwall Park.
- IV. **OCTOBER MEETING MINUTES:**  
An edit to be made to read as "Little Squalicum Park", rather than "Squalicum Park" A motion was made to approve the meeting minutes with proposed change. Motion passed.
- V. **NEW BUSINESS:**
  - a. **Coast Millennium Trail at Arroyo Park:**  
Gina Austin presented the proposed trail improvements at the crossing over Chuckanut Creek in Arroyo Park and the Marine Drive bypass at the Lockwood open space. The City's budget does not include funding for this project; however, Recreation Northwest has requested to partner in these projects moving forward.
  - b. **Geri Fields Softball Wall of Fame:**  
An existing wall known as the "Softball Wall of Fame" located at Geri Fields in the Civic Athletic Complex has been vandalized over the years and is in disrepair. Removal of the wall and relocation of remaining plaques to the existing restroom wall between Geri Fields 2 and 3 will be occurring in the future.
  - c. **Donated Artwork:**  
The City of Bellingham has been approached by a donor interested in providing annual art funds to Whatcom County as part of their legacy.

Shannon Taysi, a program specialist from the City's Planning Department, presented the proposed structures and proposed locations throughout the City parks.

d. VanWyck Community Garden:

Laine Potter provided a quick update that there will be a new accessible community garden opening at Van Wyck Park in 2024.

**VI. DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

a. Civic Athletic Complex Study Recap:

The department is now focusing on phase 2 of the Civic Athletic Complex which will involve more public engagement.

b. Mid-Biennium Budget Update:

There was a recent budget work session with City Council that granted three new positions, to be funded by Greenways. Those three positions are a community garden coordinator, construction inspector, and an additional parks technician. In addition, the Greenways budget was increased for planning purposes and various improperly funded or allocated positions were corrected.

c. Sportsplex:

A lease modification was made that allowed an extension for another 90 days. There is enough funding to upgrade the electrical system, but more details need to be worked out regarding the building usage before the HVAC system will be upgraded.

d. Stewardship Program:

The Stewardship Program is on a temporary hiatus, in efforts to evaluate the procedures, process and documentation regarding the volunteer program.

e. Cornwall Memorial Park:

There will be a public meeting in the upcoming weeks to discuss the Cornwall Courts and the bridge. There will be a notice sent out to all adjacent neighborhoods to encourage community involvement.

**VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

The board adjourned to Executive Session at 9:24am. The meeting was called back to order at 9:29am. A motion was made to recommend the purchase of property #1. Motion passed.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT:** The November 8, 2023, Parks & Recreation Advisory Board meeting was adjourned by consent at 9:29 am.