



PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

January 10, 2024, Meeting Minutes

- PRESENT:** Brian Bressler, Steve Walker, John Blethen, Asa Deane, Ray Dellecker, Jeannie Gilbert, Jed Holmes, Maggi Kriger, and Zarah Manju
- ABSENT:** Jessica Sankey
- STAFF:** Gina Austin, Melissa Bianconi, Peter Gill, Steve Janiszewski, Nicole Oliver, Bree Park, Laine Potter, Caryn Regimbal, and Lauren Woodmansee
- VISITORS:** Joan Banel, Neil Schaner, Holly Miller, Scott Pratschner, Richard McClenahan, Janice Reilly, Catherine Riordan, Barbara Beer, Garrett O'Brien, Tina Hollingsworth, Terrie May, Valerie Beckham, and Skip Williams.

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 am by Chair, Brian Bressler.

- I. **AGENDA REVIEW:**
Under "New Business", agenda item C will be discussed after agenda item D.
- II. **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**
Steve Walker announced that the Port of Bellingham's park and open space plan is currently available for public review and encouraged board members to provide input.
- III. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**
Joan Banel requests that Cornwall Cross on January 13th be cancelled due to destruction of certain areas at Cornwall Park. Barbara Beer voiced support of converting Cornwall Park tennis courts into six pickleball courts. Catherine Riordan is in favor of pickleball court expansion at Cornwall Memorial Park that allows accessibility for individuals of low-income households.
- IV. **DECEMBER MEETING MINUTES:**
A motion was made to approve the meeting minutes. Motion passed.
- V. **NEW BUSINESS:**
 - a. **Taylor Dock Signage:**
The Parks staff have evaluated multiple options for improved signage at Taylor Dock regarding bicycles and e-bikes' speed limits. The proposed improvements are to implement the entire length of Taylor Dock as a "bike walk zone" during peak use. Using data from trail counters, we have determined that the busiest period for this walkway/trail is from 11AM – 6PM. The board will make a recommendation at a later date.
 - b. **Cornwall Memorial Park Uses:**
Nicole Oliver provided an update on feedback received from community members regarding two uses at Cornwall Memorial Park; sports courts

resurfacing and the north pedestrian bridge. A motion was made to recommend to City Council that the expansion of the sports courts include one tennis court and optimize the number of pickleball courts, depending on space availability. Motion passed. A motion was made to recommend to City Council the demolition of the existing north pedestrian bridge but propose adding \$500k to the budget for a new bridge in 2027/2028 biennium. Motion passed.

c. Trail Safety & E-Bikes:

Holly Miller presented research regarding trail safety and e-bike usage throughout cities comparable to Bellingham. She voiced her group's proposed safety measures to "share the trail" and allow for safer e-bike usage throughout our city, including better signage, additional signage locations, and urging e-bike users to take mandated safety classes.

d. Status Update on PRO Plan Projects, Brainstorm Park Board Priorities & Steering Committees:

Nicole Oliver reviewed with the group the 5 major categories of project recommendations from the PRO Plan, which include neighborhood parks, community parks, open spaces, trails, and special use facilities. She provided brief updates and current timelines of the existing projects. The group will continue to discuss steering committees and top priorities at a later date.

VI. DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

a. Greenways Program Update:

This item was tabled to the next meeting.

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

The board adjourned to Executive Session at 9:26am. The meeting was called back to order at 9:29am. A motion was made to recommend due diligence to City Council on parcel #1. Motion passed.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT: The January 10, 2024, Parks & Recreation Advisory Board meeting was adjourned by consent at 9:33 am.