



PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

January 8, 2025, Meeting Minutes

- PRESENT:** Brian Bressler, Steve Walker, Asa Deane, Ray Dellecker, Jeannie Gilbert, Jed Holmes, Maggi Kriger, Scott Pratschner, Zarah Manju, and Austin Scheffer
- ABSENT:** Holly Miller
- STAFF:** Gina Austin, Melissa Bianconi, Peter Gill, Steve Janiszewski, Paul Knippel, Nicole Oliver, Bree Park, Laine Potter, Caryn Regimbal, and Lauren Woodmansee
- VISITORS:** Joan Banel, Neil Schaner, Stan Snapp, Kelsey Wylie, and Skip Williams (Council Representative)

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

- I. **AGENDA REVIEW:**
There were no changes to the agenda.
- II. **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**
The group showed their appreciation for Maggi Kriger's time serving on the board, as it is her last official meeting. The Mayor will be remodeling the Mayor's board room that may result in future meetings to have a changed location. The Bellingham Pickleball Club is working with Whatcom Community College to build a 12 court pickleball location on the college's campus.
- III. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**
Joan Banel shared her comments regarding the Cyclocross events that take place at Cornwall Park. Stan Snapp introduced himself to the board as one of our newest PRAB applicants.
- IV. **DECEMBER MEETING MINUTES:**
A motion was made to approve the December meeting minutes. Motion passed. Asa Deane and Jeannie Gilbert abstain.
- V. **NEW BUSINESS:**
 - a. **Bloedel Donovan Boat Launch Update:**
Nicole Oliver discussed implementing parking fees for the boat launch to manage traffic and environmental impact. There is a proposal for gate installation to restrict access during off-seasons when inspections are not available. This is to address concerns regarding aquatic invasive species in Lake Whatcom, with an updated Lake Whatcom Management Plan being reviewed by City Council later this month.
 - b. **PROS Plan Goals & Policies:**
The group reviewed the existing PROS (Parks, Recreation, and Open Space) Plan goals and objectives. The public engagement survey was distributed for feedback on the park's priorities and improvements.

The board discussed the integration of parks and recreational planning with the city's overall development plan.

c. PRAB Member Survey:

The staff provided a survey for the group that allowed for feedback relating to the Parks, Recreations, and Open Space Plan. Each member provided their input, and their individual surveys will be considered when updating the new PROS Plan for 2026.

d. New Policy for Board Appointments:

Nicole Oliver shared that Mayor Lund has now implemented a new policy for all appointments and re-appointments. The Parks and Recreation staff will interview the applicants and bring their final decision to the board. Board members seeking re-appointments will need to reapply for consideration.

VI. DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

The City has extended the current lease at the Sportsplex for an additional four months, in hopes of finalizing a new four-year lease agreement with Washington Sports and Recreation. The capital project update was moved to the next meeting, as various delays have occurred as of late.

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

There was no executive session.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT: The January 8, 2025, Parks & Recreation Advisory Board meeting was adjourned by consent at 9:35am.