

MEETING MINUTES
WHATCOM COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
Thursday, March 17, 2022

Virtual Meeting

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Committee Chair Sonja Max at 6:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

PRESENT

Commissioners: Sonja Max, Joe Hashmall, Pete Coy, Brian Estes,
Kristen Fagan, Terry Terry

Staff: Michael McFarlane, Christ Thomsen

EXCUSED

None

GUESTS

Dave Perry, Chris Immer, Jan Huston, Lane Coury, Nick Kluge, Dave Parker,
Mary Ross, Tammy Immer, Daniel Tepper, Greg Hall, Heather Hamel, Alan
Krum, Ryan Yeager

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS

A. Chris Immer – Thanked Terry Terry and the commission for the opportunity to be at the meeting.

B. Jan Huston – Jan Huston (on behalf of the Northshore neighbors of Lake Whatcom Park) wanted to thank the commissioners for touring the Lake Whatcom Trailhead on 3/16/22 and showing interest in the project.

IV. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

A. Sonja Max – Sonja reached out to WSDOT to try to get a representative to come to one of the commission meetings or talk to the commission about what it might entail to get a right-of-way or trail along Highway 542. She is still waiting for a response. Sonja also said the tour on 3/16/22 at Lake Whatcom Park was really good and thanked the commission members and residents who came to the tour.

V. AGENDA

A. March 17, 2022

MOTION: Joe Hashmall moved to approve the March 17, 2022 agenda as written. Brian Estes seconded. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

VI. MINUTES

A. February 17, 2022

MOTION: Pete Coy moved to approve the February 17, 2022 minutes as written. Joe Hashmall seconded. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

VII. STAFF REPORTS

A. Director's Report – Michael McFarlane

- i. **Canyon Lake Community Forest** – WC Parks met with John Gold from Sierra Pacific Industries, as well as representatives from Whatcom Land Trust and the County Executive's Office. WC Parks will formulate a letter to Sierra Pacific Industries requesting a permanent easement with the county on a section of the 1000 Road that will meet up with the county's existing easement
- ii. **Lake Whatcom Park Trailhead** – MacLeod Reckord will do some editing and graphic touchups of the preliminary designs for the preferred options of the two trailheads at Lake Whatcom Park. Mike asked for a calculation on hard surfacing.
- iii. **Capital Improvement Plan** – The Capital Improvement Plan is due in two weeks, so staff will be busy getting that plan completed.
- iv. **Budget Supplementals** – The budget supplementals for flood recovery at Hovander and the Birch Bay Beach Park improvements go to the County Council on March 22nd for approval. The planning commission will meet on March 24th to look at incorporating Hovander/Tennant Lake and Lookout Mountain flood repairs and mitigation requests into the county's capital improvements plan. If approved, WC Parks will be able to use general fund monies to effect repairs, and then reimburse the general fund with FEMA and REET funds later in the year.
- v. **Bellingham Senior Activity Center** – Mike spoke with Chris Orr from the Council on Aging regarding the Bellingham Senior Activity Center. Chris advised they would continue masking at the center until March 31st. The Council on Aging is dealing with some staffing shortages and changes in their food services, but hope to have both a congregate meal and a hybrid meal going by the second week of April.
- vi. **Staffing** – Seasonal staff recruitment is underway. An offer has been extended and accepted for the Maintenance and Construction Supervisor and an offer is pending for the Design and Development Supervisor. The Clerk IV position has been filled.
- vii. **Commission Meetings** – Mike reported that there aren't any updates on the commission meetings moving from virtual to in person. In person meetings still require a video feed and the only place in the county set up for that is the council chambers. Legal staff advised they would contact

Mike as soon as there is any change. Mike suggested the commission schedule tours if they would like to view specific parks or projects.

B. Operations Report & Design and Development Report – Christ Thomsen

- i. **Staffing** – The Ranger position in Point Roberts will be vacant April 15th. That position has been posted internally and if no applications are received, it will be posted externally.
- ii. **Operations Update** – Christ reported that work activities have been fairly normal for this time of year. There has been an increase in criminal activity throughout the parks. There have been a number of thefts and vandalism at the administrative office compound over the last couple of months. Staff have been improving security with lighting and the grounds maintenance shed has been renovated with reinforced doors and locking mechanisms. There was a burglary at Samish Park where the lodge was broken into and \$5,000 - \$10,000 worth of damage was caused. The criminal activity is prompting the department to look more globally at the security of facilities and maybe adding additional alarm systems.
- iii. **Flood Response Repairs** – Park staff have been working hard in the field to clean up and remove as much flood debris as they can while waiting for funding to get approved. They have gotten quotes, bids, and purchase orders for flood repair materials and supplies in anticipation of the budget supplemental being approved.
- iv. **FEMA Recovery Scoping Meeting** – Christ attended the FEMA recovery scoping meeting on March 16th. The recovery scoping meeting is the first substantive meeting between WC Parks and FEMA which starts the 60-day regulatory timeframe for WC Parks to identify and report damage. Once the 60 days is up, further damages cannot be added.
- v. **Maple Creek Shower and Restroom Facility** – The Maple Creek Shower and Restroom Facility construction is on schedule and going extremely well. The contractor started demobilizing their equipment because they are predominantly done and there's just some sub work left to do. The company providing the septic pumps has delayed the delivery of those pumps several times, with the most recent estimated delivery date being April 11th. If the pumps arrive April 11th, there is potential that it will delay the opening of the facility. If they arrive after April 11th, the opening of the facility will most certainly be delayed.
- vi. **Plantation HVAC and Roof Replacement** – The Plantation HVAC and Roof Replacement continues on schedule. The air handling unit is supposed to be delivered at the end of the month, but the contractor hasn't yet received a confirmed delivery date. If that unit is delayed, it will delay the completion of the project.

- vii. **Birch Bay Beach Park** – The materials are on site for the replacement of the frontage fence at Birch Bay Beach Park. Christ is working to coordinate scheduling between Hovander and Birch Bay Beach Park.
- viii. **EH1 Trail Construction** – The Lake Whatcom EH1 Trail Construction is progressing on schedule.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

IX. NEW BUSINESS

- A. **Lummi Island Public Dock** – Lummi Island Public Dock Advisory Committee chair Chris Immer gave a presentation on the Lummi Island Public Dock.

X. ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

XI. NEXT MEETING DATE, TIME, AND LOCATION

The next Whatcom County Parks & Recreation Commission meeting will be held virtually on April 21, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:09 p.m.

Transcribed by: Kristin Lunderville, Clerk IV
Approved by: Michael McFarlane, Parks Department Director