

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**WHATCOM COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION**  
**Thursday, June 16, 2022**

**Bellingham Senior Activity Center**  
**315 Halleck Street**  
**Bellingham, Washington**

**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, Kristen Fagen, Joe Hashmall, Terry Terry,  
Frank Boteler, Pete Coy, Brian Estes

Staff: Christ Thomsen, Michael McFarlane

**EXCUSED**

None

**GUESTS/PUBLIC**

Daniel Probst, Chris Orr (Whatcom Council on Aging Executive Director)

**III. PUBLIC COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS**

- A.** Daniel Probst said he is very glad to hear that Michael McFarlane is retiring and though Mike has done some great things for the community, he has also done a lot of harm. Daniel is glad there is an opportunity to change that and he wishes Mike well.
- B.** Chris Orr, the Executive Director for the Whatcom Council on Aging, wanted to personally thank Michael McFarlane for his 19 years of service to the community. Chris also wanted to thank Mike professionally on behalf of the Bellingham Senior Center and all of the partner senior centers around the county for his support and advocacy for senior programming.

**IV. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

None

**V. AGENDA**

**A. June 16, 2022**

**MOTION:** Pete Coy moved to approve the June 16, 2022 agenda as written. Brian Estes seconded. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

**VI. MINUTES**

**A. May 19, 2022**

**MOTION:** Pete Coy moved to approve the May 19, 2022 minutes as written. Kristen Fagen seconded. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

**VII. STAFF REPORTS**

**A. Director's Report – Michael McFarlane**

- i. **Staffing Update** – Bennett Knox from Louisville, Kentucky has accepted the Parks and Recreation Director position and will start September 6<sup>th</sup>. Christ Thomsen will be the interim Director.

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

- i. **Staffing** – The Park Ranger position at Point Roberts opened again, but none of the applicants panned out. Staff went back to the original list of applicants and invited a candidate back for an interview; that interview went well. There was an interview for Design and Development Supervisor position and that person is being invited back for a second interview.
- ii. **Operations Update** – Fall protection was installed at the playgrounds at Hovander Homestead park and the playgrounds were reopened. The boardwalk at Tennant Lake reopened, but a small section of the trail near the furthest lookout remains closed. Visitors can walk out and back on either side of the trail, but are unable to complete the loop. The stairway at Point Whitehorn has been repaired and is open to the public.
- iii. **Maple Creek Shower and Restroom Facility** – The septic pumps for the Maple Creek Shower and Restroom Facility were supposed to have been delivered at the beginning of June. The new delivery date is the end of June. The pumps will take several weeks to be installed once they are received.
- iv. **Plantation Rifle Range HVAC and Roof Replacement** – The liquid propane tanks have been delivered, installed, and connected to the system at the Plantation Rifle Range. There is a delay from the manufacturer of the diffusers for the air handling system. The contractor is working on revisions to some of the support struts for the air handling unit, but is still hoping to finish the project by the end of June.
- v. **EH1 Trail Construction** – EH1 Trail Construction has been held up by permitting. Planning and Development Services advised permits would be issued very soon. The contractor will begin work July 5<sup>th</sup>.
- vi. **Nugent's Corner Building Demolition** – State law requires the Good Faith Survey to be updated to reflect current conditions resulting from the fire that happened in July 2021. Abatement work will begin after the survey is updated.

- vii. **Birch Bay Beach Park** – Work on Birch Bay Beach Park has not started because staff have been pulled to work on plumbing issues at Bellingham Senior Activity Center and power issues at Samish Park.

**VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

**IX. NEW BUSINESS**

- A. June 1<sup>st</sup> Open Meetings Changes** – Beginning June 1<sup>st</sup>, in-person meetings are allowed without having to do a hybrid meeting. However, if the meeting is going to be virtual, a place must also be provided for the public to come and comment.
- B. Cooperative Agreements between Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife and Whatcom County Parks & Recreation Department** – Mike presented the cooperative agreement between Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and Whatcom County Park and Recreation for Maintenance and Operation of Cooperatively Managed Lands (Pine & Cedar Lakes, Tennant Lake, boat launches located inside Hovander Homestead Park). Per this agreement, a Discover Pass is no longer required to use the boat launch at Hovander.
  - MOTION:** Pete Coy made a motion to do recommend approval of the cooperative agreement between Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and Whatcom County Park and Recreation for Maintenance and Operation of Cooperatively Managed Lands. Joe Hashmall seconded. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.
- C. Senior Services Staffing and Operations Contracts (City of Lynden, City of Blaine, Jet Oldsters, Whatcom Council on Aging)** – Mike presented the Senior Services Staffing and Operations Contracts with the City of Lynden, City of Blaine, Jet Oldsters, and Whatcom Council on Aging.
  - MOTION:** Pete Coy made a motion to do recommend approval of the Senior Services Staffing and Operations Contracts with the City of Lynden, City of Blaine, Jet Oldsters, and Whatcom Council on Aging. Brian Estes seconded. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.
- D. Fire District 14 – 2022 Local Agreement** – Mike presented the Intergovernmental Agreement for Fire Protection Services with Whatcom County Fire Protection District No. 14.
  - MOTION:** Brian Estes made a motion to do recommend approval of the Intergovernmental Agreement for Fire Protection Services with Whatcom County Fire Protection District No. 14. Joe Hashmall seconded. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.
- E. 2022 Commission Meeting Locations** – The commission discussed and decided on upcoming meeting locations.

**X. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None

**XI. NEXT MEETING DATE, TIME, AND LOCATION**

The next Whatcom County Parks & Recreation Commission meeting will be held at 6:00 p.m. on July 21, 2022 at the Hovander Homestead Park Group Picnic Shelter, 5299 Nielsen Road, Ferndale, WA.

**XII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Transcribed by: Kristin Lunderville, Clerk IV  
Approved by: Christ Thomsen, Parks Department Interim Director