

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES
Wednesday, June 10, 2009

Present: Adrienne Lederer, Tom Barrett, Jim McCabe, Jane Blume, Julie Guy, John Hymas, Bill Hadley

Absent: Harry Allison, Dominique Zervas, Mike Anderson, Mark Peterson

Staff: Paul Leuthold, Parks & Recreation Director
Marvin Harris, Park Operations Manager
Liz Haveman, Board Secretary
Angelina Wagner, Intern

Attending: Louise Bjornson, Bellingham City Council

I. MAY MEETING MINUTES: Motion made and approved to accept the May 2009 meeting minutes with this revision: Page 1, line 50, remove the apostrophe on the word "its".

II. OLD BUSINESS:

Greenway Committee Update: Jim McCabe reported that City Finance Director, John Carter, attended the last Greenway meeting to discuss various options for funding Greenway projects in light of the budget crisis.

III. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Budget Update: Paul Leuthold reported that the City is looking at a \$6 million deficit in its 2010 budget. The Mayor put together a Fiscal Alternatives for Stability Taskforce (FAST) that Paul served on, and a report of all FAST recommendations was published on May 11, 2009. The items in the FAST report that will make the largest dent in the budget deficit are personnel related, such as deferring or eliminating salary increases and changes to health insurance benefits. These types of changes will require union negotiations, which have not taken place yet. Paul stated that Departments have been instructed to keep their 2010 budgets status quo, and additional cuts are going to be necessary to fill the deficit. Paul stated that the Mayor has recommended \$2 million worth of budget cuts from the FAST report. The remaining \$4 million deficit has been divided between City Departments. The Parks Department has been asked to reduce its 2010 budget by an additional \$450,000. In order to make this cut, Paul reported that all Divisions of the Department will be affected. Staff reductions will be necessary, including both extra labor employees and permanent employees. Individuals whose jobs will be cut will be notified in August, and those cuts will go into effect in October. Paul stated that when positions are eliminated, the Human Resources Department will be working through a very detailed bumping scenario as those employees with more years of service may bump into eligible positions filled by employees with less years of service.

Jim McCabe asked if the Mayor has decided to combine the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board and the Greenway Advisory Committee. Paul responded that while this was listed as a potential cut in the FAST report, the Mayor has not decided to consolidate any of the boards and commissions at this time.

B. Salmon Art Trail Policy: Tom Barrett suggested that point 10.6 be reworded to read, "Budget, with projected costs including maintenance for the project." Tom also pointed out that both "Signs" and "Permanence are numbered "14". He suggested that "Permanence

be numbered "15" and that a sentence be added that states, "The City is under no obligation to contact the artist if a piece is moved or removed from the collection." Tom Barrett moved to approve the Salmon Art Trail Guidelines as amended. Jane Blume seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously. Tom also stated that he is concerned that the financial burden of maintaining art pieces over time might fall on the Parks Department. He moved to recommend that the Arts Commission, rather than the Parks Department, be responsible for funding the maintenance of all pieces on the Salmon Art Trail. Jane Blume seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously.

C. Recreation Report; Community & Cooperative Events: Paul Leuthold introduced Lance Romo, Recreation Coordinator, and stated that Lance started working as a lifeguard at the Arne Hanna Aquatic Center and now runs all of the Parks Department's races and works cooperatively with a number of agencies to organize various community events. Lance explained that he started with the Youth Triathlon 10 years ago and has since added a number of races, including the Lake Padden Triathlon, the Runnin' O the Green, the Padden Duathlon, Fairhaven Runners 15K, and the RunningShoes.com Duathlon. Lance stated that all of the races generate revenue and participation is growing. Tom Barrett suggested that Lance organize a run in North Bellingham. Lance responded that he has just recently spoken with a group who is organizing a run that will be a fundraiser to keep kids in school. The run is to begin at the new Squalicum Creek Park. Julie Guy stated that there are a large number of people in the Guide Meridian/Cordata neighborhood that are not being served and asked Lance to try to plan at least one event north of Cornwall Park. Lance offered to meet with Julie and look at potential sites to host a future event in that neighborhood. Besides the various runs, Lance reported that he also organizes the annual Egg Hunt in the pool and the Pumpkin Patch in the pool, as well as the All Comer Track Meets. Lance reported that he also has recently become the liaison in the Parks Department between the public and the Park Operations Division for large events. Lance works with the public to make sure that they are providing enough garbage and recycling cans, portable toilets, and planning low impact events. Lance then communicates the plans for the large events to the Park Operations staff so they do not conflict with maintenance projects and the Operations staff know what to expect. Lance stated that by working cooperatively with organizations like Baker's Breakfast Cookie, Haggen, and KGMI Radio, the Parks Department has received free promotion and a large amount of donated equipment and food for events.

IV. Board Reports:

- A. Big Rock:** Adrienne Lederer reported that the Big Rock Committee is currently working on their mission statement. They are also going to start doing some fundraising and planning for next year's Mother's Day Sculpture Exhibit, as well as maintenance on the "Blue Man" statue in the garden.
- B. Woodstock Conservancy:** Adrienne Lederer reported that the Conservancy is currently interviewing potential new board members and is planning an art show and sale to raise funds.
- C. North Bellingham Community Garden:** Julie Guy reported that a celebration was held on Saturday, June 13, at the new community garden in North Bellingham. Julie

stated that a number of volunteers put many hours into the garden, and Ted Mischaikov made a considerable donation to make the garden possible.

- D. Cordata Park:** Julie Guy reported that she recently heard from Leslie Bryson that the trail construction that was to begin in 2009 will likely not start until 2010 because of the permitting process. Julie stated that she hopes that the trail construction will be made a priority in 2009.
- E. Lake Whatcom Watershed:** Bill Hadley reported that the Lake Whatcom Watershed Advisory Board recently acquired 23.5 acres on Dutch Harbor Road, which is opposite Strawberry Point. This land was mapped and plotted for development, but will now remain undeveloped.
- V. RECOGNITION:** Julie Guy recognized Tom Barrett for his 5 years of service on the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board. Tom stated that his term of service is up and rather than ask for reappointment, he is going to step down to give someone else the opportunity to serve.
- VI. ADJOURNMENT:** The June 2009 meeting of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board was adjourned by consent at 8:50 a.m.

Approved: Jim McCabe, Chair
Attest: Liz Haveman, Secretary