

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES
Wednesday, November 18, 2009

Present: Adrienne Lederer, Jim McCabe, Jane Blume, Bill Hadley, Mike Anderson, Dominique Zervas, Julie Guy, Mark Peterson

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

Attending: Louise Bjornson, Bellingham City Council
Jim Zander, Greenway Advisory Committee
Pam Holladay
Geoffrey Middaugh
Rick Chartrand

I. OCTOBER MEETING MINUTES: Julie Guy asked if the Center for Local Self Reliance had submitted the phasing plan that the Park Board asked them for at the October meeting. Paul stated that he had not received their phasing plan yet and would contact Steve Wilson to inquire about it. Motion made and approved to accept the October 2009 meeting minutes as written.

II. NEW BUSINESS:

A. 2010 Athletic/Park Facility Rental Fees: Paul Leuthold stated that the Parks Department has been charged by City Administration to generate an additional \$100,000 in user fees. In order to do this, the Parks Department is analyzing all user fees and is recommending an increase in park facility rental fees. Paul stated that the fee increases proposed would generate an additional \$25,000 in revenue. Jane Blume asked why the fee for Maritime Heritage Park Amphitheatre is not being raised. Paul responded that that facility is rarely used and that he hopes to encourage large groups to use that facility by keeping the hourly rate down. Mark Peterson inquired about the softball league fees and if those were being raised or not. Paul responded that the softball fees charged to the leagues are the same fees charged for school district fees, and those are still under negotiation with the Bellingham School District as part of the Interlocal Agreement. Mark stated that he feels that since most all of the other user fees are going up, the softball fees ought to go up as well. Paul Leuthold responded that he agrees and the softball user fees will be evaluated. Dominique Zervas moved to approve the 2010 Athletic/Park Facility Rental Fees with the understanding that the softball user fees would be increased as well as the others. Mike Anderson seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously.

B. 2010 Bayview Cemetery Fees: Marvin Harris reported that City Council approved 2010 Bayview Cemetery fees at their November 9 meeting. Marvin stated that the fee increase is roughly 5% across the board, and is in line with fees being charged by other cemeteries in the area. Marvin reported that revenues at Bayview Cemetery have gone down with the economy; many people are choosing to be cremated, so the burial and memorial revenue has declined. The 2010 fees will raise the cost of cremation services to help generate more revenue.

- C. Interview of Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Candidate:** An informal interview was conducted with Pam Holladay, candidate to serve on the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board.
- D. Brian Griffin Recognition/Appreciation Plaque:** Paul Leuthold stated that Rick Chartrand approached him with an idea for a plaque to honor Brian Griffin, and Paul asked him to present his idea to the Park Board because the conceptual idea for the size and location of the plaque falls outside the City of Bellingham policy for donations and memorials within the park system. Rick Chartrand introduced himself as a friend of Brian Griffin's and stated that he would like to install a plaque of recognition and appreciation for Brian's many years of service and fundraising efforts to build community jewels such as the Fairhaven Village Green, Depot Market Square and Taylor Dock. Rick shared a concept for a plaque on a post at the Fairhaven Village Green at the top of the stairs on the corner of 10th Street and Mill Avenue. Rick stated that he would be responsible for the cost of the plaque and installation; it would not cost the Parks Department anything. Dominique Zervas stated that she feels that Brian Griffin's service certainly should be honored, but expressed safety concern for a plaque on a post at the top of a stairway as it could cause a tripping hazard. Mark Peterson asked if there are any other recognition plaques in the park system. Marvin Harris responded that the existing plaques in the park system are memorials tied to a donation such as a tree or bench. Mark stated that he agrees that individuals with an outstanding record of service such as Brian Griffin ought to be recognized while they are still living. Dominique Zervas suggested that the policy for memorials be amended to include criteria for recognition of individuals who are still living. Jim McCabe suggested that Rick come up with a specific plan for the recognition plaque including a design, a location on an already existing park surface, verification of funding, and the plaque wording, and then come back to the Park Board for approval. Dominique Zervas moved general approval of Brian Griffin as the recipient of recognition with the manner of recognition to be determined at a later date once they have approved a plan. Julie Guy seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously.
- E. Interview of Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Candidate:** An informal interview was conducted with Geoffrey Middaugh, candidate to serve on the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board.
- F. Selection of Park Advisory Board Candidates:** Following discussion, Mark Peterson moved to recommend both Pam Holladay and Geoffrey Middaugh to the Mayor for appointment to the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board. Mike Anderson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.
- III. Director's Report:** Paul Leuthold reported that the Parks Department lost 12.7 Full Time Equivalents, mostly from the Recreation division. The Aquatic Center lost staff and is cutting back its hours of operation. One Recreation Coordinator out of the Park Administration office was cut as well. Other positions lost include the Parks Property Acquisition Specialist, the Office Assistant at Bayview Cemetery, and a seasonal maintenance position at Park Operations. Paul also reported that two permanent Park Operations positions that have historically been funded with the City's General Fund are now being charged to the Greenway Endowment Fund, which means that less Endowment Funds are available for park

maintenance as the greenway system grows. Jim Zander stated that it seems that there would be more opportunities for volunteers to participate in park maintenance, but said that he has heard that this has been problematic in the past with the labor union. Paul Leuthold responded that volunteers are not allowed to operate any power equipment or do any skilled labor that has previously been done by a paid employee.

IV. Board Reports:

Julie Guy reported that she attended the York Neighborhood's celebration of the recently renovated Franklin Park. Julie stated that it is a great neighborhood park for families and children and asked if the renovation was funded by a grant. Paul Leuthold responded that it was funded by a Community Block Grant through the Neighborhood Improvement Program.

Bill Hadley reported that the Watershed Advisory Board has a preliminary design for the Lookout Mountain Preserve that includes a parking area, restroom and trails off Lake Louise Road opposite the northernmost part of the Sudden Valley development. Bill stated that he believes that the County put together the development plan.

V. ADJOURNMENT: The November 2009 meeting of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board was adjourned by consent at 8:55 a.m.

Approved: Jim McCabe, Chair

Attest: Liz Haveman, Secretary