

**PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES**  
**Wednesday, October 12, 2011**

**Present:** Bill Hadley, Rosalie Nast, Adrienne Lederer, Julie Guy, Pam Holladay, Geoff Middaugh, Diane Blake, Dominique Zervas, Mike Anderson, Bill Langley

**Staff:** Leslie Bryson, Interim Parks and Recreation Director  
Tim Wahl, Greenway Program Coordinator  
Carleen Strasser, Office Assistant

**Attending:** John Blethen, Greenway Advisory Committee Liaison  
Al Zimmerman, Sculpture Northwest  
Frank James, Responsible Development

- I. **AGENDA REVIEW:** Geoff Middaugh announced that he would like to share some comments under New Business. Leslie Bryson announced she would like to share the withdrawal of the proposal for the “David Marshall Tribute” sculpture exhibit under Old Business.
- II. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** In open meeting following executive session, Mike Anderson moved to elevate the status of the following Greenway Advisory Committee recommended properties to “Action Approved”: Number 24, 703, 704, 140, 700, 701, and 702 and reconfiguration of property 488. During discussion it was clarified that “Action Approved” means staff has approval to take action on a piece of property to pursue due diligence, including appraisals, if directed by City Council. Additional Board vote is needed to recommend purchase of a property. Motion was passed with Pam Holladay abstaining.
- III. **AUGUST MEETING MINUTES:** The September meeting minutes were approved following correction of a typographical error on page 2.

**IV. OLD BUSINESS:**

- A. **Greenway Advisory Committee Update:** On October 10, 2011, Linda Grant, Greenway Committee Chair, presented the GAC annual report to Council and introduced the updated Strategic Plan for Greenway Land Acquisitions. Council voted to approve the Strategic Plan.
- B. **Big Rock Garden Park “David Marshall Tribute” sculpture exhibit:** Leslie Bryson briefly explained the proposal to enter into an agreement with Sculpture Northwest to bring in a “David Marshall Tribute” sculpture exhibit for 2012. Leslie received an email from George Drake requesting to withdraw his proposal for 2012.

Leslie introduced Al Zimmerman of Sculpture Northwest. He explained that the “David Marshall Tribute” was created to set up a trust for art students. Leslie stated that we need to check if zoning laws allow for commercial sales at the park and asked if commercial sales are needed to help funding.

Al discussed how the tribute exhibit could be included in the daily operation of Big Rock Garden Park. The basic premise is to create a place to sell sculptures to create funds for the trust and funds for Big Rock Garden Park. The Greenhouse would be used as a base of

operation. Potential buyers would be on appointment only basis. Sculpture sales would probably not be limited to David Marshall items, but a gift shop would not be opened.

Discussion and questions followed that included: whether the exhibit will be permanent or limited, the goals and objectives of the project, benefits to the City, who pays for installation, zoning issues, leasing issues, and if this project will take Big Rock Garden in a different direction.

Leslie finalized the discussion stating that this deserves more investigation and staff will come back with a recommendation for further action. Geoff Middaugh suggested that the Park Board form a sub-committee for this proposal and agreed to put it on the agenda for the next meeting.

**V. NEW BUSINESS:**

**A. Comments by Geoff Middaugh:** Geoff indicated that when it became clear that the Parks Department would be getting a new director, he asked three things of the Mayor; to designate an interim director, to recruit a new director using a professional standard, and to hire the best director available for Bellingham Parks & Recreation. Geoff reported that all three of these things have been accomplished and the process is complete. Geoff recognized and thanked Leslie Bryson for her commendable accomplishments as interim director and recognized her exceptional professionalism and dedication on behalf of the Park Board. He also thanked her for all her work during the hiring process for the new Parks and Recreation Director. He also thanked all the candidates. He shared that he felt Leslie handled the situation professionally and very exceptionally, given her situation.

**B. Responsible Development, future of Chuckanut Ridge:** Frank James of the Responsible Development group gave a brief history of other community projects he has worked on. He has been involved in the Chuckanut Ridge property for 15 years. He then discussed in detail the environmental and ecological importance of this property. Geoff Middaugh asked how the group sees the future management of the property. Frank responded that the group is a stewardship group, and currently has raised \$3800 in its stewardship fund. The group would like to create partnerships to make educational signs about the sensitive ecological areas. They are also committed to fundraising to retire the debt of the purchase.

Dominique Zervas asked, if any portion of the land needs to be sold to pay off the debt, whether the group would withdraw its support or monetary contribution. Frank responded this group's goal is to preserve the whole property. John Blethen suggested that another sub-committee be formed to consider future scenarios for Chuckanut Ridge.

**C. 2012 Parks Facility Rental Fee Increase and Policy Change:** Leslie prefaced the discussion by saying that though budget cuts were required to meet 2012 budget goals, the Parks Department has also proposed increases in fees. The Parks Department is proposing an across-the-board increase in Park Facility Rental fees of 20%. Also on the list for approval is to change wording on the fee list to define fee rates as "non-commercial" instead of "non-profit", and to remove from the "Reserving and Using Parks & Recreation Facilities" policy, the statement that fee waivers are provided to certain 501(c)(3) non-profit

organizations. Discussion followed. Mike Anderson moved to accept the proposals as stated. Motion passed unanimously.

- D. **2012 Bayview Cemetery Fee Increase**: Leslie introduced this by going over the letter Marcia Wazny submitted outlining the proposed increases in prices for items on their current price list. Julie Guy moved to accept the proposal as stated. Motion passed unanimously.

VI. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**: Leslie Bryson reported on the following: The 2012 budget will be presented to Council on October 17. In 2012 the Parks Department will cut the following community events unless sponsors are found: Summer Concerts in the Parks series, Kids Fest, and Celebrate Bellingham. The next development phase of Squalicum Creek Park is underway and the Parks Department will be applying for a grant in 2012 in hopes to obtain more funding for development. Parks is hiring a design consultant for the Boulevard Park Shoreline project.

Leslie also thanked the Park Board for its support as she served as Interim Director. As the new director arrives, she suggested that the Board think about what we are doing well and how can we improve as a department and as well as a Board.

VII. **ADJOURNMENT**: The October 2011 meeting of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board was adjourned by consent at 9:00 a.m.

Approved: Geoff Middaugh, Board Chair  
Attest: Carleen Strasser, Office Assistant