



## Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Minutes

Thursday January 21, 2021

**The meeting was called to order at 5:00pm with the following park board members in attendance:**

**Board Members present:** Tim Manns, Jason Benson, John Semrau, Jose Riefkohl, Elizabeth Detillion, Greg Francioch, Kevin Loy, and Chris Allen

**Staff Members and Representatives:** Brian Adams

**December Minutes and January Agenda:** Motion passes with the edit of a typo of the word 'expanded'.

**Public:** No public Comment

### **Board Discussion**

**Lake Erie Policy Change Resolution and Ordinance:** In 2020 a petition was sent to us regarding a desire to add special restrictions for Lake Erie under the Boating and Recreational Activities code. The petitioners mailed a survey to 27 owners of 'developed Lake Erie shoreline properties' and received 13 responses. Six respondents favored a 5 mph speed limit with no combustion engines; three favored a 5 mph speed limit with no engine restriction; two favored a 25 mph speed limit with no PWC allowed; and two favored no change to current regulations. Skagit County received three additional email inquiries regarding Lake Erie water use regulations; one advocated a PWC ban and two desired no change to current regulations. Since April, there have been additional letters and phone calls from long-term homeowners expressing their desire to retain current policies (no restrictions). On 27 August 2020, Mr. Barron contacted Commissioner Wesen via email to request a status update on the petition. This issue was delegated to the Parks and Recreation Department with the intention of a public hearing in 2021. The advisory board had several comments about the petition and felt a public meeting should be scheduled for February. Brian said that he had contacted WDFW and the City of Anacortes Parks Department. Tim felt we should reach out to a local WDFW rep by e-mailing Belinda Rotton. There was discussion about conflict and the number of people affected by the current policy or future changes. What are the seasonal conflicts? The fishing season opens in April and subsides greatly by Memorial weekend. Chris wondered about the wake created by motorized boats and the impact to the shoreline.

### **E-Bikes:**

The e-bike discussion continues with support from the Skagit Trail Builders. Tim asked if more research could be completed regarding the policies of other local jurisdictions. Brian checked with Whatcom County and the Anacortes Parks Dept. The City of Anacortes currently allows e-bikes where motorcycles are allowed. They intend on revisiting the policies when they reopen the ACFL Management plan this year. Tim is becoming more comfortable with allowing e-bikes on trails of which peddle bikes are currently allowed. Class 1 and 3 e- bikes are pedal assisted. There is greater interest with the Board in allowing bikes that are peddle assisted than w/o pedals. John felt that the condition of the terrain naturally slows the speed of e-bikes and there is no need

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for policies other than those already in place for regular bikes. The conditions of the trails govern speed and provides safety. Studies show that the demographic most interested in e-bikes are older and motor assisted bikes help with access. Younger mountain bikers have a tendency to be 'purists' and are not always interested in sharing the trails with e-bikes. Greg does not have a problem with e-bikes. He feels that signage showing trail etiquette would help. Education would be a key to greater success. Chris thinks consistency across the jurisdictions would be best if it's achievable.

#### **Drones in Parks**

Brian has had recent calls about drone use in parks. The Skagit County Recreational Codes were written prior to the use of drones. The current codes don't allow for motorized aircraft activity in SC Parks and we may need to update the codes. John said the FAA regulations are in place. Sharpe Park is within the Whidbey naval base 4 mile perimeter and is the only county park where drones are not allowed. The rules also specify that drones are prohibited from harassing wildlife. In high density areas they have to fly at 300' of elevation. Brian wondered about privacy issues at places like Steelhead Park campground. Brian was asked to follow-up with some questions about code and policies with the Skagit County attorney.

Kevin Loy promoted the idea of a memorial bench for Lloyd Brown. This matter will be discussed further at the February or March meeting.

**Park Board Recruitment:** our newest board member from district 1 was introduced. A native of San Juan, Puerto Rico, Commander Riefkohl is a graduate of Antilles Military Academy (Class 1994) and enlisted in the United States Navy in August 1994. He attended Officer Candidate School in Pensacola, Florida in 2001 and was designated an Aerospace Maintenance Duty Officer in 2003. Jose and his family now live in Anacortes.

#### **Staff Report:**

##### **Skagit Playfields:**

**Soccer fields:** The DOE, MV and Corps have approved our plans but we are still awaiting our permit. We should have approval and permits very soon. We sent out an RFP to the mitigation banks that qualify for this project. We will need two credits and SVC will require one credit for offsite mitigation. The retail cost per credit is 175k but we believe the competitive process will lower this considerably. There is still a need for a small amount of onsite mitigation, which will reduce the number of soccer fields from 6 to 5. Most of the wetland is on the 911 land.

**Softball fields:** We are working out the details of the contract. The winning bidder is Sprint Turf which is the same contractor who did the soccer field for SVC. The project will commence in March and completed by June 15. Upon completion, the seasonal window for the fields use will increase and the youth softball/hardball leagues will be expanded.

**Pressentin Park:** The permits are in hand and the bid documents are completed. We have selected a construction manager and the bid opening for construction is February 8. Marie is working with all of the bidding addendums and contract requirements. We have a contractor in place to retrofit the septic system and have an agreement for a temporary easement with the neighbor for full access to the park. We have a demolition permit for the old Good Foods residence. Let's hope for a very competitive bidding process!

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**NSRA:** The restrooms are open and getting a lot of use! We have the scope/design completed for the veterans' plaza and trails. We are in the process of having the design scoped through an engineer so we can attain the permits and put it to bid in the spring. The park is busy and the new trails are very popular.

We continue to collaborate with The Skagit Trail Builders as we build new paths. I meet (via zoom) regularly with the Port of Skagit and the City of Sedro-Woolley as we work through the trail / campus plans. An amendment to the agreement with the Port should be ready for signature in January.

**Centennial:** All permits have come in but the project will not commence until 2021. The interlocal agreement is signed and the construction bids are to be opened on the 26th. It is a great partnership that will benefit the public in many ways. We continue to work with MacLeod Reckord for a limited contract as we consolidate the engineering that has already been completed as a part of the PUD work. The SR9 crossing is the biggest challenge.

**Fairgrounds:** The Fairgrounds is busting at the seams with COVID outreach. We are very happy to see the facility get good use at this time and I think speaks to the versatility of the grounds and how it can help bring hope to the community in good times and bad. Aric and Wanda, working under the direction of Polly Dubbel have taken over a huge load on the vaccine scheduling/question line.

The winter rains has led to ongoing maintenance needs of the access road. We got a bid for the work and it's beyond our budget capacity (Fair and PH). The road could use asphalt grindings or crushed rock with a proper crown. We will limp through the season and repair the access road once the vaccinations are complete.

**Adjourn: 6:40 pm.**

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