



Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Minutes

Thursday, September 15, 2022

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm with the following park board members in attendance:

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

Staff Members and Representatives: Brian Adams and Joseph Shea

Members from the Public: None

The August minutes were discussed and passed unanimously without a modification.

Board Discussion:

Drones in Parks: Flying over stadiums and other highly populated public venues is illegal. Jose talked about security systems can home in on the location of the controller. Military bases and other protected facilities can utilize jamming technology. FAA has licensing rules for use for drones over a specific weight (8 ounces and heavier) or for activities with elevations of 400' and higher. Tim mentioned that NPS has made drones illegal in national parks due to the need to provide a safer haven for wildlife. The State has designated areas and a process in which to register serial numbers. Local jurisdictions have been developing policies for site specific areas. John talked about the rules for commercial use. There are few problems with commercial users due to their desire to retain their licenses. Adriana asked about privacy concerns. Greg Adams said that most policy makers are focused towards protecting privacy in locations where its especially important. Campgrounds are a good example of a location where policies need to be established. The City of Seattle Parks Dept banned them due to the higher density of park visitors in their parklands. The danger of lost or low flying aircraft created concerns after a number of incidents. Greg said our highest priorities should be at our three campgrounds and in areas where there are concerns with sensitive wildlife. Greg wondered if it might be prudent for Skagit County Parks to have a registry system in place. There were questions about enforcement. Greg said if there were ongoing violations, we have a process in which we can "trespass" those individuals. The exception for all the restrictions is for commercial pilots with permission (via contract or permit). John mentioned the codes already in place. 9.41.200 refers to aircraft and model rockets. It was recommended and agreed on that we should form a committee of members and stakeholders.

-E-Bikes Resolution for Hearing: Brian shared the resolution and changes with the board. Brian has been asked to meet with the commissioners individually for feedback on the proposed changes. He will be meeting with them in October. There will be a hearing required and the notice for the hearing will need to be advertised in the newspaper of record.



Staff Report:

Studley Community Park: The boundary line adjustment is being completed. The Studleys would like us to draft the transfer agreement for their review. I will be working with Steve on this request.

Skagit Playfields:

Soccer fields: We met with potential partners about the short-term and long-term plans for the property. The Mount Vernon School District is very interested in establishing a multi-purpose field. The Skagit Valley College hopes to build a new gymnasium on their adjacent property. We will continue discussions with the new SVC president and MVSD superintendent. We believe there is an opportunity to utilize the property in a way that will benefit all parties. The next meeting is being planned for late October.

Softball fields: We have the permits for the paving project. The bids came in within target and the contract for SRV will be available for your review on October 3. The work will be completed between October 1, 2022 and March 31, 2023. Getting the project completed this year will be dependent on the time it takes to get the contract finalized.

NSRA: The Veterans Park construction continues to meet time commitments well and will be completed by the end of September. The punch list will be completed after most of the equipment and crews have left the site. The park hosts have had a positive impact. A non-profit organization will be selling and installing the name placards. The ribbon cutting is planned for November 10 at 3pm.

We continue to collaborate with The Skagit Trail Builders as we complete the final trail projects. Work parties will be ongoing through the fall and winter.

Adjourn.