

THURSTON COUNTY
PARKS & RECREATION BOARD
Development Services Conference Room
Olympia WA
JANUARY 6, 2004

PRESENT: Joel Staloch, Chair
Bernie Chaplin
Joseph Shorin
Mark Lovrien
Judy Johnson
Grant Larsen
Jon Halvorson

GUESTS: Commissioner Macleod
Bill Willis

STAFF: Michael Welter
Chuck Groth
Kerry Hibdon
Cheri Johnson

CALL TO ORDER – The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – The minutes of the December meeting were approved as written.

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS – Commissioner Macleod stated that staff would be scheduling a joint meeting with the Board of Commissioners and the Parks Board. He feels it will be a valuable meeting and they are all looking forward to it. Michael reported that meeting has been scheduled for March 2 at 6:30 during the regular Parks Board meeting.

The Commissioners have encouraged Don Krupp to continue dialog with the IAC about the ORV issue in a positive but firm manner. The County is hopeful that these meetings will bring an equitable settlement to the future of the ORV Park. Commissioner Macleod felt it was a good suggestion by the Parks Board to want to be involved in decision-making concerning the park.

Michael stated that on January 22 staff would be briefing the Board of Commissioners on the things that lead up to the decision by the Board to close the ORV Park. Also they will review the whole process of the master plan, and how it got to where it did and who was involved.

The Commissioners have directed the County Budget Director to prepare a 5-year financial plan for the park showing the true costs associated with reopening the park and its operation, if it were to reopen. He is to look at all the costs associated with making it a true business enterprise. Another meeting is being planned to talk with the Risk Manager about liability issues.

Mark questioned whether the plan would have replacements costs built in. Michael was unsure whether this would be included.

Michael reported that the land donation in Boston Harbor has been taken off the table. The owners want to discuss a possible land swap instead. Staff is waiting to see their proposal.

There has been no movement on possible acquisition of the 26-acre parcel adjacent to the Athletic Complex. Attorneys have concluded that Conservation Futures money cannot be used to buy land to construct buildings on. The City is working on an alternate plan.

A briefing is scheduled with the Commissioners to discuss the process for approving and funding the Green Cove Basin and Gull Harbor projects. These projects were included in the Capital Facilities Plan; the Gull Harbor project under the Parks and the Green Cove project under Water & Waste Management.

Cooper Point Project – This is listed in the Capital Facilities Plan as a "potential acquisition." This is not a stand-alone project. Commissioner Macleod questioned whether the Parks Board had ever articulated at any point whether a park in that area should be active or passive. The board stated that the main focus has been to find water access. A passive park, more along the lines of Burfoot, has been discussed.

Since the property that the board has reviewed is not specified in the Capital Facilities Plan, the Parks Board would need to make a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners to consider this project. Commissioner Macleod has concern that now that the Cooper Point Project is site-specific, because of media coverage, political pressure may make it precedent over other potential projects in the county. The board assured him that there have been discussions of acquiring a park in that area for many years. Michael stated that there has not been opportunity to brief the Board of Commissioners of the Parks Board evaluation of the site and that it does deserve looking into.

It was suggested that the board have dialogue about the outcome of the site evaluation and come to a conclusion about the project before bringing it before the Commissioners with a recommendation. Commissioner Macleod suggested the evaluation process be discussed at the joint meeting. Staff will send out the outcome of the evaluations for discussion at the February meeting. Staff will also provide a map locating all the county parks.

Commissioners Macleod suggested staff provide an agenda prior to the joint meeting so the Commissioners can prepare for discussions.

PARK BOARD WORK PLAN – The following committees were formed:

Park Ordinances – Joe, Judy, and Mark

Large Group Reservations – Joel

Network with other Jurisdictions – Joel, Bernie

Scholarships for Rec Programs – Jon, Joe

Adopt-A-Trial – Joel, Bernie

Letters to the Editor – as a way to educate, not to take a stand. No committee was formed.

ORV PARK UPDATE – Still no response from IAC. The mediator has inferred that the IAC may be open to some of the County's requests.

YELM-TENINO TRAIL – All permits are nearly complete.

Kerry Hibdon was introduced to the board. Kerry oversees the parks development projects among other duties.

WATER RIGHTS – Staff is having discussions with the Department of Ecology on the water rights at Kennedell Park. It is the department's perspective that the department has water rights and is just seeking their input on how much is available. The water rights will allow the department to put in a well at the park and not have to use City water for irrigating the fields, which was extremely costly last summer. Staff is also working to transfer any excess water rights to Guerin Park for use sometime in the future. Michael suggested that the board look at leasing out any excess water rights should there be any.

CHEHALIS WESTERN TRAIL – The department has received an extension on the grant. It was to end on December 31, 2003. The extension allows time for construction of the parking lot at 89th Avenue.

ATHLETIC COMPLEX – The City of Lacey is moving ahead with the design process for Phase II.

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.