

THURSTON COUNTY
PARKS & RECREATION BOARD
Development Services Conference Room
Olympia WA
MAY 4, 2004

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

GUESTS: Barb Anderson

STAFF: Michael Welter
Chuck Groth
Cheri Johnson

CALL TO ORDER – The meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm

APPROVAL OF MINUTES - Jon noted that he had referred to the Thurston County/City of Lacey Athletic Complex as the Regional **Sports** Athletic Complex. With this correction noted, the minutes of the April meeting were approved as written.

COMMISSIONER COMMENT – Commissioner Macleod was unable to attend the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Barb Anderson, an ORV enthusiast, reported that the IAC has scheduled a special session for May 21 at 10 am at the DNR building. This is a public meeting and the focus is to bring resolution to the ORV issue.

Barb also stated that she is very appreciative of the County's effort in creating the Chehalis Western Trail and Yelm-Tenino Trail.

RECREATION REPORT - Sue was unable to attend because of vacation plans so Michael reported for her.

He stated that up to this date the following individuals and organizations have made a donation to the recreation scholarship fund:

Kiwanis
Mark Lovrien
Valley Athletic Club
Bernie Chaplain

Bernie reported that the Scholarship Fund Committee has sent out letters to organizations and individuals asking them to consider donating to the scholarship fund. Jon reported that Sue will be speaking at the North Thurston Kiwanis in June. She also spoke at the Olympia Kiwanis thanking them for their donation.

The sports programs are all moving ahead and in the throes of registration. Kenneydell Athletic Fields are getting used seven days a week.

Griffin Athletic Fields – Michael reported that the Griffin fields will not be playable this spring and summer due to the lack of rain on the freshly seeded fields. Hopefully, they will be usable this fall for Griffin football. There is no irrigation at the fields so grass growth is dependent on the weather.

Cheri reported that there is a lot of interest in all the summer camps this summer and many have registered. She talked about the enthusiasm of the weeklong special needs camp at Camp Cascade in Yelm each year. The board talked about media coverage of the camp because of its uniqueness. They also discussed taking a field trip out to visit camp. Michael stated he would set this up with Sue.

PARKS REPORT - Chuck reported that lots of work is being done in the parks. Staff has been using the DNR and jail crews on a regular basis and have been able to accomplish a significant amount of work and are extremely beneficial to the department.

Jon and Judy attended the Arbor Day Celebration at Burfoot Park, and Chuck reported that the Arbor Club was very appreciative.

There was a drowning at Kenneydell Park last week. A teenager swam out too far and couldn't get back to shore. Most of the news stations covered the story. The park is posted with signs to swim at your own risk, no guards on duty. In response to a question of whether this could have been prevented if there were guards, Michael stated that even if the department provided a guarded beach, the drowning occurred early in the season. Guards would not have been posted until later in June or early July when the good weather usually begins.

“NO IVY” Day - This Saturday is “NO IVY” Day. It is a volunteer workday to battle the English Ivy that is taking over natural habitat. The event is in conjunction with other jurisdictions. Frye Cove is the park that the department will be focusing on. The event is from 9 am – noon.

Glacial Heritage – May 22 from 10 – 4 pm is Prairie Appreciation Day at Glacial Heritage. The Nature Conservancy is running the program and it is in conjunction with Native Plant Week. Free native plants will be given away to visitors.

Trail Events – Events on both trails will be taking place May 29 – 30. The Northwest Tandem Bike Rally is expecting 1500 bikers for their event. The board suggested staff secure a mailing list from the sponsors to be used to send information about the Friends of the Trails program in the future.

Culverts on the Yelm-Tenino trail will be repaired thanks to a \$30,000 grant. The Roads Department was able to acquire cement slabs from the temporary 4th Avenue bridge for a nominal cost and they will be used to significantly reduce the cost of the culvert repair.

An individual who needs to do community service will be installing a new approach to the beach at Frye Cove Park at little cost to the department.

CAPITAL FACILITIES PLAN – As a follow up to the previous meetings discussions, Michael stated that he went to the Board of Commissioners with the board's suggestions to move the Boston Harbor land deal forward and the Board agreed. Michael has met with the property owner and asked him to investigate whether the property is buildable. As Michael previously advised the Board and Commissioners, the Boston Harbor Association has contacted Michael concerned about the project.

The County Conservation Futures Group will be meeting to discuss how to allocate funds from the Conservation Futures Fund. There are no projects at this time.

The County has given approval for staff to begin moving forward with the first phase (12.5-acres) of the Green Cove Project using Conservation Futures Funds. The County will be providing the Capital Land Trust (CLT) and the County will be signed to insure that the county's interest are protected.

The Conservation Futures Group is looking at the concept of placing signs all land acquisitions using Conservation Futures Funds to help explain how the Conservation Futures program works.

Michael drew an outline of the structure of the Conservation Futures Group and mapped out how the process moves through the different committees and public hearings until it ultimately ends up with the Board of Commissioners for approval or denial. Michael stated that the process can be very challenging since many projects can be added along the way. The Parks Board felt the drawing was very helpful and suggested Michael prepare on paper a flow chart like he drew on the board for the board's reference. They also suggested that the Board of Commissioners receive a copy.

Michael will distribute a final draft of the CFP at the board's June meeting. There will be no significant changes to the plan this year.

COMMITTEE REPORTS –

Bernie reported that he has attended Lacey's and Yelm's Park Board meetings. Lacey is interested in a group picnic with the other area parks boards as has been done in the past. The board discussed coordinating with the other boards and felt that fall would be a good time for this event. Joel stated that he will make the contact with the boards. He will be attending the Olympia Parks Board meeting this week and will broach the subject there.

The Park Ordinances Committee met and put together a list of questions that staff will need to address. They are policy decision questions and need staff's decision. Michael offered to electronically send the Parks Board the ordinances from Skagit and Thurston Counties. Joel suggested the committee report on their progress later in the summer.

The Scholarship Donation Group has prepared a letter that they will be sending out which targets local businesses and individuals that may have an interest in kids programs and asking them to consider donating to the scholarship fund.

There was discussion of the PARCO Foundation and the perspectives of the board. This discussion was the result of a letter received by the department from the group inviting the County to participate. They have suggested a member of the Parks Board get involved. Jon believes it would be in direct conflict with the Friends of the Trail program the department is creating. The board still has questions of how the allocation committee would be structured. Michael stated that it is his belief that once the Friends of the Trail program becomes operational, it will stand on its own.

ORV PARK – There has been no new news, except what Barb Anderson reported earlier. Michael has again been approached by the private sector with interest in running an ORV Park as a private enterprise.

REGIONAL ATHLETIC COMPLEX – The project is moving forward quickly and is ahead of schedule at this time. The dump site that was discovered on the site has been cleaned up and nothing toxic was found. Phase I will be complete by June and Phase II design is underway and is expected to get underway by Spring 2005.

Public Facilities District – Jon reported that a steering committee meeting is set for July. Interest from the money sitting in the bank is adding up. There is pressure now to take it through public process and bring in new projects.

YELM-TENINO TRAIL – Staff will be meeting with the Department of Transportation on how to deal with the crossing on Highway 507. The Roads department will begin construction the first of August. There are some issues with a few property owners along the trail that will have to be ironed out.

The City of Tenino has approached the department with interest in having the County extend the paving to their park. Michael stated it would all depend on funding and how far it will take the paving.

Michael reported that TCTV would be airing a segment on the County's parks and recreation programs in June.

The Board tentatively scheduled a picnic at Kenneydell for the August meeting and will invite the Board of Commissioners.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE – Judy and Bernie volunteered to be on the nominating committee for the upcoming elections of officers.

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm.