

**THURSTON COUNTY  
PARKS & RECREATION BOARD**

2000 Lakeridge Dr SW  
Room 280 Building 1  
Olympia, WA

**MAY 8, 2007**

**MINUTES**

**PRESENT:** Jon Halvorson, Chair  
Bernie Chaplin  
Donna Weaver-Smith  
Grant Larsen  
Larry Schaffner  
Candice Rydalch

**ABSENT:** Donald Krug

**COMMISSIONERS:** Diane Oberquell  
Cathy Wolfe

**STAFF:** Don Krupp, County Chief Administrative Officer  
Michael Welter, County Parks Director  
Chuck Groth, Parks Operations Manager  
Kerry Hibdon, Capital Projects Manager  
Sue Poyner, Recreation Program Manager  
Cheri Johnson, Administrative Assistant

**Joint Meeting with the Board of County Commissioners**

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

The board members introduced themselves to the Board of Commissioners.

**PARK MAINTENANCE PROJECTS** – Commissioner Wolfe questioned whether now is the time for the County to begin focusing on constructing parks and using its resources in that area, or continuing purchasing land while it is available.

Member Halvorson passed out a list of top priority maintenance needs from his perspective. His list was a partial list of the high priorities taken from a more comprehensive list staff had originally prepared at the Park Board's request. The total for the projects comes to approximately \$376,800. The Parks Board questioned whether there is money available in REET to fund these projects. Don Krupp stated the fund generates approximately \$3 million annually. The first quarter percent of the tax is already spoken for, but there is room for discussion on the second quarter percent. There are certain things that REET funding can be spent on and it would have to be determined if these projects lie within those parameters.

There was discussion of around County involvement in athletic fields and the resources required to build and maintain them. Commissioner Oberquell said that the RAC agreement with the City of Lacey requires the County and City split 50/50 of the acquisition, development, and maintenance for 15 years, which would be 2014, after which time the County has the option of transferring its part ownership to the City of Lacey.

Member Schaffner asked the Board of Commissioners to consider designating a portion of the REET funds annually to the Parks Department so staff is able to have an ongoing funding source to plan for the future. Currently, there is no set amount that is set aside for Parks maintenance and operations other than when the department makes a request for a particular project. Don Krupp stated that the Board of Commissioners would be in a better position to consider this during the budget process.

Commissioner Wolfe stated she wants to know the true and immediate needs of the department. She appreciated the project list.

Member Schaffner stated that he feels strongly that the County should not get involved in athletic facilities in the future. He bases this on his past working experiences in parks and recreation and park planning. He is aware of the tremendous amount of resources required for these types of facilities and he feels there are pressing issues in the other parks the County operates. Member Rydalch explained, while she sees a need for more athletic facilities to meet the demand, she also felt that this role should be filled by other providers rather than the County.

**PARK USER FEES** – Neither the Commissioners or the Park Board support this idea. There was minimal discussion.

**PARK LAND ACQUISITION** – Member Weaver-Smith talked about the Rochester community's interest in developing a 3-acre parcel that is owned by the Rochester School District. Director Welter and Commissioner Macleod have been valuable resources and helped the group get a conceptual drawing prepared as part of the first step in the project. Now the group is looking for ways to get funding. Currently, the Glacial Heritage Preserve is the only recreational opportunity in the Rochester area. Their plan is to develop the 3-acre parcel into a city-center park with walking trails and picnic tables. They would like to see a City/School District/County partnership in this plan. The Board of Commissioners are aware of the growth that is occurring in the area and understand it will continue with the addition of the Great Wolf Lodge. Commissioner Oberquell suggested the group make contacts through the Chambers of Commerce and for businesses willing to donate their time and equipment. The Board of Commissioners also encouraged the Parks Board support Rochester's vision and to hold public meetings in that area and share the vision with the community.

**PARKS COMP PLAN** – Director Welter stated that the Parks Comprehensive Plan needs to be updated by February 2008. The Board of Commissioners encouraged the Parks Board to reach out to the south county for public input. Director Welter stated that the Comprehensive Plan update is the vehicle to bring attention to Rochester's park and recreation needs.

**PARKS ORDINANCES** – Many years back a Parks Board member took it upon himself to update the County Park ordinances that were originally adopted in 1977. The Parks Board approved his draft recommendations and it was turned over to the Prosecuting Attorney's office to review. The board would like to see these ordinances approved and adopted, but they are waiting on the Prosecuting Attorney's office to return them. The Board of Commissioners stated they would contact the PA's office requesting that this move forward. Director Welter was asked to provide the date it was first turned over to them.

**PARKS BOND** – Member Halvorson stated he is interested in hearing what the Board of Commissioners felt about a parks bond and if they would support it. The Board stated they would consider any type of funding sources that would benefit the department, and felt that the community might be getting to the point where they would be willing to pay for additional parks and improvement to existing parks.

Director Welter thanked the Board of Commissioners for the active interest in the Parks Department.

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.