

**THURSTON COUNTY
PARKS & RECREATION BOARD**
Parks Conference Room
Olympia WA

APRIL 8, 2008

MINUTES

PRESENT Jon Halvorson, Chair
Bernie Chaplin
Donna Weaver
Larry Schaffner
Donald Krug

ABSENT Candice Rydalch
Ed Cael

STAFF Michael Welter, Director
Chuck Groth, Parks Operation Manager
Kerry Hibdon, Capital Projects Manager
Sue Poyner, Recreation Program Manager
Cheri Johnson, Administrative Assistant

GUESTS: Commissioner Macleod
Cliff Moore

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Member Krug moved to approve the minutes of the March 11 meeting. Member Chaplin seconded. The motion carried.

COMP PLAN UPDATE – Cliff Moore, from WSU Cooperative Extension, talked about how Cooperative Extension could be a valuable participant in the public input process. Mr. Moore stated that he uses a technique called communication engagement technique to lead the group through the visioning process. This technique allows the participants to think out how they would like to see things in the parks department 20 years from now and then move backward through the process of how the department got there. It also enables the participants to talk about how they would interact with different groups. He has used this technique with several other planning groups and it has been very effective. Mr. Moore would facilitate separate sessions with different groups (Historical Commission, farmland preservation, and parks). He would then prepare an executive summary of each meeting. After this, All the groups would come together to talk about the outcome of the meetings, and then it would be presented to the public for input.

Mr. Moore stated that it would be up to the board to determine how much involvement they would want in the process. The board felt it would be important to include staff's involvement in the beginning.

The board agreed to meet for the first visioning meeting on Thursdays, April 24, at 5:30 p.m. A transcriber will be hired to do verbatim minutes of the meeting. Dinner will be provided.

RECREATION REPORT – The Annual Bike and Hike Trail Day will be held May 10 at the Chehalis Western trailhead at Chambers Lake. This is an event for the whole family. The Rochester Swede Day Fun Run will be held June 21.

There will be a bit of challenge this year scheduling fields at the R.A.C. because 2 of the fields are under construction. Staff will be making all attempts to work through this.

The department is offering, for the first time, a spring day camp at McLane Elementary this year. There has been a lot of enthusiasm by parents. Also, for the first time, staff will be offering afterschool enrichment classes there.

Ms. Poyner reported that the PARC Foundation will be holding its annual auction at the Alpine Experience in May. The money raised will go toward offering teen programs and outdoor activities offered by the area parks and recreation departments.

The Weed and Seed program in Rochester has come up with funding to support a day camp program in Rochester. The money they provide will allow staff to get it up and running.

CAPITAL PROJECTS – Mr. Hibdon reported that the R.A.C. phase II is on schedule. There has been some delays due to weather. There has been gang activity, though not on the new section of the park, which has caused a lot of damage to the restroom near the soccer fields. Member Halvorson asked staff to provide a breakdown of the costs associated with repairing vandalism since the beginning of the year. This needs to be considered in the maintenance budget.

The maintenance crew has been busy moving into the new facility and also keeping up with mowing the grass on the sports fields.

PARKS REPORT -

April 10 – Arbor Day planting at Burfoot Park

April 17 – Hats Off to Volunteers at the fairgrounds

May 3 – Prairie Appreciation Day at Glacial Heritage Preserve. Last year 900 people attended.

May 10 – Trail Day event from 9 am to noon on the Chehalis Western Trail starting at the Chambers Lake Trailhead.

Mr. Groth reported that the South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement group has received a grant for \$80,000 that they plan to use on the Frye Cove shoreline. The project involves removing non-native rock and doing other enhancements to the shoreline that will help bring it back to its native state. Volunteers from Starbucks have spent time gathering some of the rock.

This is the first year the department has secured REET funds for projects in the parks. The money has been earmarked for new playground equipment in all the parks; sidewalks at Burfoot Park that will lead from the parking lot to the shelters and the playground; new picnic tables and barbecues in all the parks; renovation of the dock at Kenneydell Park along with improvements to the beach front; new siding and roof on the Kenneydell Park caretaker residence; and paving the trail at Griffin Park. DNR crews will assist with these projects to help save money.

Staff will get press releases out on these improvements.

PETTIT PROJECT EVALUATION – Director Welter summarized the board members evaluations. The consensus of the group was that the biggest limitations for acquiring the property are parking, location, access, liability because of the river, cost of mitigation because of the wetlands, and the price.

The board discussed the need to complete the comprehensive park plan before acquiring additional land. They felt that this was also not a viable piece of property to purchase due to the above listed limitations and the cost factor.

2008 CAPITAL FACILITIES PLAN – Mr. Hibdon presented a draft of the Capital Facilities Plan. The plan will be presented for adoption in May. He stated that staff has determined that some tentative uses for the RFP money for 2009 will be used to make much needed repairs to the asphalt on the trails due to tree roots. The money will also be used to make improvements to the property across the street from the Parks Department building that will be used for maintenance vehicles and other supplies.

MCLANE MOVE – Mr. Hibdon reported that the move into the Mclane building is complete. The maintenance side is still not organized, but staff will need to hold off until the end of the summer season to finish most of it.

ACCOUNTING POSITION – The department is seeking applicants for the accounting position. Currently, the department has been utilizing the Development Services accountant during the interim.

RUTLEDGE LAND SWAP – Mr. Rutledge has done preliminary survey work and is preparing for the boundary line adjustment. Mr. Rutledge is paying for the final survey after the boundary line adjustment is complete.

OFF-LEACH DOG PARK – This has become a regional issue with all the local parks departments being involved now. It has not been a priority for the County. Its perspective is that it is an urban issue. After doing research, it appears to be focused in the urban area. The Board of Commissioners will not take a position until they learn more about what the County can provide. The City of Olympia is moving to put in one or two dog parks. Member Schaffner spoke about dog parks he has visited in _____ and believes that the parks do provide a social and recreational opportunity to the community. Director Welter said that this will be a topic that will continue to be discussed at future meetings.

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