

**THURSTON COUNTY**

**PARKS & RECREATION BOARD**

4131 Mud Bay Rd SW  
Olympia 98502

**APRIL 14, 2009**

**MINUTES**

**MEMBERS PRESENT** Donna Weaver Smith, Chair  
Candice Rydalch  
Larry Schaffner  
Ed Cael

**ABSENT**

**GUESTS** Cliff Moore, Don Krupp, Commissioner Karen Valenzuela

**STAFF** Michael Welter, Director  
Sue Poyner, Recreation Program Manager  
Linda Abell, Senior Office Assistant  
Kerry Hibdon, Capitol Projects Manager

**CALL TO ORDER** – The meeting was called to order at 6:45 pm with the approval of the minutes.

Mr. Hibdon reports that extensive graffiti was left inside and outside the Trailhead at Chambers Lake. The Olympia Police Department was dispatched to photograph the gang-related graffiti. Cleanup by Parks Maintenance will begin tomorrow morning.

Mr. Cael invited the group to attend the Cooper Point Association at their next meeting Tuesday, April 21 at Marshall Middle School.

**Directors Report** – Director Welter asked all guests and members to introduce themselves. No formal agenda was created for tonight’s meeting but discussion will center on whether there is a role for the Parks Board since the announced closure of Parks and Recreation Department effective May 31<sup>st</sup> 2009 .

Mr. Krupp gave an overview of the county budget challenges and cuts that various departments have made. Board members unanimously voiced disapproval at the decision to abolish the Parks and Recreation Department. Mr. Krupp explained that the Parks Maintenance crew including Mr. Hibdon will be working under Public Works effective June 1<sup>st</sup>. In addition, two Recreation staff will work under Resource Stewardship to carry out programs including Specialized Recreation through the end of 2009. Members voiced various concerns with regard to the dismantling of recreation staff, loss of institutional knowledge and the level of service to be provided to clients through 2009. The existing managers of the Parks and Recreation Department have been directed to develop a transition plan and will be meeting next week with Mr. Krupp, Cynthia Stewart, Cliff Moore, Lester Olson, Diana Townsend and Director Michael Welter.

Members again expressed concern about the lack of experienced administrative support for the remaining recreation staff and worry that the success of programs and services will suffer. Members will draft a letter for the Board of County Commissioners to express these concerns.

Members asked about the future of the Parks Board and its purpose without the existence of the Parks Department or the staff. Mr. Krupp told members that the Parks Board should continue to meet because there will be continued activity and that eventually the department may be restored. Ms. Weaver-Smith requested that the three vacancies of the board be filled as soon as possible. Mr. Welter explained the appointment process. Mr. Krupp agreed to draft a letter to the Board of County Commissioners requesting the vacancies be filled as soon as possible. Mr. Krupp asked the board to come to consensus about their commitment to the Parks Board and to let him know when a decision has been made.

Commissioner Valenzuela stated that the recent public hearings have changed her mind about County Park closures. She recognizes the value to public health in keeping parks open and expressed the hope that parks will not be on the chopping block while she is County Commissioner.

Ms. Valenzuela shared a previous conversation she had with Mr. Schaffner about the Parks Plan. After the conversation Ms. Valenzuela had the impression that board members were not in support of the Comprehensive Parks Plan. She asked the other three members to clarify what their feelings about the plan were.

General support for the plan was expressed.

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.

*Linda Abell*  
*Recording Secretary*