



Parks & Recreation Advisory Commission

Preliminary Agenda

This meeting will be held virtually via Zoom.

Access to the meeting via Zoom through this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86301958882>

January 11, 2022

6:00 PM

1. Call to Order
2. Approve Minutes
3. Public Comments
4. Causland Park Memorial Wall Discussion
5. Pride Celebration at Causland Park-June 18th
6. Department Reports
7. Other Business

If reasonable accommodation due to a disability are needed, please contact Mac Jackson at least 48 hours prior to the meeting date (360-299-1961).

ANACORTES PARKS & RECREATION

Advisory Commission

Meeting Minutes

Sarah Nichols, Chairperson

Jo Ann York-Gilmore

Brad Adams

Christine Hansen

Alex Hernandez

December 14, 2021

Members Present: Sarah Nichols, Alex Hernandez, Jo Ann York-Gilmore, Christine Hansen, Brad Adams.

Staff Present: Karl Wolfwinkel, Bob Vaux, Dustin South, Nicole Johnston, and Jonn Lunsford.

Others Present: Tom Decker, Jack Darnton

Called to Order: 6:02 PM

Minutes: November minutes were approved as submitted.

Public Comments: None

Causland Park Memorial Wall: Ed Capasso spoke representing the group Patriots Corner and told about their involvement with the wall over the past 2 years. They had requested to do a stand alone plaque for veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars at Causland Park. They had back and forth communications with the City about adding this plaque to the new wall. In the spring, Council member Miller acted as a liaison between the group, the City and the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) post in Oak Harbor. They received approval for the plaque from the VFW on June 9 and had it cast. In September, they presented the plaque to Mayor Gere with a reporter on hand from the *Anacortes American*. In November Mr. Capasso received a letter from the Mayor informing him that the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission would be reviewing the placements of plaques on public memorials. He picked up the plaque from the Mayor. His group was also frustrated because they had also offered to help repair the cannon with no response from the city. He also said they were not provided a reference to city code or communication about historical precedent regarding memorials. Gary Follstad read the letter he had submitted to the Commission.

Discussion ensued. Mr. Adams asked how long the group had worked on the plaque and how much money it had spent. Mr. Capasso replied that they had worked on it for 19 months and had donated approximately \$1,200 to have it cast. He added that the City was aware of the wording on the plaque and did not inform his group that no sponsorship was allowed. He commented that his group felt betrayed by the City. Ms. York-Gilmore asked about the approval process and Mr. Capasso said that the Mayor had provided Mr. Miller verbal authority to proceed with the plaque.

Bill Thiel from the VFW commented that his organization had approved the plaque and the addition of their logo. Discussion continued. The Commission encouraged people to submit written comments and noted it will continue this discussion at their meeting on January 14, 2022.

Skate Park Update: Jonn updated the Commission that he was working with the Anacortes Skates organization and Grindline to come up with a scope of work and cost for developing the park design and construction drawing to go out to bid in 2022.

Department Reports:

- Senior Activity Center- Karl reported that Mayor Gere had held her last coffee at the Center. He has Mayor-elect Miller scheduled to hold a coffee on January 26th at the Center. The Center will be hosting two vaccination pop-up clinics this winter. Staff is also working with the Senior Center Foundation on repurposing the old playground area in front of the building.
- Recreation – Dustin reported on the Wonderland Walk at Washington Park that happened the past weekend. It was well attended as was the Breakfast with Santa the weekend before. Girls basketball season is winding up, gym space has been a challenge. We are also working with a local group to offer rugby to youths in Anacortes.
- Nicole reported on progress at the Grand View Cemetery expansion project. There are still a few items to be finished before the end of this year. Two other issues, road repair and staining the new wood fence should be completed by the end of February 2022.
- Bob updated the Commission on Forest Board activities and discussion items.

Other Business: Jonn briefly noted that the next steps for the Causland Wall discussion will be to continue the public comment and Commission deliberation at the January 14, 2022 meeting. He will provide Commission members with any other public comments that come in as well as City correspondence on the issue.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 7:20pm.

The **NEXT MEETING** will be held on **Tuesday, January 11, 2022, at 6:00 PM**, virtually.

Respectfully submitted by,

Jonn Lunsford

Approved:

Parks and Recreation Update --January 2022

Recreation Staff Report:

Girls Youth Basketball League: Our annual girls youth basketball league concluded on Saturday, December 18. Overall, the league went well. Kids and parents were grateful the league was offered this season. Registration numbers were down a little bit from years past. However, if we would have had more participation it would have been a challenge to find practice space for any additional teams. Our student recreational assistant did a good job as officials and is nice to have some that have experience officiating basketball.

Touch 7's Rugby Camp: The program concluded on Wednesday, December 15. We were able to schedule the use of Rice Field at Anacortes High School for the last couple weeks of the program. Look forward to continued partnership with the up-and-coming Anacortes Rugby program.

Breakfast with Santa Event: Took place on Saturday morning, December 4. Participation was limited to about 120 people due to COVID limitations. Those who were in attendance had a great time. We appreciate the Senior Center kitchen volunteers who prepared the food and the student recreation assistants who helped serve meals, decorate, and clean-up. We also want to give a big “Thanks” to Santa Claus (aka Jim Rains) for his role in the event. He does a great job!

Wonderland Walk: The event was held on Friday and Saturday, December 10 & 11 from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. Preparation for the event was a little dicey as a large wind and rainstorm was threatening to hit the evening of the 10th. Thankfully, the weather didn’t materialize like predicted and it did not start raining until after the first night had wrapped up. Attendance was a little lighter than in years past due to COVID and the weather forecast. The Senior Center participated for the first time and with our assistance handed out about 800 smore’s throughout the entire event. Booth vendors decorated their sites well, and parking was plentiful each night. Thanks to the Parks Maintenance Crew for their help setting up the week prior and for helping parks cars and light campfires both nights of the event. Also, thanks to the Karl and the Senior Center volunteers for participating this year. We’ll see you again in 2022!

Total Volunteers Hours for December

	Girls Yth Basketball				
	1 st /2 nd grade	8	X	4 hrs.	= 32
	3 rd /4 th grade	7	X	7 hrs.	= 49
	5 th /6 th grade	1	X	7 hrs.	= 7
	Breakfast w/Santa				
		10	X	4 hrs.	= 40
	Wonderland Walk				
		8	X	3 hrs.	= 24
Total for Month					128

That is it for the Recreation Team this year. Have a Happy New Year!

Dustin South, Recreation Manager

Travis Anderson, Recreation Coordinator

Grand View Cemetery Update:

Trinity Contractors will have until Feb. 21, 2022 to return to the project to make the repairs on the parking pullouts and the asphalt interior road. We will be working this new year to get the expansion survey for plots and we are hopeful that the department can be prepared to start selling plots by the spring of 2022. On Tuesday, January 11, 2022 all the Park Board members are welcome to join me for a tour of the new cemetery expansion. We will meet on Hillcrest Drive in front of the cemetery at 3:30pm. Looking forward to showing off all the hard work that went into this project.

Crew Update: The month of December flew by for the crew as they kept busy cleaning up trees, leaves, preparing and working the Wonderland Walk event and removing graffiti. As I reflect on this last year and everything that the crew has accomplished I am amazed by the crew and all of their efforts to keep our Parks looking the best that they can. I've had the opportunity to sit down with each crew member this month and they are all loving their job and take great pride in the work that they do.

New 28th Street Playground Memorial Bench: Swing by the 28th Street Playground and check out the new memorial bench that was donated by an Elks member. New playground chips, bench and nice garbage has giving this playground a nice face lift. Thanks to Sky for taking on the building of the bench and the follow through to get this bench installed.

Washington Park Update: 2022 Camping reservations opened up at mid night on Dec. 17, 2021. As of Dec. 23rd we have had 625 reservations made for 2022.

Tommy Thompson Parkway Trail #'s for 2021: This is from the date range of Jan. 1, 2021- Dec. 22, 2021.

Jan-21	9995
Feb-21	7398
Mar-21	11478
Apr-21	15327
May-21	17523
Jun-21	17475
Jul-21	27123
Aug-21	18745
Sep-21	15627
Oct-21	9389
Nov-21	5645
Dec-21	3420

For the whole year we had 159,145 counts and the peak day was on July 21, 2021 with a total of 2,141 counts.

Christmas Tree Pick Up: Christmas Tree Pick Up day will be on Saturday, January 8, 2022. Nichola from the crew will help work this event and drive a city truck. The Anacortes High School Key Club &

Scouts BSA Troop 911 are working together this year for picking up of the trees. For pickup: Email your Name, Address & Phone to Troop911B@gmail.com. They are taking donations to help fund community service & programming for both service groups.

Thank you and Happy New Year!

Nicole Johnston, Parks Manager

Q'elech'ilhch

This is the new name of "N" Avenue Park. Renamed at the Dec 13 Council meeting in honor of the Samish village that was the first human settlement along the northern shores of what is now Fidalgo Island. The word translates as "Ironwood", the Samish name for the native ocean spray bush. The image of Mayor Gere presenting Tribal Chairman Tom Wooten with the Council declaration was very powerful.

Washington Park Slide

You may have noticed the closure of the switchback trail that connected Puget Way to Washington Park. We had a very significant slide there over the Thanksgiving weekend. The City's focus on the area is the integrity of Puget Way, and we have hired GeoEngineers to do a bank and road stability study. Results should be available soon. The Parks Department has no short term plans to re-open the trail. A long term plan for bank stability will be developed.

Rotary Club Centennial Project

We remain hard at it. The project leadership team and I met with COA GIS Manager Robert Hoxie, discussing concepts for way-finding and interpretive signage. GeoEngineers has delivered the final draft of the Critical Areas Assessment report, and I was able to submit the Shoreline Exemption permit application.

Kit Gerwels Appointed to Forest Advisory Board

Mayor Gere appointed Mr. Gerwels at the Dec 13 Council Meeting, and Council unanimously endorsed. Kit is ACFL seasonal help alumni, and is looking forward to serving his community in this new way.

Beavers

I am happy to report our ACFL beaver population is hard at work. The amount of water they are able to store is an incredible benefit, especially during these atmospheric river events. Your friendly neighborhood parks staff keeps an eye on a few key spots, and we do have permits to tend to a couple of dams with hand tools. The emphasis in these very

limited situations is to keep infrastructure, i.e., Heart Lake Road, various trails, neighborhoods, etc., intact and above the flow.

Trees

ACFL Steve enjoyed a much deserved vacation the end of November/beginning of December. I did my best to occasionally fill in for him on the parks maintenance crew, mostly clearing trail of down trees. And of course, tending to the beaver dam rounds. Thanks to the whole Parks Crew for rotating thru the ACFL, as well as keeping the parks and cemetery clear of wind-thrown trees.

Trail #107 Vandalism

Based upon the tools we gathered, and the request for their return, some local kids have been building unsanctioned bicycle jumps just southwest of the 107 trailhead. I have done my best to reach out to them, but finally had to ask APD for help. Officer Scheepers obliged and made contact with one of the parents. I am hopeful this individual will contact me sometime soon.

Admin Assistant

On Nov 30/Dec 1 we brought in our Final 4 vying for the position recently vacated by Victoria. It was good being able to meet each of the candidates in person, as we did a rotating "interview" with the various elements of our department. And congratulations to local resident Darby Jordan for accepting the job offer. She began working with us Monday, December 20th.

Wonderland Walk

My role leading up to the event was putting together parking team assignments. We have a great crew of city staff and volunteers eager to help the region enjoy the holiday wonder at Washington Park. While our crowds were not as large this year, we still had close to 1,000 folks each night. The parking team was a pleasure to work with, and special thanks to the Anacortes PD for having an officer staged at Sunset Ave and Skyline Way each night.

2022 Campground Reservations Off to a Solid Start

As of the writing of this report, 544 camping nights have been reserved in Washington Park next year.

Van Life and Other Rogue Over-Nighters

Please help parks staff stay aware of unauthorized overnight guests. The Heart Lake Road corridor, with its many pull-off's, parking lots, trailheads and side roads is

particularly popular for this kind of thing. The parks and woods close at 10PM. Anyone on site after that is trespassing.

Worth Mentioning...

...making sure Parks and Public Works are working together on the COA snow plan. Parks is typically the lead on priority parking lots and specific building access issues. PW coordinates available equipment and other resources.

...did some South Cranberry Unit watershed touring with Emily and Nathan from Planning. Nathan is brand new to the team, and eager to learn about the COA's incredible wealth of natural resources.

...I hope everyone had a great Thanksgiving with family, friends and anyone else you invited over.

...have been attending Council meetings as the Capital Facilities Plan and 2022 budget have been dynamic topics. Director Lunsford doing an excellent job of working with Finance Director Hoglund on same. Kudos to the entire Parks & Rec staff for keeping expenses within our planned spending schedule. Not to mention the impressive revenues we have been able to generate. Happy to report the Budget and CFP were passed by Council at the Dec 13 meeting. Parks & Rec staff, programs and plans remain very much intact.

...thanks again to Mary Snyder and Victoria Alsup for both coming in and working with us while we transition into a new full-time Administrative Assistant.

...regular meetings with FoF Executive Director Asa Deane continue. We are working with the Friends on their 2022 priorities.

...I had to miss this month's Samish Nation / COA hike in the ACFL, but Denise and Steve carried on and I am sure had a great outing.

...attended regular meeting of the Parks Foundation Guemes Channel Trail sub-committee.

...took the 3rd and the 16th off.

I am sending this material out early this month as I will be on vacation Dec 24 - Jan 2. Have a wonderful holiday season.

Bob Vaux, Assistant Director

Skate Park: We are working with the Anacortes Skates organization and Grindline to start a contract to design the new skate park. Grindline is a Seattle based company that designs and builds skate parks across the country. Anacortes Skates will be working on developing a survey option to help people in Anacortes design the park. Look for a link to that in the near future on our website.

Washington Park Restroom: We were granted funds by the Lodging Tax Advisory Commission and the Anacortes Parks Foundation to build a new restroom by the group picnic/playground area. We will be looking at additional funds to start this project in the New Year.

Forest Lands Conservation Easement Program: The Skagit Land Trust has sent us a final draft of the new Conservation Easement Program documents. Once I review them with our City Legal staff, we will bring them back to City Council for a discussion.

Jonn Lunsford, Director