

Meeting Minutes for Anacortes Parks Commission

February 14th, 2023

Board members present: JoAnn York-Gilmore, Brad Adams, Sarah Nichols, Christine Hansen, Alex Hernandez

Staff present: Jonn Lunsford, Bob Vaux, Karl Wolfswinkle, Nicole Johnston, Dustin South

Guests present: Sara Hollahan

Meeting held by Zoom and in person at City Hall

Called to order at 6:00pm

Minutes: January minutes were unanimously approved as submitted.

Public Comments:

Sara Hollahan was in attendance and shared her thanks for all that the Parks & Recreation department does. She also inquired about pickleball. Jonn responded that pickleball was not in the 2020 Comprehensive plan but staff are looking at ways to accommodate expansion. Sara also mentioned an area of evergreen daphnie, an invasive species. Bob stated that he is aware of it and it is something that staff is continuously fighting.

Correspondence and Communication:

JoAnn shared an update from the Forest Board. The Board will be breaking the Forest Plan update into smaller parts to allow for focused review and public comments. There is no dam report yet, but hopefully soon. The Friends of the Forest are running lots of programs as well as their wetland monitoring.

Parks 2024 Budget:

The Board is wondering how they can help to set the goals for the Park projects. Jonn gave an overview of what funds the parks department-impact fees and property taxes for example. The department has worked hard to build a healthy reserve fund, however, for the 2023 year, the reserves are being used to cover staff costs. There has been reduced allocation of property taxes for parks as these funds are being used for other City projects. It is possible that the same will have to happen in 2024. The ACFL has quarry funds and interest earnings from the CEP that can be used for that particular area. There are current renegotiations going on for the cell tower lease on Mt Erie with this revenue to be shared with the Kiwanians. It was discussed that the Parks staff and Parks Commission will set their top 10 priorities and then ask council for their support. The Commission feels that if there are priorities made public, it would be harder for council to move Parks reserve funds into the general fund for other city

uses. The quality of life in town can not be sustained with the growth of population and loss of budget funds.

It was mentioned that a "parks levy" could be one way to fund the Community Center which would ensure that money is set aside for that specific use. Other area Cities have passed a parks levy to fund their programs and needs.

Community donations were discussed as the generosity of town is often shown. Often in these cases, projects are donor driven instead of need driven.

Brad suggested that the list of priorities include full funding for maintenance in order to keep the parks healthy. The parks are unique in that there are no state standards to meet as with the fire department or water department.

Discussion continued.

It was decided that the Commission will review the Capital Facilities Plan and Impact Fees and come up with a list of priorities to present to the Council.

Trestle Update:

Construction continues and should be complete soon. The trestle will be back open in March, if not sooner. It will be opened for public use right away and then a grand opening and ribbon cutting to thank the donors and community. There are temporary cameras up now and Jonn and Chief Floyd are working on permanent security cameras and solar lights.

Staff Reports:

Jonn had nothing else to add to his report.

Nicole reported that the burned out lights are going to be replaced at the baseball fields tomorrow. She will bring to the next meeting a draft of a new rental agreement for outside groups using the City fields.

Bob had nothing to add to his report.

Karl reported that the Senior Center has been busy. He shared a letter from a regular attender expressing thanks for the programs.

Dustin reported that basketball season has finished. The Daddy Daughter Dance is coming up with some extra Saturday lessons being offered to the attendees. There will be Community dances at the Depot this spring and summer, hosted by our dance instructor Taylor Winningham. The recent puzzle event was a success and we will have more of these in the future.

Other Business:

Jonn reported on the R Avenue improvements that Public Works is doing. There will be changes to sidewalks, crosswalks and bus stops and a roundabout at 30th street. This work will go from 34th to 22nd and impact Alice Parchman Newland Park.

Meeting adjourned at 7:02pm

Respectfully Submitted by: Darby Jordan