



ANACORTES PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT
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Parks & Recreation Advisory Commission

Sept 9, 2025 at 6pm

**This meeting will be held BOTH virtually and
in person at the Parks Conference Room
(904 6th Street)**

Access to the meeting via Zoom through this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85776295672>

Preliminary Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Approve Aug Minutes
3. Public Comments
4. Correspondence/Communication
5. Pickleball Court Discussion
6. Department Reports
7. Other Business

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

August 12, 2025

Parks Commission in Attendance: JoAnn, Sarah, Alex, Brad and Chris

Staff in Attendance: Jonn, Bob, Nicole, Eli and Karl

Call to order: 6:00pm

June minutes passed unanimously.

Public Comments:

There was a question about the U Ave park and any update available. Jonn shared that there is a consultant on board and all approvals have to go through FEMA as part of the project. Once that is done, there will be a neighborhood meeting.

Correspondence and Communication:

JoAnn reported on the last Forest Board meeting, after being off for the summer, it was a catch up meeting. The next draft of the Forest Plan was presented to Board members and made available online for the public. The Board will review it this month and come prepared to the September meeting with their thoughts and recommendations. The hope is to vote to move it along to the City Council which is where any further public comment would be taken.

Pickleball Court Discussion

Delores was in attendance to speak as a neighbor to the Clearidge courts. She expressed frustration that the City has not done more to address the noise at the courts. She would like to see the courts and park closed and removed. She stated that in her research, it is recommended to have pickleball courts 150-650 feet from residential homes and has seen other US residents take legal action regarding courts that are too close to homes. She feels she can no longer enjoy her yard and believes that the noise violates various City codes and ordinances regarding decibels. She believes the noise curtains do not help. People are playing past 8pm, the posted time that the courts close. Delores wants to know why it is ok to have these courts in a neighborhood, feels they should be in an industrial area. She shared various other issues they have had with parking and people driving through the neighborhood. She is requesting that the courts be closed and locked and only allow play from 9am to 6pm.

Jonn spoke about the efforts to disperse pickleball throughout town with discussions on hold at the school district due to high staffing turnover with the key departments. Council did hear the proposal in July and had lots of questions but no action was taken.

Jeff from Anacortes asked about the district courts and if citizens could play during school hours. Jonn responded that, yes, when not in use by PE classes or team practice, the courts would be available.

Debbie from Anacortes expressed surprise at the neighbors as these are the only public courts in town. She feels that the parking lot has been helpful and is being used regularly. She spoke with a neighbor that was walking her dog and the neighbor stated that she could not hear the play going on. Debbie shared that the noise curtains have helped and that shortening the hours will not solve the issue of people playing beyond the posted times.

Delores spoke again sharing that she is wanting peace and quiet during the summer and can not escape the noise. She feels that shortening the hours and locking the gates is a must. When tournaments are played the noise and parking is even worse. She stated again that the courts shouldn't be in neighborhoods.

Theresa from Anacortes respects the neighbors and believes another facility would be great but a reduction in hours hurts families. She stated that the majority of the year, play is not possible due to darkness and rain.

Michelle from Anacortes also expressed understanding for the neighbors while sharing what a great sport for all ages and abilities it is. She also believes looking for another space and facility would be beneficial.

Jean from Anacortes stated that she has been playing at the courts since 2017 and wonders why there have been a sudden uptick in complaints about the noise. She respects that there is an issue but posed the question of where else to go. She shared that the City is limited on space, suggested maybe the RiteAid building for a temporary solution.

Beth from Anacortes has been playing since 2010, often at Mt Eire school. She says it is a great option but the court is not regulation and the concrete floor can be dangerous. She feels it is a dangerous precedent to set by taking more hours away from a park as the hours have already been slightly shortened. With work she is unable to play midday. She brought up that airplanes have a higher decibel rating. Beth likes that the game and area have been welcoming to visitors and new people. She supports the idea of locking the gate but not reducing hours.

Steve from Anacortes is a neighbor to the courts and also believes it should be locked after hours. He agreed that the planes are loud but that noise is gone quickly. He would like the City to find a new area for the courts, not in a neighborhood.

Erik from Anacortes agreed that it is bad to have neighbor vs neighbor. He mostly plays in Mt Vernon. He feels that the City should come up with a new place with more courts, a long term solution. He also believes that double lined tennis courts are a bad idea.

Paula from Anacortes shared that she has listened to the concerns before and feels that based on the number of people that play, the players are not fully represented tonight. There are many younger people who work and can't play during the day. She was appreciative of the City and volunteers for putting up the noise screens, feels there has been a large improvement. She noted that the City measured the noise level without the screens and then after one side was installed, and there was a difference. Paula explained that she lives near Mt Erie school and there are challenges with traffic and parking and noise and after hours activities but looks at that as part of being in a neighborhood. She feels that having the park there makes for a nice, healthy environment for the neighborhood.

Delores spoke and invited others to come and listen at her house when play is going on and see what the noise level is. She asked about a change in zoning to remove the park and said there could be lawsuits.

Beth spoke again and advocated for a short term solution, possibly 3 days with shorter hours. She acknowledges it will take a creative solution.

Kellee from Anacortes stated that the noise and complaints have grown as the sport has grown. She feels there needs to be more courts away from neighbors. She asked what the readings are and if they are above legal limits.

Jonn stated that he had been out a few times and one was a windy day at that makes it tough to get accurate readings. However, by the basketball court, where there are no screens, it is about 90, and on the protected side measured about 65. Jonn will check in with the code enforcement officer to get more accurate readings.

Beth suggested there should be a noise study with readings taken at different times of day in order to get accurate data. She acknowledged that all neighborhoods have challenges. She posed that by streamlining play, shortening hours two nights a week, that would help in the summer. She would like to see the park stay but be able to find a solution.

Keith from Anacortes thinks locking the courts is a good idea.

John from Anacortes shared that he believes in science and has empathy for neighbors near a highway. He would like to look at the situation of noise on a decibel scale with 60 being the level of your dishwasher and pickleball falling from 60-70. He feels that it would be hard to prove that anyone is being injured, possibly just annoyed. John shared that it is reasonable to be empathetic and reduce noise by players but feels that this is a park that should be available to the community. He invited everyone to help build more courts.

Jonn invited continued public comments be sent in via email, they will be sent to the Parks Board for discussion next month.

It was asked about next steps and a timeline. Jonn shared that the Board will discuss this with staff at the next meeting but unlikely that a change will be made quickly. Delores once again stated that she would like to see the courts closed on Sunday and two evenings each week closed early.

Department Reports:

Nicole reported that it has been a very busy summer and she is proud of the crew. The team has been short handed all summer. Nichola has now been appointed as the foreperson and Steve has been moved to team lead. Staff is in the process of hiring for a new maintenance tech, despite it being the busy summer season. HF Sinclair is planning a large work party at Tursi park in September.

Eli shared that summer has also been busy for the recreation department. They just finished 6 weeks of summer camp at Washington Park, this was mostly lead by student recs and they did a great job. Soccer season is coming and that is the largest league run by the department. There will be several PeeWee programs starting up. A new event being planned is a Fall Family Bingo night in partnership with the Senior Center. The highlight of the fall season is the Haunted Forest to be held October 25th out at the loop at Washington Park.

Karl shared that the Center is very busy right now as well. Staff and volunteers are getting ready for their Senior Resource Fair to be held on September 13th. They are working with the Foundation to do some video clips for marketing the fair on social media. The Center staff recently met with City staff and the Foundation to discuss upcoming budget and goals. Upcoming programs and events are a revolutionary war series, ukulele performance, and the annual Fall Prevention in October.

Jonn gave an update on the Heart Lake grant. It is with contracts and the mayor to sign. Bob will lead this project and they have 2 years to get to completion. The skate park restroom and parking lot should be done by June of 2026. The pocket park at U and 2nd is part of the outfall project and is in process. The Depot plaza expansion should go to bid in October and start construction in March. 2026 will be a tight budgeting year so staff are looking for creative ways to get projects done.

Other Business:

A question was asked about the Community Center and Jonn responded that the initial fundraising has been tough to acquire. They are still looking for major donors.

Chris asked about the list of priorities that Jonn had asked for and what that was going to be used for. Jonn shared that those priorities will be used for the CFP. However with it being such a lean year, it is important that

citizens let the elected know what they want. Concern was raised that without general fund money, things will slip and not get done. The City expects to see fiber stand on its own after 2026 and for general funds monies to return to departments. He did share that in 5 years, the parks maintenance team has only been fully staffed for 18 months of that.

Adjourned at 7:08pm

Respectfully submitted by Darby Jordan

Parks and Recreation Update: September 2025

Assistant Director Report: Bob Vaux, Assistant Director

BICYCLE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY AWARD: SILVER!!

- Congratulations to all the hard-working volunteers on the Anacortes Bicycle & Pedestrian Action Committee (ABPAC) for achieving Silver status. They were recognized at the 8/11 Council meeting.

OPEN STREETS

- ABPAC team providing the usual support for this annual quieting of Commercial event. And thanks so much to Josh Gates for taking over as Lead. Lots of positive feedback and experiences at the 8/24 event. We did have some safety concerns expressed, re: traffic control. We will be reviewing these with APD.

FOREPERSON HIRING PROCESS

- Parks Management, along with HR, put together a competitive in-house hiring process to replace Parks Tottenham. We conducted interviews on 7/30-31, and I am pleased to say our interim Foreperson, Nichola Mitcell, has been offered and accepted the position. All candidates did a great job representing themselves and their commitment to the Parks Team. Congratulations as well to Steve Phillips, who has been appointed to the Lead Worker role previously held by Nichola. Now, we get to work on replacing one of our two maintenance tech vacancies.
Parks & Rec staff reviewed all 64 applications, and we are currently putting together an interview roster of 6-8 individuals.

ACFL

- Thank you, Brandon Lowry, Public Works Streets, Storm, Sewer Supervisor. Met with me at a complicated tree on 29th Street. His team came through with some great hazard abatement.
- Farewell and thank you to Forest Lands seasonal workers, Ginny and Lucy. They did a great job for us, and we'd be happy to have them back.

Miraculously, we found two young men to take over their roles through Labor Day. Welcome back Tenzin and welcome to the team Wolfgang.

- Have been providing some patrol support, pouring out random alcohol, stopping smokers and explaining why we have a leash law. Again, the vast majority of our guests are just looking to enjoy the woods, lakes, trails, etc within the etiquette asked for in our Forest Plan.
- An invasive plant survey was executed on Heart Lake Aug. 12th by AquaTechnex. Will share the report with the FAB once we have received it.
- LC BOG ART: thank you, Jamie, for removing this. The ACFL decorates itself just fine.
- FAB Member Brian W. and I spent some time at the LC view platform, focusing mostly on an improved trail approach and revegetation options. Will discuss at the Sept. FAB meeting.

HEART LAKE PARKING LOT IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

- Director Lunsford and I toured the site and discussed the project with a prospective design firm. We are looking for a plan and a fee coming our way soon for consideration.

FOREST PLAN UPDATE

- In-house work on the second draft of the Plan was completed, and the document was presented to the Forest Advisory Board on 8/7. The FAB will offer their feedback and potentially recommend the Plan at their Sept. 4th meeting.

DOG OFF LEASH PATROL EMPHASIS

- Thank you, Officer Nybo, for some focused DOL work in Parks this month. That level of enforcement is greatly appreciated.

CAUSLAND PARK

- ACFL Jamie and I handled some unhoused camping issues, along with APD, on 8/6-7. Jamie and the Forest Team ended up cleaning up the drug and alcohol layered campsite, while the Officer moved the individuals along.

BEN ROOT SKATE PARK PH II IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

- Kristen Hannon from Engineering will be managing the project along with me. We are currently working with MacKay Sposito on design and bid package.

WEST 6TH PARK PLAN

- Our design engineer should have a phase I proposal to us soon. We will then notify the neighbors and present at a Parks Commission meeting.
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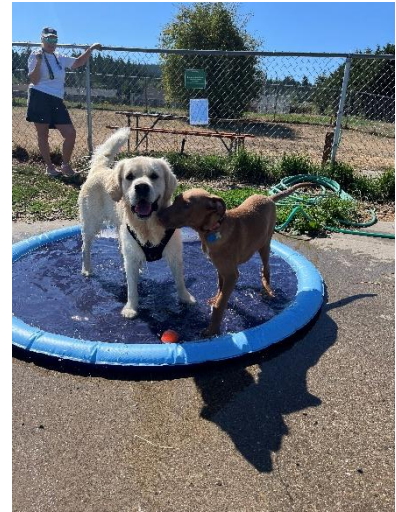
Parks Maintenance Report: Parks Manager, Nicole Johnston

Below are a few highlights from month of August.

Dog Park Spray Pad- Park visitors are loving the new dog spray pads, which connect to a hose and fill with just enough water for our four-legged friends to cool off and play. A big thank you to Braydn from the crew for getting these installed so quickly in both the large and small dog areas.



Soroptimist Flower Bed- We've been working alongside the Soroptimist International Club to come up with a plan to improve the flower bed located in the corner of the movie theater parking lot. Thanks to Braydn for stepping up to take on this project — he repaired the bed with all-new lumber and helped refresh the surrounding area. This project was generously funded by Soroptimist,



and we truly appreciate their support. We're looking forward to future collaborations to bring even more landscaping improvements to the space!

Batwing Mower- Our Parks crew has been without our new batwing mower, as it's currently awaiting parts for repair. Unfortunately, it now needs to be sent to the dealer for further work. We're hopeful that a demo mower will be available by early September. In the meantime, we've been finding creative ways to stay on top of field maintenance. Thanks to AJ for coordinating the temporary use of the Anacortes School District mower last week — it was a big help. We're now borrowing the WTP mower, and we've also brought the cemetery mower down to assist with field mowing as we work to catch up.

Washington Park - Over the weekend of August 22nd, a water leak near the lower Sunset Beach pavilions caused water to run across the road. Thanks to the quick work of the Water Department, we were able to isolate and repair the water leak. Steve followed up with a fast road repair using quick-set concrete, allowing the road to reopen shortly after. Great teamwork all around! The pressure was on to open the road as we had the senior center luncheon, a wedding, and the rush of Labor Day weekend. August has been a very busy month for the campground, with 995 reservations — just shy of July's total of just over 1,000 and well ahead of June's 668. The campground has been full every weekend throughout the summer. A huge shout-out to Dean, Caretaker Chris and our incredible seasonal team — Reilly, Erin, Clare, Grady, Lucca, and Luke — for keeping the campground running smoothly and delivering a great experience for visitors.

Prepping for Soccer Saturday- AJ continues to prepare for Soccer Saturday that is set to start on Sept. 6th. Thanks to Dustin, Eli and student rec staff for helping get the field area ready.

64 Applicants for the Parks Maintenance Technician Position- Like Bob mentioned in his report we had 64 applications for the Parks Maintenance Technician job. We have selected 7 people for first round of interviews which are set to take place on Sept. 5th.

Self-Watering Hanging Basket Discussion with Downtown Alliance- The downtown alliance wants to purchase for next hanging basket season a self-watering basket. Check it out here. [EarthPlanter | The #1 Commercial Self-Watering Planter Brand](#) The City of Burlington and Mt. Vernon both use them. The idea is that it would cut down on having to water them every day. The downtown alliance would cover the cost of the baskets and the hooks. The city would install the sturdy new hooks and take the time to pick up the baskets from the nursery.

Tommy Thompson Trail was busy this summer. June had a total of 16,864 counts, July had 19,864 counts and August had 18,406 counts on the eco visio trail counter. Thanks to Steve and Braydn for getting the TTP trimmed just in time for the long Labor Day weekend.

Excited to see what September brings! Goals for the parks crew is to spend more time catching up on raising markers at the Cemetery and bracing the Clearidge Pickleball fence.

Recreation Report: Dustin South, Recreation Manager & Eli Moore, Recreation Coordinator

Skyhawks Basketball & Volleyball: The traditional Skyhawks camp taught kids basic introductory skills for each sport. Camps were held at Mt. Erie Elementary School from Monday through Friday.

Skyhawks Multi-Sport/Mini-Hawk: Multi-Sport camp provided kids the opportunity to play three different sports during the week-long camp. The Mini-Hawk half day camp was geared towards kids ages 4-6 and provided an opportunity for them to have fun and socialize with other participants their age.

Skyhawks Soccer: As the name implies, this was a weeklong soccer camp that took place for youth ages 6-12. Half and full days were offered. The camp was popular because the start of the youth soccer season is right around the corner.

Youth Water Sports Classes: Classes concluded for the season this month with our continued partnership with Anacortes Waterfront Alliance allowed the city to offer Learn to introductory Water Sports Class to the community. These classes not only gave kids the opportunity to try sailing, but they could learn the basics of Paddle Boarding and kayaking as well. Outside of our program AWA offers further opportunities for youth to continue whichever water vessel they most enjoyed. The main mission of AWA is providing water recreation to the Anacortes Community through a variety of means.

Adult Sailing Classes: Again, through our partnership with the Anacortes Waterfront Alliance we were able to offer Beginner Small Boat *Learn to Sail Classes* for adults. Classes were held on 15th & 16th of the month. Both July and August sessions were filled and continue to be popular.

Adult Co-ed Softball: We had a total of 8 teams register for the 2025 season. Half of the teams were new this year. The season concluded with single-elimination tournament on Sunday, August 24. Champions were, "Blown Hami's." The season went well, and I have received some compliments on how players like the fact that we use wood bats.

Youth Soccer: Staff spent a lot of time this month getting ready for the upcoming season. Tasks included forming teams, recruiting coaches, coaches meetings, and taking care of late registrations. Practices started towards the end of the month and getting teams going. Games start on September 6 and are held most Saturdays through October. Thanks to all our volunteer coaches for dedicating time to teaching kids the game.


Drop-in Sports: Adult Volleyball takes place at Fidalgo Elementary on Wednesday and Friday evenings. Adult drop-in Basketball takes place on Sunday evenings in the Middle School and Tuesday evenings at Fidalgo Elementary Pickle Ball is on Mondays and Wednesdays at Mt. Erie Elementary. To see the latest on the drop-in sports schedule visit: <https://www.anacorteswa.gov/971/Drop-In-Programs>

Fall/Winter Programs: Staff worked on final planning for Fall and Winter programs and events. Prepared an electronic flyer to be distributed with September’s COA Utility bills. August is also the month that we put in our requests for facility usage for the Anacortes School District Facilities for the entire school year.

Upcoming Events: Mt. Erie Road & Trail Run is scheduled for Saturday, October 18. Haunted Forest is taking place on Saturday, October 25. Wonderland Walk, Friday & Saturday, December 12 & 13.

Total Volunteers Hours for August

	Drop-in Sports			
	4	X	16 hrs.	= 64

	Youth Soccer			
	30	X	1 hrs.	= 30
	20	X	2 hrs.	= 40
	14	X	8 hrs.	= 112

	Total for Month			246
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