



ANACORTES PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT
P.O. BOX 547, ANACORTES, WA 98221
(360) 293-1918 / (360) 293-1928

Parks & Recreation Advisory Commission

December 9, 2025 at 6pm

**This meeting will be held BOTH virtually and
in person at the City Hall 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 Nov Minutes
3. Public Comments
4. Correspondence/Communication
5. West Side Park
6. Anacortes Walk Fest
7. Department Reports
8. 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).

November 18, 2025

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

Staff in Attendance: Jonn, Bob, Nicole, Karl, Nichola and Bradyn

Call to order: 6:00pm

October minutes passed unanimously.

Public Comments:

None.

Correspondence and Communication:

JoAnn reported on the last Forest Board meeting, with the Forest Plan in process. Staff is looking for time on the Council schedule in the new year to bring it for approval. The Heart Lake project is in the beginning stages of design. Staff is looking at narrowing the scope of work to save on costs, focusing on the parking and shoreline areas.

Jonn shared that the Parks Foundation met on Veteran's day but he was not present.

W Side Park

Bob gave a presentation on the W side park project. The Mayor and City Council have pledged \$75,000 in park impact fees for this project. Staff is looking at community partnerships to help support this project. The priorities expressed at previous neighborhood meetings are in the current design. There are three distinct areas with a total cost to design and build of \$500,000-600,000. The power point will be on the Parks website and the design posted to social media for public comments. The deadline for comment submission will be December 5th to allow review prior to the next meeting. Discussion was had about the design and elements.

Department Reports:

Bob reported that he is working on the Forest Plan and related elements, hoping to have it before Council in January. Grindline was on site at the skate park to look at getting the warranty work done. The team has been dealing with a lot of downed trees at the weather has changed. Bob also spoke about the work he is doing on getting a 5 year maintenance plan for the forest lands that would save time and money on permitting. Discussion was had about the Heart Lake plan and the potential for scaling back the plan due to budget concerns.

Karl shared that he had met with the ASAC Foundation to discuss upcoming special projects and the budget for next year. Next year will bring an upgrade to the Center in order to free up program space. They are preparing for the holidays and special events, some with local elementary students. The Meals on Wheels program is in transition as the County will no longer be providing this service as of July 2026. Discussion was had about the number of meals provided in the Center and delivered.

Nicole introduced Nichola and Bradyn, sharing that they are two rockstars on the team as well as the Certified Playground Safety Inspectors, so they have a vested interest in the design of the new playground and park. Nicole shared that the team has been working on winterizing irrigation and cleaning up leaves and chestnuts. The prep work for the columbariums has begun with the concrete pad set to be poured soon and the delivery of the units set for March. The team will start preparing for the Wonderland Walk at Washington park soon. Jonn spoke for the Recreation team as Dustin was hosting a puzzle event at the Senior Center. Boys basketball is running now and girls basketball registration is due by December 1st. The Haunted Forest was a great success with over 500 attending.

Jon also shared that the Depot Plaza project will go out to bid soon. Staff is hoping that project will be completed by the end of May. The fees for cemetery services will be increasing in the new year as they have been the same for at least 8 years. Staff is working with the Mayor and Council to look at these changes.

Other Business:

None

Adjourned at 6:41pm

Respectfully submitted by Darby Jordan

Parks and Recreation Update: December 2025

Parks Manager Report: Nicole Johnston

Below are a few highlights from the month of November.

- Trimming markers at Grandview Cemetery in preparation for Veterans Day. This also included leaf and chestnut blowing.
- Braydn and Nichola have worked hard to get the columbarium pad ready. The concrete pour is set for Tuesday, Dec. 2nd.
- AJ thatched the outfield of Volunteer Field and Kiwanis Meadow. It's a slow process of thatching, picking up the grass, fertilizing, and then sanding.
- Steve with the help of the crew replaced a Green Point Bench that defiantly needed it.
- Bob mentioned this in his report, but it is worth mentioning that Grindline Skatepark Maintenance pros came to the park to give the crew a tutorial of the best ways to maintain the skatepark and how to fix the cracks. Like Bob has mentioned the customer service from Grindline is next level and they seem to have a real connection to our park.
- Cold Weather Shelter- I attend the Hotel/ Motel voucher meetings that is organized by the Anacortes Family Center. At this last meeting it was shared that the Salvation Army has opened its Cold Weather shelter. They will provide up to two nights at a local motel. The POC is Paula who works at the Salvation Army. Her number is 360.293.6682.
- Everyone on the crew for the most part has helped with winterizing irrigations at the various facilities and parks.



- Unfortunately, Braydn was bitten by a dog while conducting a sanitation check at Ace of Hearts Dog Park. This is the second incident involving the same dog. As a result, both the dog and its owner have been trespassed from the park for one year. Braydn was evaluated at a walk-in clinic, and he is ok.
- The Samish finished the SHIP-Cultural Resource Assessment for the Ship Harbor Boardwalk Replacement Project. This assessment is intended, in part, to assist in addressing state regulations pertaining to the identification and protection of cultural resources and compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. I know that I shared this before, but out of the seven probes that the archaeologist found three were positive for cultural material, both pre contact and historic. The report will be helpful for when the time comes to complete an Environmental Checklist to comply with SEPA.
- Submitted the Tree City USA application.
- Working on year end performance reviews for the parks crew and Dean at Washington Park.

In December, I will meet one-on-one with the crew for the year-end performance reviews. During the week of the Wonderland Walk event, we will focus on preparing the park and creating a festive atmosphere. By the end of December if not earlier we will have all park areas fully winterized and the leaves cleaned up. The parks crew will be ready for any winter weather that may come our way. Many crew members, including myself, will also be taking some time off around the Christmas holiday.

Assistant Director Report: Bob Vaux

TREES

- Arborist Steve and I made another trip out to our Lake Erie neighbor. We put a plan together for some trees creeping over the line, and Steve worked on his annual agreed to tree assessment.
- Met with some Forest Ridge HOA representatives. They have requested a site visit to review their NGPE's and discuss safe spaces and tree health. Will put this together soon.

BEN ROOT SKATE PARK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PH II

- RCO has asked for some more info related to the Cultural Resources Survey conducted by the Samish Nation. This work was completed and sent to the COA on 11/7. It has been forwarded for RCO review.
- The good folks at Grindline finally paid us their overdue warranty visit. No struggle here, just took some time to arrange. Members of our maintenance team were able to join them for an educational opportunity. All praised the interaction, and we are even better equipped now to maintain this very popular park.

2026 COA BUDGET

- Attended the 11/3 Council discussion of the Parks & Rec budget. While our Maintenance Tech position that has been frozen for a couple of years has now been officially removed from the books,

none of our current staff was laid off. Other departments took some big hits, especially the Museum and the Library.

HEART LAKE PARKING LOT IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

- Director Lunsford and I met on site with another engineering firm on our quest to work within our budget. Lots of optimism on site. We are currently reviewing that proposal, with help from Public Works and Legal.
- Also working on putting together the necessary list of permits with our GeoEngineers permit specialist.

FOREST PLAN 2026 UPDATE

- Received good feedback from Planning on my first draft of the related SEPA document. Working on draft #2 now.

ANNUAL DAM INSPECTIONS

- On 11/7 ACFL Jamie and I conducted the annual dam inspections at Little Cranberry and Whistle Lakes required by the DOE Dam Safety Section. All conditions looked good. Reports were submitted and have been approved by DOE.

ACFL EMPHASIS PATROLS

- ACFL Jamie and I finding some time for both off leash and motorized trail use emphasis patrols.
- On Monday 11/24 I received a written report from one hiker and a phone call from another about the same motorized threesome using our trails over the weekend. One of these folks did make contact with the adult, and let's just say that this particular illegal rider was not interested in a logical conversation. He did have two teenage boys with him so setting any kind of a positive example is clearly not on his priority list. It is important that the public knows just how offensive this illegal activity is to staff as well as to the regular users and stewards of the ACFL. For now, Jamie and I will keep trying to make contact with the various rogue ACFL users. We will keep dreaming about a fully commissioned park ranger.

W. 6TH PARK PLAN

- Continue to work with Nels Strandberg on a possible partnership. Nels has been working with us on the plan, assisting with design and construction cost estimates.
- Conceptual plan and estimated high end budget numbers were presented at the November Parks Commission. Looking for community feedback over the next few weeks.
We are getting some good written feedback from the neighbors.

COUNCIL PARKS COMMITTEE

- Joined Parks & Rec Senior Staff along with Council Members McDougall and Hubik for our quarterly discussion of relevant programs, projects and budget challenges. We wish Amanda Hubik all the best as she moves on from her work here on the COA Council. It has been a pleasure.

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

Boys Youth Basketball: Practices and games continued throughout the month and Recreation Coordinator, Eli, is doing a good job facilitating the league. There are little bumps throughout any youth sport season, and he is addressing those. Our teenage staff are doing a good job showing up and officiating well.

Puzzle Competition: Second in the Fall/Winter Series took place on Tuesday, the 18th. Staff came up with a few tweaks to the competition that created several positive comments from the puzzlers. The next competition will be an individual one on Wednesday, December 17th.



Girls Youth Basketball: Registration started in early October and the deadline is the first of the month. Staff will spend time recruiting coaches, forming teams, and securing gym space. Practices/Games will start after the 1st of the year.

Messy Me: Another popular toddler program concluded this month. Participants get to experience playing and interacting with all kinds of messy, squishy, and slimy materials. Kids can be creative and have fun in the process.

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, Wednesdays, and Friday at Mt. Erie Elementary. To see the latest on the drop-in sports schedule visit: <https://www.anacorteswa.gov/971/Drop-In-Programs>

Other Items of Interest/Upcoming Events: Wonderland Walk, Friday & Saturday, December 12 & 13. If you would like to be a greeter at this year’s event, please let Dustin know. Family Trivia Night, new event, Tuesday, January 13th and Dad Daughter Dance Event is Saturday, February 21st.

Total Volunteers Hours for November

	Drop-in Sports	4	X	16 hrs.	= 64
	Boys Youth Basketball	28	X	4.5 hrs.	= 126

Total for Month	190
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Senior Activity Center Report: Karl Wolfswinkel, Senior Activity Center Administrator

The average daily attendance at the Center was 190 in October and 208 in November.

Our outing to the Skagit County Historical Museum in La Conner on the 10th was a success. Thanks to a grant from the ASAC Foundation, participants were able to participate in an affordable and enjoyable outing and receive a first-hand tour from a regular Center attendee who was responsible for the design of one area of the museum.

Twenty-two Aging Mastery Program graduates were celebrated on the 19th after discussing the topic of community engagement. The class heard from two active Center volunteers and Foundation members, PK Mead and Don Campbell, who both shared their testimonies about the importance of volunteering, community and connection. The graduates will now be regular invitees to the AMP Alumni group as well as any ASAC program we offer. The AMP program will get refreshed in 2026 to include updated curriculum and a new name since the name and brand will no longer be supported by the National Council on Aging.

Tina Shibley facilitates a monthly gratitude gathering at the Center with the purpose of

fostering a mindset of gratitude. For our Thanksgiving Luncheon, we thought Tina would be the perfect fit to facilitate a gratitude discussion amongst the 100 luncheon participants. As we close out another year at the Center, we have much to be thankful for, including the events listed below to commemorate the Holidays.



What's coming in December?

- 1—1PM, Island View Elementary students decorating the Center.
- 8—2PM, Shelter Bay Chorus presentation
- 10—1PM, Ornament Workshop
- 15—1PM, Island View Elementary Holiday Choir
- 18—11AM, Holiday Luncheon
- 18—3:30PM, Holiday Lights Bus Tour to Warm Beach in Stanwood.

Community Partnership Highlights:

- Angel Cards Project for widows and widowers, hosted at the Center by a Center participant
- Anacortes Family Center Pet Supply drive
- ASAC Foundation Week of Giving—collecting monetary or shelf-stable foods to support Anacortes seniors, distributed at the ASAC food pantry.
- Skagit County Public Health—collecting monetary donations to provide gifts for Meals on Wheels clients.