

## April 18, 2019 Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting

**Commission members present:** Tex Blankenburg, Cy Field, Johannes Krieger (arrived 8:50am), Margaret Payne, Bill Scherer.

**Staff present:** Dona Wuthnow, Kathryn Hansen.

**Guests:** None.

Chair Tex Blankenburg called the meeting to order at 8:38am in the Parks & Fair meeting room in Friday Harbor.

**Approval of agenda:** The agenda was approved with no changes.

**Approval of minutes:** The Commission approved minutes of the March 21 regular meeting, with the following changes:

Open Forum. ~~There were no objections made.~~ The Commission was supportive of this activity.

Shaw Park bank erosion. ~~The playfield location honored the Master Plan parking lot siting.~~

Old Business. ~~By consensus,~~ †This grant funding will pay . . .

He also ~~showed~~ shared a thought . . .

**Correspondence:** None.

**Chair's Message.** Tex Blankenburg asked whether the PRC should consider taking a position on the Growler activity at Navy Whidbey Air Base. There was discussion. Members opted to submit comments as individual members of the public, if they are so inclined.

**Council Liaison's Message.** Jamie Stephens was not present, but Dona conveyed that she has been working with the Council member on department data for the levy renewal.

**Open Forum.** None.

**Financial Report.**

- 2019 First Quarter Budget Summary. Dona related that revenues look good, due to early group camping payments, resident reservations and a strong online camping reservation start. She also reported that the County is moving toward biennial budgeting for 2020-21 and beyond.

**New Business.**

- Request for Exception – Fun House 5K Fun Run at ESGV. Dona briefed the Commission on request for a reduced rental fee for space at Eastsound Village Green for this 4<sup>th</sup> of July fun run. This is the fourth consecutive year the Fun House has made this request to the PRC.

**MOTION:** Cy Field made a motion to approve the same partial fee waiver (50%) as last year for the Funhouse Commons 4<sup>th</sup> of July 5K at Eastsound Village Green on July 4, 2019. Bill Scherer seconded the motion. The motion was approved 5-0-0.



350 COURT ST #8

FRIDAY HARBOR, WA  
98250

(360) 378-8420

fax (360) 378-2075

e-mail [parks@sanjuanco.com](mailto:parks@sanjuanco.com)

[www.sanjuanco.com/parks](http://www.sanjuanco.com/parks)

Vice Chair Bill Scherer assumed the Chair position when Tex Blankenburg left at 9:15am.

**Director's Report:**

- Staffing. Dona voiced concerns over the staffing issues at San Juan Park. There was discussion about housing solutions for seasonal employees.
- TMG meeting March 26-27. No comments.
- Agate Beach shoreline restoration. No comments.
- SJCP sand filter replacement. No comments.

[BREAK 10:05am-10:17am]

**Old Business:**

- Levy renewal. The County Council needs to determine the levy content by August. They will hold a meeting on May 6 in Friday Harbor. The Council is weighing several considerations. Historically, here are a number of entities who benefit from the levy, including Parks & Fairgrounds.

Dona showed the different pages of data compiled by the department and shared with Council member Stephens. This information contains overviews of Parks & Fair facilities, camping occupancy, staffing figures, utilization of the Fairgrounds and buildings, events and rentals, and some data from the Visitor Study.

There was discussion of implications of closing parks during off-season, the Fairgrounds Master Plan, fee increases, and the increases in seasonal employee benefits, IT, and liability insurance costs.

County Manager, Mike Thomas, asked Dona to provide an operations budget information, including repairs and maintenance proposals, to be used for the Levy discussion. Dona showed a rough 5 year operating budget with the current levy and LTAC funding levels and gradual fee revenue increases. No levy increase would create a serious 6-digit deficit for all 5 years.

The Commission expressed their appreciation for the work Dona has done in trying to illustrate the budget position of the department.

- ESVG Play Area project. Dona showed 50% construction plans and marketing materials. Margaret stressed that the promotional message for fundraising is that WE (the *community*) own it, and WE're doing it (all the planning, designing, and execution). Margaret will be at the first two Farmers Markets and will collect donations. The Orcas Island Community Foundation is presenting this as one of the many donation opportunities during their "Give Orcas" campaign, May 1-17. We hope to raise \$15,000 during this campaign.

**New Business, continued:**

- Visitor Study Phase II. Dona recapped the original 2017 study and outcomes. In this phase, the Terrestrial Managers Group hopes to gauge residents' feelings on tourism. Commission members reviewed the survey pre-test and offered comments. This information should feed into the Tourism Master Plan and tourism sustainability in the Islands.
- Establish an Instagram account for Parks. Field staff suggested creating an Instagram account to help communicate to the (mostly) younger demographic and Dona supports the

idea. The account will be set up as one-way communication (comments from the public will not be received). This platform provides a quick and effective messaging on topics like burn ban, LNT principles, upcoming events & activities, and best practices. Contact information will be provided, so users can contact Administration with questions and comments. Johannes cautioned that it can take someone dedicated to actively managing the site. Field staff will be responsible for keeping the account fresh.

**MOTION:** Cy Field made a motion to establish an Instagram account as proposed by field staff. Margaret Payne seconded the motion. The motion was approved 5-0-0.

Dona will report back in 3 months.

- Park Data review.

**Announcements:** The Shaw General Store opened on April 1! The next regular meeting will be on May 16 in Friday Harbor.

**Adjourned** at 11:15am.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathryn Hansen  
Recording Secretary

*These minutes were approved by the Parks & Recreation Commission at their regular May 16, 2019 meeting in Friday Harbor.*



## Director's Report to the Parks & Recreation Commission

April 18, 2019

The following is a summary update of relevant Park Department happenings since the last PRC meeting that are not included on the agenda as discussion items.

- **Staffing** – Just when we thought we were all set for the summer, the San Juan Park Aide we selected notified Toby he would not be taking the job. He was coming out from Bellingham and the lack of housing options on the island was one of the determining factors for him. Toby is actively beating the bushes now in attempt to get the position filled; it is scheduled to start April 23<sup>rd</sup>. Jennifer and Toby attended the Job Fair this last Sunday and handed out flyers for both the Fair PA and SJI PA, that are both vacant.

Toby and I are exploring the option of adding duties and a stipend to the camp hosts that are scheduled for mid-summer to early fall as a backup plan. This is not going to cover all the work that a park aide would do but would help if we are not able to fill the position. In the meantime, camp hosts can't help with the high maintenance and staff coverage needs in spring and early summer.

- **TMG meeting March 26 & 27-** Another good turn-out of about 50 people on the first day. Really good expert presentations and discussions on the forest health and forecasted changes due to climate change. I'll attach the agenda to illustrate the breadth of information covered at the meeting. Unfortunately, I became ill and could not stay for the 2<sup>nd</sup> day.
- **Agate Beach shoreline restoration project** – The contract with Coastal Geologic Services (CGS) is signed and I expect they will begin work by the end of April. First phase will be mapping and inventory of all the material to be removed as well as specific site characteristics. I have contacted the Troyers to let them know the project is starting and to get their permission to access the beach property they own. They gave their approval and I expect that we will arrange to meet with them this summer when CGS has development preliminary information and design concepts.
- **SJP septic system sand filter replacement-** The septic work was completed in time for us to open the upper restroom on schedule (4/1). The work has passed inspect inspection and testing, so we're ready for the busy season. Picture follows.

