

KITSAP COUNTY PARKS ADVISORY BOARD

September 20, 2023

MEETING MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 PM by the Parks Advisory Board Vice-Chair, Lisa Hurt. Guidelines of the hybrid Advisory Board Meeting were read.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES | ACTION: *Nancy Whitaker motioned to adopt August 16, 2023, meeting minutes. Joanne Clark second motion. Motion carried. Minutes approved.*

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Marion Allen - Requests more transparency in Stewardship Groups. Suggests listing group members and projects.
- Mark Schorn – Former PGFHP Stewardship Committee Chair. Provided comments in response to the letter Carol Price sent to Parks Advisory Board and County Commissioners. Volunteers are an extremely important and a precious commodity that are turned-off when they feel ridiculed, harassed, or not supported by the community.
- Elaine Herrer - Requests that Banner Forest be adapted to be ADA accessible. Her research discovered the Banner Forest Management Plan addresses accessibility. Request action be taken on the proposed “one-acre handicapped-accessible nature walk and other accessible public amenities” as addressed on page 12 of the Management Plan.
- Carol Price – Thanked the Parks Board for entertaining her letter. Request to prioritize parks in general as sanctuaries rather than human playgrounds.
- Lynn Shorn – Volunteer Steward at PGFHP.
 - 1) Thanks to Sierra Kross- advocate for parks, stewards, and volunteer programs in PGFHP.
 - 2) Multi- age and multi type (walk, horse, dog, bike, etc.) park user in PGFHP is a joy to observe and experience.
 - 3) Thanks to all the work toward Forest Restoration, planting, wildlife corridors, trail maintenance and ongoing planning to create a park for all.
 - 4) Recognition of park volunteers who spend hours of their week in efforts to be inclusive,
 - 5) Recognition of attempts of the PGFHP stewardship committee to have action items moving toward the success of the park with careful balance of human use and environmental support and enhancement; converting a "100-year-old timber farm" to a sustainable park environment.
 - 6) There has been a concerted effort by the long-time (elder volunteers) to minimize user conflict with signage, user group education and communication and kindness, exhibited by example.
 - 7) In my opinion, insinuations of volunteer efforts being linked to monetary benefit as well as bullying behavior toward park volunteers in the park, in stewardship and Parks Board meetings and in letters to officials, is very challenging and does not assist in avoiding user conflicts now and in the future or promote a healthy community park environment.
 - 8) As Kitsap County Parks employees are working so very hard in our community for the benefit of its community users, they should be encouraged and supported- and I personally would like to thank them for their efforts.
- Linda Berry-Maraist – Recognized longer-term volunteer Evan Stoll who recently passed away after a long battle with cancer. A member of PGFHP and NKHP stewardship groups. A remarkable legacy of committee to Parks and Kitsap Community. Evan was an advocate for environment, parks, people, kids, ADA, and a broader community. Acknowledged his work and contributions through the years and how much he will be missed by so many.
- Kim Greenwood, co-chair PGFHP Stewardship Group (emailed comments were read aloud) -

To Parks Advisory Board:

I wish to make comments in response to a letter you recently received concerning PGFHP stewardship. Firstly, there are mean spirited mischaracterization of co-chairs and volunteers. This is not the kind of dialogue that builds community and fosters collaboration. All it does is create greater divisiveness and an "us" "them" attitude. It takes time away from being productive on work plan objectives at the park.

As a co-chair, we three co-chairs have worked hard to adjust the stewardship agenda to allow for public comment and dialogue within the time allotted for meetings. In fact, we have modelled our agenda to be similar to the parks board agenda. I think we are doing a good job.

I am especially displeased with unsubstantiated accusations about motives of the more senior stewards who have spent years getting this park to where it is. We all should be thankful for their foresight, dedication and drive.

As for myself, I am relatively new to the stewardship group. I have been attending meetings and volunteering since 2019. I have been a co-chair since Jan 2023. I feel welcome and my input valued. Myself and 2 others founded Our Forest Fund and participate in stewardship meetings, as do several other community groups. I have never felt "shut out" from participating in meetings. I attend the subcommittee meetings. I value the hard work being done by the trails volunteers to benefit all users. I look forward to developing restoration goals and work plans.

In closing, it seems to me that there is a perception that not getting ones way means not being heard.

That is far from the truth. Ongoing, constructive, respectful participation is how to best accomplish current and future work plans for the park. Sincerely, Kim Greenwood

- Lisa Hurt – Concerns regarding trees close to trail that have been killed. Also concerns regarding Bike events that are restricting trail walking. Beaver pond trail should not be used for bike events as it is a wetland area. Requests this area be protected. Hood trail is no longer accessible to walkers.
- Joe Lubischer – Comments addressing openness and transparency in the County and the Parks Dept.
 - During the Parks Advisory Board July meeting, there was discussion regarding stewardship group head department problems. This issue is significant and a business item. This was improperly omitted from the meeting minutes. Formerly request corrections be made.
 - Extensive easements granted at North Kitsap Heritage Park to OPG Properties and utility companies. These easements violated the State Recreation Conservation Office guidelines. Four months ago, Parks Department was informed that RCO had determined that those easements constituted a conversation. That the County has committed a conversation. This is equitable to larceny in criminal terms. This is a significant legal matter, and the County will likely have to make restitution. There will be a Public Hearing as a part of the process.
 - Parks Capital Improvement Plan– two thirds of that are one line item, 1.9 million dollars spent at Port Gamble this year. Few months ago, request for breakdown of that has not been provided.
 - Steward-Volunteer handbook – surprised to see new text released recently without process or consultation from Stewardship groups.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS-

- Sponsored Events - Alex Hardy presented BoCC Sponsored Events Proposal. Provide an overview of the history, financial impact, long term sustainability study and future options. Community outreach and Visitor Services sub-committee recommends BoCC re-consider funding and re-visioning this program. Recommends a grant/award program that reduces financial burden on Parks Dept. Option 3 from the presentation is most recommended.
ACTION - Motioned to approve moving forward to the BoCC the recommendation of creating a new Sponsored Events program (Option 3) with the Parks Department receiving financial compensation for all impacts to its operations.
Joanne Clark motioned to accept sub-committees' recommendation.
Seconded by Amy Lawerance.
Moved to vote- all in fair. No nays. **Motion approved.**
- PROS Plan Update - Chris Overdoff of SCJ Alliance presented an update of the current PROS Plan that is underway. Work plan consists of six phases, and we are currently a little over halfway through the process. The most critical phases involving community input. Presented results and summary of the online survey that ran from June 6 to August 30.
Request for Parks Advisory Board feedback
 - How do you define quality of life in Kitsap?
 - What does the PAB hear from constituents?
 - What are the major challenges for Parks in the near- and long-term future?
 - How to engage more diverse community participation?Comments from PAB-
 - Survey time was too short, and advertisement was lacking.
 - Release of survey was delayed. Encourage thinking through the timeline and build in some

- slack. Keep open for at least a month.
- Accessibility improvements to provide safety for pedestrian travel.
- Safety concerns
- Important to think about diversity throughout the county.
- Outreach to schools, gyms, libraries, and advisory boards
- Walkers at PGFHP feel miss placed.
- Suggests joint meetings between PAB and non-motorized committee.
- Bike and walker balance. More notification about events at Parks. Bad experience due to bike/school event at PGFHP
- Better balance between bikers and walkers. More advanced notice of events.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Staffing Update – Previously reported four vacancies in Parks staff positions. Announcing the Natural Resources Supervisor position has been filled. Irene Weber will begin with Parks on October 23. Interviews for Capital Projects Specialist were held on September 20. Last two positions are for Parks Planner and Forester. Received approval from BoCC on September 11 and will advertise in the next week.
 - Island Lake pier – repairs completed earlier in September. Is now open and being enjoyed by the public.
 - New scoreboard installed at Lobe Field is now available for baseball and softball season. Last scoreboard was very old and failed to operate.
 - Education signs for restorative thinning installed at Kitsap Heritage Parks and Banner Forest. These signs caused some concerns for community members that clear cutting would occur. Parks staff are working hard to communicate the intent and benefits of forest thinning.
 - New foot bridge at NKHP for routing cross-county trail.
 - PGFHP parking lot at Stottlemeyer has not yet been released for public bids. Hopeful this will happen in 2023. Parks working through the procurement process. Public Works Department will manage the project. Selected contractor will be awarded the project once public bidding and procurement process is complete.

SUB COMMITTEE REPORTS –

Outreach and Visitors Services committee review was included in the Special Presentation regarding

DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

OLD BUSINESS

South Kitsap – Joanne reported a group of 25-30 kayakers at the Olalla Boat launch.

North Kitsap – Linda provided a report from the PGFHP Stewardship group meeting. Some volunteers are feeling harassed on group projects, and some feel unheard. Meetings are challenging due to different interests. Overall group is unbelievably positive but receiving lots of criticisms.

Question about readiness for additional planting in the initial clear-cut areas. Previously requested a work plan for planting natural and diverse vegetation and trees. Additional questions regarding PSE and fence removal and request for updates on the overall Master Plan. Work party last weekend tackled scotch broom removal. Suggest that PGFHP Stewardship Group provide a review of some of the previous work at the park for awareness and understanding of the historical projects such as Beaver Pond and Buzz Cut.

Central Kitsap – no report

NEW BUSINESS – no report

PUBLIC COMMENT –

Beverly Parsons – appreciated the discussion regarding PROS Plan survey. Will the survey include information about existing sports and recreation fields that are currently available from schools and other organizations? Suggests some of the questions in the survey should provide information about current availability of amenities in the community so the survey responder can provide an informed answer.

Encourages a clear distinction be made between the difference of connectivity between Parks versus connectivity between a community and a given park in their area.

ADJOURNMENT | ACTION: *Lisa Hurt moved to adjourn the meeting. Linda Berry-Maraist seconded the motion. Motioned carried. The meeting was adjourned at 8:03PM.*

PARKS ADVISORY BOARD ATTENDANCE

PAB MEMBERS	STAFF	PUBLIC
Joanne Clark, Chair	Alex Wisniewski	Hybrid meeting online public attendee names not captured
Lisa Hurt, Vice-Chair	Alex Hardy	
Nancy Whitaker	Victoria Lehto	
Linda Berry-Marist	Chuck Cuzzetto	In-Person Public Attendee
Amy Lawrence	Aaron Bartleson	KC Patton
	Brian Hauschel	Lynn Schorn
	Dee Tuttle	Joe Lubischer
