

**UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS:** August 4 board meeting cancelled.

Meeting adjourned for a break at 5:55 pm and reconvened at 6:02 pm.

### **WORK GROUP PRESENTATIONS FROM SAKAI PUBLIC PROCESS**

Bob Linz, facilitator of the Sakai public process that started last January, summarized the three public meetings held on January 23, April 23, and July 16. The intended outcome of these meetings was to come up with a list of ten recommended uses for the Sakai property that were generated by the community. Citizen work groups were formed to research topics determined by the public process. Initially ten work groups were formed. One of these groups, School District and Park Collaboration, did not provide any information. Another group, Adventure Playground, has withdrawn. In addition to the initial ten work groups, several new groups have formed. This evening provides the opportunity for the groups to formally present what they have learned to the Park Board of Commissioners. The work group, Prioritize Projects, presented at the April 23 public meeting and did not think it necessary to present again. Three groups, Public Survey, Community Center, and Create a Table could not attend this evening so will make their presentations to the Park Board at the August 18 board meeting.

**1) WORK GROUP: PARK VALUES:** This group started with 406 values that were generated by the community at the January 23 public meeting. They looked at what these 406 values had in common and grouped them into six broader categories. The six values can be viewed on the Park District's website, and are summarized as follows: active lifestyle, nature preservation, community connectivity, responsible development, multi-generational opportunities, and creative learning. The group recommended that these six values be reviewed alongside the survey results to see if there is a consensus between them. This information can then be used to assist in decisions on how the property will be used.

**2) NEW GROUP: TENNIS COURTS:** This group consisting largely of members from the Bainbridge Community Tennis Association would like four outdoor tennis courts on the Sakai property. This would provide the community with grouped courts that promote community and are efficient to build and maintain. There is currently a lack of public tennis courts on the island which limits the number of people, including children, who can play. When asked by the Board if the group would be open to multi-use courts, the initial response by the group was to use the Sakai courts for tennis, and turn the other Park District tennis courts into multi-use courts.

**3) WORK GROUP: FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY:** This work group produced a report that came up with prospective cost figures for a variety of possible uses at the Sakai property. Options ranged from doing nothing to building a pool complex. Approximately nine acres of the Sakai property can be developed. To give an example of what this might look like, the Silverdale Hazelwood YMCA facility would cover the entire buildable area at Sakai. Any large facility will require capital funds as well as operational funds, and operational funds can exceed incoming revenue. The Sakai property could be utilized for less expensive uses while plans for a larger facility are being assessed.

**4) NEW GROUP: 50 METER POOL:** This group represents a lot of groups who use the two pools at the BI Aquatic Center. The Ray Williamson pool is past its prime, and to upgrade and repair it would be expensive. This group would like a new indoor aquatic center on the Sakai property with an indoor 50 meter x 25 yards pool. This could be used by a number of user groups while freeing up space at the overcrowded Nakata pool. While supportive of the concerns raised, it was pointed out by several commissioners that the current BI Aquatic Center does not cover its operational costs and is heavily subsidized. The Park District's main source of revenue is through property taxes, limited to a 1% increase each year, and user fees. While the Park District could charge more for the facility and its programs, it also has a responsibility to keep these available to the public. It was also noted that the Park District would not be the recipient of any sales or other tax revenues generated by more people coming to the island to use the new pool for

competitions. The group was encouraged to consider how to address their needs in light of these two major concerns, capital and operational costs.

Meeting adjourned for a break at 7:25 pm and reconvened at 7:30 pm.

**5) WORK GROUP: DEMOGRAPHICS:** This group was to look at the list of possible uses generated on January 23 and consider what percentage of the island's residents might be likely to use them. The group's work is based on the 2010 census and broke the island's population of 23,000 down into different age groups. The greatest number of island residents are in the 18-64 age range. It was noted that the demographic numbers generated can be compounded in value when uses are mixed. For example, the needs of both children and working parents could be met by providing uses at the Sakai property during the 3-6 pm time slot. While the results are subjective at some level, the information is meaningful as an indicator, and might be useful to the Board during the decision making process when considered alongside the other information presented.

**6) NEW GROUP: MOUNTAIN BIKE:** This group would like less than one acre on the Sakai property for a pump track. A pump track helps develop mountain biking skills and can be on flat or slightly sloping terrain. It is made out of dirt and blends with the existing terrain. A pump track is easy to construct and much of the work would be done by volunteers. It is inexpensive to build, the group would assume responsibility for raising the funds. A pump track of this size could be used by 10-20 people at the same time depending on the number of features it has. Youth mountain biking is rapidly growing throughout the state and nation.

**7) WORK GROUP: YOUTH SPORTS:** This group set out to learn the perceived inadequacies of youth sport facilities on the island. A survey went out to leaders of youth sports on the island. The group's report outlines the survey questions, responses, and final conclusions of the group. Ideally the Sakai property would have two multi-use outdoor fields with lights and an indoor complex with gymnasium space for basketball, volley ball, gymnastics, etc. as well as meeting rooms and office space. Fields with lights would expand the inventory tremendously since this would provide for year round use. The overall objective is to provide space for kids to spend energy in positive ways.

A comment from the audience asked that a global approach be taken, saying if a non-pool option is selected for the Sakai property, the Ray Williamson pool must be included as part of the equation. It is important to consider what will happen when it breaks down.

Executive Director Terry Lande said every presentation has been incredible and expressed appreciation for all the work that has been done over the past six months. The challenge now is how to move forward and choose, given that it's unlikely all the recommended uses can be done.

Bob Linz said three more of the work groups will present at the August 18 board meeting, and the next step is work directly with the Park District. He commented on how well the public process has gone, saying he is pleased the board was open to it. It is rare he said for a public body to try this approach and that an intangible value is realized through it. A number of people attending the meeting also commented on how beneficial the process has been.

Meeting adjourned for a break at 8:25 pm and reconvened at 8:30 pm.

#### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT** (continued)

**Park Services Director:** Dan Hamlin: At Fort Ward Park on Wednesday morning, a young man was found deceased by a park user; the incident is under investigation and the Park District has been informed there is nothing the District could have done to prevent it from occurring. Since the grand opening of Owen's Playground last weekend, there has been non-stop use of the playground and an out-pouring of positive comments from the community. A four-year old fell today in the stump hop area of the playground and broke his arm; this was the result of active play and no fault of