

**BAINBRIDGE ISLAND METROPOLITAN PARK & RECREATION DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MARCH 18, 2021
ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING**

CALL TO ORDER: A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Chair Janow.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Kristine Cox, Ken DeWitt, Dawn Janow, Jay Kinney, Tom Swolgaard.

ADJUSTMENTS TO AGENDA: Remove item 50.1, the Presentation from Bainbridge Island Football Club Regarding Proposed Lighting of Turf Fields at Battle Point Park, which has been postponed given the recent tragic loss in the community of three high school students in a car accident. Add an Executive Session for five minutes regarding real estate.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Kyle Schroer said he recently completed his eagle scout project at Battle Point Park. He thanked everyone for their help, especially Park Maintenance Coordinator Chris Andre, Park Maintenance I Erik Sherwin and Community Outreach Coordinator Emily Swift. He is grateful to have had the opportunity to help his community.

BOARD CONSENT

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Upon hearing there were no corrections to the minutes of the March 4, 2021 regular board meeting, Chair Janow stated the minutes stand approved as submitted.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Commissioner Janow led everyone present in a moment of silence to honor the loss of the three high school students, Hannah Wachsman, Marina Miller and Hazel Kleiner who died Tuesday night in a car accident.

LEVY LID LIFT RESOLUTION DEVELOPMENT: Commissioner Janow said the board held a retreat on March 6 at which staff presented information on the work that has been done over the last 13 years. One thing discussed was the possibility of pursuing a levy lid lift. Commissioner Janow reviewed some of the information presented at the retreat. In 2008, when the last levy lid lift was passed by voters there were 17 park sites and now there are 32 park sites. Trails have increased from 23 miles in 2008 to over 40 miles today and that number is still increasing. Program revenue has grown tremendously. In 2009 recreation program revenue was 1.7 million dollars and in 2019 program revenue was 3.1 million dollars, a revenue gain of 1.4 million dollars. Program revenue numbers from 2020 were not cited due to impacts from the coronavirus pandemic. The number of full-time and regular part-time staff is the same as it was in 2008. Staff has achieved growth through flexible and thoughtful staffing, increased use of technology, innovation on many fronts and frugality whenever possible. Revenue from the 2008 levy lid lift has decreased. In 2009 1.1 million dollars was collected, in 2019 \$649,000 was collected and in 2021 the Park District will collect \$662,000. Even while program revenue has increased, which has been able to help sustain the staff and expand programs, levy lid lift revenues are not going in the right direction. At the request of commissioners, staff presented at the retreat the Park District's current staffing needs as well as deferred maintenance needs to protect and preserve facilities at preferred standards. Commissioner Janow said that in 2020 there was a huge increase in park and trail use due to the coronavirus pandemic, which is great, but it takes a lot more means to maintain standards given the increases. Before the board tonight is an opportunity to ask the staff to develop a resolution for a levy lid lift. **MSC:**

Kinney/DeWitt: Move to direct staff to put together the necessary documents to move forward with a levy lid lift to be presented by the April 15 board meeting to be able to amend if necessary and file in May for the August 2021 election.

Commissioner DeWitt said it is important to have clear information on when the Park District's revenue and expense lines are going to cross, as it will be important for the public to understand that. Executive Director Terry Lande said that bond council research can be prepared in time for the April 15 board meeting. Commissioner Swolgaard asked to review what

exactly the gain would be from a new levy lid lift. Staff shared some slides from the presentation that was viewed at the March 6 board retreat. Executive Director Terry Lande said the 2008 levy lid lift is currently at 59 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value. Commissioner Swolgaard reviewed that the Park District would gain an additional 1.49 million dollars of revenue if the levy lid lift is raised back up to 75 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value. He asked what the Park District's total tax revenue is. The total tax revenue for the Park District in 2021 is 5.6 million dollars. Commissioner Swolgaard said he is concerned about being able to pass a levy lid lift as he does not have a feeling about it from the community, although bonds have dropped off the tax burden in the last few years. He estimated that a levy lid lift will cost about \$240 for a 1.5-million-dollar home, which could feel like a lot of money to some people so the Park District will have to see how it goes. Commissioner DeWitt said if the board expects to have a chance to pass any future bond issues for potential capital projects for Sakai Park or the Ray Williamson Replacement Pool the Park District has to ensure that there is enough revenue to cover operations, which the Park District will not have if a levy lid lift does not pass. Commissioner Swolgaard asked if anyone had any idea how people are doing financially. Commissioner Janow said there was also some concern regarding the recent School District levy which passed overwhelmingly. There is strong support of the Park District and she would urge the board to go for it as opposed to not putting it to the public. There will need to be a public relations job explaining the growth the Park District has had and the idea that if the Park District does not get additional operational funding there could be some decline in existing properties. Commissioner Swolgaard said he can understand the need with impacts from inflation and staffing needs.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Park Services Division: Park Services Division Director Dan Hamlin said that working on the KidsUp! Playground renovation the crew discovered an old fire hydrant water line underneath the middle of the playground which has now been rerouted. The Schel Chelb Park restroom is getting closer to completion. Ballfield preparation has started. Park Maintenance Coordinator Morgan Houk has taken on the duties of her new position. She is working to develop COVID-19 plans for volunteer parties as the region is moving further towards reopening in the Healthy Washington Plan. Once the plans are in order, she will start hosting some small group activities to get to know the community and folks from other agencies the Park District works with. In April she will work with Earth Corps doing restoration work at Blakely Harbor Park. Ecological Land Services which conducted the critical areas study for Grand Forest North is now conducting a wildlife study as well. A document addressing frequently asked questions regarding the proposed mountain bike trails in the Grand Forest North was posted on the Park District's website, people are reaching out and being directed to the information. Staff met with National Park Service staff who have done groundwork to get approval to add money to their budget for maintenance and long-term replacement costs for structures at the Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial. Senior Planner Perry Barrett is working on trail easement transfers from the Bainbridge Island Parks Foundation and wrapping up outstanding trail easements with private property owners. Some property owners are asking questions about liability and he said that regarding trails Washington State has a very trail friendly immunity clause. Negotiations continue for the trail connection to Sakai Park from Marshall Suites; the open space there is controlled by both condo owners and Marshall Suites. The Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial Association committee is finalizing a selection of artists for interpretation elements.

Recreation Division: Recreation Division Director Mark Benishek said staff met with the consulting group that was contracted by the City of Bainbridge Island to replace the Waterfront Park dock to learn about the permitting, engineering, and design of the current dock. Staff is exploring two options, both a replacement of the current sailing float in Eagle Harbor and the potential for a finger dock off the Waterfront Park dock. Next steps include developing a request for qualifications for a consultant to pursue both options including cost comparisons and permitting information. Last Thursday Governor Inslee announced that the whole state will be transitioning to Phase III in the Healthy Washington Plan next

Monday. Many of the Phase III guidelines are still being developed and staff has been involved by giving feedback through the Washington Recreation & Park Association, which is one of the support groups. Staff is working to finalize content for the summer program catalog and doing spring clean-up in facilities in preparation for summer. Community Outreach Coordinator Emily Swift has been helping train Park Maintenance Coordinator Morgan Houk, who was hired to fill her previous position in Park Services. Emily Swift has also been wrapping up preparation of the egg hunt kits that people can register for as well as planning for summer events. Active Adult Program Manager Sue Barrington is excited about the story walk program which will be launched this summer in collaboration with Youth & Teen Program Manager Shannon Buxton and the library. Marketing Coordinator Allie Smith is in the final phases of summer catalog development. The Park District will resume having a booth at the Farmers' Market this year. Executive Director Terry Lande said it would be great to get both a staff person and a board member to work the Farmers' Market booth. Commissioner Swolgaard said he has helped staff the booth in the past and that it was a lot of fun. Aquatic Center staff is busy preparing to adjust programming with the movement to Phase III in the Healthy Washington Plan. Staff had a productive meeting with Bainbridge High School Athletic Director Jim Corsetti. Recreation Superintendent Bryan Garoutte said staff sent out a notice to the entire Park District email contact list regarding the first day of summer registration and upcoming board meeting agenda topics. The Teen Center is experiencing an uptick in attendance now that the high school is back in session; staff is considering adding a homework time twice a week after the morning school session and before athletics start. Outdoor Program Manager Nick Prevo has almost completed hiring staff for summer programming. He was able to facilitate additional dog training programs this session and is working to update the outdoor webpages. Gymnastics staff will begin to offer open gym and open playtime again after spring break. These programs have been modified so that participants will register, and no drop-ins will be allowed. Gymnastics will be allowed to have spectators in Phase III; although only three spectators will be allowed in the Bainbridge High School gymnastics room and only two spectators will be allowed in the Transmitter Building. Youth & Teen Program Manager Shannon Buxton is restarting the theatre program which will meet at Island Center Hall. There will be a wheel throwing marathon at the Eagledale Pottery Studio on April 1 from 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm. Shannon Buxton is gearing up for the spring break All-Day Explorer Camp. Sports Program Manager Julie Miller got permission from the School District to use the outdoor covered areas at Ordway Elementary School and Sakai Intermediate School for programming. Julie Miller knew and coached in Park District programs the three high school students who died Tuesday night in the car accident.

Executive Director Terry Lande said he attended a Chamber of Commerce board meeting which included discussion about alternatives for the annual 4th of July celebrations. This is the first year that the new island-wide fireworks ban is in effect. After some discussion regarding upcoming agenda topics for the board it was decided that the presentation from Bainbridge Island Football Club regarding proposed lighting for the artificial turf fields at Battle Point Park will be held on April 1; the presentation from interest group proposing tennis courts to be built at Sakai Park will be on April 15; and the proposed mountain bike trails in the Grand Forest North will be on May 6.

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS:

- Commissioner Cox said she was at Battle Point Park last weekend and there were a lot of people out, the energy was good, and everyone was wearing masks and social distancing.
- Commissioner Swolgaard said that there was a post on the Facebook group Bainbridge Islanders regarding the KidsUp! Playground and he thanked Commissioner DeWitt for responding to it.
- Commissioner Swolgaard asked about the status of the Schel Chelb Park fence. Park Services Division Director Dan Hamlin said staff is compromising by moving the fence back into the right-of-way rather than having it right next to the road. Changes to the permitting application are being made and will be submitted to the City of Bainbridge Island.

- Commissioner Swolgaard said the most prized asset of our community is our youth, it really hurts to lose them, and he feels for the families.
- Commissioner DeWitt said he attended the Bainbridge Island Environmental Conference last Sunday and he was very impressed with the first speaker. The speaker was Kirk Hanson with the Northwest Natural Resources Group and he spoke on the importance of managing forests. Kirk Hanson is one of the most common-sense people he has ever heard talk on forests. Kirk Hanson talked about the effect of climate change on the forest as well as how to manage the forests with climate change, which is happening regardless of if it is caused by people or not. Tree species such as hemlock and cedar are dying, which is creating problems in forests. The Park District is the largest forest owner on the island, so the plan the Park District has to start a forest management committee is perfectly timed. One of the things that Kirk Hanson said was that Bainbridge Island historically burned every 300 to 500 years, long before it was clearcut starting in the 1850's. Hopefully last summer was a wake-up call and the forest management that needs to be done can start, though it is not going to be easy.
- Commissioner DeWitt said he and Commissioner Janow attended the City of Bainbridge Island's Sustainable Transportation webinar. The featured speaker recommended that all non-arterial speed limits be dropped to 20 miles per hour. He also recommended bike pathways next to roads be physically separated, as paint stripes are not the safe way to go. It will be interesting to see how it plays out on the island with the narrow roads and not very large rights-of-way.
- Commissioner Janow said she also attended the Bainbridge Island Environmental Conference and they are doing a wonderful job. There are two more sessions on the next two Sundays and she thinks anyone who has the opportunity to attend would be impressed.
- Commissioner Janow said that regarding the City of Bainbridge Island's Sustainable Transportation webinar that the presenter Gil Penalosa was quite enthusiastic. It will be interesting to see what the City comes up with in terms of next steps. A lot of the presentation had to do with pretty urban areas and moving large amounts of people. The scenario and topography on Bainbridge Island may not lend itself to what that vision is. She does not know what the next steps will be and how it will all come together but it is an ambitious project the Park District should keep its eyes on it.
- Commissioner Janow said she attended the recent Trails Advisory Committee meeting. The committee is looking at the trail connection to Sakai Park behind the Marshall Suites and will again be taking up the issue of electric bikes on trails.
- Commissioner Janow asked how the Battle Point Park pond is looking. Park Services Division Director Dan Hamlin said the dam has temporarily sealed itself and the pond is filling up again. The engineer should be wrapping up his work soon and then staff can move into the permitting phase and come up with a plan for the full repair.
- Commissioner Janow asked about the netting for the pickleball courts. Park Services Division Director Dan Hamlin said there was a miscommunication between staff and that it will be ordered tomorrow.
- Commissioner Janow thanked staff for making updates to the website regarding the proposal for mountain bike trails in the Grand Forest North.
- Commissioner Janow asked about when new trails are added to the website, as the inventory on the website is not current. Park Services Division Director Dan Hamlin said once trail work is completed at Sakai Park and on the Blakely Hills trails and they are officially open to the public they will be added to the website.
- Commissioner DeWitt said the Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial Association has an event on March 30 every year at the memorial however this year it will held on Zoom and invitations will be sent.

MEETING ADJOURNED TO EXECUTIVE SESSION at 6:59 pm for discussion of real estate with announced time to reconvene at 7:05 pm.

MEETING RECONVENED at 7:05 pm and **ADJOURNED** at 7:05 pm.

Helen M. Stone
Terry M. Lande
BAINBRIDGE ISLAND METROPOLITAN
PARK & RECREATION DISTRICT

BY: _____
Dawn Janow

BY: _____
Kristine Cox

BY: _____
Kenneth R. DeWitt

BY: _____
John Thomas Swolgaard

ATTEST: _____
Jay C. Kinney