

**BAINBRIDGE ISLAND METROPOLITAN PARK & RECREATION DISTRICT  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MARCH 4, 2021  
ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING**

**CALL TO ORDER:** A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 6:02 pm by Chair Janow.

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

**ADJUSTMENTS TO AGENDA:** Add an Executive session for thirty minutes for real estate.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

Asaph Glosser said he and his two children attended the last board meeting which addressed the proposed mountain bike trails in the Grand Forest North. He appreciated the opportunity to hear the presentation and the discussion as well as to share his perspective. He said his children got a great education in local government and civil dialogue. All three of them left the conversation enthusiastic about the proposal. He emphasized his support for the proposal and encouraged the board to maintain momentum.

Loanne Harmeling inquired about scheduling a time to make a presentation to the board about proposed tennis courts at Sakai Park and the money, design and support that has been accrued for this proposal. Commissioner Janow said that Loanne Harmeling should email her or Executive Director Terry Lande to have the topic placed on an agenda for a regular board meeting.

Torin Larson lives adjacent to the Grand Forest North and said he was not able to make the last board meeting about the proposed mountain bike trails in Grand Forest North and is not sure if he will be able to make the next one. While he has heard people say that the Grand Forest North is not heavily trafficked, he disagrees. He believes it is very trafficked and cherished by the community around it. Rather than take away the tranquility and the value that people have in that location he asked if it would make more sense to put the proposed mountain bike trails somewhere else. He suggested Sakai Park where people do not have vested attachments to the park and have not been going to it for twenty years or more. He said Sakai Park is not as tranquil as the Grand Forest, as it has road noise from the highway and other noises from being in town. It is closer to the ferry so it would be easier for people coming from Seattle for the mountain bike trails to access it. If not Sakai Park, he suggests Meigs Park as an alternative location since it is close to the highway and therefore does not have the tranquility as well as being closer to the ferry. Using one of these alternate locations would keep additional traffic from coming to a tranquil, peaceful, and cherished location. He believes these other locations would be a lot more conducive to a proposal like this one. He does not oppose the proposal, but he feels there is a better solution. He has neighbors that walk the Grand Forest North every single day. He goes by the intersection of Miller Road and Koura Road multiple times a day and probably 50% of the time he sees someone going into or coming out of the Grand Forest North. He walks the Grand Forest North himself and while he understands that the proposal would be separate from the existing trail, there will still be additional traffic at the park which is a much more tranquil place than either Sakai Park or Meigs Park.

Rebecca Abell said that regarding the proposed mountain bike trails in the Grand Forest North she has some concerns, though there should be a designated place for mountain biking trails on Bainbridge Island. She grew up on Bainbridge Island and has been using the Grand Forest for most of her life. She has had the experience of walking on trails with other users on mountain bikes and sometimes it is fine. However, she now has a four-year-old and they have had some rather scary encounters with mountain bike riders that have not seen her child. If the Grand Forest North will be used by walkers and mountain bikers, she does not think it is a very good idea. The Grand Forest North is used fairly frequently and she has seen horses going through there and people walking their dogs. It is a wonderful, healthy forest and she thinks there are other areas on Bainbridge Island with less healthy forests. Therefore, it makes sense to put trails for mountain biking somewhere else in other less healthy forested areas on the island.

John Benjes said that during the Sakai Park planning process mountain bike trails were identified as one of the more important unmet recreational needs on Bainbridge Island. However, with all the other interest groups that had an interest in Sakai Park, mountain biking was not included in the plan. Therefore, he does not think mountain bike trails are an option at Sakai Park.

## **BOARD CONSENT**

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Upon making the following revisions to the minutes of the February 18, 2021 regular board meeting, Chair Janow stated the minutes stand approved as corrected: on page 10 under Board Member Items in the third bullet on the sixteenth line change “there ability” to “their ability.”

## **GENERAL BUSINESS**

**FUNDING FOR KIDSUP! PLAYGROUND:** Administrative Division Director Amy Swenson shared the KidsUp! Playground renovation project budget total of \$604,004. So far donations of \$453,569.80 have been received from the Bainbridge Island Parks Foundation and \$100,000 of Park District funds were budgeted and applied, leaving a difference of \$50,434.20. The Park District has now spent a total of \$135,000 on the project and would typically bill BIPF for \$35,000 at this time, but staff has not yet asked for reimbursement. Commissioner DeWitt said there are updated figures for what the BIPF has raised for this project. **MSC: Swolgaard/DeWitt: Take from reserves not to exceed \$50,434.20 for KidsUp! Playground.** Park Services Division Director Dan Hamlin said the KidsUp! Playground Renovation Committee and the BIPF have done a phenomenal job of raising \$453,569.80 and the Park District has committed \$100,000. The question tonight is if the board wants to raise their commitment to the project to bridge the gap between the amount that has been raised and the total budget to complete the project this spring. Executive Director Barb Trafton with the BIPF said they are now \$36,000 away from their fundraising goal. Park Services Manager Douglas Slingerland said the committee is continuing to raise funds so that number could decrease. The committee has worked tirelessly during a very strange year, going above and beyond all expectations and it would be great to show them this support. Dan Hamlin said that many personal touches are going into the KidsUp! Playground renovation and that staff really got behind this project. The committee found a donor for the We-Go-Round, which is one of the more expensive pieces of play equipment being included in the playground renovation. There are four metal panels on it that would have had generic artwork, but the committee’s donor wanted the We-Go-Round to incorporate the names of their two children who died of congenital disease. The committee came up with the idea of having a local artist work on unique panels to replace the generic ones. Douglas Slingerland, who is also an artist, threw his hat into the ring and came up with a series of four scenes of Battle Point Park for the panels that were chosen to be incorporated on the We-Go-Round. The artwork is designed in a whimsical, impressionistic style and the panels will be a unique aspect to the playground. The core group of the KidsUp! Playground Renovation Committee consists of Curt Thomas, Jana McCulloch, Stephanie Page, Kerri Russo, and Peter Mulier. This group has been dedicated, hardworking and committed to the project through thick and thin. Commissioner Janow said she appreciates all the work everyone has done, as none of these projects happen without the involvement of lots of people and it is important to recognize them and give gratitude, as we do not really know how far our tentacles reach.

**BOARD RETREAT UPDATE:** Commissioner Janow said there are a lot of ideas as well as excitement for the retreat. It will be important to find a way to stay focused on what the board needs and wants to accomplish during the retreat, to stay on task and chart a path forward. Executive Director Terry Lande said that at the board retreat staff will present what the last 13 years have looked like, where the Park District is today, what the next 3-7 years look like and then if time allows other initiatives can be discussed. Commissioner Janow said that she would like to give commissioners and staff as much time as possible and recommended that public comments be limited to the last 15-20 minutes, as people can always send public

comments and suggestions in via email. Commissioner Kinney said this retreat has to be different than a regular board meeting; it is a chance to talk about big picture topics that the board does not normally get to talk about, rather than specific current issues being dealt with on regular board meeting agendas. Commissioner Kinney said that if someone has an idea about the big picture topics that may not be on the Park District's radar that he would like to have a way to hear them. Commissioner Janow said she agreed and is trying to figure out how to manage it and asked if any commissioners had recommendations on the best way to navigate communication on the Zoom platform. Commissioner DeWitt suggested that the board split public comments into two separate groups, as is done in regular board meetings; starting with comments related to retreat topics and then moving on to other topics the board did not touch on during the retreat but excluding the specific items that are being dealt with on regular board meeting agendas. He also said it will be important to stay focused and respond to each other rather than responding to what may be posted by attendees in the Zoom chat. Commissioner Janow said she is really looking forward to the opportunity to hear what staff is going to share and for the board members to set their sights moving forward.

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

**Administrative Division:** Administrative Division Director Amy Swenson said that the 2018-2019 audit is still underway and is going well. The Washington State Auditor's Office is overwhelmed right now but the audit is expected to be completed in about a month.

**Recreation Division:** Recreation Division Director Mark Benishek said that staff is doing a tremendous job with the winter/spring programming currently underway. Bainbridge Aquatic Masters is looking to expand the number of people allowed at swim practices. Staff is working to add more time trials for Bainbridge Island Swim Club. Community Outreach Coordinator Emily Swift is working on preparing pre-packaged egg hunt kits which individuals can register to receive in lieu of the annual mEGGa Hunt event. Marketing Coordinator Allie Smith is preparing to begin development of the summer catalog. Staff is hoping that COVID-19 restrictions will be eased as summer gets closer, therefore summer registration which is usually in March will begin on May 5 this year. Outdoor Program Manager Nick Prevo is studying for his Wilderness First Responder certification. There has been a large increase in the amount of mountain bikes the Park District has rented out lately, indicating a lot of new participants are trying out mountain biking programs. Social paddles and trips for spring and summer are being developed for families and groups. The gymnastics department has added five new classes for participants who were originally placed on waitlists. An additional Eagledale Pottery Studio instructor has returned to teaching which will help to facilitate more opportunities for participation at the studio. The Green Kids Adventure program which focuses on nature, play and adventure is going well. Soccer programs started last Saturday, there was a huge number of people on the waitlist most of whom were able to be accommodated. The Teen Center reopened a few weeks ago and with the reopening of the high school this week staff is hoping to have more drop-in participation. The Teen Center staff had signs made with inspirational messages for teens, as it has been a tough year for a lot of youth.

**Park Services Division:** Park Services Division Director Dan Hamlin said that work on installing the ferry boat element at KidsUp! Playground will begin soon. Landscaping by volunteers from the pickleball group around the pickleball courts will hopefully be completed this weekend, depending on the weather. The draft memorandum of understanding with Kitsap Public Utility District regarding work to be done in their easement in Gazzam Lake Nature Preserve is now being worked on by KPUD's attorney and Park District Attorney Hayes Gori. Dan Hamlin is now working directly with the City of Bainbridge Island's Public Works Director Chris Wierzbicki to move the Schel Chelb Park fence project forward. Morgan Houk has been hired for the full-time Park Services coordinator position responsible for working with volunteers. Senior Planner Perry Barrett said that the Park District has filed documents to accept a state grant on behalf of the Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial Association. The Sakai Park archeology update memo was received yesterday and sent to the Recreation and Conservation Office for the Sakai Park grant. Commissioner Janow asked if the Park District can put the

Schel Chelb Park fence on Park District property if the City does not approve it in the right-of-way area. Dan Hamlin said that is an option, however it would create an area on the side of the road that could be misinterpreted as a parallel parking lot.

#### **UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS:**

Board Retreat: March 6 from 10:30 am-1:30 pm.

#### **BOARD MEMBER ITEMS:**

- Commissioner Kinney said that the board has received more emails this week than at any other time during his entire tenure on the board. Quite a few emails came in from an interest group that wants two tennis courts to be built at Sakai Park. He looked at both the schematic design done by Jones & Jones and the master plan from 2017 for Sakai Park. In the master plan for Sakai Park one multi-purpose outdoor sports court is indicated. On page 21 and 22 of the master plan the 10 recommended uses gathered from the community planning process were prioritized based on three criteria regarding level of service and site analysis. They were prioritized as follows: 1) multi-use indoor recreation complex, 2) trails, 3) playground, 4) passive uses, 5) picnic shelters, 6) community center complex, 7) outdoor multipurpose court, 8) mountain bike park/trails, 9) multi-use indoor complex, 10) 50-meter pool. However, the board decided that any new pool facility or pool renovation would be located adjacent to the existing Aquatic Center. He said it is important to begin work again at some point with both the Ray Williamson Pool Replacement and the Sakai Park advisory committees regarding what to do, what sequence to do it in, and how it will be funded.
- Commissioner Kinney said he walked the Grand Forest North with Park Services Division Director Dan Hamlin and Commissioner Janow.
- Commissioner Kinney said he is looking forward to the board retreat on Saturday.
- Commissioner Cox said Bainbridge Island Swim Club is excited about the possibility of participating in more time trials. There is a virtual regional championship in March and team members would like to compete.
- Commissioner DeWitt reminded the commissioners that they should have received an email from the Washington State Public Disclosure Commission stating that their financial affairs disclosure (F-1) forms are due before April 15.
- Commissioner DeWitt said he attended a recent Bainbridge Island Parks Foundation board meeting and that the things BIPF has been doing since they were reorganized 8-10 years ago are amazing. He gave them kudos and thanks and said that without their efforts and partnership the Park District would not be anywhere close to where it is today. BIPF has had a phenomenal year for fundraising despite the coronavirus pandemic, indicating there is a lot of excitement from community members. He encouraged board members to join him as a member of the BIPF's Conifer Club, which is a sustaining membership with a minimum contribution of \$10 per month.
- Commissioner Janow said she will be attending the City of Bainbridge Island's meeting regarding the Sustainable Transportation Planning Study on March 16 and asked other commissioners who are interested in joining to contact her or Executive Director Terry Lande and let them know.
- Commissioner Janow said that the Park District trail map is already outdated and that she would love to see it updated before it is reprinted.

**MEETING ADJOURNED TO EXECUTIVE SESSION** at 7:17 pm for discussion of real estate with announced time to reconvene at 7:47 pm.

**MEETING RECONVENED** at 7:47 pm and **ADJOURNED** at 7:47 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

*Commissioner Cox's signature not included due to her resignation.*