

BAINBRIDGE ISLAND METROPOLITAN PARK & RECREATION DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING September 1, 2022
BAINBRIDGE ISLAND RECREATION CENTER

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

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

ADJUSTMENTS TO AGENDA: Executive session for real estate and introduction of new employee.

MISSION STATEMENT: Commissioner DeWitt read the Park District's mission statement: The mission of the Bainbridge Island Metropolitan Park & Recreation District is to build a healthy community through effective, sustainable stewardship of the District's parks and open space, and through the development and delivery of innovative cultural and recreation opportunities.

Marketing/Communications Manager Douglas Slingerland introduced new employee Stephanie Bugas, the Community Outreach Coordinator. Stephanie Bugas was previously employed as the area director for Young Life in Walla Walla. Stephanie Bugas said she is happy to join the Park District and recently attended the movies and concerts in the park.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Debbie Wolfe, a retired school principal from New York, has lived on Bainbridge Island for one year. She said Bainbridge Island is a community in the truest sense. She is at the board meeting, first to thank the board for all that is done to include and provide diverse opportunities, and to ensure recreation is a priority in people's lives. She swims, plays pickleball and tennis, hikes and watches her granddaughter. The board makes many decisions and embraces collaboration and cooperation and believes data is very important in making decisions. She has waited for an available pickleball court with 25-30 people. The turnover is rapid in pickleball, 15 minutes to play a game. Tennis is a difficult and different game. Patience is needed when waiting to play tennis as the wait for a court may be one hour. To compare the number of pickleball vs. tennis players on which to base a decision regarding access to courts may be false data. The issue is about access to courts.

Susan Oblak spoke about access to tennis courts. She mainly plays tennis but has played pickleball. Her concern is the future of tennis which has been discussed for quite some time. She has not seen that any progress has been made. She listened to LoAnne Harmeling's presentation to the board last year. At the conclusion of the presentation, the board mentioned there would be discussion of the budget and a decision about tennis. Susan Oblak said it seems the tennis community has not heard much since then. She read an article in the Bainbridge Island Review about possibly losing more tennis courts. She is concerned because she feels tennis players' access to courts is shrinking rather than maintaining. She inquired at the Bainbridge Island Recreation Center (BIRC) front desk and learned that there is a very long wait list for tennis memberships at BIRC. She would like to have a sense of what the future of tennis is on Bainbridge Island. If tennis is growing, maintaining, or shrinking. She feels it is important to have a dialog with pickleball players. Both tennis and pickleball players want the same thing and that is access to courts.

Kathleen Dassel said she thinks it is obvious what the problem is. She wondered if it would be possible for the board to informally hold forums with both tennis and pickleball players to discuss their mutual problems. She believes things are amicable between the two groups. She has heard the wonderful things the Park District has done at Strawberry Hill Park with the dog park, and the skatepark but has not heard anything about tennis. She looked up the Park District's rules and regulations under sport facilities and rentals and the rules specifically discuss pickleball and tennis. She believes the intent of the rules and regulations is to manage pickleball, however pickleball is currently unmanaged. She suggested creation of an online dashboard providing pickleball players a method to sign-up for courts. The Park District's tennis and pickleball court rules and regulations state pickleball players must yield to tennis players on designated tennis courts.

AnnMarie Kimball stated she plays tennis. She questioned taking an asset the community invested in and later changing it to a different use. She appreciates the board looking at the tennis/pickleball court issue.

Edith Cobourn said she moved to Bainbridge Island in 2019 from Atlanta and played competitive league tennis for 40 years. She looked for a friendly group to play tennis with here and found the Bainbridge Community Tennis Association (BCTA). BCTA was willing to mop and sweep various courts on Bainbridge Island during the fall and winter. Because of this work, BCTA is familiar with the various courts and knows that the fast-drying courts are located at Battle Point Park. This is a simple reason why Battle Point Park is the best place for existing and new tennis courts. She was surprised by the August 4, 2022, board minute comments regarding pickleball. She said at that board meeting Commissioner Kinney said what is done for tennis and pickleball courts must be good for everyone, where no one is at a disadvantage. Edith Cobourn said this requires people to talk and work together to find a solution and she does not see this has happened. She asked if there is \$300,00-\$350,000 in the 2022 budget to build two tennis courts and is there a plan to build more tennis courts in 2022.

Commissioner Kinney said there was a plan to build another court at Strawberry Hill Park not at Battle Point Park and \$200,000 is budgeted for one court. Executive Director Terry Lande said tennis players would pay for the second court. A member of the public commented that playing tennis at Strawberry Hill Park can be a mess due to debris from trees, it can be hazardous to play. Commissioner Janow said the location of the new court has not been decided yet and will be placed in an advantageous spot. Commissioner DeWitt stated the Park District is working on a concept plan for Strawberry Hill Park, considering various uses such as tennis, the skatepark and the bike park. There will be more information forthcoming in the next few months. A member of the public asked if it is definite that the new tennis court will be at Strawberry Hill Park. Commissioner DeWitt said a decision has not been made.

LoAnne Harmeling said she has been involved with the Park District board and staff for the past six years regarding the current state of tennis and tennis courts on Bainbridge Island. There has been a long-standing conversation between the tennis community, Park District staff and board members, but precious little has come from the conversations. The tennis community advocated for courts in Sakai Park during the developmental phase. Sakai Park remains undeveloped. The board and staff have been supportive of the tennis community's efforts to improve and expand tennis access. The tennis community would like the Park District to site and develop an outdoor tennis facility for both young and old community groups and for team play. The tennis community seeks public access for those islanders who have limited access to market-driven recreational facilities. Youngsters are taught to play but are not provided free and accessible public courts to play on. There should be a decent facility here on the island. This is one reason park levies are supported. There is \$200,000 in the budget for tennis courts. She would like to see the budgeted funds spent and more allocated. Tennis players have \$50,000 in pledges and cannot write grants until the Park District has a plan in place. She would like the Park District to show a plan for sustainable tennis play on Bainbridge Island. The current population is about 25,000 and expected to grow to 33,000 by 2040. Four public courts are inadequate. Tennis players want a plan and want the plan implemented.

A member of the public stated that over the past year she has informally surveyed various tennis groups at different tennis court facilities on Bainbridge Island and the consensus is to place the new tennis courts at Battle Point Park over Strawberry Hill Park. Volunteers who teach elementary school children to play tennis want to gather at a larger facility. Junior tennis players and their supporters would prefer to play tournaments on Bainbridge Island rather than going to Seattle. Commissioner Goodlin asked the tennis players gathered at the board meeting about their past interest to locating courts near the downtown Winslow core. Those who spoke tonight said Battle Point Park is the preferred location. LoAnne Harmeling said she was told it would be years before courts could be built at Sakai Park. Commissioner Kinney asked if the problem at Strawberry Hill Park is the trees encroaching on the courts. Several community members answered yes. Commissioner Janow said Strawberry Hill Park as it exists is being transformed. Park Services Division Director Dan Hamlin said it will be a couple months before the plan for Strawberry Hill Park is completed. Terry Lande said the plan for

Strawberry Hill Park will include the bike park, skatepark, and tennis courts and is in the very first stages of designs. The board will review the plan including where to locate the tennis courts.

A member of the public questioned if the two public tennis courts at Battle Point Park will remain. Commissioner DeWitt said there has been no change in policy. If or when policy is changed there will be a public session. Commissioner Janow said it is important to know that tennis and pickleball playing side by side is a chronic problem across the nation. This is not a new or unique challenge. Commissioner Janow said the Park District is attempting to respond as quickly as possible and gather more information. Commissioner DeWitt said Park District policy is set by the board and usage of facilities is part of operations which falls to Terry Lande and his staff. Terry Lande said the board decides where courts are to be located. Implementation would be the responsibility of staff. Commissioner DeWitt recommended tennis players get in touch with Terry Lande and work with staff to set policy such as the hours courts are reserved for tennis players. Commissioner Kinney said the board is aware more courts are needed for both tennis and pickleball. Commissioner Janow said there is money earmarked for tennis courts. There is no money earmarked for additional pickleball courts.

BOARD CONSENT

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Upon making the following revisions to the minutes of the August 18, 2022 regular board meeting, Chair DeWitt stated the minutes stand approved as corrected: on page one, third paragraph, line three, changed “meet” to “met.”

APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS: MSC: Goodlin/Janow: I have reviewed the following vouchers, warrants and electronic payments and move that they be approved for payment.

Batch Date	Fund Number & Name	Warrant Numbers	Total Batch Amt	Pre-Approved
08/18/22	001 General Fund	23491-23507	27,294.24	08/18/22
08/24/22	001 General Fund	23508-23578	616,994.96	08/24/22
08/30/22	001 General Fund 300 Capital Improvement Fund	23579-23600	41,955.83	08/30/22
	001 General Fund (August Payroll)	EFT & 3011-3024	737,256.64	

GENERAL BUSINESS

2022 General Fund Budget vs Actual: Administrative Division Director Amy Swenson first reported separately on the Bainbridge Island Recreation Center (BIRC) budget. BIRC actual revenue is in line with projections. Utilities are over budget. This was due to miscommunication, underbudgeting, general price increases, plus the Park District did not get a solid number from the prior owner. The property insurance increase was greater than expected. Vehicles and large equipment expenses are over budget. Payroll, benefits, and services are under budget. A \$200,000 surplus is projected.

Commissioner DeWitt asked if the vehicle and large equipment expense of \$40,000 or \$60,000 is a recurring cost or if it is a onetime expense. Amy Swenson said that the Park District bought a large copy machine and that was part of the \$40,000 expense. Commissioner Swolgaard asked if the vehicle and large equipment budget line item includes vehicles. Amy Swenson said the line item is mainly exercise equipment in the BIRC budget. Recreation Division Director Mark Benishek said two new stair steppers, two new ellipticals, and two tennis/pickleball serving machines were replaced this year. Commissioner DeWitt asked where the gym floor replacement cost is in the budget. Amy Swenson said under repairs and maintenance. Commissioner Swolgaard asked about the increase in utilities. Park Services Division Director Dan Hamlin said fuel and electric costs have increased by approximately 40%. Commissioner Swolgaard asked if BIRC uses propane. The

response was yes. Commissioner Goodlin asked if the interest expense budget line item relates to the purchase of BIRC. Amy Swenson said yes. The principal payments will begin in 2026.

Amy Swenson said in the overall budget, including all cost centers, the tax and program revenue is quite strong. Rental and facilities revenue is doing well overall however, pool facility rentals are down. The revenue from the Washington Recreation & Park Association SEEK grant is estimated to be \$500,000 instead of \$200,000 as noted in the budget. The budget will need to be amended to reflect the increase in grant revenue. Commissioner Janow asked if the SEEK grant funds will be received by year end. Amy Swenson said it is expected to.

Amy Swenson said wages are a little less than projected in large part due to difficulty hiring staff. The supplies expense is over projected due mainly to the SEEK grant. Recreation Division Director Mark Benishek said some wage and supply expenses are covered under the SEEK grant. Amy Swenson said the utilities expense has 7% remaining of the 2022 budgeted amount. Liability insurance went up much more than expected this year.

2022 Capital Improvement Fund Budget vs Actual: Park Services Division Director Dan Hamlin presented the 2022 Capital Improvement Fund Budget vs Actual stating the Aquatic Center and Battle Point Park improvements are progressing. Getting materials and contracts has been challenging. The Park District is seeking a structural engineer to review the in-house Maintenance Area Plan. The Park District is working to locate a foundation stabilization company for the Cave Family Heritage Park improvements. Work is being performed at Fay Bainbridge Park on the self-contained bathroom, cabins, and hillside shelter. Gazzam Lake Nature Preserve and Grand Forest restrooms may be replaced with pit toilets. Commissioner DeWitt asked why pit toilets are being considered. Dan Hamlin said contracting out the work and purchasing structures like the existing ones would cost \$80,000 to \$90,00 each. Vandalism to the current structures is also being taken into consideration.

Dan Hamlin said the Park District is working on a site plan for Grand Forest parking improvements. The Park District is working on a plan to improve parking at Battle Point Park around the Transmitter Building. Pritchard Park improvements are waiting on a permit from the City of Bainbridge Island. The Strawberry Hill Park skatepark design is going back to the committee with an initial plan. The dog park expansion at Strawberry Hill Park will be moving forward and the proposal will be brought to the board in the future for approval. The bike park at Strawberry Hill Park has a preliminary plan which the committee has weighed in on and new tennis courts are being discussed.

Noxious Weeds and Herbicide Applications – Request for Herbicide Applications for noxious Weeds: Commissioner DeWitt said that all actions will be in compliance with and guided by the Park District's Integrated Pest Management (IPM) policy

Natural Resources Manager Lydia Roush said IPM utilizes four strategies to control weeds and can be thought of as a triangle. There are four levels of the triangle. The base level is preferred, using preventative methods to control weeds. This level includes actions such as cleaning boots between hikes and not planting invasive species in yards. The second layer includes mechanical and physical controls such as hand pulling weeds and mowing. The third layer includes biological controls such as using goats or releasing other pests or insects to help keep invasive species at bay. The fourth layer is chemical and includes herbicides. Herbicides are used very sparingly in areas which are so overgrown with invasive species that other methods are not possible. The Park District has been working with the Kitsap County weed board to develop a contract to spray the Park District's weeds. The contract was denied by Kitsap County. The county has been unable to find a qualified replacement to fill the vacant noxious weed coordinator position. Staff is asking for approval to spray specific weeds in specific parks. Kitsap County was spraying weeds in many areas of Bainbridge Island including in parks. Invasive weed management is part of a successful restoration program and includes herbicide application. Staff does not want to use herbicides more than necessary, but noxious weeds are in areas where herbicide application is applicable and recommended. All state and local requirements are followed including the IPM policy which calls for the least toxic and

most localized applications. If approved staff would purchase injection systems to inject an herbicide capsule into a plant's stem. Using this method there would not be overspray of herbicide or human contact with the herbicide. The Bainbridge Island Land Trust has been using the herbicide injection system with great success. Lydia Roush asked the board for a motion to approve the presented treatment for noxious weeds on Park District property identified by the Kitsap County noxious weed control coordinator, other known or newly discovered noxious weeds and follow up treatments as necessary during the fall application period. **MSC: Janow/Kinney: Approve the presented treatments of noxious weeds on District properties identified by the previous Kitsap County weed coordinator and other known or newly discovered noxious weeds and follow up treatments as necessary for the fall application season.**

Forest Management Update: Natural Resources Manager Lydia Roush updated the board on activity in a few parks. Earlier this spring staff prepared a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for a five-year management plan for the Moritani Preserve as required by the donation agreement. The Moritani Preserve Management Plan Review and Update Project provides vegetative management consultancy services for Moritani Preserve. The RFQ was awarded to Chickadee Forestry, which wrote the Moritani Preserve forestry management guidelines. Chickadee Forestry has been asked for recommendations for field and invasive species management and to provide a more holistic view of site management of the Moritani Preserve. This fall the Park District will begin thinning two or three tree stands in Moritani Preserve depending on Chickadee Forestry's recommendations. Chickadee Forestry has reviewed the site and believes clearing and logging can be successfully accomplished. Timber on the site has marketable value and can be sold to a local mill, using the proceeds to help offset the cost of the thinning project. Lydia Roush said tree stands at Moritani Preserve are very dense. Thinning has occurred on the southeast corner of the preserve, and it is looking very good, the area is responding well with the growth of natural vegetation. The goal is to create open spaces without toppling additional trees. Based on how the other thinned stands have done, Park District staff will follow a similar procedure called variable density thinning to mimic normal ecological processes.

Lydia Roush said the Strawberry Hill Park natural area management plan has been completed, guiding efforts for the next 10 years. It is recommended that the plan be reassessed in five years to ensure the Park District remains on target with the management plan. A forestry group came to look at the timber which is very dense and of high quality. The forestry group believe the trees can be thinned and the timber sold to a mill. The sale should pay for the cost of the work. Executive Director Terry Lande asked what happens if the trees are not thinned. Lydia Roush said the trees at Strawberry Hill Park are in a self-pruning process. The branches are very nubby due to inadequate sunlight, resources, or space. Trees cannot support foliage and branches. The self-pruning process can continue indefinitely and naturally but this process will take hundreds of years to reach a point where we are moving towards an old growth sustainable forest. Park District users want to enjoy the park, so self-pruning can be dangerous with falling limbs or trees. Climate change adds an additional stress to trees in the self-pruning process. These trees are not providing much carbon sequestration, capturing, and storing carbon dioxide in the air. Thinning these trees will help with carbon sequestration.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Recreation Division: Recreation Division Director Mark Benishek said the few remaining summer programs are finishing up. Outdoor Recreation Program Manager Nick Prevo is departing the Park District on September 15. Mark Benishek wanted to recognize the great work Nick Prevo has done. At the Bainbridge Island Recreation Center (BIRC) attendance is picking up for fall, fitness has been steady, tennis players are returning after the summer playing outdoors. Leagues are kicking off for both junior and adult tennis players. Fitness has had great staff preparation for fall classes working with a new instructor focusing on physical training and working with the older generation, plus an expanded personal training element. There will be an open house Saturday, September 17, to celebrate the one-year anniversary of the Park District acquiring BIRC. Gymnastics continues to look to fill the Recreation Program Specialist role, however one possible candidate will not be

available until December or January. Fall program enrollments are going well. Soccer enrollments are at a historic level and the Sports Program Coordinator Audree Gormanson is working with a private club to expand programs to accommodate individuals on a wait list. Staff is working on the winter/spring catalog. Active Adult Program Manager Sue Barrington will retire September 30 and is transferring many of the active adult programs to Audree Gormanson. Cultural programs will transfer to Youth & Teen Program Manager Shannon Buxton. Sue Barrington is working on the Washington Recreation & Park Association SEEK grant report and will present it at the September 15 board meeting. Recreation is looking to expand programming in the winter/spring catalog to include new parent/child and pottery programs. The Don Nakata pool is on schedule to re-open September 6. Bainbridge Aquatic Masters coach is out for approximately one more month, and Mark Benishek wanted to recognize the assistant coaches who have come back to fill in during the coach's absence. A head lifeguard for weekends began work last week. Commissioner Janow said there are BIRC memberships available, but tennis memberships are full. There is a tennis waitlist.

Park Services Division: Park Services Division Director Dan Hamlin said the Don Nakata pool is nearly ready to reopen. Parking lots have been restriped. Staff returned to work on the cabins at Fay Bainbridge Park. A water leak was discovered in a hillside at Fay Bainbridge Park, it was a costly repair. Staff worked at the Moritani Preserve for Bainbridge Island Parks & Trails Foundation's event on September 5. Strawberry Hill Park will be spruced up for BIPTF's event on September 10. Staff met with the soccer league folks to discuss a potential synthetic turf field at Strawberry Hill Park. Senior Planner Perry Barrett said an application letter was received from the City of Bainbridge Island regarding permitting requirements for Williams-Olson Park. The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) document provides guidance on who leads in the permitting responsibility. Perry Barrett said he was finishing the SEPA check list for environmental impact for Williams-Olson Park. The storm water report for Williams-Olson Park is complete. There is no over-water structure, but a shoreline permit is needed.

The Recreation Conservation Office had a presentation at which he defended the Park District's grant for the extension on the City dock at Waterfront Park. Staff will not know for certain the status of the award until the governor's budget is proposed. Additional site investigation is needed with regards to Blakely Harbor Park, and there may be minor activity related to clean-up efforts through the end of September or early October. Port Blakely Tree Farms is lead on the clean-up effort as directed by the Department of Ecology. Parks is not liable for the clean-up costs. Commissioner DeWitt asked if the Department of Ecology has indicated when remediation will begin. Perry Barret said no, but it is on the DOE's priority list. Executive Director Terry Lande said the DOE indicated it may be three to four years before anything is forthcoming. Perry Barrett said the DOE must figure out the remedy and they are still in the assessment period.

Executive Director Mary Meler with Bainbridge Island Parks & Trails Foundation said Monday, September 5 is a community picnic at Moritani Preserve to celebrate the park in downtown Bainbridge. The following Saturday is the first benefit for the BIPTF at Strawberry Hill Park. She wanted to thank the Park District for its support.

Executive Director Terry Lande recognized IT Manager Skye Carlson for the great work he is doing. Movies in the Park and the Sounds of Summer concert series at Battle Point Park went very well thanks to Marketing/Communications Manager Douglas Slingerland, Marketing Coordinator Allie Smith, Community Outreach Coordinator Stephanie Bugas, and other staff. The final concert of the season possibly had the largest crowd ever, over 2,000 attendees. Commissioner Janow said concert attendees were very happy, both young and old having a great time. She thanked the park staff for the concerts in the park as it builds a sense of community.

UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS:

On October 20 there will be a work session.

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS:

- Commissioner Janow said she attend the Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial event. The National Park Service's new regional superintendent made a presentation. The presentation included a thank you to the Park District for maintaining the memorial.
- Commissioner Goodlin said while reviewing expenses he realized the Bainbridge Island Parks & Trails Foundation made a \$25,000 grant donation for the purchase of an excavator. Park Services Division Director Dan Hamlin said the BIPTF has made donations for several items that come through the budget process. Mary Meier with the BIPTF said a mid- and end-of-year report of total grants can be provided to the board.
- Commissioner Kinney staffed a booth the Bainbridge Island Farmers' Market a few weekends ago and was approached by an individual from the tennis community to discuss tennis and the synergy of locating two tennis courts together. He also heard from a community member who was curious about the farm trail easement. Park Services Division Director Dan Hamlin commented that the trail is being built in a right-of-way. Commissioner Kinney said he was at Battle Point Park a few weeks ago, noticed a gap in a sidewalk and mentioned it to Executive Director Terry Lande. The next day staff fixed the issue.
- Commissioner Swolgaard said he will not be at the September 15 regular board meeting.
- Commissioner DeWitt said he attended last night's concert in the park. The crowd was amazing and large. He sent a letter to editors of two local newspapers acknowledging staff, thanking attendees and sponsors.

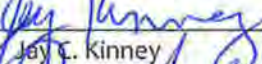
MEETING ADJOURNED to a five-minute recess at 7:55 pm with announced time to reconvene at 8:00 pm. **MEETING RECONVENED** at 8:00 pm.

MEETING ADJOURNED TO EXECUTIVE SESSION at 8:00 pm for discussion of real estate with announced time to reconvene at 8:10 pm.

MEETING RECONVENED at 8:10 pm and **ADJOURNED** at 8:10 pm.

Betty Mirkovich
Terry M. Lande
BAINBRIDGE ISLAND METROPOLITAN
PARK & RECREATION DISTRICT

BY: 
Kenneth R. DeWitt

BY: 
Jay C. Kinney

BY: 
Tom Goodlin

BY: 
Dawn Janow

ATTEST: _____
John Thomas Swolgaard