

**BAINBRIDGE ISLAND METROPOLITAN PARK & RECREATION DISTRICT  
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING October 2, 2025  
STRAWBERRY HILL CENTER**

**CALL TO ORDER:** A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 4:01 pm by Chair Goodlin.

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

**ADJUSTMENTS TO AGENDA:** None

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE:** None

**MISSION STATEMENT:** Chair Goodlin read the 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.

**GENERAL BUSINESS**

**BUDGET WORK SESSION – 2026 BUDGETS:** Assistant Executive Director Amy Swenson reviewed District accomplishments in 2024 and 2025 including: 1) the completion of the Strawberry Hill Bike Park, 2) improvements to the procurement process, 3) accounting and timesheet software system conversions, 4) the new website which will be ready to launch in 2026, 5) conversion to ActiveNet recreation software, 6) Phase I of the Ray Williamson pool renovation, 7) work on the Comprehensive Plan update which will be adopted in 2026, and 8) getting started on the ADA transition plan.

Goals for 2026 include: 1) completion of the 2026 Comprehensive Plan, 2) Phase II of the Ray Williamson pool renovation, 3) continued development of the ADA transition plan, 4) updates to the fee policy for recreation programming, 5) completion of the review of and possible updates to the salary scale, 6) fundraising for the sail float replacement project, 7) addressing the Battle Point Park artificial turf field replacement, and 8) pursuing new grant funding opportunities. Anticipated challenges for the budget in 2026 include: 1) impacts to the budget from scheduling changes during Phase II of the Ray Williamson pool renovation, 2) finalizing Phase II of the renovation, 3) funding Phase II of the renovation, 4) addressing a need for improved recreation staff office space, 5) the initial quote for health insurance in 2026 was for a 14% increase and although the broker has indicated that it can probably be negotiated down that increase is not yet reflected in the budget, 6) improvements to the Jack O'Neill Maintenance Center and park office at Battle Point Park, 7) fundraising for the sail float replacement project, and 8) continued attention to aging structures and increased maintenance.

Recommendations for the 2026 General Fund budget include: 1) 3% cost of living adjustment, 2) 3% increase in tax revenue, 3) no increase for property and liability insurance, 4) no increase in legal fees, 5) continued funding for records management, and 6) \$25,000 in professional fees moved from the 2025 budget to the 2026 budget to complete the consultant's work on the salary scale review.

The District's reserve balance is projected to be approximately 7 million dollars at the end of 2025 and staff's recommendation is to never dip below 3.5 million dollars in reserves. The Finance Committee requested that staff make projections for the reserve balance in a scenario where no loan is taken out to complete Phase II of the Ray Williamson pool renovation, which is projected to bring the District's reserve balance down to about 4 million dollars by the end of 2026.

The administration division budget was divided into more cost centers for tracking purposes and there is a 1 million dollar increase budgeted in the amount to be transferred to the Capital Improvement Fund in 2026. The recreation division is proposing additional funding for increased lifeguard staffing at the Aquatic Center. Funding for contracted custodial work at the Eagledale Pottery Studio and gymnastics facilities has been moved to the recreation division budget from the park

services division budget. In the park services division budget funding has been added for a 24-hour per week part-time custodial position at the Aquatic Center as well as increases for utilities and pool chemicals.

Procurement Administrator Michelle Miller reviewed the Capital Improvement Fund projects completed in 2025: 1) Strawberry Hill Bike Park, 2) Don Nakata slide staircase, 3) Eagledale Park picnic shelter roof, and 4) tennis court resurfacing. More projects are currently underway including: 1) the conversion of the tennis courts to pickleball courts at Battle Point Park, 2) the skate bowl in Strawberry Hill Park is being repainted, 3) the septic system replacement for the restrooms by the KidsUp! playground at Battle Point Park, 4) Don Nakata slide recoating, and 5) Phase I of the Ray Williamson pool renovation.

Projects budgeted for District funding in 2026 include: 1) ADA improvements, 2) ballfield improvements, 3) Battle Point Park restroom and septic system, 4) Battle Point Park artificial turf fields, 5) court resurfacing, 6) Eagledale Pottery Studio roof replacement, 7) Phase II of the Ray Williamson pool renovation, and 8) the heat pump for Strawberry Hill Center. Projects budgeted for with other funding in 2026 include: 1) Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial visitor center, 2) sail float replacement, 3) EV stations in parks, 4) Meigs Park trail improvements, and 5) the new skate park for Strawberry Hill Park. Executive Director Dan Hamlin said staff will work with the Bainbridge Island Parks & Trails Foundation to confirm the projects budgeted for in the other funding category.

There was some discussion about capital projects budgeted from 2027 through 2031. A lot of projects had to be pushed out to accommodate the large projects planned for 2026. The projects pushed out include: 1) improvements to the house in Cave Family Heritage Park, 2) Transmitter Building roof, 3) Grand Forest parking improvements, 4) Island Center Hall heating system, 5) Sakai Park improvements, 6) Seabold Hall roof, and 7) dedicated office space for recreation staff. It was noted that Bainbridge Island Recreation Center, where recreation staff work currently, is a busy public facility. A dedicated office space for recreation staff would be more conducive for office work requiring focus and communication between staff members, it would also free up additional parking for BIRC members.

The General Fund reserves forecast for the end of 2026 is for 4 million dollars in reserves, which is the minimum amount staff is comfortable with. Staff noted that 4 million dollars is the forecast without taking out a loan for Phase II of the Ray Williamson pool renovation and assuming there are no significant changes to the scope of the project due to discovered conditions. Commissioner Kinney noted that even though not taking out a loan, as was previously discussed, will pull the District's reserves down it does not make sense to borrow money just to keep money in reserves. If it becomes necessary the District can get a loan for the amount necessary at that time. Dan Hamlin noted that in 2028 the District will revert to the statutory limit of 1% for yearly tax revenue increases rather than having that amount be tied to inflation as it is currently. Amy Swenson said staff recommend not going below 4 million dollars in reserves to ensure the District does not have to take out a line of credit to pay for operations and payroll until tax funding is collected. Amy Swenson said she is concerned about 2028 when the District reverts to the 1% statutory limit for tax revenue increases. Capital Improvement Fund funding will likely become more limited at that time to preserve staffing levels so that the levels of service to the community are maintained. Commissioner Janow said she is interested in creative ways to seek or maximize additional revenue sources for the District. Amy Swenson said one way the District has been able to manage its growth is by increasing efficiencies to keep expenses down.

Commissioner Kinney asked if there is money budgeted for forest management in 2026. Park Services Division Director Lydia Roush said staff are working with Bainbridge Island Parks & Trails Foundation on fundraising. Staff intend to sell timber from forest thinning to help offset cost, however, District parcels are small compared to most forestry properties making offsetting the cost of the projects with the revenue tricky. Dan Hamlin noted operational dollars are budgeted for natural resources, trails, and Student Conservation Corps which are all part of the District's efforts to improve forest health.

Commissioner Janow asked about funding for increased access to shoreline which is something the community ranked as a high priority during the feedback gathering process for the Comprehensive Plan update underway currently. Dan Hamlin said operational dollars can be used for improving access to shorelines while land purchases would require planning. Commissioner Kinney asked if in the future the District will need to manage forested parks through thinning or other means so that they are not as fire prone. Lydia Roush said yes, and staff are assessing ways to prioritize sites and when to do that work. Dan Hamlin said staff will also be increasing efforts to pursue grant opportunities.

Dan Hamlin asked if pursuing cork infill rather than rubber infill for the replacement of the artificial turf fields at Battle Point Park is a priority for the board considering the higher cost. The amount currently budgeted in the Capital Improvement Fund is for rubber infill, which although considered controversial by some people, to his knowledge there is no direct proof of health risks associated with it. The board expressed interest in having more information, staff will do additional research and talk to the user groups.

Commissioner Goodlin asked if there are any uncertainties identified in the Capital Improvement Fund budget. Michelle Miller said the biggest uncertainty may be an unexpected discovery during Phase II of the Ray Williamson pool renovation. While there are contingencies budgeted into the project, that will not be enough for major changes to the plan due to discovered conditions. The estimated cost for Phase II has already come in 1 million dollars over what was expected originally due to tariffs and the additional drain work being required.

Commissioner Janow asked if there is a way to create a fund where reserves are constantly being accumulated towards long-term replacement costs. Dan Hamlin said money has been added to the reserves for years for the Ray Williamson pool renovation. However, if unexpected catastrophic failures happen other capital projects may need to be prioritized. Commissioner Swolgaard asked how much money was spent on change orders for Phase I of the renovation. Staff said change order costs stayed within the budgeted contingency. Commissioner Swolgaard replied that change order costs staying within the contingency is good because it shows good planning.

Principal payments on the loan for the Bainbridge Island Recreation Center start in 2026. BIRC is currently making enough money, for the second year in a row, to cover the larger principal payment.

**MEETING ADJOURNED** at 5:37 pm.

Helen Stone  
Dan Hamlin  
BAINBRIDGE ISLAND METROPOLITAN  
PARK & RECREATION DISTRICT

BY: 

Tom Goodlin

BY: 

Dawn Janow

BY: 

Jay G. Kinney

BY: 

John Thomas Swolgaard

ATTEST: 

Kenneth R. DeWitt