

**BAINBRIDGE ISLAND METROPOLITAN PARK & RECREATION DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING OCTOBER 21, 2021
ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING**

CALL TO ORDER: A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 6:03 pm by Chair Janow.

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

ADJUSTMENTS TO AGENDA: Move item 50.3 COVID-19 Vaccinations for Employees directly before item 50.2 COVID-19 Vaccinations for Patrons.

MISSION STATEMENT: Commissioner Janow 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.

BOARD CONSENT

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Upon hearing there were no corrections to the minutes of the October 7, 2021 regular board meeting, Chair Janow stated the minutes stand approved as submitted.

APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS: MSC: DeWitt/Swolgaard: 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
10/05/21	001 General Fund 300 Capital Improvement Fund 310 Land Acquisition Fund	21883-21913	90,815.99	10/05/21
10/12/21	001 General Fund 300 Capital Improvement Fund 310 Land Acquisition Fund	21914-21944	68,671.17	10/12/21
10/19/21	001 General Fund	21946-21948	9,895.00	10/19/21

GENERAL BUSINESS

STRAWBERRY HILL PARK CONCEPT PLAN: Executive Director Terry Lande said what is being presented tonight is a concept plan put together by staff to use as a starting point. Park Services Division Director Dan Hamlin said that the purpose of this discussion is to deal with the park cohesively, which is necessary due to how many different interest groups are working on projects in the park. The recent 10-acre property addition to Strawberry Hill Park was donated anonymously but with several specific conditions for land use including: that the property will remain as part of Strawberry Hill Park in perpetuity, that it will be used to expand the dog park which is to cover up to 25% of the property addition, and that mountain bike trails be considered as a site use.

All the individual interest groups will check in together so they know what each other are doing and how they might impact each other. The dog park expansion has been discussed by the Dog Advisory Committee. Several ideas have been examined such as building an additional large dog area rather than simply enlarging the current one, improving the current large dog area entry, screening the dog park from the mountain bike trail area, and possible off-leash dog trails. The property addition was found to be topographically ideal for mountain bike trails and the interest group is excited and ready to move forward with a designer for phased development of that area. A joint mountain bike trail project agreement will be made with the Bainbridge Island Parks Foundation who will spearhead fundraising while the Park District leads project development and

implementation. The feasibility of a hard surface pump track will be investigated and could be a joint project between the mountain bike trails interest group and the skate park interest group. The skate park interest group has been in discussions with the BIPF regarding a project agreement to form a joint agreement. The current skate park is a bowl that is designed for relatively high-level skateboarding. The new elements being explored by the interest group would be more beginner friendly and include street skate elements. They are also interested in covering a portion of or the entire skate park area. Expansion of the skate park area may require the current playground area to be moved or some reconfiguring of the dog park area for small dogs. This is an example of why the interest group projects must happen both separately with their own consultant and budget and yet simultaneously to work towards a final plan for the entire park. Several trail connections to the park are being investigated as well as a perimeter loop trail. Staff is working on a possible amendment to the right-of-way that came with the property addition. The right of way goes directly through an old agriculture building with historical significance which belongs to the Hayashida family who used to own the property which was recently added to the park. If the playground area does need to be moved to a new location to make room for skate park expansions, recreation staff has requested that it remain near Strawberry Hill Center so that programs can still easily access it. This is a good opportunity to also explore the addition of a separate playground near the concession stand. There is the potential for ballfield improvements at the park, such as expanding field three. The current tennis court is in a compromised condition and the current footprint may be a good location for moving the current playground to. Two new tennis courts could be added east of the existing tennis court, although some tree work and potential tree removal would need to be done. The tennis court interest group is exploring options for covering and lighting the tennis courts. Other considerations for the park include determining the fate of the old administration office and support structures as well as other sheds and outbuildings. The well house and water storage tank will need to be protected. Road conditions and parking areas need to be addressed including overflow parking for the Filipino American Community Hall. This revamp of the park is a good opportunity for the board to talk about renaming the park or naming the property addition as has been previously discussed. Next steps include getting the project agreements with BIPF in place, formalization of the various interest groups into committees, and sending out requests for proposals or requests for qualifications as needed for specific project areas. Staff would like to put out a request for qualifications for a consultant to consolidate and synthesize all the work being done by the various interest groups.

Commissioner DeWitt said the idea of putting a storage facility where the old administration office is at the entrance of the park does not excite him. He also mentioned that the playground could be put where the tin shed is now. Commissioner Kinney said the tin shed is full of softball equipment which will still need to be stored on site. Commissioner Janow thanked Dan Hamlin for the presentation tonight which captured a lot of people's dreams and hopes for the site and she would like to see a consultant create a design concept for the entirety of the park. Commissioner Glosser agreed that having an overall vision is an imperative and added that having an overall timeline is important as well. User groups are eager to move forward, and a timeline would serve to both manage expectations and get people excited. Addressing restroom facilities will also be important with the potential for more users at the park. He appreciates the emphasis on non-motorized access and said maximizing the ways that people can get there safely is important. Elements in the park design that allow for highlighting historical uses of the land would be nice even if the park is not renamed, whether that means naming different sections or having informational kiosks. Commissioner Kinney asked if some user groups can get started right away with their elements while other elements are figured out. Dan Hamlin said that is the plan and the requests for proposals for the bike park and the skate park are ready to be put out. Conversations regarding potential sites for additional tennis courts are ongoing with the tennis community and more information will be brought to the board on this subject at a subsequent board meeting. **MSC: Swolgaard/DeWitt: Direct staff to send out a request for qualifications for a concept plan for Strawberry Hill Park.** Commissioner Janow said there is a lot to coordinate in this park and she wants to make sure all the interest groups have a seat at the table. Terry Lande said the concept plan is to oversee that all the individual interest group

elements are facilitated to move forward as fast as possible rather than for asking the community in general if there are additional interest groups that have ideas for this park.

Andy Maron, an island resident, said that there has been some discussion about inquiring after the availability of the eight acres east of the park which is owned by TCI Cable. He would mention this potential for expansion in that direction to the concept plan consultant. He does not know what is left underground from when the park was a Nike Missile site during World War II, but it may be worthwhile to see if there is anything usable or historically significant from that era.

COVID-19 VACCINATIONS FOR EMPLOYEES: Executive Director Terry Lande said this is meant to be an initial conversation for the board to be able to direct staff to work on policies if the board decides to move in the direction of requiring COVID-19 vaccines for employees. According to the Kitsap Public Health District as of yesterday, 100% of kids on Bainbridge Island between 12-18 years of age have had at least one of the two required COVID-19 vaccination shots and 95% of kids in that age group have had both COVID-19 vaccination shots. Just over 90% of island residents above the age of 18 have been fully vaccinated. What staff is hearing is that both employees and patrons have expressed interest in the vaccination status of other employees as well as patrons. Some employees have even resigned during the pandemic because they are not willing to work in a situation where they do not know who is vaccinated and who is not.

Commissioner Kinney said that the state mandated that all state employees be vaccinated. There is certainly a safety issue for vaccinated staff who are exposed to unvaccinated coworkers. Legally there is no problem with requiring mandatory COVID-19 vaccinations for employees with the same exemptions that the state has for medical and religious reasons. The same motivations that the state had for enacting a COVID-19 vaccine mandate apply to the Park District, which are to protect both patrons and staff. He said there is no need to reinvent the wheel if the Park District adopts the state program. Commissioner Swolgaard asked what other agencies on the island are doing regarding employee COVID-19 vaccination requirements. Terry Lande said 100% of the staff at the Bainbridge Island Fire Department are vaccinated. The City of Bainbridge Island does not currently interview anyone for employment who is unvaccinated. The School District is following the state mandate. Commissioner Swolgaard said staff safety is very important. Commissioner Glosser agreed with Commissioner Kinney that using the state's vaccine mandate as a template for a policy is a good idea. He said that if the job of a commissioner is to represent the will of the community, then due to the percentages of people who are vaccinated on the island, there is no ambiguity as to the direction the board should go on this topic. It is hard to get 90% of people to agree on anything and this is a case where actions speak as loud or louder than words. Commissioner DeWitt said he has thought about people who have already had COVID-19 as they could have antibodies built up which may fall under a medical exemption and said something like that is a reasonable accommodation. He thinks it would be okay if the Park District puts a COVID-19 vaccination mandate in place if the Park District also has reasonable exemptions in place.

Caty Kehs spoke in support of mandating COVID-19 vaccinations for staff and asked the board to consider a mandate for patrons as well. She believes the island would be in support of vaccine mandates and noted that many Park District employees live off-island. She is especially concerned with children who are not yet eligible to be vaccinated. She would like to see more safe indoor access for everyone given the seasonal weather and daylight changes.

Loanne Harmeling said as a member of a vulnerable community she supports mandated COVID-19 vaccinations for staff. She was at the Aquatic Center today and noted that there were people more vulnerable than her that use the facility.

Betty Wiese said she is an Aquatic Center user and would like the Park District to explore having a policy for mandatory employee COVID-19 vaccinations. She would suggest looking at lessons learned by the state as they have gone through the process of implementing exemptions.

MSC: DeWitt/Kinney: Move to direct staff to prepare a policy to require employee COVID-19 vaccinations.

COVID-19 VACCINATIONS FOR PATRONS: Executive Director Terry Lande said Park District patrons have expressed an interest in knowing if other patrons who participate in programming are vaccinated. There are many different types of patrons and activities to consider. Commissioner Kinney said it is one thing to require a COVID-19 vaccine to go on a hike with your kids in a park and another to require program registrants to be vaccinated. He would suggest that all access to and use of facilities and programs be limited to people who are vaccinated for COVID-19, except for outdoor scenarios with only friends or family present. There are national conversations going on about COVID-19 vaccine mandates and no one is going to be forced to get the COVID-19 vaccination. However, if you want to participate in the public sphere, one must get the COVID-19 vaccine just like one must get other vaccinations to go to school. There are a hundred examples of things one can do at home but not in public, and if one wants to be in public, one must make sure everyone is safe. Commissioner DeWitt said he is not quite as comfortable saying everyone who participates in programs needs to be vaccinated, however he does think there needs to be consistency for all the guidelines imposed across the Park District. Staff should look at options for flexibility such as either proving one is vaccinated for COVID-19 or that one has had a negative COVID-19 test within a certain amount of time. Commissioner Glosser said he largely agrees with Commissioner Kinney. As an example of why he thinks a requirement would be beneficial he said his son was registered in a Park District program this summer and by not having a COVID-19 vaccine requirement, it put the onus on participants to speak up when asked about their vaccination status. People and especially children may not feel comfortable asserting their COVID-19 vaccination status among peers. By not having a COVID-19 vaccine requirement in place it puts individual staff members in the position to enforce safety without clear guidelines or expectations to convey, and that ambiguity is troublesome. Imposing a requirement for something that reflects both the science and the will of the community strikes him as well reasoned. He understands the logistical difficulty of imposing a mandate. He knows it will be a pain to implement but said there is a responsibility to protect staff and the community. He defers to staff on how to implement a COVID-19 vaccine requirement for patrons in a way that makes sense. He would like it if everyone that walked into the Grand Forest was vaccinated but acknowledged there is no reasonable way to enforce that. Commissioner Janow asked if there is any information from the School District regarding which students are vaccinated. Terry Lande said that according to the Kitsap Public Health District 100% of 12-18-year-olds are vaccinated for COVID-19. The challenge becomes when sports teams visit other areas of the state or county or there are visiting teams in Park District facilities. If the Park District implemented a COVID-19 vaccination requirement it makes sense that registrants would have to show proof of vaccination at registration to keep individual instructors from being put in the position of having to enforce the requirement. Commissioner DeWitt said the Park District will also have to look at the use agreement with the School District for the Aquatic Center. Terry Lande said multiple issues will need to be investigated. He will contact the School District to see how they handle teams that visit other locations for competitions where there is no mandatory COVID-19 vaccination requirement.

Betty Wiese said that she is assuming that exemptions will have to be addressed for patrons and that addressing a COVID-19 vaccine requirement for patrons seems more complicated than for employees. Terry Lande said that he agrees that the policy would be more complicated for patrons and that staff will have to find some way of identifying patrons who are vaccinated or have an approved exemption. Betty Wiese said that those who will be in the position to approve exemptions will also have to be identified.

Caty Kehs said that Seattle Parks & Recreation is now requiring proof of COVID-19 vaccination, or a proof of a negative COVID-19 test for entry to all indoor facilities. Since other communities have blazed the trail the Park District will not have to go out and recreate the wheel on this issue. She knows that for high school students participating in high contact sports programs coming up this winter that students either must be vaccinated for COVID-19 or have negative COVID-19 tests twice a week and on any competition days. She hopes the Park District will look at other communities and pull from their best practices. She is in favor of COVID-19 vaccinations for users of all indoor facilities and programming as well as in situations where masks or proper social distancing cannot be ensured.

Marie Figgins said as an employee of Bainbridge Island Recreation Center that she is in favor of COVID-19 vaccination requirements for employees and patrons, which would make her feel more comfortable. She has also heard from a lot of people who take her classes that it would put them at ease.

Mary Dombrowski said she would like to see an exemption from the COVID-19 vaccination requirement for people attending private parties at facilities owned by the Park District.

MSC: Kinney/Swolgaard: Move that the Park District investigate and come up with a policy for users to be vaccinated and/or have a negative COVID-19 test and suggests strongly that staff investigate the policy Seattle Parks & Recreation has in place.

Commissioner Glosser said staff can think about what a reasonable time for implementation is but that having something in place by the next round of registration is an imperative.

MEETING ADJOURNED to a five-minute recess at 7:42 pm with announced time to reconvene at 7:47 pm. **MEETING RECONVENED** at 7:49 pm.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Recreation Division: Recreation Division Director Mark Benishek said that tonight is the last night of the Haunted Hayride event which sold out and has received positive feedback. There is a new Bainbridge Island Swim Club Head Coach, his name is Kyle Harris, and he will start in early to mid-November. There are five new lifeguard candidates. Active Adult Program Manager Sue Barrington has five new instructors and is in the process of readjusting her winter/spring programming to accommodate the corresponding new classes. Marketing Coordinator Allie Smith is working on the development of the winter/spring recreation catalog. The Park District will be applying again in 2022 for grant monies through a Washington Recreation & Park Association grant, this year the Park District was awarded \$131,000 through that grant opportunity. Recreation Superintendent Bryan Garoutte said that this is the first week that employees are eligible to join Bainbridge Island Recreation Center as a benefit of employment. BIRC now has 850 monthly user accounts. There are several new instructors at BIRC. Outdoor Program Manager Nick Prevo received new kayaks ordered with funds from the WRPA grant. Gymnastics teams are prepping for their competitive season. Sports Program Manager Julie Miller's tot tennis, ultimate frisbee, and pickleball classes are going well. Youth & Teen Program Manager Shannon Buxton will hear in a couple weeks if the Bainbridge Island Parks Foundation has approved her grant request for Eagledale Pottery Studio equipment. Executive Director Terry Lande noted that staff are working on how to address pickleball requests at BIRC with the fewest number of disruptions to current programming.

Park Services Division: Park Services Division Director Dan Hamlin said that the Cooperative Weed Management Agreement group has drafted a memorandum of understanding which is moving forward. Staff has been busy working on the Haunted Hayride. The trees at the Moritani Preserve are being thinned this week to promote forest health. Work is being done on new cabins at Fay Bainbridge Park, it has been a struggle getting materials. Construction of additional offices in the Bainbridge Island Recreation Center is underway. The new Sound to Olympics trail connection into Sakai Park was completed today with a grand opening planned for November 3 at noon. The bid paperwork for the Battle Point Park pond dam repair is nearly complete. Senior Planner Perry Barrett said work is being done on grant reimbursements. There was a walk through on the potential trail connection between Meigs Park and the Grand Forest and talks continue in this effort.

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS:

- Commissioner Kinney said he got an email from a Bainbridge Island resident which he forwarded to Executive Director Terry Lande regarding topping trees in a park that are growing into the resident's view.

- Commissioner Kinney said there was a Dog Advisory Committee meeting this week and committee member Kirk Robinson is upset about the Park District not having a public process in place for Pritchard Park. Kirk Robinson wants to make sure the public has the chance to be heard on the issue of whether the community at large wants to see off-leash dog use at Pritchard Park.
- Commissioner Kinney said he met with representatives from the Battle Point Astronomical Association and the Battle Point Night Skies Alliance regarding their position against lighting of the artificial turf fields at Battle Point Park. During the meeting he got a tour of the observatory building and noticed it needs some maintenance. He asked if BPAA or the Park District oversees maintenance on the observatory building. Executive Director Terry Lande said he believes the agreement between BPAA and the Park District is that BPAA takes care of building maintenance.
- Commissioner Kinney said that regarding the discussion about kids needing more entry level skateboarding opportunities on the island and the possibility of building them at Strawberry Hill Park, across the street from his office is an empty lot and he has observed that many kids use it as a place to skateboard.
- Commissioner DeWitt said that he got the same email that Commissioner Kinney did about topping trees in a park and that there are issues with the request.
- Commissioner DeWitt said he took his granddaughter to the KidsUp! Playground recently and she did not mind that the sand was replaced with wood chips.
- Commissioner Glosser said he attended a recent Trails Advisory Committee meeting.
- Commissioner Glosser said he is enthusiastic to have the requests for qualifications and requests for proposals going out for work to be done at Strawberry Hill Park as discussed this evening.
- Commissioner Glosser said it was fun to have the opportunity to participate in the Walks with Commissioners program.
- Commissioner Janow said that she sent an email to Park District staff regarding equity in registration which was addressed by Executive Director Terry Lande. She feels good about the multiple ways that participants have to register for programs.
- Commissioner Janow said that the Haunted Hayride is awesome this year and staff did a fantastic job.
- Commissioner Janow said the Park District podcast series that she is facilitating is going well.
- Commissioner Janow said she enjoyed the recent Walks with Commissioners program.
- Commissioner DeWitt gave kudos to Community Outreach Coordinator Emily Swift and the rest of the staff for the Haunted Hayride.
- Commissioner Janow encouraged everyone who has not been to Battle Point Park recently to get out there as it is gorgeous this time of year.

MEETING ADJOURNED at 8:11 pm.

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

BY: 
Dawn Janow

BY: Jay Kinney
Jay C. Kinney

BY: Kenneth R. DeWitt
Kenneth R. DeWitt

BY: John Thomas Swolgaard
John Thomas Swolgaard

ATTEST: Asaph Glosser
Asaph Glosser