

BAINBRIDGE ISLAND METROPOLITAN PARK & RECREATION DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING July 21, 2022
BAINBRIDGE ISLAND RECREATION CENTER

CALL TO ORDER: A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 6:01 pm by Chair DeWitt.

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

ADJUSTMENTS TO AGENDA: Add an executive session for real estate for ten minutes.

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.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Mary Dombrowski asked if the Park District is thinking about creating a policy for motorized bicycles in parks. She also plans to talk to the City Council. Commissioner DeWitt replied that the Park District is looking into creating a policy for motorized bicycles. Staff has been tasked through the Trails Advisory Committee to do research and bring recommendations to the board.

BOARD CONSENT

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Upon hearing there were no corrections to the minutes of the July 7, 2022 regular board meeting, Chair DeWitt stated the minutes stand approved as submitted.

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
06/15/22	001 General Fund 300 Capital Improvement Fund	23186-23232	85,334.02	06/15/22
06/21/22	001 General Fund	23233-23242	3,309.88	06/21/22
06/28/22	001 General Fund 300 Capital Improvement Fund	23243-23267	41,405.47	06/28/22
07/05/22	001 General Fund 300 Capital Improvement Fund	23268-23299	84,510.29	07/15/22
	001 General Fund (June Payroll)	EFT & 2980-2993	622,233.21	

GENERAL BUSINESS

FORT WARD PLAYGROUND: Park Services Division Director Dan Hamlin said this is the introduction of this project and there will be no decision requested from the board tonight. The Fort Ward Parade Grounds was transferred from the City of Bainbridge Island in 2011 and that transfer agreement specifically permits passive uses and a children's playground. In the plat the Fort Ward Parade Grounds is limited to informal recreation, and it is noted that a children's playground may be developed. Both the Fort Ward Parade Grounds transfer agreement and plat specify that upon recommendation from the Fort Ward Neighborhood Association a playground may be developed there. This is an area of the island that has been identified as having a lack of a public play area. Many requests for a playground have been received by staff from the Fort Ward community. Three site options were shared, one in the upper Fort Ward Park area, one on the Fort Ward Parade

Grounds, and one on a lot adjacent to the Fort Ward Parade Grounds. One option is to use a playground which was donated to the Park District, and images of that playground were shared. Fundraising would be required to pay for any playground developed in the area. The Bainbridge Island Parks & Trails Foundation has provided a \$3,000 grant for seed money and the Fort Ward Neighborhood Association has some money available as well. The next step is to listen to public input. Staff proposed bringing this topic back to the regular board meeting on August 18 for possible approval to move forward. If the project does move forward, a location would be selected, an agreement would be developed with BIPTF, and a neighborhood working group would be formed.

Sarah Lee lives in Fort Ward and thanked the Park District for its partnership over the years. The Fort Ward Parade Grounds is special to her. She does not support a playground on the Fort Ward Parade Grounds. What she likes is passive play and she suggested building a playground in the upper Fort Ward Park parking lot.

Bonnie Harris lives in Fort Ward. She is concerned about the historic presence of the Fort Ward Parade Grounds and is against putting any play structure there. Traffic is a concern to her if a playground is built. Without a traffic and parking study she does not think it is a good place to have a playground. There is a lot of disagreement in the neighborhood about this issue. She requests that the board send the issue back to the neighborhood to vote.

Executive Director Mary Meier with the Bainbridge Island Parks & Trails Foundation said BIPTF supports the Park District and the community in fundraising for various projects and takes a neutral stance on the project.

Karen Brumley lives in Fort Ward. She said the Fort Ward neighborhood is a close-knit community. Many of the neighbors were disappointed that this process had begun without notice. She said she deeply values young families in the neighborhood and is not against providing families access to a nearby playground. She is deeply concerned that if this continues to move the way it has that the Fort Ward neighborhood could become fractured.

Matthew Malouf lives in Fort Ward. He said there have been significant issues with speeding next to the playground placement option presented tonight in the upper Fort Ward Park area, making it not a safe place to put a playground. People are not opposed to a playground in the area, they are opposed to one on the Fort Ward Parade Grounds. He thinks that the upper Fort Ward Park parking lot is an underutilized place that would be a good site for a playground. The goal should be to identify a place where a playground will be accepted by the community.

John Lay lives in Fort Ward with his wife. They bought their house, which is across the street from the Fort Ward Parade Grounds, relying on the fact that it was a historic district and would be in perpetuity. Had they known that there would be a playground proposed virtually in their backyard they would not have purchased the house. One of the main points he would like to make is that this playground is being constructed for the convenience of young parents. He asked who is going to pay the price for that convenience.

Patrick Taylor lives in Fort Ward, and he supports the idea of a playground. However, from a historical standpoint he does not think it is appropriate to put a playground on the Fort Ward Parade Grounds.

Heather Berse lives in Fort Ward and has three kids under the age of five. She has made a public records request for police reports made in several Bainbridge Island parks. She said it is serious that at Bainbridge High School there is sexual assault happening and drugs being used. That is not ok to happen in Fort Ward and she does not want to be exposed to that. She is wondering how the Park District could maintain a playground if there is graffiti in the area that has not been cleaned up.

Corey Berse said the thing that concerns him most is what this topic has done in a week to his community. The other thing that concerns him is the notion of the Fort Ward Neighborhood Association which he has not been aware of in the three years he has lived there. He wants to make sure there is a neighborhood process. He thinks the proposal disadvantages the people who live immediately around the Fort Ward Parade Grounds.

Alicia Arter lives in Fort Ward. Looking around at other children's parks, she does not see them put within 100 feet of private residences. It was noted that Schel Chelb Park, Owen's Playground at Rotary Park, Madison Tot Lot, and Aaron Tot Lot are located within 100 feet of private residences. She is concerned about the traffic in the area which she says is dangerous for kids under six years old. She is a commissioner with Kitsap County Sewer District 7, and she does not believe the area is set up with sewer lines for bathrooms. She has never heard of the Fort Ward Neighborhood Association. One of the conditions is that FWNA recommend a playground on the Fort Ward Parade Grounds and FWNA has not approached the neighbors. She thinks the issue needs to be addressed by the Fort Ward community.

Grant Morgan said he appreciates the spirit of the community participating in this process. He agrees that traffic calming measures are appropriate. He thinks the playground is a wonderful idea because there would still be plenty of area available for unstructured play, there are no play structures within walking distance of the neighborhood, and this is another way for neighbors to use the Fort Ward Parade Grounds and will give them an opportunity to talk to each other. He said on average amenities like playgrounds increase nearby property value. He is all for amenities that encourage neighborhood kids to play together and neighbors to talk to each other.

Jess Morgan said her main reason for supporting the playground is her child. Her son has a playground in his backyard, but there should be an option for kids to play together. While she respects the objections she thinks it is imperative to encourage kids to be resilient in the face of risk whether it be traffic, personal injury, or illness. One thing that strikes her is that this has been in discussion for 11 years. In arguing about who is responsible for the playground, where it should be placed, and how it should be approved there is no agreement on whether the community wants a playground. She wants this to get done while her son is still young.

JD Sumsy said she appreciates all the comments made tonight. She never even considered that so many people would be against the idea of a playground. She said she is excited that this ongoing idea for a playground has been picked up again. She said it has been uniting for families to imagine an area where their children can play. Something she has heard a lot is the historical objection. She went to the Bainbridge Island Historical Museum and learned about the area. At one point Fort Ward was owned by someone in King County who brought children over for camps. She said in the long history of Fort Ward there have been a lot of uses of the land, and all the homes are built on land once owned by the Suquamish Tribe.

Erin McMann said she is the neighborhood nanny. The Fort Ward Parade Grounds is a wonderful place but when she moved to Fort Ward it felt like the Fort Ward Parade Grounds was an extension of people's backyards. She said it feels like an exclusive area that the rest of the community is not welcome to use. She has personally been escorted off the Fort Ward Parade Grounds three times this year even though she owns a home less than a block away. Not everyone in the neighborhood was able to attend tonight and there are both pro and con petitions going around. She referenced studies that support decreased crime in properly designed and maintained parks and increases in property values around play spaces. She said that they need someplace walkable for small children.

Mary Dombrowski said she is here representing the Fort Ward Neighborhood Association and she is in favor of a playground on the Fort Ward Parade Grounds. She said the FWNA was formed in the mid-90s. They knew the neighborhood was going to grow from about 40 homes to 400 homes. Fundraising was done, some money was spent on the benches and picnic tables in the Fort Ward Parade Grounds. She said the historical uses of the Fort Ward Parade Grounds include baseball, marching parades, social gatherings, and camps for children. It has been the center of Fort Ward and to have a playground anywhere else would be a waste. The playground needs to be up where the sunshine is, where people can walk to it and enjoy it.

Charlie Olsen said he was raised in Fort Ward and has seen it go through major changes. He thinks the playground project would be good for children in the neighborhood and he supports it.

Tom lives in Fort Ward and in the summer he opens his windows at night. He said there are a lot of kids that go to the Fort Ward Parade Grounds in the middle of the night that make noise and smoke marijuana. He said that if a playground structure goes in it is going to get worse. He is in favor of a playground just not on the Fort Ward Parade Grounds because vandalism does happen. Parking and a restroom would have to be provided and the restroom could be attacked by vandals. He asked that other areas be considered.

Nicole moved to Fort Ward three years ago. It did not occur to her to question whether there was a playground nearby. She said pocket playgrounds do not have bathrooms or parking. She thinks it would be a huge asset to have someplace kids can walk to. She has huge concerns about a playground being in the upper Fort Ward Park parking area because of traffic. It was a shock to her that the Fort Ward area does not have a playground and she would love to see one on the Fort Ward Parade Grounds. She understands the history of the Fort Ward Parade Grounds but there was also history before the military owned it and if history is going to be argued she said trees should be planted.

A citizen asked when a proposal is made to an entire community how it is disseminated to the members of that community. She would love to be an active member of the community, but she does not understand the process. She did not know about the Fort Ward Neighborhood Association. Commissioner Kinney said it happens a lot that members of the community come to staff with an idea which is then vetted by staff. Then a proposal comes to the board to see if the board likes the idea. Then it goes back to the community for fine tuning and feedback. Staff will work with the neighborhood in many ways. There will be at least one more public meeting. There is no cookie cutter answer. He encouraged people to talk to their neighbors and check the Park District website. Commissioner Janow said there is a document on the website that talks about how an idea for a Capital Improvement Fund project is brought forward and vetted. She said for folks who did not have a chance to attend tonight's meeting, the board reads every written comment they receive and that is as valid and important as making public comment. Someone from the audience asked when the Bainbridge Island Fire Department is brought into the process regarding emergency vehicle access. Commissioner DeWitt said the process is a little different for every proposal, but the appropriate agencies will be involved. Senior Planner Perry Barrett said that is done through the permitting process. Commissioner DeWitt said corners will not be cut in the public process, which takes too long for some people and is too slow for others. No decision has been made, the process will develop, and there will be notification. Commissioner Janow said Fort Ward seems like a lovely community and it would be a bummer if the neighbors cannot figure out a way to come together. She encouraged the community to take the next couple of weeks to have meetings. Bainbridge Island Parks & Trails Foundation Executive Director Mary Meier said she lives in Fort Ward and that in her experience good projects build community, and that should be the goal. Commissioner Swolgaard said he would like the community to get together and work something out. He does not want to see any division in the community. Commissioner Goodlin said he agrees with that and said this has been a healthy and robust discussion. A need has been expressed but it must respect the history of the property and fit in with the community. He encouraged the community to talk over what locations could work. Commissioner DeWitt asked if the board wants to direct staff to work with the Fort Ward community on this issue and all board members indicated yes. He clarified that this would be simply to look at the feasibility of a playground in the area. He emphasized that this is the start of the process.

MEETING ADJOURNED to a five-minute recess at 7:17 pm with announced time to reconvene at 7:22 pm. **MEETING RECONVENED** at 7:23 pm.

RESOLUTION 2022-08: AMENDED COVID-19 POLICY FOR EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS: Administrative Division Director Amy Swenson said at the last board meeting the changes to the policy were discussed. **MSC: Janow/Swolgaard: Pass**
Resolution 2022-08 regarding the employee and volunteer COVID-19 policy.

BUDGET SCHEDULE: Administrative Division Director Amy Swenson asked if the budget schedule which was distributed via the board packet works for board members. Commissioner DeWitt said the Park District uses the Consumer Price Index for

Urban Wage Earners (CPI-W) and said this year so far CPI-W is up 9.54%. When things like cost-of-living increases are discussed that will have to be considered. Commissioner Janow said she is not available for the October 6 regular board meeting. Commissioner Kinney suggested that the October 6 meeting be moved to September 29 and the board agreed. Commissioner DeWitt said that September 29 will be the last chance for deciding what the Capital Improvement Fund projects are going to be.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Park Services Division: Park Services Division Director Dan Hamlin said that significant progress has been made on the farm trail. Student Conservation Corps started their second session this week. Irrigation is being turned on. Park Services is still understaffed with no applications received since the last board meeting. The Fay Bainbridge Park campground has been full. The pirate statue at the Fay Bainbridge Park playground was pulled down by a child climbing on it and staff is working to determine what can be done to remedy the situation. Staff met with the City of Bainbridge Island's new planning director and planning manager; they are assessing everything including whether meeting with Park District staff is worth their time. The City has moved the Blakely Harbor Park programmatic permit, which was submitted in October of 2020, to the bottom of their list. City staff suggested that Park District staff ask for permission from the board to meet with City staff. Dan Hamlin asked for approval from the board to meet with City staff and the board acknowledged their support. Commissioner Swolgaard asked if staff has heard any updates on the Blakely Harbor Park programmatic permit. Dan Hamlin said yes but there has been no forward movement. Senior Planner Perry Barrett said that the City will be looking for a SEPA process regarding the Gazzam Lake Nature Preserve trail and parking lot. The bench permit at Pritchard Park will need a site area review. The final Recreation and Conservation Office grant presentation for the sail float replacement project at Waterfront Park will be in August.

Recreation Division: Recreation Superintendent Bryan Garoutte said that the fall recreation catalog is now viewable online and the first day of registration will be Saturday, August 13. Fitness classes are getting busier, and membership is growing at Bainbridge Island Recreation Center. A new pickleball instructor is being hired. Gymnastics staff had Kindergym Camp last week and Parkour Camp is this week. Youth & Teen Program Manager Shannon Buxton's theme camps are full. The first teen night at BIRC went well and had 34 participants. The slide at the Aquatic Center is out of order, a part has been ordered but is out of stock so staff is not sure how long the slide will be closed. Aquatic Program Administrator Megan Pleli just finished training three new lifeguards. Water exercise classes and swim lessons are being held at BIRC as well as at the Aquatic Center. The Don Nakata pool will be closed for maintenance August 15-September 5. A videographer has been hired through the Washington Recreation & Park Association grant to document programming.

Administrative Division: Administrative Division Director Amy Swenson introduced Administrative Specialist Betty Mirkovich who will be backing up Executive Services Manager Helen Stone when she is on vacation.

Executive Services Manager Helen Stone said that American Transparency agreed to limit their public records request to salary information for full-time and regular part-time staff. Paul Bang-Knudsen agreed to significantly pare down his third public records request. Jennifer Solseng and Samantha Everett have both made requests for the investigation report regarding Bainbridge Island Swim Club Head Coach Kyle Harris. Lisa Neal made a request this week regarding a complaint received from an Ashley Mathews related to pool use, however staff has no record of receiving a complaint from an Ashley Mathews.

UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS:

There will be a special board meeting on September 29 and no regular board meeting on October 6.

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS:

- Commissioner Goodlin said he participated in the recent Walks with the Commissioners program with Commissioner DeWitt.
- Commissioner Janow asked about the status of the Blakely Harbor Park bathroom, which was vandalized. Park Services Division Director Dan Hamlin said a new toilet has been ordered and there is a porta potty in place for now.
- Commissioner Janow thanked staff for their work retaining IT Manager Skye Carlson.
- Commissioner Janow shared that many teens in the community are currently employed by the Park District to staff summer programming and said they are having a great experience. The word on the street is that the teens are loving it, making money, and mentoring young kids and she said it is a fantastic cycle.
- Commissioner Swolgaard was at the Park District's Farmers' Market booth on Saturday, and said it was fun. He was asked if an extra lap lane has been added to the pool at Bainbridge Island Recreation Center. Recreation Superintendent Bryan Garoutte said no additional lane was added.
- Commissioner Swolgaard said there was an article in the paper that the Washington State Parks and the Department of Natural Resources are studying electric bikes, including their wear and tear on trails and affect on wildlife.
- Commissioner Swolgaard attended the Trails Advisory Committee meeting last Monday and said that Trails Coordinator Sean Smith-Sell is doing a great job running the meetings.
- Commissioner Kinney asked how the planning is going for Strawberry Hill Park. Park Services Division Director Dan Hamlin said staff is currently in the negotiation phase with Askura Robinson LLC for the plan for the entire park. The mountain bike park committee is currently working on their plan and the skate park committee should have a plan to share with the community soon.
- Commissioner Kinney said there was not enough parking tonight at the Bainbridge Island Recreation Center for the board meeting and said if there is another meeting where a lot of people are anticipated that the meeting should be moved back to Strawberry Hill Center.
- Commissioner DeWitt said the recent Walks with the Commissioners program was a lot of fun and a great chance to get out and look at parks.
- Commissioner DeWitt said that the Rotary Auction netted almost \$740,000 this year, which is a record. He thanked everyone who participated in that effort.
- Commissioner DeWitt said he has been attending the Sounds of Summer concerts and a few weeks ago there was a lot of audience participation.
- Commissioner DeWitt said he had a nice conversation with Frank Petrie who told him that the Battle Point Astronomical Association is currently fundraising for a projector.

MEETING ADJOURNED to a five-minute recess at 8:06pm with announced time to reconvene at 8:11 pm. **MEETING RECONVENED** at 8:11 pm

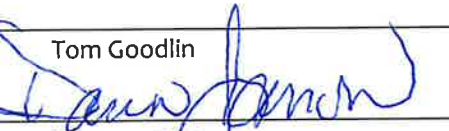
MEETING ADJOURNED TO EXECUTIVE SESSION at 8:11 pm for discussion of real estate with announced time to reconvene at 8:21 pm.

MEETING RECONVENED at 8:18 pm and **ADJOURNED** at 8:18 pm.

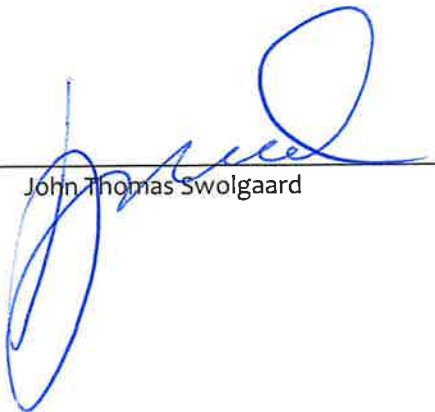
Helen M. Stone
Terry M. Lande
BAINBRIDGE ISLAND METROPOLITAN
PARK & RECREATION DISTRICT

BY: 
Kenneth R. DeWitt

BY: _____
Jay C. Kinney

BY: 
Tom Goodlin

BY: 
Dawn Janow

ATTEST: 
John Thomas Swolgaard