

CITY OF BURLINGTON  
PARKS ADVISORY BOARD  
Meeting Minutes for Monday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2009

---

**Board Members Present:** Sonia De los Rios, Don Erickson, Marilyn Houser, Jim Iversen and Todd Power

**City Council Members Present:** Helen M. Doyle

**Parks & Recreation Staff:** Park & Recreation Director Loren Cavanaugh, Parks Supervisor Craig Bloodgood, Recreation Coordinator Christi Kinney and Parks & Recreation Receptionist Rachel Catlett

---

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER** by Chairperson Todd Power at 5:30pm.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Jim Iversen motions to accept the minutes of the June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009 meeting as written. The motion is seconded by Helen M. Doyle. All agreed. Motion carried.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Parks and Cemetery Quarterly Report:** Parks Supervisor Craig Bloodgood reports on his department's second quarter business. The month of May brought high water levels to the Tjeerdsma Boat Launch. The Parks crew spent time cleaning up silt left behind once the water receded. Other spring projects included planting trees at the boat ramp, readying baseball fields for B-E Little League, tree trimming along SR-20, repairing Boerner Park's sprinkler system and preparing the Kiwanis is for Kids Waterpark at Maiben for summer. The crew stayed busy with the seasonal tasks of mowing and weeding as well as regularly updating the City's Readerboard at the intersection of Fairhaven Avenue and Burlington Boulevard. Craig states that he has cut back on weed spraying due to budget constraints and it has been difficult to keep on top of them as a result. Crew began watering Skagit River Park daily to ready it for the Berry Dairy Days Fireworks Show held there on June 19<sup>th</sup>.

(11) Funerals were held at Greenhills Cemetery, Parks crew reset (12) headstones and (9) new headstones. They finished preparing the cemetery for this year's Memorial Day services. Craig adds that the crew worked hard in their preparations. Helen M. Doyle comments that the grounds looked great. Board members inquire about how fees are charged for the City's cemetery plots and services. Craig states resetting fees are charged by the square inch, but he is not certain about other fees. The fee schedules are listed in the Burlington Municipal Code (BMC). Loren Cavanaugh states that he and Craig will begin work on updating the fee schedules in the near future. Loren believes the fees currently contained within the BMC are from the year 2002.

Jim Iversen adds a quick comment that the newly paved Highway-20 Trail looks great. The trail's pavement runs along SR-20 from its intersection with Anacortes Street to Gardner Road, just beyond the City limits.

**Recreation Quarterly Report:** Christi Kinney reports on Recreation happenings during the second quarter of 2009. Some of the highlights are:

**Basic Cartooning with instructor Max Elam.** This program which began in January consists of 4-week sessions and runs monthly. Each session is \$35. The program is offered to Teens (13yrs and up) and to Kids (7yrs-12yrs) and continues to be very popular.

**Youth Appreciation Day.** This annual event went very well again this year. The event is organized by the City and Burlington Healthy Communities Coalition (BHCC). This event is offered free to the community and at virtually no cost to the City thanks to help from BHCC and the Burlington-Edison School District. B-ESD offers Lucille Umbarger Elementary School at no charge as the event's venue. The event is staffed by Christi and members of BHCC along with student volunteers from B-EHS. Parks crewmembers help with setup and teardown. Christi said that there were (23) kid-friendly agencies represented at this year's event. Hard costs for the event totaled \$560 all of which were paid by BHCC. The 2009 Mayor's Youth Achievement Award was presented at the event. Christi mentions that she took the opportunity to promote Burlington's upcoming summer programs while she was there, too.

**Pitch, Hit & Run.** Burlington Parks & Recreation partnered with the Mount Vernon Parks & Recreation Department to host this baseball competition at Bakerview Park last April. Christi says turnout wasn't great, about 10 kids only. She adds that there will need to be some changes made if it is to run in 2010. She doesn't have a plan fully formed yet, but says better advertising will be a part of it.

**Earth Day.** Burlington's tribute to Earth Day took place at the Tjeerdsma Boat Launch on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. Christi helped coordinate volunteers to assist the Burlington Parks Foundation and the B-EHS Earth Club in their tree planting at the boat launch. The Parks crew lent a big helping hand, too.

**Free Kids Day.** Christi and her summer Recreation Assistant, Shayna Vaughn manned a booth at the Skagit Valley Fairgrounds for this event on Saturday, May 30<sup>th</sup> between 10am- 6pm. Christi says that the two of them put together a fun and inviting booth for the kids. They grabbed arts & crafts supplies already on hand from the Recreation cupboard, set up tables and let the kids enjoy themselves.

Challenger Sports which operates Burlington's summer British Challenger Soccer Camps donated a soccer bag and ball for a raffle. More than 5000 people attended the event; Christi said they were hopping all day long. They also used the opportunity to advertise the summer Recreation programs.

Christi says June started off with a bang. The Recreation office was furiously trying to keep up with summer registration interest.

The **Tiger Volleyball Camp** and the **Tiger Soccer Camp** were offered in June. These annual camps are run by B-EHS coaches who receive 85% of collected registration fees for their camps' booster clubs.

The Skagit Valley Flyers coach Greg Hill instructed a youth **Lacrosse Camp** for Burlington in July. He and Christi offered (2) free 2-hour clinics in June hoping to promote interest in the camp and the sport.

Skagit County Parks & Recreation's Director, Bob Vaux met with Burlington's Recreation staff in the spring to discuss the fate of the **All Comers Track Meets**. The County's Recreation Department lay-offs, which resulted from their budget shortfall, heralded the end of the Meets. The County had been the primary sponsor of this annual summer event with Burlington's help in acquiring donations and coordinating volunteers. After discussions with Mayor Brunz and the City's Finance Department, it was ultimately decided that this event was too valuable to the community to let pass away. The City contracted with Lauren Woodmansee who had been the director of the event before her lay-off from the County. The City took the helm for the Meets with Lauren's expertise leading the way. **All Comers Track Meets** were hosted at B-EHS each Wednesday evening between June 17<sup>th</sup> and July 22<sup>nd</sup>. Christi says they were a huge success not only in attendance, but in revenue. Profit had been projected at a hopeful \$1000. Christi reports that staff wages and operating expenses were lower than anticipated. The actual revenue made from the Meets is closer to \$3100.

The **CATCH Kids Club After School Program** is scheduled to begin on September 15<sup>th</sup>. This new program is largely funded by a grant received by United General Hospital and is offered on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons during a 12-week session. The intent of the program is to teach kids about healthy lifestyle choices. This is done through fun, engaging games with focus on healthful nutrition and physical activity.

Councilor Edie Edmundson began hosting **Historical City Walks** through Burlington in June and will continue the Walks twice monthly through August. The program has been well received and interest spiked after the Skagit Valley Herald printed a great article on the Walks.

**Capital Improvement Plan 2010-2015:** Loren Cavanaugh presents copies of the CIP to board members. The CIP is a compilation of proposed City projects. He comments that the CIP pages are not presented in order of prioritization, but rather by an assigned project number. Loren explains that the CIP is funded in part by real estate excise tax and park impact fees. A condition of these funding sources is that money received from them must be spent within a 6-year period. The expiration date will arrive in 2010 for a large portion of the funds currently in the Capital budget. Therefore Loren has been pursuing CIP projects during 2009 that will help to lessen expenses incurred in the Operating budget.

Contractors have begun work on one of those projects, the paving of Rotary Park's parking lot. Loren comments on a few of the items listed in the CIP:

Among equipment listed within the CIP, Loren plans to **replace a worn out Parks pickup truck**. He would also like to order more **rubber coated picnic tables** so that there are enough for each park site. Helen M. Doyle mentions that the Burlington Parks Foundation will be requesting at least (1) of those tables for Railroad Park (there will be (2) on site). Loren states that he would like to purchase a **new Parks utility vehicle** that has been on the CIP list for the last two years however, he has been unable to get funds

approved for its purchase. Skagit Valley Youth Soccer Association had earmarked \$4,000 towards the purchase of the new vehicle, but was unable to hold it indefinitely. One **5-tier set of aluminum bleachers** for the Little League fields at Rotary Park is also on the CIP wish list; there are none at the fields currently. Don Erickson raises the question of whether the bleachers are a high priority given the budget concerns. Loren responds that while he feels the bleachers would be appreciated by many in the community, it is not a purchase that would ultimately lower maintenance costs. **A Bunker Rake**, a tool used to level Little League fields and sand volleyball courts, is another CIP wish-list item that Loren mentions will most likely be postponed until the City's financial concerns have stabilized. **A new Recreation Van** is an item that Loren would like to see moved up on the priority list. A second van would not only increase the capacity of the Recreation camps, it would also increase revenue possibilities. Parks & Recreation currently uses for camps (2) 5-passenger cars in addition to the department's (1) van. The cost of (2) additional staff to drive cars that will carry only (4) camp participants each diminishes revenue projections for Recreation programs.

Other Capital projects mentioned include:

1. **Re-roofing the "old" Parks and Recreation office at 219 S. Skagit Street.** Loren would eventually like to see this building used for non-profit groups that currently use the Community Center for meetings free of charge. He feels the savings on overhead costs alone would be significant.
2. **Remodeling Maiben Park's restroom building.** The restrooms at this popular City park have been in long need of refurbishment.
3. **Beautify the entrance to Maiben Park** at the Washington Avenue / Regent Street corner. Craig comments it's about a 2-day project to finish work that began earlier this year.
4. **Community Center energy-audit improvements.** Loren states that while the upgrades detailed in an energy audit performed in 2006 would surely lessen maintenance costs of the building, the cost of implementing the upgrades is prohibitive at this time given the City's current fiscal situation.
5. **Revitalization of Jack Doyle Memorial Park.** Loren comments that he feels that some progress is being made on the park's interpretive boardwalk.
6. **Gages Slough restoration.** Loren adds that this is coupled with the Urban Forestry program targeted at cleaning up the slough.
7. **Park signs.** Loren states that there are two remaining locations that he would like to place signage. One location is the Horseshoe Pit Shelter on Whitmarsh Road and the other location is at Maiben Park's northwest corner entrance (Washington Avenue / Regent Street). Helen asks if Railroad Park will be getting a sign. Craig responds that it has not been talked about.
8. **RV Parking at Skagit River Park.** This would include 33 sites with water and electrical hook ups.
9. **Irrigation line at Skagit River Park.** Develop an irrigation loop that extends from the line at the restroom/concession building. Loren mentions that one of the two water cannons used to water the Skagit River Park playfields was stolen recently. Craig adds that it will cost the City \$1780 to replace it. Loren takes the opportunity to comment that he would like to see a separate line item created for costs incurred from vandalism. Loren estimates that, depending on the year, \$8000 - \$20,000 is spent in reparation which currently must be absorbed by the department's Operating budget.
10. **Welcome Center/Downtown restroom building** at Railroad Park.
11. **Renovating "Old City Hall".** This building is now home to the City's Parks and Recreation Department. There are tentative plans to refurbish the "old" library so that it can be used for rentals and also as an additional space for Recreation programs.

Helen inquires about improvements at the Tjeerdsma Boat Launch. Loren answers that First Class Concrete will begin resurfacing work next Monday, August 10<sup>th</sup> which will widen the ramp allowing for angled truck & trailer parking on pavement.

A last comment from Loren directed to board members is regarding Capital project spending. He explains that the majority of the general public does not understand that the money spent on projects like paving of the Highway-20 Trail or Rotary Park's parking lot comes from funds with an expiration date. The public perceives that it is money being ill spent during trying economic times. These funds are received largely from impact fees charged to developers. These funds must be used within a 6-year period from receipt or the money is returned to the developers. Loren would like each board member to understand this so that they can knowledgeably respond to questions posed to them from members of the community.

**2010 Operating Budget:** Loren Cavanaugh discusses the proposed Operating budget with board members. He reiterates his desire for a separate line item within the budget for vandalism. Loren describes how difficult budget preparation has been for his department with the extreme nature of cuts requested in effort to balance the City's budget. He sees the Parks and Recreation Department as the City's "welcome mat". The community looks to the department for quality of life. The City's playfields alone draw large crowds to Burlington for tournaments, crowds that generate revenue within the city. If the playfields cannot be maintained because of dire budget constraints, that revenue will be lost. Loren has watched the department's budget dwindle over the last (4) years to a frightful level. It is a subject he's addressed during Officer's Reports at many City Council meetings. Loren is asking the Parks Advisory Board to become a voice for the community to the Mayor and Budget Committee.

***OLD BUSINESS:***

**Grafton House Museum:** Loren Cavanaugh explains that the Museum has been sitting idle for a very long time due to a number of reasons. Maintenance and utility costs are still paid from the Parks' Operating budget. The Burlington Lions Club has expressed interest in using the Museum as a meeting place and for storage beginning this September. In exchange, they will absorb maintenance responsibilities and utility costs. Marilyn Houser asks if that would mean that the property would never be a museum again. Loren answers it does not mean that. He explains that the City would enter into a contract with the Club outlining the agreement. Loren asks the Parks Advisory Board to vote on a recommendation to the Council on the Lions Club proposal. Marilyn asks whether it would be appropriate to ask for a monthly stipend or rent from the Club for use of the building. Loren explains that the board can entertain any motion that they wish, but feels the proposition as is from the Lions Club is a good one. Don Erickson motions to recommend to Council that the Lions Club be allowed use of the building in exchange for the Club assuming responsibility for maintenance and utility costs. Jim Iversen seconds the motion. Helen M. Doyle abstains. All other board members are in-favor. Motion carried.

Loren will be recommending to City Council at their next meeting to disband the Museum Board which has not met since 2002. He reads a passage from the BMC explaining the purpose of the Museum Board as an advisory committee to the Mayor and Council concerning the general operation of the museum, collection and interpretation of exhibits, museum programs and building usage. He feels a Museum Board is not warranted until the building will be in use as a museum with exhibits.

***EXPENSE & REVENUE REPORTS:*** No discussion regarding reports during the August 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

***NEXT MEETING: Monday, October 5<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm*** in the Parks Conference Room.

The Parks & Recreation business entrance at Regent Street is locked at 5:00pm. Attendees should use the **South Entrance** of the building (off of Washington Avenue). Current expense & revenue reports will be available for review.

***ADJOURNMENT:*** A motion is made to adjourn the meeting by Jim Iversen, seconded by Marilyn Houser. All are in favor. The meeting is adjourned at 7:39pm.

Minutes recorded by Rachel Catlett, Receptionist for Burlington Parks & Recreation.

Minutes prepared by Shelley Johnstone, Secretary for Burlington Parks & Recreation.