

**South Whidbey Parks and Recreation District  
January 18, 2017 – Annual and Regular Meeting Minutes**

**Annual Meeting**

**I. Call to Order**

Commissioners Present: Mark Helpenstell, Dennis Hunter and Matt Simms  
Staff Present: Doug Coutts, Tom Fallon, Carrie Monforte and Peggy Nelson

Mark called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The attendance sheet is attached for permanent records only.

**II. Election of Officers for 2017 Board of Park Commissioners**

*Matt nominated Mark as Chair of the Board and Dennis seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. Dennis nominated Bob as Vice Chair of the Board and Mark seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. Dennis nominated Matt as Treasurer of the Board and Mark seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. Dennis nominated Don as Secretary of the Board and Matt seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.*

**III. Adjournment**

There being no further business the Annual Meeting was adjourned to the Regular Meeting at 6:03 p.m.

**Regular Meeting Minutes**

**I. Call to Order**

Commissioners Present: Mark Helpenstell, Dennis Hunter, Matt Simms and Bob Hezel (via GoTo Meeting at 6:30 p.m.)  
Staff Present: Doug Coutts, Tom Fallon, Carrie Monforte and Peggy Nelson

Mark called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. The attendance sheet is attached for permanent records only.

**II. Public Comment**

Karl Peterson said he uses the Sports Complex to coach select soccer teams but now they do not have access to the Sports Complex fields so he is training the teams on the Elementary School fields which are acceptable for practices but not for games. Karl said he is asking to use Park District fields, possibly the upper field, for a home game this weekend. Karl said he is concerned that what he has been told by District staff is not true regarding field conditions.

Jim Hamer said that District staff is inhibiting girls from being able to practice and staff has not justified their decision to close the fields. Jim said the decision to close the fields needs to be really clear and the District needs to work with parents and coaches when closing fields.

Lori Jackintell said she took core sample temperatures of various District sports fields on Wednesday. Lori said nobody from the community supports the decision to close the Sports Complex fields and the safety of kids is jeopardized by forcing the kids to use school fields. Lori asked for evidence as to why the kids should not be playing on the fields.

Jim Hyde said he wants to see a log of field usage for the last two or three months which would show which teams have had access to the sports fields to see if field use was unfavorably divided up between boys and girls.

Mary Jane Miller said she walked all of the sports fields and they were squishy. Mary Jane said they need access to their home turf to win their games and she thought the girls were being discriminated against by forcing the girls to use other fields besides the Sports Complex fields.

Terry Swanson said he previously heard that the fields would be open year round and the fields are in good shape.

Ben Rusch said he is opposed to using the Elementary School fields for games.

Brian McCleary said he has seen the sports fields at the Sports Complex get trashed but they recover and he asked for more notice of field closures for planning purposes.

John Cobbs said he wanted to know why the sports fields were closed.

Doug responded to the comment regarding a field usage log as follows: he assigns specific areas of the fields that may be used and the Soccer Club decides who uses which area. Doug said they have not closed any fields in four years until now and they closed the fields now because of extraordinary circumstances this year.

Tom said that Sports Complex Field #1 sustained significant damage so a change was needed in the amount of field use so that the other fields did not sustain the same damage. Tom said it has been a cold winter and the fields have frozen and thawed and have started to collapse with the thaw and rain. Tom said District staff took a hit last month for not giving the Soccer Club enough notice about the field closure so plenty of notice was given this week of the field closure due to the weather forecast for the game scheduled this weekend.

Doug said District staff has to take into consideration now the usage of the fields in the spring when all of the Soccer Club kids will be using the fields. Doug said Field #1 will not be back in shape until at least April due to the damage.

Tom said that when the soccer fields were constructed, they were cheaply built and the soil used was not conducive for use in the winter months. Tom said that two weather conditions that we have had this year has made it difficult to keep the fields open – the freeze and thaw and the downpours.

Matt said the Park District and the Soccer Club need to collaborate. Matt said he was on the damaged field prior to its closure and some kids were almost hurt. Matt said that one end of the upper field was frozen but the other end was not frozen so the same field can be in two different

conditions. Matt said that as far as historical references go, the situation that we are in right now is different from where we were at years ago because we have multiple select soccer teams playing during the winter now. Matt said the fields will be damaged if they are played on now. Matt said a better winter option is needed such as a turf field because there are too many select soccer teams playing during winter. Matt said the Park District intends to apply for grants in 2018 for a turf field. Matt said the Park District tries to meet the needs of all soccer players and space is allocated to each organization, not to boys or girls individually.

Dennis echoed what Matt stated and said it was important to collaborate with the community to build a facility that will work for everyone in the winter. Dennis said this has been the worst winter for weather that he has seen since 1983 and he respects the decisions of staff and Matt.

Mark said he coached soccer for many years and he has been part of both the Soccer Club and the Park District so he has seen both sides of the issue. Mark said this has been a unique situation with lots of rain in the fall and then everything froze. Mark said he has walked the sports fields for the last two weeks and the fields are in mixed conditions. Mark said the Langley Middle School fields are not bad but the Elementary School fields are better. Mark said that today the fields are starting to thaw out and the water is flowing and Fields #2 and #3 and the upper field look good but if they are played on, they will be in the same condition as Field #1. Mark said he would play a soccer game at the Elementary School before he would play a game at the High School stadium. Mark said a turf field would help to solve the field use problem of playing soccer in the winter. Mark said the Elementary School field was dry and was built for usage year round. Mark said that going forward, the Park District is trying to get the sports fields open again but in a safe manner and with minimal damage to the fields.

Terry Swanson asked why Field #1 was in use for four months in the fall and stated that the fields should have been rotated. Mark said a decision was made to keep play on Field #1 because it is a pain to move fields due to lining the fields, etc.

Lori Jackintell asked what the criteria was for determining field closures and Doug said they look at the impact on the fields along with weather conditions.

Matt said the Soccer Club asked in the previous meeting to be given sufficient notice of field closures and the Soccer Club said they would identify a field coordinator who the Park District would communicate with regarding field conditions. Matt said the field coordinator was identified and Doug has been working with the field coordinator to keep him in the loop regarding field conditions.

### **III. Approval of Minutes**

*The minutes of the Regular Meeting on December 20, 2016, were unanimously approved in a motion made by Dennis and seconded by Matt.*

### **IV. Treasurer's Report/Voucher List Approval**

Matt reviewed the Treasurer's Report with the commissioners.

The ending fund balances, per Island County, were as follows:

- The Maintenance and Operations Fund was \$316,311.71

- The Capital Fund was \$500.64.
- The Reserve Fund was \$203,813.51.
- The Bond Fund was \$53,986.44.
- The Property Fund was \$23,826.45.

### **Voucher Approval**

*In a motion made by Matt and seconded by Dennis, the Board unanimously approved the Maintenance and Operations Fund Vouchers #7954 through #8001 in the amount of \$49,225.34, electronic tax payments in the amount of \$3,977.92 and Property Fund Voucher #13A in the amount of \$1,195.38.*

#### **V. Staff Report** (to be attached for permanent records)

Doug reviewed the Staff Report with the commissioners. Doug said that South Whidbey State Park will be keeping the campground closed and the Park will be open for day use only. Doug said there was a potential opportunity for the Park District to recycle some of the State Park's campground equipment, such as fire rings.

#### **VI. Unfinished Business**

##### **A. Comprehensive Plan Programs**

Doug said he reorganized the Capital Items list by incorporating the rankings from each commissioner and he included the list in the Board packet. Doug suggested a Board workshop in February to discuss the list.

##### **B. Campground Status Update**

Doug said that before he schedules a meeting to discuss cuts to the campground budget, he wants to take into consideration any surplus equipment that may be available due to the closure of the campground at South Whidbey State Park.

#### **VII. New Business**

##### **A. Commissioner Committee Assignments 2017**

The commissioners agreed that all of the commissioner committee assignments from the previous year would remain the same.

##### **B. Resolution 2017-01 – Direct Deposit Account Authorization**

Doug said the Island County Treasurer would allow the Park District to utilize direct deposit for employee paychecks but that a resolution was necessary to allow the Park District to open a bank account for direct deposits. *Matt made a motion to approve Resolution 2017-01 – Direct Deposit Account Authorization and Dennis seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.*

##### **C. Aerator Purchase – Board Approval**

Doug said the District had budgeted for the purchase of a Wiedenmann aerator in 2017 and the District was ready to move forward with the purchase but needed Board approval. *Dennis made a motion to approve the purchase of the Wiedenmann aerator and Matt seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.*

**D. Choochokam Usage Request – Review/Approval**

Doug said the Choochokam promoters had submitted a Facility Use Request to use Community Park on August 25-28 for the Choochokam Festival. Doug said the weekend of August 26-27 was available and if the date was approved by the Board, the Choochokam promoters would like to discuss a beer and wine garden at a future Board meeting. Matt said he was okay with the dates for the Choochokam Festival and Dennis agreed with Matt. Matt suggested the Park District add some type of programming for kids during Choochokam and to include sports groups such as Little League and the Soccer Club in the program. *Matt made a motion to approve the use of Community Park for the Choochokam Festival the weekend of August 26-27 and Dennis seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.*

**VIII. Adjournment**

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 7:54 p.m.