

South Whidbey Parks and Recreation District
May 10, 2018 – Special Meeting Minutes

Special Meeting Minutes

I. Call to Order

Commissioners Present: Josh Coleman, Mark Helpenstell, Dennis Hunter, Matt Simms (via GoToMeeting) and Don Wood

Staff Present: Doug Coutts, Tom Fallon and Peggy Nelson

Mark called the meeting to order at 11:02 a.m. The attendance sheet is attached for permanent records only.

II. Public Comment

No public comment.

III. Unfinished Business

A. 2019 Levy – Discussion

Doug said the deadline for the August 7th ballot was May 12th so the commissioners needed to determine the levy rate and term of the levy ballot measure. Doug said he recommended a four-year levy term and the commissioners agreed.

Matt said if the District asked for a twenty-cent levy rate then they would have enough funds to maintain the District with no excess but if they asked for twenty-two cents, there would be money available for a project/capital/grant-matching fund. Doug said if the District sticks with the eighteen-cent levy rate, we might have to make budget cuts because we need twenty cents to maintain the same level of service.

Dennis said a rate of twenty cents made practical sense and they should be considerate of the voters since property taxes have been rising. Tom said that historically, the mission of the Board has been to be conservative and live within our means. Tom said that when the District purchased the campground property, money should have been recouped from the campground to make the property payment but the campground has not generated any money yet. Tom said the money to make the property payment should not come out of M&O funds. Tom said park use is down compared to ten years ago so it is hard to justify increasing the levy rate. Dennis asked Tom how the District could afford maintaining the District with an eighteen-cent levy rate and Tom said we could run a two-year levy instead.

Doug reminded the commissioners that South Whidbey EMT was running a levy on the August ballot also. Mark said if the District increases the levy rate to twenty-one or twenty-two cents, it change the scenario of how the District approaches offers when they appear. Mark said the public takes pride in the parks and he has confidence that the voters value parks by supporting an increase to expand the baseline. Dennis said a more conservative approach to the levy rate was appropriate and he did not recommend asking for more than twenty cents and Josh agreed.

Doug said that if the District wants funds for grant matching or capital improvements, the District should go out for a bond measure and Matt agreed.

Doug confirmed with the commissioners that they were all in favor of adding a twenty-cent, four-year levy on the August 7th ballot and they all agreed. Doug reminded the commissioners that staff can create levy information guides for the voters but are not allowed to campaign for the levy so the burden will fall on the elected officials to promote the levy ballot measure.

B. Resolution 2018-04 – 2019 Maintenance & Operations Levy

Matt made a motion to approve Resolution 2018-04 – 2019 Maintenance & Operations Levy and Dennis seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

IV. New Business

No new business.

VI. Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 11:37 a.m.