

**CITY OF ISSAQUAH
Park Board**

7:00 PM
May 23, 2022

MINUTES

Virtual Meeting

BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT

Alternate Meeting Format: On March 6, 2020 the Mayor declared a civil emergency due to the outbreak of novel coronavirus (COVID-19). On March 24, 2020 the Governor issued Proclamation 20-28 relating to the COVID-19 emergency and open public meetings. The proclamation has been extended. Due to these factors, the meeting was held using a remote meeting platform.

Board Members:

Bradley Book
Chris Kovac
Danielle Wolfrom Githens (Excused)
Zac Szablewski
Marlene Waxse
Tim Motley
Katie Bell
Brenda Spears (Excused)
Ryan Reamy, Youth Rep

Administration/Staff:

Jeff Watling, Parks Director
Milissa Ching, Department Operations Specialist
Jennifer Fink, Park Planner and Project Administrator
Matt Mechler, Parks Operations Supervisor
Rick Still, Parks Operations Manager

CALL TO ORDER

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a) Minutes of April 25, 2022 Book approved Minutes as written.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Susan Neville Cougar Mountain Resident 26 years: Title 18 Land Use Code changes going into effect touch on tree canopy and environment. Under new code changes, many areas discussed in the presentation are having many protections added as part of the zoning. City council had agreed to look at the addition of positions to ensure compliance and monitoring of the canopy. Arborist and Urban Forest Manager. She supports funding staff positions over consultants or consultants.

Connie Marsh Squak Mountain Resident: Marsh supports the urban forest plan. Provided history to efforts to preserve City trees that in conflict with housing development. Climate change and forest planning importance. What is the basis for the plan – the intent. Agrees that the current pocket programs do not support the greater needs of urban forestry management. Feels Carbon Credit is not success because it still allows development. Marsh wants to encourage a better future which includes protecting heritage trees, not simply naming them. She encouraged the Bo

Mary Lynch: Reiterated her thoughts from her letter and would like to see the value of the program to the public. She also supports Ms. Marsh's remarks regarding the total canopy and understory. She would like to see a staffed arborist who works holistically with these programs and other departments. She would also like to see more accountability in taking care of the trees we have in the City.

Julian Mydlil: On the Tab board. Feels the City can do a lot better along arterials. Feels that the city would benefit from a staffed arborist. Weighing future development and tree canopy balance.

REGULAR BUSINESSa) **Welcome and Introductions, (I)***Presented by:**Jeff Watling, Parks and Community Services Director**Brad Book, Park Board Chair*

Watling welcome Bell and Motley to the Park Board and invited staff and board members to introduce themselves.

b) **Park Board Leadership Appointments – Chair and Vice Chair, (A)***Presented by:**Jeff Watling, Parks and Community Services Director**Brad Book, Park Board Chair*

Szablewski volunteered himself for role of the Park Board Chair and shared his passion for Issaquah. Would like to continue the good work being done with the board.

Book nominated Szablewski, Waxe Seconded. Unanimously approved by the board.

Waxe volunteered herself for the role of Vice Chair.

Book nominated Waxe, Szablewski Seconded. Unanimously approved by the board.

Book shared his desire to mentor the new chair and vice chair and encouraged others to mentor new board members as well.

c) **Park Board Rules and Regulations – Alternate and Legacy position considerations, (D)***Presented by:**Jeff Watling, Parks and Community Services Director*

Watling shared the continuation of a discussion started at the prior Park Board meeting regarding the idea to create additional flexibility with the alternate positions. This could allow for transition both onto and off the board. Last month board members began discussing the term 'legacy' position to honor and preserve knowledge of exiting long term board members.

Watling inquired if the board members would prefer that flexibility existing within the two positions currently allocation vs. adding additional positions,

Szablewski is in favor of adding additional positions.

Motley asked for details about how the alternates have been used in the past.

Book added that alternated are 2-year terms vs. regular are 4-year terms.

Book is in favor of adding legacy positions in addition. He supports the term and the intention of the idea. Feels details on voting rights need to be ironed out.

Kovac asked for clarity that legacy positions would not be a requirement for existing the board. Watling confirmed that it would not be a requirement.

Waxe is in support of adding flexibility to support the needs of the board.

Watling clarified the process of amending the IMC which requires the approval of council to add/change the membership of the board.

Staff will connect with Clerks/Mayor to define next steps and a timeline to make the changes proposed.

Book noted with Watling that the rules and regulations attached to the agenda were not the most current. The most current changes will be available at the next meeting.

Book inquired if it would make sense to adjust the quorum number. Watling shared he will discuss that with the clerk's office.

d) **City Tree Programs, (I), (D)**

Presented by:

Jennifer Fink, Park Planner and Project Administrator

Matt Mechler, Parks Operations Supervisor

Watling kicked off the City Tree Program presentation and thank Neville for touching on much of the content being presented tonight.

This overview is intended to provide context to the board regarding current programs and Watling will share thoughts about moving forward.

Presentation content:

- Tree City USA, Overview, Stats and Criteria
- 1-Million Trees Grant
- 11,385 Trees were successfully planted as part of the grant
- Heritage and Landmark Trees
- IMC 12.812.030 Definitions
- Application requirements
- Characteristics
- Designated Trees information
- Carbon Credit Program
- City Forest Credits (partner)
- Carbon Credit National Sale
- Carbon Credit Considerations
- Money from credits goes to support initiatives around forest stewardship activities
- Green Issaquah, launched in 2020
- 2021 Green Issaquah Impacts
- Forest Steward Program
- Contracted Arborist Services

Board members asked clarifying questions and staff shared additional details to respond to their inquiries.

Book shared his sentiment about the Heritage Tree program/lack of program since the loss of a staffed arborist. Feels lack of community awareness may also play a factor. Book wants to see more nominations submitted to the board in the future.

Motley shared thoughts on increasing the perceived value of property for heritage trees.

Watling provided closing comments regarding future resources to best support the needs of the forestry programs and needs.

Watling thanked Fink and Mechler for their presentation and commented that while we have a range of programs in the department, they do not replace the needs of the bigger picture of urban forest management.

More work is being done to understand and plan for those needs.

REPORTS

a) Director's Report

- Hillside Park, hosted neighbors to provide feedback and comments. Feedback collection is open until the 31st
- Hillside Park teaser: in June Watling will bring more information regarding an acquisition at Hillside Park (about 1 acre) to improve functionality of the park and a loop trail.
- Board recruitment is underway until the end of the month to fill remaining vacancies.
- 20-acre Squak Mountain acquisition is closing this Thursday (May 26)
- Milissa's last meeting. Has accepted a new professional role. She thanked the board for the humble opportunity to serve the Issaquah community and looks forward to following the boards continued success and future work.

b) Chairperson's Report

- Covid updates for in person meetings – delayed
- IACT lands forum
- King Country Conservation Futures (November Ballot) for 65K acres in King County

c) Youth Report

- Issy Kids Triathlon on June 5th
- 2022/2023 Youth Advisory Board interviews for new members

OTHER BUSINESS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

- None

ADJOURNMENT: 8:59 PM

The next meeting is currently scheduled for June 27, 2022.