

**CITY OF ISSAQUAH  
Park Board**

7:00 PM  
September 26, 2023

**MINUTES**

Tibbetts Manor, 750 17th Ave  
NW, Issaquah

**BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT**

*Board Members:*

Chris Kovac, Chair  
Marlene Waxse, Vice Chair  
Zach Szablewski (*Excused Absence*)  
Andrew Eliquen  
David Liu  
Nicholas Lee (Absent)  
Brenda Spears (Virtual)  
Katie Bell  
Tim Motely (Absent)

*Administration/Staff:*

Jeff Watling, Parks & Community Services  
Director  
Robin Separ, Park Planning & Development  
Manager  
Hasanthi Piyasena, Department Operations  
Specialist

*Community Members/Guests:*

Cory Christensen  
Steve Pereira

Ryan Olson, Alternate (Acting as Regular  
Member)  
Bradley Book, Alternate (Virtual, Acting as  
Regular Member)  
Andrew Myers, Alternate (Acting as Regular  
Member)

**CALL TO ORDER**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- a) Minutes of June 26, 2023  
There being no corrections, the minutes were approved as presented.
- b) Minutes of August 9, 2023  
There being no corrections, the minutes were approved as presented.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**Steve Pereira:** Mr. Pereira Olde Town resident, thanked the board for their contributions and praised the bench donation program and proposed adding a bike rack donation program. Does not believe the dog park is a good use of city funding and has concerns about the Watershed report and possible wildlife area and multiple dog park approach. Advocated for the Heritage Tree Program to include language in the code to protect these trees from removal and include a category for recognizing CMTs and further tree protection.

**Cory Christensen:** Mr. Christensen disagreed with the boards take on park classifications and that they should adhere to local/regional standards which will help highlight the high points in our system and show our deficits. He then expressed concerns over the dog park size, drainage at the current site, ground water or stormwater implications, advocated for concrete for the pathways to allow for ADA access and better containment of surfacing, and that the shelters be placed away from the entrance to allow for better circulation.

**REGULAR BUSINESS**

a) **Park System Plan Update, (D,I)**

*Presented by:*

*Jeff Watling, Parks & Community Services Director*

*Robin Spear, Park Planning and Development Manager*

Director Watling introduced the new Park Planning and Development Manager, Robin Spear and gave background on the plan update, community engagement thus far and future touch points related to the plan coming back to the board in the coming months. PPD Manager Robin Spear led the board through proposed changes to the park classification process and updating based on national standards, Issaquah's current use, and how we want the parks to perform in the future. This deep dive and definition of the function and priority for the parks will help show gaps or needs and move forward priorities within the plan. The proposed changes take into about size, primary use, amenity type, access, environment, natural/open space and fit within Green Necklace Network. The proposed changes include 2 new types of classifications, Linear Parks and Greenways, and updates Resource Parks to Nature Parks and better defines other classification criteria. This review also proposes aligning trail classifications to the city's Comprehensive Plan and trails being amenities within parks.

The board asked for clarification between greenways and linear parks and for examples, what Green Necklace could be classified as, that art, education and interpretive signage be included in these classifications, that the definitions are not too restrictive in their use definitions but allow for flexibility, how trails are viewed, and making sure there are not gaps within the classifications that current parks cannot meet.

b) **Rainier Trail Dog Park Update, (D,A)**

*Presented by:*

*Jeff Watling, Parks & Community Services Director*

*Robin Spear, Park Planning and Development Manager*

Department Operations Specialist, Hasanthi Piyasena led the board through the community priorities that will be carried through the final design for the dog park including two exits/entrances, bark surfacing, shade structures, small dog/shy dog area with flexibility based on use, and water stations with anticlogging features. Director Watling then confirmed the next steps will include a Technical Document Review with CPD that looks at all critical area studies for this parcel, including the Watershed Report included in the packet and any other studies to help guide as we proceed in this project. This will be done prior to permit submittal and the timeline for the project is looking at permit submittal later this year and construction in 2024. He also reminded the board of the background on the multiple dog park approach.

The board agreed that the paving/trail be concrete, moving the amenities/shade structures for better circulation, asked clarifying questions about the size, surfacing, lighting, maintenance, amenities, and durability of features in the updated plan. They also asked about the risks of water/drainage at this site and discussed the TVP and multiple dog park approach.

Following the presentation and robust discussion the board moved to take action to support proceeding with the design for the project and moving it forward to permitting.

Katie Bell motioned, David Liu seconded.

The motioned passed unanimously with 9 votes (all Alternates acted as Regular Members).

**REPORTS**

## a) Chairperson's Report

Chair Kovac continued a proposal to bring together a larger group of park partners, users, and groups to meet the board and remind them of the opportunities for engagement. He requested any members to send him names and groups to include and this may happen in the first quarter of next year.

b) Director's Report

Director Watling reminded the board on upcoming topics under the work plan including Park Plan Goals & Policies, the Urban Forest Management Plan, and the Heritage Tree program review. He then led the board through the presentation he gave to City Council about Parks & Community Services Summer Highlights.

**OTHER BUSINESS / ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Ryan Olson commented on the art installation for Jakob Two Trees and how there was a lot of concerns over the amount of visitors, traffic, environmental/plant impacts, and the reality is a fantastic show of community in this shared, accessible experience.

Katie Bell also commented on the troll installation volunteer process and being able to meet people from all over the Seattle area and how important art is for Issaquah and what a great opportunity this has been.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:57pm.

The next meeting is currently scheduled for October 23, 2023.