

**CITY OF ISSAQUAH  
Park Board**

7:00 PM  
October 23, 2023

**MINUTES**

Tibbetts Manor, 750 17th Ave  
NW, Issaquah

**BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT**

*Board Members:*

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

*Administration/Staff:*

Jeff Watling, Parks & Community Services  
Director  
Robin Separ, Park Planning & Development  
Manager  
Hasanthi Piyasena, Department Operations  
Specialist  
Dan Hintz, Urban Forest Supervisor

*Community Members/Guests:*

Andrea Starbird, PlanIT Geo Consultant  
Chris Peiffer, PlanIT Geo Consultant  
(*Virtual*)  
Steve Pereira, Community Member

**CALL TO ORDER**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- a) Minutes of September 26, 2023  
There being no corrections, the minutes were approved as presented.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**Connie Marsh:** *via email* The board received comment by email from Ms. Marsh regarding the Heritage Tree program and submission process for public trees. She asked who has the authority to sign as the landowner for public trees submitted by a community member and what protections are being proposed for these public/private trees.

**REGULAR BUSINESS**

- a) **Urban Forest Management Plan, (I,D)**

*Presented by:*

*Dan Hintz, Urban Forest Supervisor  
PlanIT Geo, Inc. Consultant*

Urban Forest Supervisor, Dan Hintz and consultants from PlanIt Geo led the board through the first comprehensive urban forest plan and how it will help frame the community priorities for our urban forest. The draft plan is scheduled for September 2024 and will include further outreach and surveys.

Following the presentation the board had comments and questions regarding recent Western Red Cedar die back, how building code interacts with tree conservation, that the plan should be unique to Issaquah's forest, how canopy cover is calculated and how the goal of 55% can be reached and if that is typical of the region, if information about wildlife corridors and riparian canopy cover will be reviewed in the plan, if the plan will translate into permit processes, how it

aligns with the cities goals, if it will affect development and city code, the sustainability and diversity of trees in relation to climate change, and to look at sister cities, native species, culturally significant species, and mapping and tree inventory options.

b) **Heritage Tree Program Updates, (I,D)**

*Presented by:*

*Dan Hintz, Urban Forest Supervisor*

Urban Forest Supervisor, Dan Hintz reviewed the current Heritage Tree program and the 24 trees that are currently designated. He made recommendations for how to update the program to include an electronic submission form, updated website, how to solicit new nominations, include more educational resources and proposed changes to the selection criteria.

Following the presentation, the board had questions on whether the board should be the deciding body on this program, that well defined criteria are needed, that the intent of the program is to celebrate not encumber both private or public land, that the board maybe makes a recommendation not the final decision for designation, that the environmental board might play a part in the program and suggested a few other criteria to include like carbon sequestration or native species status.

c) **Park System Plan Goals & Policies, (I,D)**

*Presented by:*

*Robin Spear, Park Planning and Development Manager*

*Jeff Watling, Parks & Community Services Director*

Park Planning and Development Manager, Robin Spear led the board through the 8 previous goals from the 2018 plan and asked for feedback on whether to keep, expand, or change any of the goals and their associate priorities. The board suggested adding a few priorities and changing some of the goals but mostly agreed that the previous goals still apply. This item will return to the board for further discussion and updates with possible action.

## REPORTS

- a) Chairperson's Report – Chair Kovac reiterated the Boo at the Barn event and mentioned the Historical Museum's cemetery tours also on Oct. 28 and Oct. 29, mentioned the IATC events and Green Issaquah events available for registrations and there is a State Park Free day on November 11. He also touched on the board work plan and that we will discuss this further at the January meeting.
- b) Youth Representative's Report – no report
- c) Director's Report – Director Watling reminded the board of the upcoming Boo at the Barn event on October 29, showcased some new signs that will be present in the parks and trails on a partnership with the Snoqualmie Tribe on the Ancestral Lands Movement and our park plan survey will be open through mid November.

## OTHER BUSINESS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

## ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:16pm.

The next meeting is currently scheduled for November 27, 2023.