

**CITY OF ISSAQUAH  
Park Board**

7:00 PM  
June 24, 2024

**MINUTES**

Tibbetts Manor, 750 17th Ave  
NW, Issaquah

**BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT**

*Board Members:*

Chris Kovac, Chair (*Excused Absence*)  
Marlene Waxse, Vice Chair (*Excused Absence*)  
Katie Bell (*Absent*)  
Andrew Eliquen (*Virtual*)  
Nicholas Lee (*Absent*)  
David Liu (*Virtual*)  
Tim Motley (*Virtual*)  
Ryan Olson, Acting Chair  
Brenda Spears (*Excused Absence*)

*Administration/Staff:*

Hasanthi Piyasena, Department Operations  
Specialist, Parks & Community Services  
Dan Hintz, Urban Forest Supervisor

*Community Members/Guests:*

Connie Marsh, Community Member  
Chris Peiffer, PlanIT Geo Consultant

Mari Stevens, Alternate  
Paul Adair, Alternate (*Excused Absence*)  
Martha Ginthner, Alternate

**CALL TO ORDER**

Acting Chair, Ryan Olson called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- a) Minutes of Special Meeting on May 30, 2024  
There being no corrections, the minutes are approved as presented.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**Connie Marsh:** Ms. Marsh mentioned the approval of the Hillside Park project at City Council the same evening and her unhappiness with how the project was portrayed. She then spoke about the Urban Forest Management Plan and the need for trackable action for wildlife habitat protection and that this is largely a "tree plan" instead of a forest management plan. She mentioned how we live among this habitat in our streets, side yards, and backyards and not just the riparian corridors that need attention but the entire city being at the urban growth boundary. She would like to see a stronger connection to the community value for wildlife habitat within this plan.

**REGULAR BUSINESS**

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

*Presented by:*

*Dan Hintz, Urban Forest Supervisor*

*PlanIT Geo Consultants*

Dan Hintz, Urban Forest Supervisor reminded the board of the history of this project and previous topics covered with both this board and the Environmental Board. He mentioned the timeline for the project aims for adoption of this plan by City Council in the fall and this meeting is the time for any adjustments to the overall direction for the plan. Chris Peiffer, the PlanIT Geo consultant working on this plan then led the board through the presentation.

Questions and discussion from the board included:

-reference to the stagnation/plateau of our UTC tree growth percentage from 2018 to 2021 as shown in the analysis and why the number has stayed flat

- in reference to the above, is the 55% goal realistic and achievable
- questions around where the 55% growth goal came from and why we are holding to this number from ICAP? Is it too ambitious? How does it stack up to our surrounding cities and nationally?
- is there a specific make up of tree types to plant or look for an ideal urban forest? Will this plan address this?
- What explains the small decrease in % from 2018 to 2021?
- mention of the lag between plantings and when they could count towards canopy coverage. Looking at 2025-2030 for planting and coverage to support the 55% goal
- discussion to add wildlife preservation and protection strategies under guiding principle C.
- how do budgets play into recommendations? Is there capacity for more training and maintenance? What is our current capacity and how can we continue this work given budgets and priorities?
- more community education needed and work with youth specifically at the elementary and middle school level to help garner interest for future generations to continue this work
- discussion around wildfire risk and is there a need for fire breaks? Does increasing our canopy coverage increase our wildfire risk and how do we balance those needs
- looking at possible planting areas, discussion around the percentage of those that would be needed and that these are currently field space and question of what is realistic. Where else can these trees go? HOAs, other public lands, partnership with private land owners. It can't only come from public spaces
- is western red cedar die back a negative on our canopy cover and discussion around mortality rates of trees
- feedback on the vision statement to change the language of "ensure a sustainable future for all" that acknowledges this is not the only way for a sustainable future. Suggestion to revise.

## REPORTS

### a) Director's Report

Hasanthi Hogleund gave a staff report on behalf of the director, noting Hillside Park project bid was approved by City Council that same evening, construction timeline and more information to come, council committee will hear from staff on Park System Plan update (June 25) similar to updates given to Park Board and another opportunity for feedback before draft plan document is released for public review in July, upcoming education, outreach and community feedback will be coming this summer for the potential pool expansion based on the feasibility study, a thank you for promoting the recreation survey which garnered huge responses (600+) and analysis from rec staff forthcoming and lastly a plug for volunteers for the Down Home 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade and festivities.

### b) Chairperson's Report

Acting Chair, Ryan Olson gave a shout out to the recreation team and City of Issaquah for the start of summer camp this week and the youth staff that help with that program noting what a vibrant and fun program the camps provide, mentioned the Issaquah Farmers Market is underway every Saturday at Pickering Barn and Concerts on the Green start next Tuesday evening (July 2) and a Happy 4<sup>th</sup> of July to all and encouraged folks to get outside in our parks and outdoor spaces for the holiday.

## OTHER BUSINESS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

## ADJOURNMENT

The next meeting is currently scheduled for July 22, 2024.

The meeting adjourned at 8:17 PM.