

**CITY OF ISSAQUAH
Park Board**

7:00 PM
September 23, 2024

MINUTES

Tibbetts Manor, 750 17th Ave
NW, Issaquah

BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT

Board Members:

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

Administration/Staff:

Jeff Watling, Director
Hasanthi Hoglund, Department Operations
Specialist
Dan Hintz, Urban Forest Supervisor

Community Members/Guests:

Chris Peiffer, PlanIt Geo Consultant

Mari Stevens, Alternate (*Excused Absence*)
Paul Adair, Alternate, *Acting as Regular Member*
Martha Ginthner, Alternate, *Acting as Regular Member*

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Kovac called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm. Roll call was taken.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a) Minutes of August 26, 2024
There being no corrections, the minutes were approved as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

REGULAR BUSINESS

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

Presented by:

*Dan Hintz, Urban Forest Supervisor
PlanIt Geo Consultants*

Director Watling reminded the board the scale of the UFMP is much more in depth than the Park Plan as it is a management document. Then Urban Forest Supervisor, Dan Hintz, and PlanIt Geo Consultant, Chris Peiffer reviewed the plan progress to date and led the board through recommended action and next steps. Following the presentation the board had questions and discussion including:

- Review Periods for the plan and content?
 - Revision maybe every 10 years, 5 years for canopy coverage assessment, annual reports on progress and audits every 2 years
- Re: Wildlife Corridor Study, what do we hope to learn from what we already know?
 - Better understanding and formalized data on wildlife crossings and known habitats for protection and restoration, connectivity, transportation planning and other city uses. No formal reports assessed at this time. Pursue grant funding primarily for this recommendation.

- Questions around estimated costs included in the document and total investment over 10 years given current budget constraints.
 - Reminder that this is not a budget document, that this is aspirational and meant to help provide a picture of multiple options as staff plan and review community priorities in the coming years. Nothing is binding.
- Questions on the recommended number of arborists for the city? How was this determined and is this too may?
 - The plan benchmarked staffing against 19 other cities and the recommendation is to add certification to current city staff. Already have two certified and looking to support further staff development and spread expertise across different city departments (PW, CPD, Park Ops)
- Question on the rate of investment currently, details on the estimates provided, and context for these amounts
 - Note that we are already investing at a very good rate and there are grant opportunities that can be pursued. Tree planting goals tend to be a higher amount and are tied to canopy goals that may be reviewed for feasibility and wildfire preparedness measures.

Following discussion and questions, Chair Kovac motioned to move forward the draft Urban Forest Management Plan for City Council Adoption given clarification based on this conversation. Vice Chair Waxse seconded.

The motion passed unanimously with 8 votes. Both Alternate Members acted as Regular Members.

Donation Bench Program Update, (D,A)

Presented by:

Hasanthi Hogleund, Department Operations Specialist

Department Operations Specialist, Hasanthi Hogleund led the board through some recommended updates to the Bench Donation program ahead of moving for action with City Council. The changes take into account the increasing costs for materials, installation and labor and allow more flexibility for the program. Following the presentation the board had questions and discussion including if this program can expand to more locations and other amenities and site furnishings and how beneficial the benches along the walking trails have been especially near the Senior Center.

Following discussion and questions, Brenda Spears motioned to recommend moving forward the changes to the Donation Bench Program for City Council to review and adopt. David Liu seconded.

The motion passed unanimously with 8 votes. Both Alternate Members acted as Regular Members.

Parks and Community Services Summer Highlights, (I)

Presented by:

Jeff Watling, Director

Director Watling led the board through the Parks & Community Services department work and summer highlights as shared with City Council.

REPORTS

a) Director's Report

Director Watling gave an update on budget, referencing the recent City Council meeting and noting the department has looked at reductions and modifications of services and positions going into the next budget cycle. More information about budget will be available at the October 28 City Council Committee of the Whole meeting.

- b) Chairperson's Report
None.

OTHER BUSINESS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

Board member Liu gave a shout out for the CIT program and that Pirate Week of Camp 'Quah was his kid's favorite week of camp over all other camps they participated in outside of City camps.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m. The next meeting is currently scheduled for October 28, 2024.