

**CITY OF ISSAQUAH
Park Board**

7:00 PM
February 24, 2026

MINUTES

Tibbetts Manor, 750 17th Ave
NW, Issaquah

BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT

Board Members:

Ryan Olson, Chair
David Liu, Vice Chair
Jane Takushi
Katie Bell
Tim Motley
Chris Kovac
Marlene Waxse
Diana Ren
Hannah Novakivic

Administration/Staff:

Jeff Watling, Director, Parks & Community
Services
Robin Spear, Park Planning & Development
Manager

Paul Adair, Alternate
Martha Ginthner, Alternate
Jeffrey Newell, Alternate

Please note, this agenda also serves as the special meeting notice pursuant to RCW 42.30.080.

You may join the meeting in-person at the address above, or virtually using the following options:

Join by Computer

- Teams Meeting [attendee meeting link](#)
- If needed, meeting ID is 256 165 810 436 33 and passcode is mX3Tp2qu

Join by Phone

- Call 1-206-485-0299, enter phone conference ID 751 662 439#

If planning to make verbal comments, please email jeffw@issaquahwa.gov. Submit written comments to parkboard@issaquahwa.gov.

A recording of the meeting will be posted to the City's YouTube channel: [issaquahwa.gov/youtube](https://www.issaquahwa.gov/youtube).

CALL TO ORDER

7:01 start meeting

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a) Minutes of January 26th, 2026
Approved by Ryan Olson, no revisions or comments

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- a) 02-23-2026 Email from Connie Marsh, 02-24-2026 Email from James Mantel (both attached)

REGULAR BUSINESSa) **Mayor Introduction & Priorities (I)**

Presented by: Mayor Mark Mullet and Jeff Watling

Park Board bond expiring this year in November. frees \$9-10m to use in park investments, \$12-13m with impact fees.

- *advantageous position to do grant matches with the bond renewal, and value to live in Issaquah is because of our outdoor area and is an advantage to invest in.*
- *would like a voter led statement and list*

Potential Projects based on Near Term Priorities and to meet or park use diversity and hit realistic goals:

- *Ek House at Confluence Park,*
- *Bill Ramos trailhead repaving, furnishings, restrooms (easier it is to access trail properties)*
- *Partnerships with Issaquah School District for pilot projects for field space (enhancing public owned spaces) Memorial Field, PFAS challenges with some locations that could be mitigated.*
- *Pickleball courts*
- *Tibbetts Valley Park- needs to be upgraded for upcoming development and to support existing neighborhoods like Talus*

? Ek House: \$2-3m seems high. Athletic fields needs equity of turf, Issaquah Elementary is a great central location. How do we make sure the field/turf areas are spread throughout and equitable? A: what are the small and medium size of projects that give us a good mix? Confluence reimagining the NE corner to complete it. More cost estimating for these projects needed. Tibbetts does need a larger investment to help complete the vision.

? How much of the \$16-20 would be replacement bond? A: 1/2 of it would be, the other impact fees and grants. ? People ask about Tibbetts and the dog park at Tibbetts. A: temp dog park was just below townhomes. Re-envisioning the entire park is needed and multiple dog parks are going to be needed due to land constraints.

? diversity of program is good, focus on the athletic fields and putting them in the front of the plan for revenue generating. A: will need to be a sequencing of it and will be a 5-6 year endeavor.

? is there a way to move forward without acquiring the Kelly property? A: yes, we can do it without the property.

400 TDR units from Lakeside and revise the agreement, payment to the city to reinvest.

? Pickleball needs to be at Tibbetts. Community sized playground needed.

? Elementary fields are open to the public so turf in multi-use areas at the schools is great. More space to be able to walk to without getting soaked after a rain. A: take care of our own fields, partnership with the district.

? Squak Mountain Trail Corridor: trailhead close to the Squak Mountain, east side has no connection. A: Kelkari III adjacent to Weymouth property that goes right to Squak Mountain State Park. Long range plan for west side of Squak Valley Park to have a connection in future

into East Squak but needs extensive community work and outreach.

Further conversations in March 23rd Park Board Meeting, and April 6th Council meeting. Presented to the Council at their retreat.

b) Issaquah Climate Action Plan Update (I, D)

Presented by: Stacy Vynne McKinstry

Update:

- *foundation for the City's climate work, adopted 2021 with community engagement and special interest groups*
- *current input from committees, boards, and the Planning Development and Environmental Council committee*

Park Board 2025 Feedback:

- *community gardens*
- *tree canopy and forest fire protection*
- *drought tolerant landscaping policies*
- *habitat protection and how we are incorporating it into the plan*

Natural Systems Targets and Actions:

- *Target 1: Current target: Increase tree canopy to 55% by 2035 (around 300 additional acres of tree canopy)*
- *Target 1 Alt: no net loss tree canopy from 2023 levels*
- *Target 2: 100% Tree Equity Score achieved in each neighborhood by 2050.*
- *Target 3: Additional target focused on riparian habitat and water conservation.*

? Policy for enforcing or supporting tree canopy?

- *Policies, programs, and incentives, acquisitions.*

? Underlying motivation for increase in tree canopy

- *benefits it can provide, clean air, heat island effect, habitat. More aspirational.*

? What are the surrounding cities?

- *Issaquah has one of the highest. Jeff to send around the Puget Sound list*

? Why was the Environmental board split?

- *ambitious target so we can strive to meet it. big benefits. habitat restoration projects may lose trees to improve habitat within the community and balance it out.*

? Without residential projects increasing tree count will parks be able to increase canopy?

Safety standpoint they can be damaging and would make it harder to remove? Landslides are stabilized with trees.

- *public property can help to increase and sustain a healthy canopy is supported through the Urban Forestry program is a constant goal. Always a balance and trade off but goal is health and sustaining canopy cover.*
- *Central Issaquah is the greatest area to increase canopy. Street trees help.*

? Trees aren't necessarily an environmental benefit. Hyper local scale if just looking at Issaquah, developers will look at areas that are easier to develop in by maintaining a stricter standard.

? 4% increase how much is it from trees growing a little bit. How much of our existing growth would help us achieve the 55%?

- *quantity shouldn't be the only metric, but also canopy health metric.*

? Equity is a good lens, we should concentrate on areas that lack the tree canopy should be the focus.

? Is the cost to go from 50% to 55% realistic from a financial perspective? Do we need to make what we have better vs. increasing what we have?

5 Actions:

Action 1: Implementing the Park Plan and UFMP. Speak generally that the ICAP is focused on

referencing the plans.

Action 2: Partnerships for private landowners. Tree Equity to align with a new target.

? can it include other types of habitat that doesn't include trees included in the action? grasslands, wetlands, etc.

Action 3: Implementation plan to address invasive species and educate private owners. Volunteer in nature, not mandates.

Action 4: Support enhancements around riparian protection, floodplain expansion and strategic acquisitions for stream health and wildlife resilience.

? Is there a call to action? Program or project? What is the nexus with climate? Build the resilience with the climate for alignment with comp plan.

Action 5: Providing education on climate change and encourage climate action. Increase opportunities for messaging and public involvement.

Pickering Barn solar project moving forward and ribbon cutting soon.

c) Park Rules and Regulations (I, D)

Presented by: Dale Markey-Crimp and Jeff Watling

Kicked off at Services Safety and Parks Committee

Helps to make sure parks are welcoming and safe, and users know what you can and can't do in the parks. Focused on park rules, already regulatory language is there for parks in the development code for capital projects.

1. *Agree with general direction? Moving towards a consolidated, updated, and clear park code*

- *A: Yes, absolutely*

1. *What topic areas will be most high interest?*

- *A: Fireworks, firearms, and weapons- makes a park space more safe and welcoming if controlled*

- *A: Tents, Shelters, and Camping- how do we help find unhoused people housing so people coming through feel welcomed and safe?*

- *A: Speed limits on the trails to avoid conflicts*

- *A: Animals and Pets- where demand is outsourcing places to go for owners.*

- *A: Building fires along SR900 and burning trash*

- *A: Tobacco free park position? Do we want to join other jurisdictions in this?*

? What lessons learned has Redmond had? A: Update more frequently but relatively new yet.

1. *Overarching approach to pursuit community input?*

- *HOA meetings*

- *Social Media, NextDoor*

- *Word on the Street locations at trailheads, multi-use paths, parks. QR code on signs so park users specifically see it.*

Review of Redmond's Parks Chapter is helpful and can be discussed later.

- *Clearer on governance and enforcement of rules*

Will return in March to Park Board. April a final draft for review and recommendation. July full Council.

REPORTS

a) Chairperson's Report

*Bare root plant potting events coming up- Issaquah parks web site.
as spring comes and days get longer enjoy getting out to the parks and trails*

b) Director's Report

Department Operations position has been filled by Laura Hass, starting March 2nd.

Dog Park is coming along and waiting to pour concrete next week. Utilities are completed.

Talk to local groups and get a pulse on the community if the renewal is of interest

c) Student Rep Report

Trail standards- collecting photographs of existing parks for examples to use in the report.

OTHER BUSINESS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

a) Working Document - Park Board Work Plan attached

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

The next meeting is currently scheduled for March 23rd, 2026

INQUIRIES

Potential Issaquah Park Bond Renewal

Example Projects – small to medium-scale projects from the near-term priorities in adopted 2024 Park System Plan and the current 6-year CIP	Initial Cost Range – including soft and hard costs
Ek House - full restoration and incorporation into Confluence Park	\$2.0 m - \$3.0m
Ramos Trailhead Improvements – New surfacing, restrooms & other trailhead furnishings	\$1.0 m
New Trail Corridors – Creeks to Peaks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cougar Mountain - using Harvey Manning Park (Bergsma) • Squak Mountain - using Kelkari and Weymouth properties 	\$1.5m - \$2.0 m
Athletic Fields – conversions to multi-use synthetic turf Community Sports Fields for 2-3 of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issaquah Valley Elementary • Grand Ridge Elementary • Clark Elementary • Memorial Field • Central Park Pad-2 • Dodd Field <i>(note: not a multi-use facility like the others and only used by a single user.)</i> 	\$7.5 m - \$9.5m
Park Amenities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanded Pickleball at Central Park or other location • Community Park sized all-inclusive Playground at Tibbetts Valley Park • Dog Park at Tibbetts Valley Park <i>(note: both the Playground and Dog Park at TVP would be informed by the new vision for the park to be completed in 2027)</i>	\$4.0 m - \$5.0m
TOTAL	\$16.0 m - \$20.5m

Presented and discussed with Park Board at February 24, 2026 meeting

From: [Connie Marsh](#)
To: [Park Board](#)
Subject: Code
Date: Monday, February 23, 2026 3:07:03 PM

Hi,

Missing:

Special events in Parks.

Anything...at all...that regulate the Parks Department and how they hold themselves to standards in the interest of the community.

Thanks,

Connie Marsh

From: [James Mantell](#)
To: [Jeff Watling](#)
Subject: Park Board - Special Meeting - Feb 24 2026 - Written Comments
Date: Saturday, February 21, 2026 5:14:48 PM

Hello Jeff,

I reviewed the Park Rules and Regulations Presentation dated February 24, 2026.

I wanted to provide community input regarding *“Questions to Answer tonight: 2) What topic areas do you believe will be the most high-interest for our Issaquah community? And do you already have policy perspectives on the position that the City should take on these topics?”*

- In consideration of our past conversations, I believe it is absolutely critical to develop, communicate and enforce stringent Park Rules for 1) “Building fires” (with potential devastating consequences for neighborhoods adjacent to Timberlake Park) and 2) “Animals and pets” (especially off-leash dogs in Timberlake Park, which includes the City of Issaquah’s only swimming beach on Lake Sammamish).

If required, please forward my written comments to the Park Board.

Regards,

Jim

James Mantell
425.443.1935
jmantell@hotmail.com