

CITY OF MONROE
PARK BOARD MINUTES
March 17, 2011

Call To Order

Chairperson Karin Coppernoll called the Park Board meeting to order at 7:02pm in the Parks/Public Works Conference Room.

Roll Call

Board Members Present: Karin Coppernoll, Shawna Chamberlain, Ralph Yingling, Bill Kristiansen

Board Members Absent: Collette Reams

Agenda Revisions – It was pointed out that item 7. A. of the agenda is in error. The date for setting the draft agenda under New Business should read **April 21, 2001**, not March 21, 2011.

Approval of Minutes - The minutes of the regular meeting held on January 20, 2010 were reviewed. Motion was made by Shawna Chamberlain to approve the minutes and seconded by Ralph Yingling. Motion carried unanimously.

Audience Participation – None

Unfinished Business –None

New Business – The draft agenda for the February 17, 2011 regular meeting was discussed. Items to be added to the agenda include a general discussion on a park from the inventory list – *Blueberry Children's Park*, and review of *Section 1 of the Park Plan*.

Staff Reports/Updates –*Director's Report*- Copies were distributed the Department monthly report to the Board Members. The report included an update on effects in the parks from a second flooding event of the Skykomish River that occurred in January. The maintenance crew replaced the flagpole at Lewis Street Park, as well as other maintenance activities such as general park repairs, painting, pruning and pressure-washing. Of note in the report also was the installation of several tons of free composted material into the ends of the island planters along Main & Lewis Streets, which will improve the areas for the flowers. In addition, it was reported that planning continues for 2011 special events and athletic tournaments. Staff is also working with the DOC Monroe Reformatory on the growing of flowers from seed for the downtown islands.

Ralph Yingling pointed out that recently, due to the murder at the prison, the DOC could no longer care for the flower starts so Mike Farrell searched for an available greenhouse to save the flowers and the Monroe School District has agreed to provide space at the Park Place Middle School greenhouse. The flowers have been moved there and are under the care of Parks Department staff.

Board Discussion

Al Borlin Park - Ralph Yingling and Karin Coppernoll gave a brief overview of the current features and uses of the park including noting that erosion has occurred through the years due to regular flooding. With the future transfer of property to the City from the Cadman mine site, a public recreation linkage along the river will encompass area from Al Borlin Park through Lewis St. Park, DNR's Lewis Street Boat Launch Sky River Park to the Cadman site. Proposed improvements per the Park Plan include expanded trails, disc golf, off-leash trail/dog park, picnic shelter, bike trails, interpretive sites, ecological restoration, bank stabilization and river access. Steve Whalen inquired as to the costs noted for the improvements, whether they had occurred. It was noted that the Park Plan CIP costs are estimates in 2008 dollars for future concept improvements and there is not available funding for all of the projects. Bill Kristiansen also pointed out that there are a number of geo-caching sites in the park, which has become a quite popular outdoor endeavor.

Review Park Plan elements – Preface/Summary of Key Elements – The Board reviewed and discussed the preface and summary of the current Park Plan Element of the City's Comprehensive Plan. Karin Coppernoll and Ralph Yingling introduced the key points including the Level of Service (LOS) and funding sources. It was explained that the LOS, 3.7 acres/1,000 pop., is a number based on acres of developed park land per 1,000 people of the City's population, and the acknowledged deficit in the plan is .3. Ralph Yingling expressed the view that the Park Board has a role to preserve the LOS as possible for current and future generations of Monroe residents, while acknowledging that economic and other forces at times may tend to drive the LOS downward. Shawna Chamberlain inquired whether the school-age population data in the plan is accurate today. Ralph Yingling replied that it is, but is trending to new proportions of traditional and alternative school programs. Steve Whalen inquired if that would have an effect on parks and recreation. Ralph Yingling responded that probably not, other than proximity to school sites and parks.

Karin Coppernoll raised the mission statement of the Department – *'to protect & enhance through the development of parks & trails'* phrase and noted that, due to the economic slowdown, development has slowed/stopped and also that trails is a high priority and should be kept as a high priority as to seek opportunities to connect with regional trails such as the Centennial Trail. It was generally agreed that the neighborhood trails are used frequently by residents. A question was raised for Mike Farrell as to the status of the Centennial Trail. A second point Karin raised from the plan is that the Department 'maintain a stewardship role' regarding open space and natural resources. Another question was raised whether the City has open space and natural resources preservation policies. Bill Kristiansen didn't recall the Planning Commission addressing those areas, and it was agreed to ask Mike Farrell for information regarding that point. Ralph Yingling suggested that the University of Washington has an Landscape Architecture Department and that it might be a resource for information on programs that may assist in developing or amending planning policies. Steve Whalen asked if the plan was restricted to the City limits and the general answer was yes, but also the East County Park District, which has traditionally served the Maltby area, has taxing authority for the entire Monroe School District.

Bill Kristiansen inquired in the case of the LOS, how an annexation affects it. Ralph Yingling replied that he has observed annexations where development of housing has already occurred. He related that in some of those cases, the developer had set aside small undevelopable pieces for tot lots or small neighborhood parks, and that past Park Boards have made recommendations that the community does not have a need for more small parks, but larger, strategically located parks (example North Hill).

Karin Coppernoll then raised the issue of budget cuts and funding sources and if there is an ability to raise revenue bonds. Ralph Yingling gave his observation on the available sources of funding - General Fund (shared) for operations, park mitigation fees which are limited and have slowed in recent years, and that the City could run a bond, however, it would compete with the Fire District, School District, Library, etc. The Board generally agreed that other sources of funding should be explored as it was agreed that it would not come from the General Fund.

The discussion concluded with a general consensus that the next Park Plan update in a few years should be looked at as a revision rather than a whole re-write, which may save money on the scale of consultant services needed. It was agreed that the plan as done in 2008 made improvements in being understandable and workable, but the revisions needed would be more in the area of updating population figures, budgets, funding sources and CIP priorities.

Planned 2011 Special Events – The board reviewed the listing of planned special events for the year and agreed that kudos should be given to Director Mike Farrell for his work in growing and adding new events and programs that both brings in revenue to the City and provides recreation for residents. Karin Coppernoll raised the point that the Department hosts a booth at some of the events and that it would be good to get a list of events that the department intends to host a booth. She stated, and it was generally agreed, that Board Members should attempt to sign up for and serve in the booth to help promote the parks and recreation available to the community. The Board wondered whether other interested residents may sign up to work the booth as ‘docents’. Shawna Chamberlain stated that she was surprised to learn how much of a positive economic benefit the athletic tournaments bring to the community when Mike Farrell reported that to the Board last year. A Board Member questioned whether the concessions would be open for many of the listed events.

Agency Reports

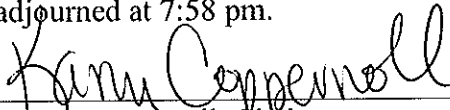
Planning Commission – Bill Kristiansen reported that the Planning commission was nearing the end of the re-zoning of the Main Street area including new design standards. They recently held a public hearing and are readying to send it to the City Council for their decision.

Monroe School District – Ralph Yingling reported that the School District is moving to all-day kindergarten and consolidation of the three middle schools to two. He explained that Monroe Middle School will be re-purposed to house the Sky Valley Education Center, as well as the ^{FRANK WAGNER} Monroe Arts Council Performing Arts Center. ^{WILL HOUSE} The high school wrestling program will be located there as well. The changes will not be easy, and some existing users (afternoon & evening recreation user groups) will need to adapt to new and/or less space/times. The changes to the Monroe Middle School also have limits on renovations due to the location/age of the facilities and most importantly, the lack of stormwater drainage that would be required for major

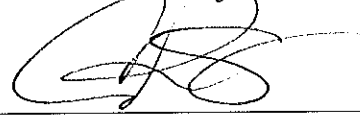
renovations or improvements. So, while there may be potential conflicts, the consolidation changes are needed and responsible moves. There shall be significant budget savings to the moves as well. Karin Coppernoll inquired whether the School district could look into moving the handicap parking stalls at Monroe Middle School to another location that is less-prone to stormwater flooding. Ralph Yingling replied that he would look into it.

Adjournment

Motion by Ralph Yingling and seconded by Steve Whalen to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:58 pm.



Karin Coppernoll, Chairperson



Collette Reams, Secretary