

REPORT of the regular monthly meeting of the OAK BAY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION held on Wednesday, May 1, 2013 in the Council Chambers, Municipal Hall.

In Attendance:

Monty Holding, Chair
Sandi Piercy
Rick Marshall
Brian Sharp
Victor Lotto
Linda Allen
Alison Davis
Chris Smith
Councillor Ney

Staff:

Ray Herman, Director, Parks and Recreation
Grant Brown, Manager Administrative Services
Chris Hyde-Lay, Manager, Parks Services
Janet Barclay, Manager Recreation Program Services
Mandi Krieger, Executive Assistant

Regrets: Drew Henderson

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.

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| I. | MINUTES | Commission
Committee of the Whole | (2013-04-03)
(2013-04-15) |
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Moved by Victor Lotto, Seconded by Brian Sharp, THAT THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 3, 2013 REGULAR MEETING OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION BE ADOPTED.

Carried

The minutes from Committee of the Whole were received for information.

II. CORRESPONDENCE

Request for fencing at Native Plant Garden (Davies, 2013-04-17)

Correspondence was received from Carol Davies, a volunteer with the Friends of Oak Bay Native Plant Garden, requesting Commission approval for deer fencing around that park, located at the corner of Beach Drive and Margate Avenue.

The Native Plant Garden includes a wide variety of native plants, shrubs and trees, many of which are rare. This garden is largely maintained by volunteers. Deer are becoming a problem in the park as they are eating many of the plants. Staff reported that, in order to keep deer out of the park, an eight foot high fence would be required. The estimate to install this fencing at the Native Plant Garden location is \$7,385.00. Given other fencing/backstop emergency expenditures incurred this spring, the parks division operating budget does not have available funding to cover costs.

The volunteers have approached the Heritage Foundation (given the park's heritage designation) for funding, and have been advised that approval was granted for 25% of the costs. Given the lack of operating funds in the parks budget, it is recommended that the funding request be forwarded to Council. Staff noted that in the event the request for fencing is approved, the ongoing maintenance and repair costs for the fence should be minimal and could be absorbed within the department's operating budget.

Commission requested that Council forward the proposal for the installation of the fencing to the Heritage Commission for their consideration, if appropriate.

Moved by Rick Marshall, Seconded by Alison Davis THAT THE COMMISSION APPROVE THE INSTALLATION OF DEER FENCING AT THE NATIVE PLANT GARDEN, SUBJECT TO FUNDING BEING CONFIRMED; AND

THAT IT BE RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL TO CONSIDER FUNDING OF THE FENCING.

Carried

III. REPORTS

Program Reports

Manager, Parks Services reported that brochures are being created in the region to guide eradication of invasive species.

Personnel Report

The full time position of Parks Equipment Operator was posted and filled.

Finance Report

March 2013, Month End Statement

	<u>2013</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>%</u>
YTD Revenue at month end	\$2,135,142	31.26	\$2,037,598	29.71
YTD Expenditures at month end	\$2,632,695	25.06	\$2,654,509	25.56
YTD Net Expenditure at month end	\$ 497,554	13.53	\$ 616,911	17.50
YTD Net Expenditure at month end (adj.)	\$ 506,444	13.78	\$ 616,911	17.50

NLC Update

The Director, Parks & Recreation reported that the three proponents will be submitting their design proposals for the NLC in June.

Henderson Centre Update

The Director reported that, although the Henderson Centre upgrade is behind schedule due to the hazardous abatement process, the fitness studio did open on April 29th and was well received. Temporary occupancy for the fitness studio has been granted and full occupancy status is expected to be granted on Monday, May 6, 2013.

A grand opening event will be scheduled once the project is fully complete.

Urban Forest Strategy Working Group Update

Rick Marshall reported that the working group has attended presentations from various groups to aid in the preparation of the Urban Forest Strategy terms of reference draft. The working group will present the material at the June Commission meeting for discussion.

Sportsview Lounge Working Group Update

Chris Smith reported that the Sportsview Lounge working group will present discussion items at the September Commission meeting.

Moved by Linda Allen, Seconded by Sandi Piercy, THAT THE STAFF REPORTS BE APPROVED.

Carried

IV. NEW BUSINESS

School District #61 Strings Group Event Request

The School District #61 Strings Group requested use of Willows Park to hold a “Bach to the Beach” event on Thursday, June 6, 2013 from 3:30pm to 5:30pm. The event has been held in the past with Commission approval, but did not take place in 2012.

The School District #61 Strings Group is comprised of students from Oak Bay, Esquimalt, Spectrum Community, Mount Douglas, Lambrick Park, Reynolds and Victoria High Schools. The group wishes to conduct a two-hour performance at Willows Park that would be open to the public at no charge. There would be no fundraising activity associated with the event. A sound system would be utilized to make announcements, but the music itself would not be amplified.

Staff noted that the impact on parks users is considered minimal and, may in fact, add to the experience of those who attend the park at that time. The booking would be subject to the usual park permitting process.

Moved by Sandi Piercy, Seconded by Chris Smith THAT THE COMMISSION APPROVE THE REQUEST FROM THE SCHOOL DISTRICT #61 STRINGS GROUP TO HOLD A “BACH TO THE BEACH” EVENT AT WILLOWS PARK ON JUNE 6, 2013 FROM 3:30PM TO 5:30PM.

Carried

North/South Pathway Proposal

The Active Transportation Advisory Committee has made a number of recommendations to Council, one of which is to establish a North/South pathway from Lansdowne Road to UVIC, potentially impacting Henderson baseball field and Henderson Recreation Centre. Council has directed the Director of Engineering Services to undertake a consultation process with stakeholders, including the Commission, regarding this proposal. The Commission was asked to provide comments back to the Director of Engineering Services on this pathway, as it impacts infrastructure in and around Henderson Recreation Centre and Henderson Park.

Discussion ensued and a number of concerns were voiced regarding the proposal:

- The route is not considered the most appropriate bike route due to the steep incline on the route and the narrow pathway. Alternate routes on Cadboro Bay Road, Henderson Road, or through the Uplands are more conducive to bike traffic;
- Drainage and fencing issues;
- Henderson Park fields and adjoining amenities are not appropriate to have bike traffic as it raises a safety concern, especially around the baseball field. It was noted that the baseball fields are utilized by the highest caliber of baseball players in Oak Bay that means that foul balls routinely land in the area where the path is proposed. Another safety concern raised was the merging of bike traffic with vehicular traffic in the parking lot at Henderson Centre;
- The relocation of the bull pen and batting cage that are currently in foul territory and would need to be relocated to allow for the path. An alternate area has not yet been identified.
- Cost of the project is a concern;
- Concern that the number of people disrupted would outweigh the number of people using the pathway;
- Suggestion was made that the bike lane currently on Foul Bay Road be extended the last block at the top of the hill to connect the lane to all the way to Lansdowne Road.

Staff was requested to contact the Active Transportation Advisory Committee to invite representatives to the September Commission meeting to get a broader picture of the proposed trail network throughout the municipality and for the ATAC to hear the challenges of the Parks & Recreation department.

Moved by Brian Sharp, Seconded by Chris Smith THAT THE COMMENTS GENERATED BY DISCUSSION AT THE COMMISSION MEETING FORWARDED TO THE DIRECTOR OF ENGINEERING SERVICES.

Carried

VI. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director reported that Cattle Point has been approved nationally as an Urban Star Park and signage is being created. Staff are working with the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada – Victoria Centre on a recognition ceremony as well as working together to emphasize the vulnerability of the area due to the rare plant species located at Cattle Point.

Director reported that there are no recommendations for the Wall of Fame to forward to Council for 2013. It was noted that the Wall of Fame Committee will be reviewing the application criteria.

Recommendations to Council for the award of the tennis bubble replacement has been deferred to look at options for fire access as the current lane will not exist after the Oak Bay High School rebuild.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Chris Smith, Seconded by Victor Lotto, THAT THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION BE ADJOURNED.

Carried

The regular meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm.