

Mr. Monty Holding – Chair
Parks and Recreation Commission of Oak Bay
Commission Members
November 14th, 2017

Dear Mr. Holding and Commission Members:

Police, Bike Thefts and Safety at NLC

October 16th - Council Approves Bike Lanes on Cadboro Bay Road
October 18th - Three Bikes Swiped from Oak Bay High – Oak Bay News
October 25th - Man Faces Charges after school bait-bike sting – Oak Bay News
October 27th – Oak Bay Police Introduce Bike registry – Oak Bay News
November 1st – Letter to Parks and Recreation Commission – Gerald Smeltzer

Thanks for the discussions at the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting of November 1st. I understand that Mr. Ray Herman, and / or other staff members will explore steps to increase security and bike safety at the NLC and adjoining recreational facilities at Oak Bay High School.

As suggested at the November 1st meeting, I will talk to Ms. Randi Falls, Principal of OBHSS, and similarly raise these concerns. To provide background for these steps, I have provided additional photos – taken on Tuesday, November 7th - and further information:

Bike Count on November 7th: Even with colder weather, and increasing rain, there were 152 bikes parked at 11:15 am on November 7th. Once again, the “secure” and “highly visible” parking under the bike shelter was overwhelmed. (space limited to 80 bikes). One month earlier – on October 6th – the overall count was 172 bikes.

Can bike parking be improved – so that NLC patrons, students and staff are not so vulnerable to theft? Yes – there are both immediate and longer term solutions. A quick fix is installing the six bike racks that are locked away behind the school. These are well designed, heavy duty racks that would accommodate another 45 or 50 bicycles. But the sign says it all.... (shown below).... – right now – these racks are no parking 24 hours per day – seven days a week.



A second longer term solution is better placement of existing racks. Don't put bike parking in remote locations far away from obvious destinations, with little visibility, and few by-passers. Below are two examples of bike racks on the south side of the playing fields on lonely, secluded walkways – with no lighting and no gates nearby to the fields.



Even if bike racks are properly placed in highly visible locations, the available bike spaces could easily be doubled to properly protect owners and bikes. Simply turn the existing racks to allow access from both sides! Placing bike racks sideways against concrete walls or fences (as shown in two photos below) is improper installation, reduces bike parking spaces by 50%, and forces owners to lock to flimsy, insecure fences.



At the same time, put bike racks where people want to go!! For example, the main entrance to the Neighbourhood Learning Centre (NLC) has no bike racks in sight, but lots of room on a wide walkway!



Immediately around the corner, Paddington Station Day Care fails to provide visible and secure parking for its youngest customers.



*“Recreation Oak Bay is dedicated to creating **a warm, welcoming and safe environment** where everyone can participate in a wide range of recreational opportunities regardless of age, ability, background and economic status.”* Recreation Website – About us

Surely our community can provide better support and encouragement for people – from the youngest, and the oldest – who choose to cycle!!

I ask the Oak Bay Parks and Recreation Commission, as co-managers with School District #61, and as lead tenant at the Neighbourhood Learning Centre (NLC) to take these positive steps to reduce bike thefts.

Certainly, parents, students and the energetic patrons would support longer term solutions. No one wants a stolen bike!!

Yours sincerely

Gerald Smeltzer
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Member - Greater Victoria Cycling Coalition

Programs

Marketing

- A new departmental website was launched on November 29th. The purpose of the website upgrade was to make it more user friendly when searching for information and to make it compatible with our new on-line registration system. Feedback so far has been very positive.

Culture

- Congratulations to sculptor Fred Dobbs, whose piece *Lunar Transitions* received the highest number of public votes, earning him the *ArtsAlive* People's Choice Award. *Lunar Transitions* will be considered for purchase by the municipality. Honorable mention go to the sculptures *Bodhi Frog* by Doug Taylor, and *The Gatekeeper* by David Hunwick, which were runners-up for the People's Choice Award. Votes were collected by both paper ballot and QR codes between June 1st and November 1st, 2017, with more votes being cast this year than any other year so far in the *ArtsAlive* program.
- The Call to Artists for the 2018/2019 *ArtsAlive* Program is now online and open until December 10th, 2017.
- The Call for Submissions for the 2017 Acorn Arts Award is now online and open until January 19th, 2018.
- Art created by participants in the Oak Bay Artists' Fall Studio Tour is on display in the Neighbourhood Learning Centre hallway starting October 27th through to November 28th.
- Oak Bay Artists' Fall Studio Tour took place Saturday, November 4th, and Sunday, November 5th, with 5 artists being hosted in the Neighborhood Learning Centre as part of the self-guided tour.
- Oak Bay Parks, Recreation, and Culture staff Glenna Garramone and Janet Barclay attended the Capital Regional District Arts & Culture Roundtable on Friday, November 24th, which provided opportunity to exchange highlights and challenges with other Arts & Culture staff in the CRD.

Aquatics

- Willows School began their school swim team practices on Tuesday November, 14th. They will be swimming every Tuesday from 3:30-4:15pm until February.
- Three afterschool groups started participating in Oak Bay's public Red Cross swim lessons in November. New this year, Christ Church Cathedral School has 14 swimmers enrolled on Tuesday afternoons between 3:30-5pm. They join Sir James Douglas Out-of-School Care who has returned with 21 children participating in lessons on Tuesdays. On Thursdays between 4-5pm, over 50 Recreation Oak Bay Afterschool children are registered in public lessons.
- A new session of Lifeguards in Training started on Sunday, November 5th. This program has been steadily growing in popularity since its launch in fall 2016. There are currently eighteen 7-14 year olds registered. This program continues to provide an opportunity for children and youth to learn and practice their lifeguard skills, and a way to stay active in the pool after they have completed all of their swim levels.

Community Recreation

- The daycare children continued with their visits to Kindergym on Tuesdays, walking trips to neighborhood parks, dance classes, Sportball classes and Kodaly Method of Music every second Wednesday. The group visited Goldstream Park to see the salmon run and visited the nature house.
- The morning and afternoon Preschool Playhouse children at Windsor visited Craigdarroch Castle on Friday, November 24th for a field trip.

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- Crafty Pro-D Day Camps were successful with a total of 23 participants participating in Winter Wonderland crafts.
- The Oak Bay Staff participated in the Christmas Light Up Festival on the Avenue with street hockey and children's crafts.
- There were 56 children participating in the November Pro-D Day at the Neighbourhood Learning Centre.

Fitness

- The Fitness Department held a Staff meeting on November 25th with 22 staff in attendance. The meeting provided a great opportunity to discuss areas of concerns and collaborate on solutions. The meeting was followed by a Core workshop with Tina Truscott from Body Blue Print which gave staff the opportunity to continue their education credits and gain insight into a variety of core exercises that can be utilized in group fitness classes and personal training sessions.
- With the success of the small group training in the fall 2017 session, an additional class was added for the final few weeks of the season. The class was capped at 8 participants to allow for proper instruction and supervision. The class was immediately sold out as participants appreciated the additional class.

Monterey Centre

- Over 80 Monterey Members received a complimentary Flu Shot between October 30th and November 1st. The clinic was sponsored by Save on Foods Pharmacy.
- A birthday cake celebration was held in the lobby for members on November 3rd.
- The Monterey Drama Club presented two short productions- "G & T" and "Bringing Edwin Home" on November 4th. The entertaining plays were enjoyed by 99 Monterey Members.
- Members attended the Vintage Fashion Show November 16th and enjoyed an afternoon tea and beautiful vintage fashions.
- November daytrips included an outing to watch the Comic Strippers, a Lunch with Captain Bob at the Blue Moon Café and a road trip to Chemainus for the production "Cornwall's An All Inclusive Cancun Christmas".
- The annual Artisan Show and Sale on November 18th featured 26 Artisans, including youth artisans and the Rotary Interact Club.
- The Monterey Concert Band hosted a "Night of Music" on November 23rd. The delicious pork dinner and inspiring music was enjoyed by 128 patrons.
- November 24th was Christmas Decorating Day. Volunteers beautifully decorated the centre and the Christmas Trees. MRAA proudly participates in the CFAX Anonymous Bear Drive for local children in need.
- The Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon was held November 30th. Over 85 Volunteers enjoyed the delicious buffet lunch, and entertainment by the Noteables.

Arena / Teens / Indoor Sports Field

- The indoor sports field is very busy now that the weather has changed and the daylight is shorter. There are only a few times during Saturday day time and late nights after 11:30pm during the week available.
- New this fall, Indoor Sports Field Premium Birthday Parties such as bubble soccer, glow in the dark dodge ball and laser tag, have been offered and are starting to get booked up on Saturday and Sunday afternoons.
- Remembrance Day Everyone Welcome Skate held on Monday, November 13th, had a record breaking 250 plus skaters at the skate.
- Adult skating lessons are running Wednesday evenings with just under 20 participants.

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- Novice Hockey league for ages 5-14yrs continues to be a successful program for participants wanting to learn and/or participate in hockey at a recreational level. This program has three different groups with 91 participants in the program.
- Youth Centre numbers continue to be strong at lunch with 35-45 youth and afterschool between 15-18 youth regularly attending.
- Youth monthly evening events are running well. The events are planned by the staff with input from the youth that attend the center. Popular events are Table tennis tournament nights that come with pizza and drinks.

Tennis

- Junior Team Tennis, offered the first Friday of every month, had 32 juniors attend on November 3rd.
- Due to very positive feedback, all junior tennis lessons will continue with a tournament to conclude the lesson set. The tournament is called Rogers Rookie Tour with the primary focus being fun and light competition.
- Block Booking accommodated all patrons requesting a time during the September – December 2017 session. To ensure these groups continue to stay together and active during the Winter session, Fall 2017 block booking groups will be given “first right of refusal” prior to an online Block Booking court registration on December 16th.
- Child/Parent/Guardian participation lessons on Sunday have been very popular.
- The New Year’s Classic, January 2- 14, 2018, is being planned and is a Tennis BC sanctioned tournament. This year the junior non-ranking portion of the tournament was changed from December to November 9th -12th. The change allowed the tournament to be sanctioned through Tennis BC: 50 children participated and the event was shared between Cedar Hill and Oak Bay.

Upcoming Events

- Thursday, November 30th, **Volunteer Recognition Luncheon**, 12:00pm-2:00pm, Monterey Recreation Centre.
- Friday, December 1st, **David Vest performs: The Music of Jerry Lee Lewis**, Oak Bay Recreation Centre - Upstairs Lounge. Doors open 6pm, Music 7:30pm.
- Friday, December 1st, **Sea of Lights Lighted Ship Parade**, 7:00pm, Willows Beach.
- Saturday, December 2nd, **Breakfast with Santa**, 9:00am to 11:00am, Oak Bay Recreation Centre.
- Sunday, December 3rd, **38th Annual Merrython Run**, 10 am, Henderson Recreation Centre.
- Friday, December 8th **Twin Kennedy** performs Oak Bay Recreation Centre - Upstairs Lounge. Doors open 6pm, Music 7:30pm.
- Sunday, December 10th, **Free Family Skate Canada 150 Skating Day across Canada**, 12:00pm to 2:45pm, Oak Bay Arena.
- Wednesday, December 13th, **Members & Clubs Holiday Luncheon**, 12:30-2:00pm, Monterey Recreation Centre.
- Sunday, December 17th, **Holly-Daze Dinner and Dance**, 5:30-9:00pm, Monterey Recreation Centre.
- Saturday December 23rd, **Santa’s Kindergym Surprise**, 9:30-10:30am & 11am – 12pm, Henderson Recreation Centre.
- Monday, December 25, **free Christmas Day activities** including swimming and skating and fitness studio admissions.
- Monday, January 1st, **Walk with Mayor and Council and free New Year’s Day activities** including Jazzercise, Swimming, Skating and fitness orientation.

Maintenance

- The Henderson lower roof project has experienced delays due to all the rain we received in October and November. The forecast for the first two weeks of December looks promising. Hopefully this project can be wrapped up before the end of the year.
- The new lighting in the Garry Oak room is up and running. The energy savings and the ability to control the lighting levels of each light independently will be beneficial.
- One of the ammonia compressors in the arena was rebuilt by Modern Energy out of Vernon. The whole process was completed in 3 days.
- Due to the ammonia leak in Fernie that took the life of 3 workers, we are reviewing & updating the ammonia emergency response procedures and re-training all of the Maintenance staff. This will be complete by the end of 2017.

Parks

- The boulevard crew are busy with seasonal leaf cleanup until the end of the year.
- The gardeners are busy with annual garden bed maintenance.
- The golf course closed for the season mid-November.
- The tree crew was busy for the month of November installing Christmas lights.

Tree Report

For the month of November.

The tree crew participated in our annual Tree Appreciation Day in Uplands Park on Sunday November 5. We planted 8 Garry oaks along the boulevard of the 3000 block of Midland Road. There were tree climbing demonstrations, plant identification quizzes and we repotted the 16 Ginko trees that we have been growing from seeds collected from a tree that survived the Hiroshima nuclear blast. We have planted three memorial donation Garry oaks this month at Windsor Park, Bowker Creek Walkway and Uplands Park near Cattle Point.

Public Property

Parks staff removed 1 boulevard Garry Oak from public property this month. This tree partially failed in the wind.

Private Property

35 permits were issued under the Tree Protection Bylaw. 8 removal permits were received for the removal of 17 trees protected under the Tree Protection Bylaw and one removal was denied. These permits were issued because the trees were dead, diseased, dying or structurally unsound or removed for construction. 5 of the trees were Garry oaks. One replacement trees was required. 25 permits were issued for pruning protected trees.

Security Deposit and Enforcement

Two security deposits of \$500 were collected this month. None were forfeited due to non-compliance with conditions on deposits as required by the bylaw. The bylaw requires security deposits to ensure care of required replacement trees; deposits are held by the Municipality for 3 years pending satisfactory planting and care or required replacement trees. Forfeited deposits go to the Parks tree purchase account.

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Work Orders

In this period we received 21 calls for service and closed 23.