



**ANACORTES PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT**  
**P.O. BOX 547, ANACORTES, WA 98221**  
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Parks & Recreation Advisory Commission

**March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

Cancelled due to COVID-19.

If reasonable accommodation due to a disability are needed, please contact Mac Jackson at least 48 hours prior to the meeting date (360-299-1961).

# Parks and Recreation Update

## March 2021

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### Parks and Anacortes Community Forest Lands Report

Jon Lunsford, Nicole Johnston, Dustin South and I made our annual lobbying trip to Olympia, virtual though it was. We had great meetings with Senator Lovelett, Rep. Ramel and Rep. Lekanoff's legislative aid, Kaylee Galloway. Each found time for specific discussions of our local park projects, grant funding levels in Olympia, and strategies for working with the homeless population. We look forward to continued work with these offices, and appreciate their accessibility.

Steve and I have been infusing more volunteer help into the ACFL. Of course, there are many regular trail users who perform all kinds of helpful anonymous tasks, as well as those who keep us posted with the maintenance needs they discover on their respective travels. We appreciate this very much, as well as the folks who have been working with us on specific tasks. We are also excited about our first official work party in the woods in over a year, scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 27<sup>th</sup>. Thank you to the Friends of the Forest for partnering with us on this one. Executive Director Asa Deane and I have been working toward a formalized series of volunteer trainings and work parties, and 2021 will reveal these as we move through the year.

I did attend the February Friends of the Forest Board meeting, and was able to provide some updates and answer some questions. I will be doing the same next week at their Annual Meeting.

Steve's Certified Arborist credentials continue to play a key role in working with our parks and woods neighbors. Winter winds have brought forth a handful of questions and concerns, and we have been able to respond with a site visit and resulting plan on several fronts.

We continue to work with our Washington Park campers on a variety of needs. In addition to a couple of successful programs with partners like the Anacortes Police Department, the Anacortes Family Center and our Planning Department, we continue to see camping revenue increasing for this time of year. Our team approach to the management of the campground keeps fresh perspective on park visitor and maintenance challenges, and helps improve our response to the constantly growing number of visitors.

Representatives from the local Rotary Club presented their Cap Sante trail and viewpoint project concepts at the February Parks Commission meeting. The information was well received and will be further discussed at the Commission's April meeting. I continue to work with Club members in refining the plan.

We were able to complete a long term Guemes Channel Trail negotiation with two home owners along the rail bed between "A" and "B" Avenue. This involves trading a street vacation for trail right of way. The process is now in the hands of the City Council. As of the writing of this report, I do not know when it next appears on their agenda.

Parks and Planning staff have been working on an upgrade for the West Beach steps at Washington Park. The railing suffered some recent winter storm damage. Hoping to have a plan ready for review in the next few weeks. Parks Crew did a nice temporary fix.

I am also working with Planning on a repair plan for trail #10, between #117 and #113, as well as some very preliminary discussion regarding the Little Cranberry "boat launch."

Just about everyone on our Parks Crew, along with celebrity volunteers, have been hard at work at Causland Park, upgrading the memorial plaza. This project will be a great tribute to those who have given all.

We are preparing our plans for seasonal hires, as March is already next week. Some jobs should be posted today. We are looking forward to expanding the team for the “busy” months.

Most of us on the Parks & Rec team are working on getting the downtown street tree Christmas lights removed so we may proceed with a much needed round of pruning.

As the City owns and manages two dams within the ACFL, the Department of Ecology has safety protocol required for each. You may remember the work done at the Little Cranberry dam in the mid 90's. This included tree and vegetation removal, the construction of a spillway and installation of a log boom. We do an annual inspection and send that to DOE.

The earthen dam at Whistle Lake has not been upgraded to these standards, and DOE has reached out to us to explore options for necessary safety upgrades. The dam, just north of Toot Swamp is crossed by trail #205 and is rarely noticed by most forest visitors. We are currently working with a consultant on some options going forward, and may have these ready for discussion at the March Forest Board meeting. It should be noted that Whistle Lake is still the backup water supply for the City.

Keeping a close eye on beaver activity, notching dams where we have permitted ability to do so.

Doing my best to help Steve out on a variety of trail projects, most still involving cutting windfall out of the way of trails.

Enjoyed another great Samish Nation / City of Anacortes hike in the ACFL with Denise Crowe. No matter how many years we have been hiking the trails, I always learn something new. This connection is greatly appreciated.

**Bob Vaux, Assistant Director**

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## **Parks Maintenance Report**

### **Grand View Cemetery Expansion Update:**

After a long weather delay, Tiger Construction paved cemetery exit road yesterday. Tiger Construction will plan to come back by the end of March/early April to put the final touches on the swale, work the open dirt and hydroseed. All of this can potentially happen sooner than later if we get a break in the rain. This will wrap up Phase One.

We are planning for Phase Two of the Grand View Cemetery expansion and we are hopeful to start work by August. Phase Two will include final landscaping, irrigation, a columbarium area, surveying for the layout of the cemetery plots and preparing the area for use as a cemetery.

In the end we are looking to have over 2,000 plots for sale and a columbarium area (*A columbarium is a structure usually for holding cremated remains*) and we will have more trees and grass to make the area look like a cemetery.

**Field Use Update:** After a successful Feb. 20<sup>th</sup> Volunteer Park work party the fields are on their way to be ready for the AHS Baseball/ Fastpitch season to start March 22<sup>nd</sup>. Still have lots of work to do on Ace of Hearts, Rotary Field and Storvik ballfields. Hoping to plan a work party with Anacortes Little League and Blackhawk Baseball Club to help us get those fields ready. Youth baseball will start early in March.

**Crew Update:** Crew remains busy clearing trees at the Cemetery, we had another large limb fall around the same time as when the snow came. Sky and Brian have been plugging away at the Washington Park Utility Upgrade project, Steve has been keeping trails clear in the ACFL and has been assigned the job to take the lights off the downtown trees so he

can successfully prune. Nichola has been keeping up on setting markers at the Cemetery and AJ has transitioned into baseball season mode. Dustin & Travis still help us out when we can. The crew really appreciates the help with the sanitation route that needs to happen 3x a week.

**Washington Park Update:** Washington Park remains busy with visitors and even a few campers. We have yet to have an empty campground this winter. Thanks to Sky who put out additional reminders for social distancing and mask wearing. Utility upgrade project is on track in the "A" section. Still hoping to be done with this project by April 1.

**Pickleball Court Update-** Exciting news for the pickle ball community. We have all four nets up on the courts. We have only had two up because of covid. We have additional signage to encourage users to not cluster and to only have 4 people per court.

Nicole Johnston, Parks Manager

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## Recreation Staff Report:

**Youth Basketball:** The modified practice only basketball season began February 1<sup>st</sup>. Each team has no more than six players and one coach, practices have an emphasis on individual development and skill building. We currently have 78 children participating in the program.

**Pee Wee Sports:** The modified Pee Wee Sports Camp began February 24<sup>th</sup>, the program has 33 children enrolled in the program. The children are divided into small groups and will participate in a different sporting activity each week.

**Fieldhouse Fun:** The modified fieldhouse fun class began February 23<sup>rd</sup>. The toddler movement and sport course provides small children and their parents an opportunity to move and play in a semi structured environment.

**Fitness Fun:** Staff partnered with the Anacortes Library to offer a virtual fitness program. The program guides you through a four-part video series with options for all fitness levels. The program offered a weekly fitness video to promote the community to stay active in a safe and fun manner. <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC38maL3ZWnZGVUBzTmoG65w>

**Senior Center:** Staff has partnered with the Senior Center to offer a virtual exercise program (Silver Foxes w/Richard Simmons) for seniors via Zoom. Staff has been facilitating the online programming and sharing the video to the participants. The program began February 1<sup>st</sup> and will continue to run Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10am-11am.

**Depot Plaza Restroom Project:** Delivery and installation of the new restroom unit occurred on February 3 & 4. There are still some items the manufacturer, CXT, needs to complete before we can open the restroom to the public. We will install timed locks so the restroom can be open for set number of hours during the day. The restroom should be ready to go by the time the Farmer's Market resumes in April. <https://www.anacorteswa.gov/1282/Depot-Plaza-Restroom>

**Anacortes Waterfront Alliance Partnership:** Matt Halliday is the new director of AWA. The Recreation division is working with Matt (AWA) to provide summer learn to sail classes this summer. We are confident we can offer some sore of class schedule safely under COVID protocols.

**Summer A-Town Publication:** Staff has been informed there will be a Summer A-Town Publication this year so that we can advertise recreation programs that will be offered this summer. The publication is currently scheduled to be sent out around mid-May.

**Spring Recreation Programs:** We are looking at what type of recreation programs we can run over the next couple months under Phase 2 COVID guidelines. In addition to the aforementioned, we are looking at offering some type of Youth Track and Field Program, Youth Volleyball League, and Adult Sports program.

Dustin South, Recreation Manager

Travis Anderson, Recreation Coordinator

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The **Forest Advisory Board and the Arts Commission** will hold their first virtual public meetings in March. On March 3 at 6pm the Forest Board will meet and the Arts Commission will meet on March 10 at 4pm. Please contact [coaparks@cityofanacortes.org](mailto:coaparks@cityofanacortes.org) for more information or follow us on Facebook or Instagram for links to join us.

**Parks and Recreation Impact Fees:** We will be bringing our impact fee study to the City Council at their March 1<sup>st</sup> meeting. Impact fees on new development help to fund parks and park amenities to meet new growth. Our fees are over 20 years old and in need of an update. Berk Consulting has helped us by drafting the Fee Study for review.

**Partnership with Samish Nation:** The Anacortes Museum and our department are partnering with the Samish Nation as we update many of the informational & educational signs in our parks and trails. You may have seen our signs everywhere from Ship Harbor to Cap Sante. Our two governments are working together to better incorporate accounts of Samish people and places. The Port of Anacortes will also join this partnership on signage in their parks and trail network.

**Causland Memorial Park Update:** As Bob noted above, a great team effort has helped us prepare our memorial plaza at the park. Stone mason Bryan Elliott is scheduled to start his work March 1, on the memorial wall. Other community volunteers are busy at work restoring the cannon and should have that ready by summer. As usual, our generous community has stepped forward with donations to pay for the wall construction and are at about 90% of our goal. Thank you.

Jonn Lunsford