



ANACORTES PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT
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Parks & Recreation Advisory Commission

May 11, 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

May 2021

Recreation Staff Report:

First off would like to give “big thank you” the Anacortes School District 103 for working with us to provide gym space for several of these spring programs.

Egg Hunt: Staff ran a modified version of the annual egg dash for April 4th 8am-10am. The event took place at multiple parks including Storvik, Kiwanis, Tursi, Causland and Washington Park. Moving the event to multiple parks allowed for smaller group sizes to meet state health requirements to provide this popular annual activity. Some parks had more visitors than others, but overall it was a great success.

Youth Volleyball: The youth volleyball league for children 3rd-6th grade, began April 13th. Staff planned a modified league following the state health guidelines, we currently have 44 participants registered for the league. The season is scheduled to end May 13th

Youth Track and Field: The youth track and field program for children 1st-6th grade, will begin May 10th. The program has been modified to meet state health guidelines. We have met the capacity of the league with 120 registrations. The program will end May 24th.

Co-Ed Youth Flag Football: We have offered flag football programs/camps in the past but will be the first time offered as a “league.” Over the years more and more parents/participants have requested a program like this. It will be geared for children 1st-6th grade, begin May 12th. The recreation staff is partnering with the Anacortes High School football team to offer a developmental league to teach the fundamentals of football. Staff has planned a modified league following the state health guidelines, we currently have 44 participants register for the league. The season is scheduled to end June 11th

Adult Recreation League: Staff planned an adult recreation league. The league allowed for participants to compete in a different sport every week. We did not have enough interest to run this program and it was canceled.

A-Town Publication: The Summer A-Town publication is scheduled for distribution May 18th. The publication includes information for all summer 2021 recreation programs. Staff has planned to open registration for the 2021 program offerings around May 19th. Some (but not all) of the programs that will be offered are Survivor Camp, Learn to Sail Classes, Pee Wee Athletics, Fall Soccer League Registration, Art Dash Fun Run, Adult Co-ed Softball, and more!

Fall Soccer: The Skagit Valley Youth Soccer Association voted at their most recent meeting to change the age cut-off from “Birth Year” to “School Age Year”. This means the age cut-off will be August 31st instead of the previous December 31st. This brings age divisions more inline with kids playing with other kids in their own grade instead of potentially kids two grades older/younger. APRD staff have adopted the same age cut-off date for the City League as well. Soccer registration for the fall 2021 season will open in mid-May.

Depot Plaza Restroom: Ribbon cutting was on April 7, 2021. The restroom is officially open for public use. Just in time for the Farmer’s Market busy season to start back up. Thanks to Skagit County for providing the grant and City staff for making it all come together.

Dustin South, Recreation Manager

Travis Anderson, Recreation Coordinator

Parks Maintenance:

Mowing, sanitation and baseball fields sums up the month of April for Parks.

Ballfields have been busy. AJ Yost has done a great job maintaining all the fields at Volunteer Park, while also getting Rotary, Storvik and Ace of Hearts ready for all the Anacortes Little League games. I know that AJ will welcome his seasonal staff help that starts on May 3rd. At this point the City is not hosting any tournaments like we have in the past at our ballfields this summer, but we will continue to allow teams to play games and/or practice. Our fields at Volunteer Park are still in high demand by teams from outside our community and we will continue to accommodate as we can. Also super exciting we were able to get 10yards of infield dirt from the Skagit ballfields who are putting in turf fields. This is a huge score for us as infield dirt is hard to come by and is very expensive.

Volunteers thanks to Fidalgo Island Rotary Club who have done two work parties at Causland Park. They do a great job at weeding the flower beds for us. They also have been weeding the Pickett Pocket Park flower beds. *The dedication of the PPP is scheduled for Thursday, May 6th at 1:30pm, all Park Board members are welcome to attend.*

Two Arbor Day Trees (*Sunset Maples*) were planted near R Ave next to the Skatepark on Earth Day with the help of Fiddlehead Montessori and Mayor Gere. Also on Earth Day the Port of Anacortes did a beach clean down at Ship Harbor.

Opening Weekend of Fishing The Department of Fish and Wildlife stocked Heart Lake with 8,000 fish of various sizes. Opening weekend April 24/25 was pretty mild this year due to the rain. Saturday morning the Heart Lake parking had on average 20-30 vehicles.

Crew Update-We have started to hire seasonal staff for parks, Washington Park and ACFL. We are still looking to hire one more trim and one more ACFL seasonal staff. Exciting news is that our department has been approved to hire two more full time parks maintenance positions. The crew is looking forward to being back to a full crew and to catch up on things we have not been able to do this past year.

Grand View Cemetery Expansion Update- We are working with eccosDesign who has developed the conceptual Landscape Plan that was shared with you at last meeting. Patrik with eccosDesign is working now on the irrigation plan we need for expansion site. We are waiting on what the cost is going to be for the scope of work for Tuttle Engineer. We are asking for the following deliverables from Tuttle Engineer for Phase Two of the expansion:

- Civil construction plans for additional site improvements,
- Working with eccosDesign for landscaping plans including irrigation
- Final cemetery plat map
- Engineers estimate of cost
- Project specifications in WSDPT format
- As-builts following construction

As soon as we are able to get all of the above together we will go out to bid on Phase Two.

Grass is slowly growing on the expansion side. Brian worked the dirt even more and put down grass seed in early April.

Washington Park remains the busy as ever. Over the weekend of April 23/24 we had only handful of first come first serve spots available. Parks crew is preparing for another epic summer of camping and WP visitors.

We will open the upper restrooms Mother's Day weekend. It is exciting to see the A section come together and to see campers using the new pedestals.

What's next... the month of May Parks crew will continue to small mow and big mow and catch up on as much trimming as we can. We will trim R Ave Ivy and also spend the first week of May trimming the headstones at the cemetery for Mother's Day weekend. Nichola will work her magic in the planter boxes and fill them with new flowers and the hanging baskets will return downtown in mid – May.

Nicole Johnston, Parks Manager

Parks Administration and Anacortes Community Forest Lands:

We are super excited to thank our brothers and sisters in Public Works for getting some LONG NEEDED road work done on the Mt. Erie Road. Parks & Rec was able to purchase the material and the Streets Division provided the operators and equipment. It really has improved the drive up and down the mountain. We look forward to continuing this low-cost partnership in the future on other parks roads.

We had two great clean-up projects in the ACFL centered on Earth Day. I helped out with the Dallas Kloke Mt. Erie climbers clean up, and Parks Staffer Sky Guthrie worked with divers in Heart Lake. Both events took place the morning of April 17th, and were successful in getting some non-native materials off the mountain and out of the lake. Thanks to all who participated.

Very happy to report the Washington Park 'A' Loop was opened for camping by the promised date of Friday, April 2nd. A huge thank you to Nicole, Brian, Nichola, Steve, AJ and Sky for making this happen. And thanks to VECA as well for their continued positive partnership.

We also completed a long term stay program in the campground with partners the Anacortes Police Department and the Anacortes Family Center (AFC). This was done in conjunction with the cold weather shelter, and an outreach grant the AFC was able to secure. The program resulted in no complaints in the campground, and some very positive steps forward for program participants.

I completed two sessions of trail steward training with the Rotary Club on the Cap Sante trails system. The two outings included at least six of each; Rotarians and AHS Green Club members. The sun came out both days, and we are now ready to send some new trail stewards into the wild.

The vacation of portions of 11th Street and 'B' Avenue to the Wynn and Ortman families in exchange for waterfront easements to be used for Guemes Channel Trail construction continue to work their way through the City Council Public Hearing process. A few of the neighbors have raised concerns regarding their views and the long term plans of the residents of their neighborhood. The Public Hearing is currently continued to Monday, May 3rd.

Nicole Johnston and I continue to work on a much drawn out seasonal hiring process. We have found it challenging this year to find applicants willing to meet us for an interview. Thankfully, we have also found some new folks who are ready to pitch in, alongside a returning core group at Washington Park.

Nicole, ACFL Steve and I were also able to get a fair amount of downtown street tree pruning completed. We shall take our next look at this in the fall. The three of us also continue our work with a variety of tree owners, both public and private.

Steve and I have been responding to 4-wheel drive access issues at the Whistle Lake trailhead. I was able to catch up with a home-made rig in response to a concerned hiker's phone call. From there, Steve and I put a plan together, and he has done a nice job shoring up the access points.

Friends of Forest Executive Director Asa Deane and I had a good South Cranberry outing. I included a tour and description of the trail #10 improvements we are working on between trail's 117 and 113. We are working with Public Works and a local biologist on the plan, and will have the paperwork in to Planning very soon.

Director Lunsford and I had a nice meet and greet with new Fire Chief Bill Harris. We are looking forward to showing him around the ACFL and Parks, and continue our work on community safety.

Steve, Denise Crowe and I continue our City/Samish educational ACFL outings. We spent a beautiful afternoon on Sugarloaf, where the spring wildflowers are beginning to burst, and things look pretty good up there, despite the steadily increasing visitor numbers.

I was on vacation April 19 – 27. Special thanks to Steve, Nicole and seasonal staffer Vinod Kushner for taking care of Heart Lake on Opening Day weekend. All reports indicate a wet, orderly fishing adventure had by all.

Bob Vaux, Assistant Director

Whistle Lake Dam: We are working with a Geotech firm who needs to determine for us if we need to drill into the dam to determine what it is made from (earthen fill, rock, clay). We also need a hydrological analysis of the lake to understand its capacity and flow. We may need to get a small excavator to the dam which is currently possible, except for the last 300 feet. Permitting may be required and that is what we are trying to determine right now with our consultants and the City Planning Department.

Hiring Update: We expect to start our hiring process for two Parks Maintenance staff and the Senior Center Administrator in the next week. We are refilling positions that we could not rehire due to the COVID hiring freeze. Thanks to the Mayor and City Council hope to have these new people on in June and July.

Pickett Pocket Park Dedication: We will dedicate the park on Thursday, May 6th at 1:30pm on site with Ms. Pickett and many important guests.

Budget Process: We will begin the process this year with a budget retreat in late May with City Council members to hear their priorities for the upcoming budget cycle.