



Berthusen Advisory Committee Minutes November 15, 2023

1. **ROLL CALL:**

Members Present: Harlan Kredit, Marlin Hendriks, Dave Timmer, Joel Vander Hoek, and Karen Steensma

City Staff Present: Parks Director Brent DeRuyter, and Parks Administrative Asst. Nancy Norris

2. **ACTION ITEMS:**

A. **Reading and Approval of May 23 Minutes**

The minutes were left out of the agenda packet. DeRuyter briefed the Committee on what was discussed. The May 23 Minutes will be included in the January meeting agenda for review and approval.

3. **INFORMATION ITEMS:**

A. **Sign Update-** Sign on west end of park still being designed by Tractor Pulling Club After a brief discussion BAC recommends this area not be known as an optional entrance to the park that it remains as a horseback trailer parking lot only.

BAC recommends the sign not be permanent, allowing a portable sign that the Club can position for their event days.

B. **Continuing to work on Noxious Weeds/Ivy-** Spring projects are possible with Lynden Christian School kids- teacher Kim Veltkamp and Whatcom Million Trees Project- Michael Ferrier.

Harlan asked Nancy if together they could revisit the project areas from last year and help identify any other areas that should be addressed as well.

C. **Safety in the Park-** Minimal complaints, have heard of a couple of late departures and received complaints about horse users.

BAC member Vander Hoek shared that he and his wife and other neighbors have witnessed suspicious, unusual behavior in the park like what has been expressed in the past.

Vander Hoek asked if the Park gate hours could be changed back to open at dawn and closed at dusk, especially this time of the year, and better security for opening and closing the park and having more of a park employee presence.

BAC agreed that this park needs better security before it becomes problematic like what other neighboring cities are dealing with or before something bad happens after hours or dark etc...

BAC recommends that the city hire an additional full-time employee who secures the park and has more of a presence at the park daily and for the city to consider putting a park caretaker or park ranger back in the house.



PARKS DEPARTMENT

Brent DeRuyter, Parks Director
(360) 354 - 6717

D. Rental Number/Usage- Rental calls were way up again (record high?) this past season and we will now be able to take reservations on the new website starting after the first of the year.
Nancy reported that 2019 still holds the record high with 2022 being second. Noting Berthusen is the most popular park for facility rentals. Nancy encouraged BAC to visit the new park website.

E. 2nd Restroom Upgrades to be done “In House”- We will wait until after the new year to use 2024 funds. DeRuyter shared that the City has applied for a ROC grant that is strictly for Park Improvements.

A. Nooksack Loop Trail Follow-Up

Marlin announced that in the past 10 years of working on the Nooksack Loop Trail there is huge progress being made,

The Nooksack Loop/Connector Trail Committee has met with surrounding community Leadership. Together they petitioned to BNS to give an easement of abandon railroads for developing a County wide trail system. The Program is called Rail Banking with rights to develop a trail on abandoned railroads with the understanding BSN could take back the railroad property for development of future railroad projects.

There are many people getting on board to make this project a reality. Marlin is hopeful more progress will be made in the next few months and years to come and that he might be so fortunate to see this trail developed still in his lifetime.

B. Upgrades to Berthusen House and Change of Tenants Update

The interior of the house was freshly painted, the walls and ceilings repaired that had water damage from the old leaky roof, and the very old flooring replaced with new flooring throughout the house.

There were four (4) city employees who expressed interest in renting the house but all four (4) backed out. The house is being rented by Abbey and Abner Drury-Perez as private residents. They are not employed by the city nor do not aid any security or maintenance to the park, they are only responsible for maintaining the residence, the yard and flowerbeds surrounding the residence.

4. ITEMS ADDED:

A. Project Ideas from Committee Members-

Karen shared with the committee old photos and slides of Berthusen Park from the Werkema's. Mrs. Werkema served on the BAC for many years. As a couple the Werkema's volunteered many hours working in the park removing noxious weeds and ivy. They also lead school kids on interpretive trail hikes. The Werkema's are now residing in Olympia close to family. BAC praised the Werkema's for their contributions to Berthusen Park and the Lynden Community.

Meeting Adjourned 8:31pm

NEXT MEETING DATE
January 17, 2024