

**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO
MINUTES OF ELECTORAL AREA 'E' PARKS AND OPEN SPACES ADVISORY
REGULAR COMMITTEE MEETING HELD
WEDNESDAY MAY. 27, 2015
7:00PM
(Nanoose Place)**

Attendance: Director Bob Rogers - Chair
Peter Law – Secretary
Gordon Wiebe
Scott Rowswell
Vicki Voros
Debbie Mitchell

Staff: Elaine McCulloch, Parks Planner
Wendy Marshall, RDN Parks Manager

Regrets: Diana Young

CALL TO ORDER

Director Rogers called the meeting to order at 7:00pm

DELEGATIONS

No Delegations

MINUTES

MOVED G. Wiebe, SECONDED S. Rowswell that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Nanoose Bay (Area E) POSAC held February 25, 2015 be approved.

CARRIED

REPORTS

Monthly Update(s) of Community Parks and Regional Parks and Trails Projects (January to April, 2015)

Ms. McCulloch tabled these reports

District 69 Recreation Commission Report

G. Wiebe provided a summary of some recent issues being discussed at the Commission, including a 2016 budgeting proposal for a “needs assessment” report on developing an outdoor multi-sport complex in District 69.

Fairwinds Regional Parks Management Plan

Ms. Marshall summarized the public engagement (Survey and Open House) process that occurred in May. The final Fairwinds Park Management Plan will be submitted to the Parks and Trails Select Committee on June 16th.

P. Law asked if there would be any more opportunities for public comment on the Plan before it is adopted by the Board. Ms. Marshall responded that the public comment period has now closed.

Claudette Community Park

Ms. McCulloch provided a brief summary about proposed tree removal work in the Park and on MOTI property (NWB Road). A bird assessment is being proposed before work begins.

Blueback Community Park – Revised Concept Plan and Cost estimates (Plan and Cost materials provided at the meeting)

Ms. McCulloch provided members with a revised plan (May 2015) and costs. The plan has changed since being discussed by POSAC at the Feb. 2015 meeting. Input has been received from Director Rogers and David Polster (ecological restoration consultant). Ms. McCulloch has modified the (May 2015) slightly (with mark-ups).

The revised Park plan is to complete the project in 2 phases. Phase 1 will see site prep, removal of Blackberry, modify site drainage patterns, installation of waterline (for plant watering) planting of grasses and site furnishings on the foreshore, path and parking. The Phase 2 will be to control the Blackberry and replant using native plants. This may take several years.

General Comments:

- Plan is much improved from Feb 2015.
- A plant/grass water system is proposed
- Danger tree management issues exist on site. Large Cedar tree may be made into a “wildlife tree”
- POSAC members agree with the Plan layout (May 2015) with “Mark-ups”

S. Rowswell – asked about the cost estimate of \$20K for annual park maintenance?

Ms. McCulloch suggested that this cost estimate was high, and that an effort to monitor blackberry and re-introduce native plants will result in annual park maintenance that will be much lower.

G. Wiebe – Asked about the potential for funds to be invested in this project from the Commercial Divers who use this site?

Ms. McCulloch stated that the Park Use Bylaw will be updated this year. A discussion regarding “Park User Fees” will occur during this process that will clarify how Commercial “Park Users” will be required to pay to use Community Parks. At this point, it is unlikely that Commercial Divers will contribute to the Blueback Park Plan (May 2015).

S. Rowswell – Questioned the level of accuracy of this (May) budget for Blueback Park. The costs have risen \$20,000 from February (2015) budget estimates, plus there is a contingency of 15%, so these costs estimates do not seem accurate? Is there a “ceiling” on how much this project can spend?

Ms. McCulloch explained that based on POSAC direction at the last meeting, the scope of the project increased. As the plan is still at the concept stage the cost estimates are based on order of magnitude costing. Cost estimates will become more accurate as construction drawings are developed. The final cost of the project will be known once the contractor “bidding process” is completed in the coming weeks.

Director Rogers stated that once the bids are received, the Directors will make the final decision on whether to proceed with the project, or to revisit the project design to reduce costs.

MOVED P. Law, SECONDED G. Wiebe that the reports be received.

CARRIED

NEW BUSINESS

5 Year Planning Review (2015 - 2019) – Table provided at the meeting

Ms. McCulloch provided an overview of this table, and how the projects listed have been placed here over the years by previous Area E POSAC Committees. In recent months, she has heard from POSAC members that we are interested in “fast-tracking” trails for Area E. She also recognizes that the new Oakleaf subdivision will have a unique parcel of land transferred to the RDN for a Community Park, and that this site should be the subject of a Park Plan process.

S. Rowswell commented that the 5 year time frame for projects does not make sense for a number of reasons:

1. budget limitations and
2. limited staff resources to develop/cost projects.

Director Rogers pointed out that he likes to see a 5 year horizon on potential park projects. He suggested the POSAC form a “sub-committee” to review the existing spreadsheet and background materials with new eyes and provide some ideas for projects. This subcommittee will provide a report on their recommendations for the AREA E - 5-Year Project Planning (worksheet) 2015-2019 by mid July 2015.

POSAC Members in attendance who volunteered to review the table include: S. Roswell, V. Voros, D. Mitchell.

Ms. McCulloch will supply maps to sub-committee members.

COMMITTEE ROUND TABLE

Director Roger asked POSAC members to comment about Community Parks in the future:

- G. Wiebe – would like to see more attention given to roadside trails in our community
- D. Mitchell – keen about trail developments
- V. Voros – keen about trail development
- P. Law – Happy to see the Blueback Park project coming to final design and implementation. This has taken a long time, but glad the RDN Parks have followed through.

Comments from Public:

Director Rogers invited anyone in attendance to ask questions about Community Parks issues.

Mr. D. Bligh of Henley Place - indicated there is a Community Park in his neighbourhood that is “rough shape” and looks ugly. POSAC subcommittee to follow up with Mr. Bligh about this issue.

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED G.Wiebe, SECONDED D. Mitchell that the meeting be adjourned at 9:00 pm.

CARRIED