

North Whidbey Park and Recreation District
Minutes of the Regular Meeting, September 15, 2011

The regular meeting of the North Whidbey Park and Recreation District Board of Commissioners was held on September 15, 2011, at the John Vanderzicht Memorial Swimming Pool. Board members present were: Chair Ron Rhinehart, Vice-Chair Allan McDougall, Secretary River Powers, Commissioner Dennis Jepsen and Commissioner Harvey Prosser. Staff member present was: Director Craig Carlson.

Public

Fil Jepsen, Nedra Weber, Bob Wilson, Julie Wilson, Bill Young, and Nathan Whalen of the Whidbey News-Times were in attendance.

Call to Order

There being a quorum present the meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m. by C/Rhinehart.

Changes to the Agenda

There were no changes to the Agenda.

Board Issues

Levy Failure Options – The possibility of levy failure was discussed at length, and three options were proposed should it fail in November.

1) **Raise prices to cover the District's expenses.** Discussion: C/McDougall stated that fees would need to be doubled from \$3 to \$6 to compensate for the levy failing, but with a drop in attendance from those who were coming in four times a week and would now only be coming in twice a week, the fee would then need to be increased to \$12 to compensate. C/Powers stated that she feels attendance would go down to zero with a \$12 admission fee. C/Rhinehart asked the Director to explain how the Navy uses the pool from a program standpoint. The Director stated that the Navy uses the pool for PRT testing and recreation, with MWR (Morale, Welfare & Recreation) contributing to Active Duty, Dependent and Retiree fees. The Director also stated that a significant portion of participation (approximately 40%) comes from the Navy and their families. C/Prosser summed up that it is apparent that there is no way to raise the prices enough to cover expenses.

2) **Private party takeover of the pool.** Discussion: A member of the public asked if a private company could operate the pool if it closed. C/Prosser stated that nobody was interested in touching the pool when the levy failed 8 years ago.

3) **Close the pool.** Discussion: C/Rhinehart asked if there are contractual issues with closing the pool. The Director stated that the pool would become property of the City*, according to the District's most recent lease agreement with the City. Bill Young asked what would happen to the Clover Valley ball park and the dog park if the pool closed. C/Rhinehart stated that they could theoretically be operated without the levy, though the fees to cover the overhead and staffing would be astronomical. C/Rhinehart stated that – out of the three options discussed - the only real option is to close the facility, use the reserves to avoid the deterioration of the asset, and wait a year to go back for another Levy vote. C/Powers agreed. C/McDougall proposed closing the pool on January 1st, 2012, if the Levy does not pass, with reserve funds being used to limit the deterioration to the capital investment already made by the community. C/McDougall stated an additional option, which would be to separate out the dog park, ball park and Whidbey Island Running Club to see if there's a way to make them financially viable. C/Rhinehart stated that it would be difficult at best, but the District could look for ways to staff and support these on a self-sustaining basis. [*Clarification: The lease agreement with the City provides the City with an option to take over the facility if the District closes the pool.]

General discussion: A public member asked why Coupeville residents can't vote on the levy. C/McDougall informed her that she can't vote because she is outside of the voting district, and while he doesn't know how to change that rule, it would be more reasonable to reflect the actual community of users. Aerobics Instructor Nedra Weber asked if the Anacortes pool is having any issues, as she feels a lot of the aerobics participants might go there for their instruction. The Director stated that the Anacortes pool did pass their last levy, but they are due for another levy vote next year, so they're in the same situation, but the timing's different. C/Rhinehart stated that all of these options will be addressed after November if the levy fails, and thanked those in attendance for a useful conversation.

Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the August 18, 2011, meeting was made by C/Powers, seconded by C/Jepsen. The motion passed unanimously.

Voucher Review

A motion to approve the review of the vouchers numbered 4964-5007 in the amount of \$32,497.47 as well as two payroll transfers in the amount of \$54,873.84, for a grand total of \$87,971.31, was made by C/Powers, seconded by C/McDougall. C/Powers asked if the District's van is being regularly serviced after a recent break-down during Running Club travel. The Director informed her that it is. The Director also stated that the cost to replace the van's fuel pump was over \$1200. *The motion passed unanimously.*

Staff Reports

Director's Report

The Director followed the points in his written report, providing the Board with information relating to: 1) The attendance report for the month of June, 2) Estimated Recreation Program participation, 3) Annual Maintenance Week—the Director recognized Staff members Janika Bainco, Roxy Culver, Adrian Hansell, Spencer Hawkins, Ciara Hu, Rachael Jappert, Jacob Jepsen, Joshua Jepsen, Lloyd Long, Sophie Marks, Steve Martinez, McKenzie McCormack, Megan Morris, Autumn Robinson, Michelle Robinson, Anna Skurdal, and Brett Vagt for all their help during shut-down, 4) Annual Dog Day—over 100 hot dogs were eaten and over 70 dogs swam with their masters, 5) the sales tax response from the Department of Revenue—no definitive answer was given, but based on other entities in a similar situation, Swim Team is being addressed as Swim Lessons with no tax being paid unless instructed to do so, 6) Employee of the Month recognition to Jenna Fletcher for all of her efforts as a Lifeguard, 7) the audit timeline—State Auditors indicated that they do not plan to conduct the audit until late October at the earliest, 8) the 2012 Proposed Budget—certified assessment values will be received by September 30th. The deadline for the Budget has been changed from November 15th to November 30th, 9) an October meeting date change request—the Director has upcoming vacation plans and suggested October 13th for the next regular meeting, and 10) the response letter to Judy Norton from whom the Director still has not received a reply. C/Powers asked about the contents of the Judy Norton letter. The Director stated that the letter asked Ms. Norton to pay half the amount that was previously billed. C/Powers stated that, based on the circumstances, it's ridiculous to ask her to pay anything. The Director informed C/Powers that he would communicate this to Ms. Norton directly.

The Director stated that Swim Team Treasurer Vicki Robinson was recently admitted to the hospital and that he will be sending flowers and discussing back-up personnel with the Coach Romney. The Director also stated that he recently met with an MWR Representative, who informed him that there is actually wording in the contract with the Navy that relates to—and meets the needs of—a rate increase, if one is required. C/Jepsen asked if the Head Coach has considered a written letter going out to all NWAC membership in case the levy fails, and how the District will rectify getting fees back to the individuals who paid their dues in advance. C/Rhinehart stated that fees can continue to be accepted for all District programs under the usual procedures along with a note stating that refunds will be given for all fees pre-paid from January 1st on, in the event that the levy doesn't pass and the pool closes.

Maintenance Report

Maintenance Supervisor Lloyd Long provided a written report to the Board. There were no questions.

Swim Team Report

Head Coach Neil Romney provided a written report to the Board. There were no questions.

Running Club Report

Head Coach Catie Rodeheffer provided a written report to the Board. There were no questions. C/Powers stated that WIRC has a lot of runners on the Oak Harbor High School Cross Country Team, and they are all doing very well in the current high school season.

Budget Report

The Director stated that another \$3,000 in general property taxes was recently received. The City of Oak Harbor has been billed approximately \$14,000 for the remainder of the summer lifeguarding services at Windjammer Park. Revenues have been holding their own, with the exception of daily admissions, though the Director pointed out that passes and punch cards have been higher. Swim Team membership is down at this point, but due to being on a different billing cycle, it should catch up. Expenses relating to the Head Guard are due to her having to work a lot more than anticipated due to the turnover of lifeguards. Refunds/credits will be given from Frontier on the next phone bill due to misinformation being provided on long-distance and web-hosting services. Unexpected repairs relating to the boiler recently came up and were taken care of. Utilities still seem to be under budget, though the Director stated he is apprehensive about the City's new rates and how the charges will be affected by the draining and re-filling of the pool. The Director also pointed out that the bill from County hasn't been

received for the August election, nor did he anticipate budgeting for the November election, though resources are available to take care of both.

Public Comments

There were no Public Comments.

Unfinished Business

There was no Unfinished Business.

New Business

Appointment of Committees to develop pro and con statements for online Voter's Guide – Julie Wilson stated that she has a call in to the Secretary of State and their Webmaster to find out how many hits the Online Voter's Guide actually gets, though she has not heard back from either of them as of yet. The Director stated he sent an email to County asking the same question and has not yet received a response. C/Rhinehart asked the Board if they want pro and con statements in the Online Voter's Guide. C/Powers asked if there was a disadvantage to having them in there. C/Rhinehart stated that you can't have a pro statement without a con statement. The Board would have to appoint a special committee to write the statements. Then both of them would have to be signed by somebody appointed by that committee. C/Rhinehart asked if the Board needs to direct that statements be issued, or if the decision can be left to the committee's judgment. The Director stated that he thinks the committee could do that. Julie Wilson stated that one of the problems last time was that there wasn't anything written, so people didn't know anything about it, even though the voter turn-out was so low. She said that the con statement can be made pretty effectively against the levy, though a pro statement could be very persuasive, too. Mrs. Wilson added that she wasn't sure if the District would lose more from having a persuasive con statement, or gain more from simply spreading the word about the levy through the Save the Pool Committee. C/Powers asked when the statements would go online once they are written. C/Rhinehart stated that it is his understanding that the Voter's Guide becomes available as soon as the ballots are mailed out. C/McDougall stated that he is leery of putting statements in, as it's too easy to turn them against the District, based not on facts, but emotion. ***A motion to not appoint a Committee to develop pro and con statements in the online Voter's Guide was made by C/Prosser, seconded by C/Powers. The motion passed unanimously.***

Open Discussion

There was no Open Discussion.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by C/Powers, seconded by C/Jepsen. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:29 pm.

For the North Whidbey Park & Recreation District Board of Commissioners

River Powers
Secretary

Craig C. Carlson
Director

Christopher Cross
Recording Secretary Designee