

Minutes of the Regular meeting of the Area I (Youbou/Meade Creek) Parks Commission held in the Upper Community Hall, 8550 Hemlock Street, Youbou, B.C., on Tuesday, May 12, 2015 at 7:00 pm.

PRESENT: Chairperson Marcia Stewart
Vice-Chairperson Rob Somers
Rose Davidson, Recording Secretary
Monroe Grobe
Ian Halowaty
Dan Nickel

ABSENT: Area I Director Klaus Kuhn

**APPROVAL
Of AGENDA:**

It was moved and seconded that the agenda be amended by adding the following item to:

**NB1: Price Park “and Nantree” garbage cans
and that the agenda, as amended, be approved.**

MOTION CARRIED

**ADOPTION OF
MINUTES:**

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the Regular Area I (Youbou/Meade Creek) Parks Meeting held on April 14, 2015 be adopted.

MOTION CARRIED

REPORTS

**COWICHAN LAKE
RECREATION**

Boom sticks at Arbutus and Nantree Parks are slated for removal in the next year, which raises a number of concerns:

L. Blatchford

- Boom sticks provide “play” for youth; the shift in the world is toward a focus on bringing back play to make kids healthier. Kids have played on these boom sticks for generations.
- Boom sticks protect the wharf from the winds.
- They define the park and swimming area from boaters on the lake.
- If the Parks Division moves the boom sticks further out and then puts a rope and buoy system in place between the wharf and boom sticks, kids will just go further out to play and this could provide a more dangerous situation.

Members of Area I Parks Commission support the views of the Recreation Division and are in favour of keeping the boom sticks.

**CHAIRPERSON
REPORT:**

M. Stewart

Brian Farquhar wants to have a **Parks Chairs Working Group Meeting** in May or June. Items on the agenda will include:

- Overview of the Parks Bylaw 738 that was updated this past fall
- 2016 Budget Planning Schedule adopted by the Board
- Community Parks and Trails Planning Priorities for 2015 (and into 2016)
- Community Parks and Trails 2015 Capital Project Schedule
- Park Naming and Memorial Policy Development
- Electoral Area Community Parks and Trails Master Planning
- Parks Bookings and Special Events
- Bright Angel Park Re-opening Event

- Parks and Trails Division – Parks Commission Communication
- Parks Chairs Roundtable Sharing

Area I Parks Commission Members suggested it would be a great learning experience for Rob Somers, Vice-Chairperson, to accompany Marcia Stewart to this meeting.

CVRD REPORT:

Ryan Dias

- **Arbutus Dock:** The concrete floats are in good condition but all wood components need replacing. The cost is approx. \$18,000 - 20,000 and will come out the Community Park and Trails Capital Project Budget. Michael Miller says the reconditioning of the main dock will take about five to seven working days, during which time public access will be closed and is expected to open again at the beginning of June.
- **Maintenance Crews** are in full swing. The road in **Little League Park** was graded.
- **Playfield Park:** Due to the ongoing drainage problem, the whole situation is now being assessed to find out what the root cause is. Since the sprinkler system was shut off during the winter, it is not believed that the water could have come from there.
- **“Dawn to Dusk” signs in Mile 77 and Stoker Parks:** CVRD will do up additional signs to inform the public that washrooms will be open between 8:00 am and 8:30 pm.

OLD BUSINESS

OB 1

Memorandum from Tanya Soroka – Public Process to prepare a Concept Plan for Revitalizing Arbutus Park:

Parks and Trail Planners Graham Gidden and Tanya Soroka will be in charge of this project, which will not only look at the replacement of the washroom and storage building, but the park use as a whole.

It was moved and seconded that the Area I Parks Commission supports the revitalization process for Arbutus Park, as outlined in T. Soroka’s memo, and requests the CVRD provide the Commission with an updated timeline for this project.

MOTION CARRIED

OB 2

Memorial for Gerald Thom:

R. Davidson has started a list of possible donors for the Commission’s fund raising efforts. We are waiting to receive from CVRD staff proper plans for the proposed picnic shelter in Mile 77 Park (time line?) so we can start this process.

OB 3

Price and Swordfern Parks – tree snags:

Snags near the road that runs along Price and Swordfern Parks need to be removed, since they are close to the bus stop where kids wait to be picked up. Ian Halowaty met with Brent Wilson and a contractor and together they walked the area to identify problem trees. Brent Wilson gave permission to proceed with work.

NEW BUSINESS

NB 1

Garbage cans at Price Park and Nantree Park:

- A new bear-proof garbage can was placed at the entrance to Price Park.
- At Nantree Park, Dan Nickel reported that staff from the Easy Living Maintenance Contractor has ongoing problems with people filling up both the new bear-proof and the old plastic garbage can, which should have been removed but never was.

Commission Members request that the old plastic garbage can at Nantree Park be removed and to let them know once it is done. In general, Commission Members would appreciate receiving information about any changes to garbage cans, park signage, etc. in a timely manner so that they may be able to answer questions about such matters when approached by the public.

NB2

Algae Bloom on Lake Cowichan:

The unusual appearance of masses of brown algal bloom in the waters of the lake, which has lasted for more than a week and caused a lot of consternation among the residents of the area, was discussed. Of particular concern was the intense rotten organic stench emanating from the water. Volunteer researchers George deLure, Bill Gibson, Gord Davidson and Rob Somers from the Cowichan Lake & River Stewardship Society first noticed the algae in their weekly readings of water quality on May 3. At this time of the year, depth visibility is normally 10 to 12 metres, however, measurements taken over the following two weeks indicated that this had been reduced to about 4 metres. Local residents claim the last time such an occurrence was noticed on Lake Cowichan was in 1941. Algal blooms are not unusual in smaller lakes in Canada, but are rarely seen in larger lakes. The cause of this algal bloom has not been identified. Possible contributing causes may be the unusually warm winter and a lack of run-off from snowpack in the mountains. Some people claim it may have to do with high concentrations of nitrogen run-off due to forest practices (?). The Ministry of Environment will be monitoring the situation to determine long term trends associated with climate change and land use activities within the watersheds.

NB 3

Procedures for contacting CVRD:

For our new members joining the Commission, M. Stewart reiterated the following guidelines:

- If Members discover any dangerous situations in parks (fallen trees on trails, damaged bridges, etc.) they should contact and inform CVRD staff directly by phone or email.
- Any subject that will need to be discussed in Commission Meetings should be brought up and discussed only at such meetings.

NB 4

Nantree Park Area – Rezoning Application:

Parks Commission Members have concerns about this situation and discussed it. And, in light of what has developed at Nantree,

Request from CVRD staff an update on the situation with the public squatter who had taken up the Dhillon Road public access as reported by the late Gerald Thom (see Area I Parks Commission Minutes of May 14, 2013).

ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved and seconded that the Regular Meeting of Area I (Youbou/Mead Creek) Parks Commission be adjourned.

MOTION CARRIED
Meeting adjourned at 8:44 pm

The next Regular Meeting of Area I (Youbou/Mead Creek) Parks Commission is scheduled for Tuesday, June 9, 2015.