

**MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE SANDPOINT CITY COUNCIL  
October 2, 2019**

**I. OPENING**

Mayor Rognstad called the regular meeting of the City Council to order at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, October 2, 2019, in the Council chambers at City Hall, 1123 Lake Street.

ROLL CALL: Council members Ruehle, Aitken, Aispuro, Williamson and Eddy and were present. Councilman Darling was absent.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mayor Rognstad led Council and the public in the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

A. **PUBLIC FORUM** – No comments during Public Forum.

**B. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

City Administrator Jennifer Stapleton announced vacancies on the Board for the Sandpoint Urban Renewal Agency (SURA Board) and the Sandpoint Arts Commission. Anyone interested in volunteering to serve is invited to visit the City website and complete the Committee Application.

**II. CONSENT CALENDAR**

C. **MEETING MINUTES** (*approval of City Council minutes; acknowledgment of all others*)

1. City Council – September 18, 2019, Regular Meeting

D. **BILLS** in the amount of \$939,328.86 for regular payables.

**Councilwoman Williamson moved** that items C-1 through D be approved. **Councilman Aispuro seconded the motion.**

A roll call vote resulted as follows:

Councilwoman Ruehle	Yes
Councilman Aitken	Yes
Councilman Aispuro	Yes
Councilman Darling	Absent
Councilwoman Williamson	Yes
Councilman Eddy	Yes

**The motion passed by a unanimous vote of Council present.**

**III. OLD BUSINESS**

**E. RECOGNITION OF EMPLOYEE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Mayor Rognstad** announced that he wanted to take this opportunity to recognize several City employees who have successfully completed job-related certification, licensing or other professional development programs this year, stating:

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We are proud to have such dedicated and hardworking employees like you. The Council members, leadership team and I regularly receive many compliments and words of praise for our employees from our citizens, and we are delighted to have such a valuable staff like you with us. On behalf of our citizens, we appreciate the effort and the time you have put into your professional development in the past year. One of our adopted strategic priorities over the past two years has been investment in, and support for, further development of our employees throughout the City. You have each displayed great enthusiasm to learn and grow professionally. To show our appreciation for your work and conduct, we would like to present each of you with a Certificate of Recognition for your accomplishments.

Human Resources Director Nicole Goes announced employee names, while **Mayor Rognstad** presented the certificates. Division heads accepted certificates on behalf of those employees who were not present.

Ms. Goes reported that Infrastructure and Development Services (IDS) employees in the Utility Services Group are required to obtain licensing through the Idaho Board of Drinking Water and Wastewater Professionals, and several employees have passed the exam to achieve a higher level of operator licensure. Their efforts ensure that we meet Idaho State standards (and in many cases exceed them) and continue to operate efficient, safe and effective drinking water and wastewater collection, distribution and treatment systems.

Certificates were presented to:

- Clayton Bowman - Idaho Wastewater Collection Operator, Class III
- Joe Higgins - Idaho Water Distribution Operator, Class II
- Quentin Ducken - Idaho Water Distribution Operator, Class II
- Quentin Ducken - Idaho Wastewater Collection Operator, Class II
- Tim Winget - Idaho Water Distribution Operator, Class I
- Tim Winget – Idaho Wastewater Collection Operator, Class I
- Zachary Neu - Idaho Water Treatment Operator, Class I
- Zachary Neu - Idaho Wastewater Treatment Operator, Class I
- Zachary Neu - Idaho Wastewater Treatment Operator, Class II
- Rich Buday - Idaho Water Treatment Operator, Class IV

Ms. Goes reported that employees in the IDS Street Services Group are responsible for miles of roads and streets throughout Sandpoint that are seeing an ever-increasing traffic demand. With the increased demand and new technologies comes the need for more diverse skills and knowledge necessary for maintenance and preservation activities on the roadways. The Idaho Road Scholar Program is a way for local road professionals to be recognized for completing a series of training courses. The program curriculum is designed to provide participants with the fundamentals of safety, management, and advanced technologies, as well as exposure to a wide variety of other topics relevant to the transportation field. The program is administered by the Local Highway Technical Assistance Council (LHTAC), whose representatives will attend a future Council meeting to present these City employees with program certificates and additional recognition.

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Certificates were presented to:

- Chet Jackman
- Shawn Henderson
- Tony Hendrickson
- Chad Larson
- Zeb Platt

Ms. Goes reported that, in the IDS Planning and Building Services Group, Planning and Community Development Director Aaron Qualls passed the examination to become an American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) certified planner. The American Planning Association's professional institute offers the AICP credential to assure our community that our employees have the education, experience, breadth of knowledge, ethical practice, and a commitment to the planning profession.

Ryan Shea passed the exam to become a Certified Floodplain Manager. The Association of State Floodplain Managers has established a national program for certifying floodplain managers. This program recognizes continuing education and professional development that enhances the knowledge and performance of local, state, federal and private-sector floodplain management professionals. The role of floodplain managers is expanding due to increases in disaster losses, the emphasis on mitigation to alleviate the cycle of damage-rebuild-damage, and a recognized need for professionals to adequately address these issues.

Bruce Robertson completed the Certified General Construction Inspector (CGCI) program, which focuses on standard specifications, special provisions, contract plans, contract administration, roles and responsibilities, documentation requirements and resources needed for effective inspection. The CGCI certification ensures quality control and quality assurance, as well as consistent administration of construction projects.

Ms. Goes reported that, in the Parks and Recreation Division, Recreation Supervisor Jason Wiley recently passed the National Recreation and Park Association Certified Park and Recreation Professional (CPRP) exam. CPRP certification is the national standard for all parks and recreation professionals who want to be at the forefront of their profession. Attaining the CPRP designation shows that Jason has met education and experience qualifications and illustrates his commitment to the profession, as well as his knowledge and understanding of key concepts within parks and recreation.

Ms. Goes reported that, in the Police Department, Community Resource Officer Angela Tennison is being recognized for two significant accomplishments: First is the completion of the Idaho POST-Certified Crisis Intervention Teams Academy Training. This week-long training is designed to equip law enforcement personnel with the tools needed to interact with people experiencing psychiatric crises. Second is the completion of 80 hours of training by the National Animal Care and Control Association (NACA) to become certified as an Animal Control Officer. The NACA organization's vision is to ensure that animal care and control professionals are respected as essential public servants and receive consistent support, resources and training, allowing them to effectively and

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compassionately achieve the highest quality of life for the animals and citizens in our community.

Additionally, several of our Police Officers have obtained either a specialty certification or higher-level Idaho Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) certification.

The following officers were recognized for obtaining their Basic POST Certificates:

- Steven Kingery
- Cody Martin

The following officers have obtained their Intermediate POST Certificates:

- Michael Aerni
- Jeremy Inman
- Spencer Smith

Officer Riley Flanigan has obtained his Advanced POST Certificate.

The following officers have received the following specialty certifications:

- Zachary Fisher, Drug Recognition Expert (DRE)
- Dave Giffin, in process of completing SRO Certification
- Heather Trumble, General Topic Instructor
- Steven Chamberlain, General Topic Instructor

Officer Chamberlain was also recently promoted to Lieutenant.

**F. PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN UPDATE**

Representatives from GreenPlay, LLC, and Bernardo Wills Architects, PC, were in attendance and provided an update for the Mayor and City Council. *(Their presentation is included in the meeting packet and attached to these meeting minutes.)*

Tom Diehl with GreenPlay reviewed the following slides from the presentation:

- The Process, findings and visioning
- Information Gathering and initial public engagement priorities
- Sandpoint Demographics
- Sandpoint Population
- Population Annual Percent Change
- Sandpoint Age Data
- Relevant Recreation Trends
- Survey Analysis
- Key findings from the Survey
- Demographic profile of survey compared with city demographics
- Parks & Recreation Events
- Communication Effectiveness
- Top 5 methods of receiving information

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- Vision/purposes of Parks and Recreation
- Future needs – facilities and amenities
- Future needs – programs and activities
- Top ranked priorities for the future -invite respondents
- Additional Comments Word Cloud

Dave Peterson with GreenPlay reviewed the following slides pertaining to City Parks Inventory and Level of Service:

- The Sandpoint System
- Population Density
- Inventory Site Visit general observations
- Mapping Location and Quality of Components
- Park/Facility Rank
- Comparisons (national dataset)
- GRASP Benchmarking
- GRASP Neighborhood Access -heat maps
- Walking barriers “8/80 Rule”\*
- GRASP Walkable Access
- GRASP Walkability
- GRASP Walkable Access -maybe increase amenities at Farmin Stidwell Elementary
- GRASP Indoor Access

\*The 8/80 Rule seeks to ensure safety and walkability for those younger than 8 and older than 80.

Mr. Diehl reviewed a list of Master Plan Recurring Themes, which he pointed out were not listed in any particular order:

- Previous park planning has been reactionary and opportunistic
- Maintain what we have
- Improve City Beach and Waterfront Area
- Improve playability at Memorial Field
- Improve communication
- Improve playability of athletic fields
- Retain open space
- Trail and bike path connectivity
- Consider indoor facility (aquatics/gym/fitness...)
- Consider ice rink
- Enhance special events
- Enhance programs for adults and art programs

Mr. Peterson explained that the map showing walkable access to City parks is not based in any way on survey responses; it's based simply on parks location.

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Mr. Diehl confirmed that the property where the disc golf course is located is included in the analysis.

Dell Hatch with Bernardo Wills Architects provided a presentation and update on the four additional specific sites that were reviewed: War Memorial Field, City Beach/Downtown, the Sports Complex, and the Watershed. They want to make it clear that no decisions have been made, and public input is desired and needed.

Memorial Field

Mr. Hatch displayed photos of Memorial Field as it currently exists and also displayed the preliminary concept for the Field. The Field serves as a special venue for high school athletics and activities and is home of The Festival at Sandpoint. He pointed out that significant recent improvements have been made to the Field, stadium, and entrance, but the parking lot is also in need of improvements, and ongoing turf health is a concern. The Field is a tight space for all the various uses that take place on it. These uses have caused significant damage to the ground over the years, including scarring and compaction, resulting in differences in elevation across the field. In the two weeks following The Festival this year, City staff did a remarkable job of “greening up” the Field, raking all the dead grass, filling in depressions, fertilizing, applying copious water, and reseeding. The plantain weed has been allowed to thrive in the muddiest portion of the field, where challenging soil conditions exist. But even in the best of conditions, the soil is so compacted, grass cannot set deep roots, and the ground turns to mud. Crews are continually working to maintain the field for sports playable conditions. Currently, there is no practice taking place at the Field.

The Field is used and has been developed as a high school sports venue. A women’s softball field has been proposed under Title 9. A football field is traditionally crowned. A grass field will result in continuing compaction and dead grass. In the drawing, the parking lot is expanded. Relocating the existing lift station would be very expensive; it will need to stay in place. The proposed parking lot would encompass 32 boat trailer parking spaces and 130 car slots. Currently, there are 44 car spaces. On the field, playability is key. GreenPlay recommends artificial turf. During the Festival, trucks and vans would not be allowed on the field, and all food cooking areas would need to be set up on an additional flat surface. The turf would be a significant investment and will need to be protected. Artificial turf will accommodate an incredible increase in access. Various activities can occur, one immediately after another, without damage to the turf. The lights and reorganization of the lighting should be considered. (**Councilman Aispuro** left the meeting at 6:43 p.m.) Large events with tents are regularly held on artificial turf. Water barrels can be used for staking.

Some elements of Lakeview Park may need to be relocated. A water-access dog park could be a possibility. The existing pickle ball courts could stay. The southern end of the park could be improved in one to three years.

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Mr. Hatch displayed a cost chart, based on a field in College Park, Maryland, comparing natural grass and synthetic turf. (**Councilman Aispuro** returned to the meeting at 6:45 p.m.)

Mr. Diehl explained that the proposed expanded use would be for practices, not games with spectators that would have a greater impact on the surrounding neighborhood, and that, with new field configuration, concurrent practices would be possible.

Parks and Recreation Director Kim Woodruff commented that a sand field takes a great deal of fertilizer and water; drainage and durability are improved, but it requires more maintenance. Ms. Stapleton added that a live cost analysis was done by a prior consultant. The scope was limited to turf options only. Staff has spent considerable time reviewing the prior analysis with the GreenPlay consultants. Mr. Diehl stated that a grass field can be used to a certain extent, but synthetic replaces two to three grass fields. The cost of *multiple* grass fields should be considered when comparing.

Mr. Hatch responded to **Councilman Aitken** that the surface in the Maryland example was approximately 165,000 square feet in size. In Liberty Lake, the cost will be \$11.00 per square foot for full-profile artificial turf.

#### City Beach

Mr. Hatch pointed out that, at the Beach, the boat launch penetrating so far into the park may not be necessary. It's a challenging location. There are only a handful of dedicated boat trailer parking spaces, and they are exclusively diagonal, which may not make the most sense for boat trailer parking. The City Parks Maintenance Shop sits right on the waterfront; this is valuable real estate. The adjacencies to the various components, basketball courts, and volleyball courts are disjointed.

He showed an old photo of City Beach when it was first developed. Aside from the sandy beach itself and the Snack Shack, it was a "blank slate". If we think of the Beach property like a blank slate, then anything is possible.

He displayed the City Beach preliminary concept, which proposes moving the boat launch in order to eliminate conflicts. Currently, the City does not own the property where the boat launch is proposed. It is owned by the Edgewater Resort for their RV park, along with some marina space. There is the potential for a swap for City properties that extend in front of the Edgewater. A new hotel is proposed for this location, and there is currently not enough room to gain the parking necessary for the new hotel while maintaining the restaurant, which is very popular in this location. Good faith discussions between the City and resort ownership are underway. Other components proposed include a carousel, hardscape area for events, an ice rink, a splash pad, and expansion of the Snack Shack and playground. City Beach Park is the size of a football field. If events are to be held and ticketed in the center green space, a solution will need to be found for cordoning off this area. The concept calls for the selective removal of some of the trees. A boardwalk is proposed as a connecting trail from the Beach under the Byway to Sand Creek.

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Mr. Hatch responded to **Councilwoman Williamson** that there would be ten accessible parking spaces, and emergency vehicles would be able to access the outer buildings and areas by simply removing the bollards in the cul-de-sacs.

Mr. Hatch replied to **Councilman Aispuro** that the basketball courts, which are popular at City Beach, could remain, with a type of post/hoop that can be removed and stored when that area is needed for events.

Sandpoint Downtown Waterfront

Bridge and First is an “arrival point”, and this valuable waterfront should be utilized to the greatest extent possible. Sand Creek Park is a prime location, but it is currently being used as a parking lot. The proposal suggests developing Gunnings Alley as a gathering place and the hub of the downtown core. The concept suggests the businesses along Sand Creek taking full advantage of their waterfront location. (**Councilman Eddy** left the meeting at 7:25 p.m.) There could be a boat dock under Cedar Street Bridge, extending as far north as the hospital. A boat ramp is proposed parallel to Bridge Street. Opportunities abound at the First and Bridge intersection. (**Councilman Eddy** returned to the meeting at 7:27 p.m.)

(**Councilwoman Williamson** left the meeting at 7:27 p.m.) Mr. Hatch replied to **Councilwoman Ruehle** that bicycles would most likely need to be walked up the ramp. Stairways can sometimes include a runnel.

(**Councilwoman Williamson** returned to the meeting at 7:29 p.m.) Mr. Hatch replied to **Councilman Aispuro** that removal of some parking areas is proposed, but these parking areas are currently sitting on valuable ground. He relayed that he worked with the City some 30 years ago, at which time a downtown parking structure was being contemplated. These types of concepts can take 30-50 years to develop, but it’s never too early to start thinking about parking solutions, and there is room for efficiency improvements in downtown parking as it currently exists.

Sports Complex

(**Councilwoman Ruehle** left the meeting at 7:30 p.m.) Travers Park includes an accessible play structure, and the City should consider more of these as play structures are constructed. The softball fields are in high demand and can be used when conditions allow. The skate park is heavily used. The tennis courts are in nice shape and regularly used. Great Northern Park appears to have adequate parking and, by their observation, the best field conditions. (**Councilwoman Ruehle** returned to the meeting at 7:32 p.m.) The complex affords excellent walking opportunities, with the loops mapped by mileage.

The parking lot at Travers Park is undersized. The skate park could be expanded. There is a nice playground and adjacent picnic area, with a well-situated restroom and an additional picnic shelter. However, the ground subsidence is disturbing, with settling of

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6"-8" in places. There are issues with the subsurface, and the ground is very wet. Travers Park was built over a former landfill. The soils hold water and are not ideal. There are issues with moisture on the subsurface, and it requires constant maintenance.

The concept suggests moving tennis courts here from other parks, such as City Beach and Lakeview in order to consider this park the "tennis complex", along with pickleball courts. The skate park is very popular and should be expanded; it's too small. Parking could be expanded to the west, possibly tripling parking capacity. As with City Beach, adding a splash pad here is suggested. The BMX track should also be expanded. The proposal suggests moving the softball fields, covering them with artificial turf, and lighting them up for evening play. Soccer fields could be overlaid on the softball fields, and this space could also include some micro soccer fields.

Mr. Hatch agreed with **Councilwoman Ruehle** that moving the BMX track to the west side of the complex may be a good solution. The current Parks shop could be situated elsewhere.

**Councilwoman Ruehle** pointed out that the walkability to parks score is 80%, but the "8/80 Rule" is not applicable, as children and the elderly don't have a sufficient network of sidewalks to get to these parks. She would like to see an integration of the parks and sidewalk/pathway plans.

Mr. Diehl confirmed for **Councilman Aitken** that the proposed fields are multipurpose and can accommodate lacrosse.

Mr. Hatch responded to **Councilman Aitken** that, if the conditions this past spring at Great Northern Park were unusually dry, and there are issues there that did not present themselves during their visit, then a complete network of underdrainage may be needed.

**Councilwoman Williamson** pointed out that all of the fields here have drainage issues. Mr. Hatch reiterated that, with that being the case, an underdrainage plan will be needed.

Watershed

Mr. Diehl reported on the activities related to the Watershed:

- Going through a detailed process of facts and findings
- Develop decision making framework
- Fully assess all factors within watershed; finalize master plan
- Timeline –estimated completion August 2020

**Councilwoman Ruehle** commented that she has been working on the watershed project for several years and is disappointed in the proposed timeline. It continues to be pushed out into the future, and she would like to find a way to expedite completion.

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Cari House stated that she is the current Past President of The Festival at Sandpoint. The Festival would prefer a natural turf surface at War Memorial Field. They understand the desire for sports playability, but they believe natural turf would be the better choice for both sports activities and The Festival. There are concerns about artificial turf, including the heat in August, which is when The Festival is held. There are specific artist requirements concerning distance of spectators from the stage, and there are concerns about the distance of Festival activities from the proposed available parking areas. Cleanliness of the surface is also a potential issue, and they are concerned what that might mean for guests. The Festival appreciates the City's willingness to work with them, and, regardless of the ultimate decision, they want to continue working with the City and look forward to the 2020 season.

Lake Pend Oreille School District Superintendent Tom Albertson stated that playability is an issue. The District values all aspects of their students' education, and they look forward to working with The Festival and the City on this issue. It is the District's opinion that an artificial surface would offer better opportunities.

Clay Hutchison, resident of the City and a representative of the group that hopes to install a carousel in town, stated that he believes the consultant has done an amazing job, offering some excellent ideas to draw from, illustrating the pros and cons of the turf surface options, and bringing us closer to a decision on this issue. He supports the work that is being done. It is timely and needed.

Chase Tigert, Head Baseball Coach at Sandpoint High School, stated that he believes it will be important for student athletes to have access to artificial turf. Currently, they are able to hold only 10-12 practices outdoors. First day of baseball practice is scheduled for February 21, and they aren't able to get on a field to practice until after spring break. They can't compete under these circumstances. Artificial turf would be an asset to the community, offer greater access and, he believes, rekindle and instill a love of the game.

Mr. Hatch responded to **Councilman Aitken** that replacement of the turf at War Memorial Field will take three to four months. In order to accomplish in 2020, it would need to be completed by August 1. The first steps would include collecting the necessary base data, surveys, and possibly geotechnical investigation. A Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for design and consulting services would need to be published by mid-October, with selection and contract award November 20. The consultant would have from that time until February 1 to do their work, and that is not a significant amount of time. The call for construction bids would need to go out February 2, with a March 10 bid opening. The contract could be awarded during the March 18 Council meeting. From that time until April 1 would be spent on contractor setup. April 1 – August 1 would be the construction period. It could be done, but this proposed timeline is tight and aggressive. Ms. Stapleton added that, ideally, this project would be undertaken in 2021, but the question has come up as to whether it could be accomplished in 2020. Funding is available, but Council will need to make a decision soon.

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Ms. Stapleton responded to **Councilwoman Williamson** that this would be a two-phase project, with Phase 1 encompassing the fence-line infield, electrical, lighting, and field surface in time for The Festival and fall sports. Phase 2 would include the parking lot and boat launch improvements and would take place next fall or spring in 2021. Staff has already consulted with the School District and The Festival as to whether this is a realistic timeline. The grandstands construction displaced an entire fall sports season, and the City committed that it would not happen again. Construction time would need to be fall or spring. High school graduation would have to be held at an alternate venue.

Mr. Hatch responded to **Councilman Eddy** that, if the decision is made to install artificial turf, there are a number of contractors in the Spokane area. There are two fields currently in the process of being installed in Spokane, with completion scheduled for late 2020/early 2021. A call for bids from Sandpoint would likely draw two or three major contractors from the Spokane area.

Ms. Stapleton announced that the concepts presented this evening will be posted on the City website.

**IV. NEW BUSINESS** - none

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Mayor Rognstad** adjourned the regular meeting at 8:10 p.m.

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Shelby Rognstad, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

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Melissa Ward, City Clerk