

MISSION: The "Friends of Big Finn Hill Park Trails" promote safe, sustainable, multi-use trails within a healthy, natural environment while fostering relationships and engaging the broader community.

Friends of Big Finn Hill Park Trails (FBFHPT) Executive Committee General Meeting Minutes

Date: September 2, 2020
Location: Zoom Meeting
Facilitator: Bill Blanchard
Note Taker: Debbie Meyer

Committee Attendees:

Ayrault, Lisa (At Large)
Blanchard, Bill (Neighbors)
Gerrish, Bob (Dog Walkers)
Gerrish, Janice (At Large)
Hoognagle, Wayne (Bicyclists)
Johnson, Gary (Dog Walkers)
Leach, Jeanette (Walkers)
Meredith, George (Walkers)
Meyer, Debbie (Neighbors)

Absent Committee Members:

Hall, Bill (Bicyclists) - Excused

Non-Committee Attendees:

Hughes, Joe (King County Parks)

Summary of Meeting Topics: A quorum was present.

Certification of Annual Meeting Voting Results:

The FBHPT Executive Committee unanimously voted to certify the following Interest Group Representatives who were voted in at the May 6, 2020, Annual Meeting for a two-year term, expiring in May 2022:

- At Large – Lisa Ayrault
- Bicyclists – Bill Hall
- Dog Walkers – Gary Johnson
- Neighbors – Debbie Meyer
- Walkers – George Meredith

Election of Executive Committee Officers for New Year (2020 – 2021):

The FBFHPT Executive Committee unanimously voted the following members to hold Officer positions for the current term:

- Chair – Gary Johnson
- Vice Chair – Debbie Meyer
- Secretary – Wayne Hoofnagle

Let these Minutes reflect the Executive Committee's appreciation for Bill Blanchard's leadership as Chair for the last few years.

King County Update:

- Routine maintenance is ongoing throughout the district and will continue until leaf season begins. This work includes mowing, line trimming, blowing off hard surfaces, removing downed trees, grooming fields, etc..
- Joe Hughes' crew decommissioned the unauthorized trail built along the 2016 hill slide above Denny Creek. The trail ran parallel to the slide and was put in during the Covid-19 State shutdown. The developer has been notified to install "No Trespassing" signage on top to keep folks from encroaching onto King County property, and King County installed warning signage below.
- With help from King County Park's Back Country Trails crew and the Washington Trail Association, the rerouted trail to the new NE 138th Place crosswalk was installed. The culvert was shored up and line of sight issues were removed. Temporary signage will be installed to direct trail users to the new crosswalk. Later this Fall, the plan is to add a few native plants along the route, address any drainage issues that might arise, decommission the north end of the trail to the old crosswalk once the new trail has been settled and relocate the blue Gateway sign closer to the new crosswalk. The west-side kiosk will remain in its current location.
- The decommission project team to close the north end of the trail to the old crosswalk will consist of King County Park's staff and volunteers from the FBFHPT group. Given Covid-19 restrictions, the work party has to be limited to 6 or fewer people, including one King County Park's representative and up to 5 volunteers. Gary Johnson volunteered to coordinate the work party with King County.
- The south end portion of the old crosswalk will remain open to allow King County to access the trail for maintenance with their gator. King County will install a bollard at the trail head to keep other vehicles out. Bill Blanchard expressed concern over leaving the south end of the old crosswalk open as it might encourage some users to continue to cross NE 138th Place at that point. However, King County has determined that location is their least disruptive option to access that portion of the trail system for maintenance and believes the bollard, closing of the north end of the old crosswalk and proper signage will direct users appropriately to the new crosswalk.
- George Meredith suggested more "No Parking" signs be installed on the south side of NE 138th Place in an attempt to prevent the unauthorized parking that is occurring. Bill Blanchard volunteered to take the request forward to the City of Kirkland.

- King County prepared a “cease to operate” order letter intended to be served to the “potato farmer” on the southwest side of Big Finn Hill Park. Joe Hughes does not know if the letter was ever served, but he does know the potatoes are ready to harvest; and word has it the potatoes are being removed.
- Tiny Trees Preschool classroom training in Big Finn Hill Park has been suspended due to Covid-19, but King County is reserving the space for them so it will be available once it is felt it is safe to return.
- Kirkland National Little League will be continuing their season. No games will be played but practices are scheduled throughout September and parts of October.
- A capital request will be submitted to revamp the entrance to the ballfields' restrooms and concessions. The scope of work will include removing the current chain link fencing and replacing with four to five man rock, shrubs and plants; sandblasting and repainting the main gate; and improving the look around the restrooms and concessions. A timeline for this project has yet to be determined.
- A work request will be submitted to restripe the parking lots, but it is anticipated this work may not happen until next year.

Other Business:

Lisa Ayrault questioned what is King County's plan to remove/kill the invasive holly/laurel spreading throughout the Park. Joe Hughes explained limited use of Roundup is used to rid the Park of invasive growth.

Lisa Ayrault expressed concern over the trail degradation throughout the Park, stating the trails appear to be getting wider at an unsustainable rate. After some discussion, it was concluded this is the unfortunate outcome of increased Park usage by walkers and bicyclists with no current plan to curb usage.

Janice Gerrish requested time to discuss the Park wildlife, citing the beavers are still a problem and coyotes have been seen brazenly watching people while dogs are still running off leash. It was suggested the posting at the kiosks of nearby off leash dog parks, along with the wildlife list and keep dogs on leash warning might give people more cause to pause in allowing their dogs to run off leash in Big Finn Hill Park.

Gary Johnson committed to send to the Committee the existing maintenance project list and asked for members to prioritize what they consider to be the top three projects so a consensus could be reached as to what work should be tackled next.

The next General Meeting of the FBFHPT Executive Committee is Wednesday, November 4, 2020, scheduled from 3 pm to 5 pm. It is anticipated we may again need to meet via Zoom.

Meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:20 pm.