

# *Parks, Recreation & Sport Tourism Committee – Minutes*

2E – Community Room A  
City Hall  
13450 – 104 Avenue  
Surrey, BC  
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2017  
Time: 5:30 p.m.  
File: 0540-20

---

**Present:**

Councillor Hayne– Chairperson  
C. Annable  
R. Benson  
M. Booth  
B. Burnside  
C. Murphy  
Gurpreet Rai  
S. Gill – Youth Representative

**Regrets:**

Councillor Gill  
T. Allen

**Staff Present:**

L. White, Manager Community & Recreation Services  
T. Uhrich, Parks Planning, Research & Design Manager  
N. Aven, Manager, Urban Forestry  
L. Anderson, Legislative Services

---

**A. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

It was  
and Sport Tourism Committee meeting of July 19, 2017, be adopted.  
Carried

Moved by C. Annable  
Seconded by B. Burnside  
That the minutes of the Parks, Recreation

**B. DELEGATIONS**

**1. Neal Aven, Manager of Urban Forestry, Colleen Gillespie, Parks Operations Coordinator, Sarah Brookes, Friends of Semiahmoo Bay Society and Roy Strang, Sunnyside Acres Heritage Society**

Neal Aven, Manager of Urban Forestry, Colleen Gillespie, Parks Operations Coordinator, Sarah Brookes, Friends of Semiahmoo Bay Society and Roy Strang, Sunnyside Acres Heritage Society, were in attendance to discuss the positive impact of the Environmental Extravaganza (EE).

Colleen Gillespie, Park Operations Coordinator, provided a review of the events and programs that are held each year for the EE, a long standing initiative now in its 20th year, taking place each spring over 7-8 weeks. 125 events were hosted this year by 28 volunteer partner groups, with the City helping to organize and promote. 9,000 residents from 44+ locations took part in many of the events including nature walks, tree planting, salmon release, workshops, lectures and library story times, etc., with a goal for children and families to become engaged and learn about the urban forest and the critically important work the volunteer groups undertake to raise their profile and the environment.

Sarah Brookes was introduced as a volunteer of the Friends of Semiahmoo Bay Society, a non-profit society working as environmental stewards in conservation, education and restoration in Boundary Bay and the Fraser River delta. As a volunteer for 6-7 years, Ms. Brookes reported on her long-standing experience

with the society and the varied tasks undertaken, which include shoreline cleanups, hosting bird walks, plant walks, beach explorations and also co-hosting the World Ocean Day event each year. The series and programs offer an inclusive opportunity for similar organizations as well as the community, engaging people in nature, to network and share ideas. The importance is placed on having a relationship with nature; the EE is a free program that supports this by offering a wide variety of nature programs.

Roy Strang, Sunnyside Acres Heritage Society, was introduced. As a member of the society since its inception in 1988, working to ensure the preservation of the Sunnyside Acres Urban Forest, Mr. Strang reported the following:

- The society's two main objectives are to maintain the integrity of the forest and involve and educate the community. To support these objectives, the society has operated an open house for the past 12-13 years, engaging many residents and non-residents to become aware, educated and engaged in the forest. The EE provides further opportunity to connect with the community and share the benefits of the forest.
- Much of the society's success could not be realized without the tremendous support and help from Surrey's Natural Areas Partnership (SNAP) students, who are enthusiastic, willing and able to help restore and enhance the forest and promote environmental stewardship.
- On the first Tuesday of each month until November 7th, one hour guided tours are operated (rain or shine) from 10:00 am – 11:00 am. For those feeling more adventurous, a seven kilometre guided walk is also offered. In addition, a number of activities take place in the parking lot which includes teaching children how to feed birds (cones stuffed with peanut butter, etc.) and children building nesting boxes.
- There were over 200 visitors to the forest this year, many as a result of the EE. Exhibitions of flora in the forest are on-going and there has been great success over the past couple of years providing a birds' eye view of the forest from a bucket truck.
- The forest continues to grow, however there has been a problem with laminated root rot, which is a naturally occurring process. Since the basic management is 'leave it to nature', one school of thought was to do just that, however the hardened trees that were taken out in the 30's and 40's, opened up the process for fungus early in conifers.
- The forest has also suffered moisture stress throughout the 2017 summer, particularly the red cedar which likes the moist environment. Fire is a continuous threat and, although the forest remained safe, cigarette ends were found along the trails and a dried alder leaf was found just as it was beginning to smolder.
- Removal of invasive species, replaced by planting of better species, is done twice a year; successful a number of years ago, but has been dropping off.

In closing, Mr. Strang noted the disappointment in not being able to engage schools to include a visit to the forest within their curriculum, reporting that only three schools had expressed interest. A brief discussion ensued with respect to

exploring opportunities to engage schools, noting potential success by contacting school principals and teachers directly.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair thanked the presenters collectively for the information they provided and the invaluable work they do for the City, its citizens and the many visitors to Surrey.

## 2. Discover Surrey

Cathy James, Discover Surrey, was in attendance to provide a mid-year Sport Surrey update. A PowerPoint presentation was shown to provide an overview of achievements and challenges to date for 2017.

The following was reported:

- In consultation with Charmaine Crooks, NGU Consultants, a new Sport Tourism Strategy was developed and delivered in March of 2017. With input and support from all connected sectors, the strategy charts a progressive pathway for sport in Surrey. Some key features include:
  - Explore emerging events in e-sports;
  - Women/girls in sport events, conference and meetings;
  - Increase accessible sport for athletes with disabilities;
  - Increase focus on Masters/Senior's single events and multi-sport events;
  - Ongoing database development and enhancements; and
  - Initiate meetings with neighbouring Metro Vancouver community sport events and tourism leaders, counterparts and stakeholders.
- The sportsurrey.com website underwent a complete redesign in the spring of 2016; showcasing everything Surrey has to offer for sport hosting. Currently maintaining information and uploading new:
  - Case studies
  - News and press releases
  - Facility listings
  - Athlete Profiles
  - Testimonials
  - Events calendar

The events calendar has been the most frequently visited. Lately discovering that once an event is awarded a news release is sent out, which has been helpful in gaining attention for the site.

- An e-newsletter has been distributed quarterly through 2017 to 148 subscribers with an average open rate of 46.3% (industry average is 20.69% for travel and 25.41% for sports). The target audience is events rights holders, PSOs, NSOs and local community groups. It is the main communication piece for Sport Surrey, advising user groups of facility development, upcoming grant opportunities, community sports news and events. The next issue will go out late September.
- It continues to be a struggle to secure room nights from hotels (stats shown). With just over 4,000 room nights, July was the busiest month; summer time is typically the busiest because of Surrey's fields and baseball facilities.

- Hotels are asked to report room nights by sport and teams. As expected, soccer and baseball dominate the room nights generated by sport, with events such as the Umbro Challenge Cup, 2017 SX Cup Series (2 events), Whitecaps FC College Showcase and Adidas Cup, and the 2017 International Fastpitch Championships. Also starting to see water polo and swimming events.
- For sport tourism growth, the highest years have been 2014 and 2016 as a result of fastpitch. There have been many groups that have gone to other areas as hotel rates in Surrey have been reacting to an overflow from Vancouver, resulting in rooms already being filled without the need to offer lower rates. As at the end of August, currently 2,000 room nights short of 2016. An upswing is expected with BC Soccer moving to Surrey for October and November events (1,000+ room nights). There may also be some under reporting of the numbers from some of the properties.
- There weren't many RFPs issued this year, currently at the same number as 2016, as organizers are starting to develop relationships with hotels. New events will be welcomed soon, increasing occupancy.
- Some of the challenges facing Sport Surrey:
  - Lack of facilities able to accommodate large shoulder season events (e.g. indoor sports – volleyball/basketball);
  - NSOs and PSOs decision making in a timely manner in order to secure rooms; and
  - Accommodation providers:
    - lack of inventory during peak seasons (Surrey has only 1,100 hotel nights, compared to Vancouver with 15,000 – population the same);
    - reluctance to accept sport teams or certain events rights holders; and
    - non-reporting of sport numbers.
- A Sport Hosting Grant was established in 2016 which allowed for funding support to be given to a variety of 14 user groups and events rights holders, totalling \$40,500 (amounts \$500 - \$5,000).
- Final reporting has been streamlined to an online process, giving recognition to Sport Surrey by providing:
  - Copies of collateral material;
  - Rights to photos (to advertise);
  - Post event surveys;
  - Detailed list of accommodation (cross-referenced with hotels); and
  - Media coverage (for Sport Surrey to share).

Events hosted for 2017 were provided, including water polo and the Rugged Maniac Adventure Race. In particular, the Field Hockey National Championships were noted, as it was which extended for two weeks.

Events secured so far for 2018 were provided, including some new events such as the Canadian Ultimate Mixed Championships, Synchro Canada FINA World Series, and Synchro Canada National Espoir Championship. Currently working on the potential for ringette and lacrosse events in February; giving residents an opportunity to view a variety of sports throughout the year.

Discussion ensued with respect to hotel rates comparing Surrey to Vancouver, and sport tracking hotel numbers within other municipalities. It was reported that some municipalities do not track hotel numbers by sport. It was also noted that many hotels are seeing the rates that Vancouver hotels receive and trying to achieve the same (e.g. rate increase of 21% in August, typically 5%). Hotels are looking at the overflow from Vancouver and maybe not opening their door to sport as much as they have been successful in achieving higher rates.

The Committee expressed their appreciation for the presentation.

**C. STAFF PRESENTATION**

**D. OUTSTANDING BUSINESS**

**E. NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Ocean Park Community Orchard – One Year Update**

File No. 0850-01

The memorandum from the Landscape Operations and Park Partnerships Manager, dated September 12, 2017, regarding the above subject line, was reviewed. It was recommended that the Parks, Recreation and Sport Tourism Committee receive the report as information.

A series of slides were shown to showcase the Orchard Community Gardens as the plants have evolved and the project has gained momentum.

Staff reported the following:

- The gardens, with its focus on fruits and fruit trees, have provided residents with the opportunity to build relationships as they learn from arborists how to plant and grow food.
- Neighbouring communities are now coming forward to the City to find out how they can be involved in a similar project for their area. They are informed that this was a community initiative that the City supported.
- Signage with the community group's address is in place noting that the orchard is a community led project, with the group looking after the entire site.
- There haven't been any issues with respect to dividing up the harvest; there is an understanding to pick an apple or collect some blueberries while walking through.
- A future challenge may be harvesting as the fruit trees start to produce an abundance of fruit, keeping on top of that will be important.
- Looking at ways to get school groups involved.

It was Moved by R. Benson  
Seconded by C. Annable  
That the Parks, Recreation and Sport  
Tourism Committee receive the report from the Landscape Operations and Park  
Partnerships Manager, dated September 12, 2017, entitled "*Ocean Park Community  
Orchard – One Year Update*", as information.  
Carried

2. **Nicomekl Riverfront Plan**  
File No. 6140-20/N

The memorandum from the Parks Planning, Research and Design Manager, dated  
September 8, 2017, regarding the above subject line, was reviewed. It was  
recommended that the Parks, Recreation and Sport Tourism Committee receive  
the report as information.

Staff reported the area is undergoing tremendous growth and the residents will see  
this as a great asset to get out and experience the river. The plan is on schedule  
and a further update will be provided to the Committee in early 2018.

It was Moved by C. Murphy  
Seconded by B. Burnside  
That the Parks, Recreation and Sport  
Tourism Committee receive the report from the Parks Planning, Research and  
Design Manager, dated September 8, 2017, entitled "*Nicomekl Riverfront Plan*", as  
information.  
Carried

3. **Sport Tourism Report – June and July, 2017**  
File No. 6980-01

The memorandum from the General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture,  
dated September 11, 2017, regarding the above subject line, was reviewed. It was  
recommended that the Parks, Recreation and Sport Tourism Committee receive  
the report as information.

It was Moved by C. Annable  
Seconded by M. Booth  
That the Parks, Recreation and Sport Tourism  
Committee receive the report from General Manager, Parks, Recreation and  
Culture, dated September 11, 2017, entitled "*Sport Tourism Report –June and July,  
2017*", as information.  
Carried

**F. ITEMS REFERRED BY COUNCIL****G. CORRESPONDENCE****H. INFORMATION ITEMS****I. OTHER BUSINESS****1. Calendar of Events**

The calendar of upcoming Parks, Recreation and Culture and Community Events was acknowledged.

**2. Verbal Update**

L. White, Manager, Community and Recreation Services, provided the following update:

- **Summer Fun Pass** – This was the second year the Summer Fun Pass was offered for children under 12 for unlimited use of the City's recreation facilities for the whole summer. This incentive providing a great way for families to have fun and be active over the summer season and resulted in a significant increase in participation and activity throughout Surrey; increasing the number of pass holders from 1,452 in 2016 to 3,342 pass holders in 2017.
- **Summer Camps** – Summer Day Camps were offered to Surrey children and youth at various recreation facilities. A seven percent increase in participation was recorded for 2017, with 16,120 registrations from children and youth.
- **Arenas** - On September 11th, all arenas officially opened for the fall/winter season. Cloverdale, Newton and North Surrey were closed for spring and summer, but will now offer recreational drop in hockey and public skating.
- **Annual Fleetwood Festival** – On September 9th, Fleetwood Community Centre hosted the 19th Annual Fleetwood Festival.
- **Youth Fest** – On September 23rd, Guildford Recreation Centre will be hosting Surrey's largest youth event, Surrey Youth Fest! Activities include live music and DJs, 25+ youth performers, 40+ interactive exhibits, dance battles, carnivals games and food trucks, skateboard and BMX jams and much more.
- **National Seniors Day** - From September 27th - October 6th, various recreation facilities will be hosting many free events and activities for National Seniors Day to celebrate and recognize their important role in Surrey.
- **Newton Recreation Centre Grand Reopening** - On September 30th there will be a Grand Reopening event for Newton Recreation Centre! Everyone can enjoy free swimming, activities, games, prizes, live entertainment, facility orientations and much more for the afternoon. Newton Recreation Centre

officially opened on June 6th to the public after its scheduled maintenance closure, but this celebration will be a way for the community to celebrate the renovated facility.

- **Band-Aid** – Another successful year for Band-Aid was held on September 9th at Surrey City Hall. 50 youth engaged in free workshops led by music industry professionals.
- **Youth Speak Up** – On Friday, October 27th (9:00 am – 3:15 pm) Youth Speak Up will be held at Surrey City Hall. Youth Speak Up is a day-long forum organized by youth, for youth. It is jam-packed with workshops and opportunities for young leaders to learn, share, and grow.
- **Waterparks** – The new waterparks at South Surrey Athletic Park and Cloverdale Athletic Park were completed and opened to the public for Labour Day weekend with great success. Tremendous positive feedback from users.
- **National Tree Day** – the Surrey Nature Centre will celebrate National Tree Day on September 30th. 500 native trees and shrubs in Green Timbers Park will be planted and there will be live music, a scavenger hunt contest, nature activities, and a free BBQ lunch for planters to enjoy.
- **Bose Forest Park Grand Opening** – Celebrate the grand opening of Surrey's newest park on October 14th. Explore scenic trails through the forest, try out the new playground, and plant a tree or shrub.
- **Fraserview Dog Off-Leash** – [get from Rachel](#)
- **ESS Reception Centre** – An ESS reception centre was very successfully provided in Cloverdale the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of July until August 30th. Staff and volunteers processed over 4,000 registrations, many of which returned two or three times as a result of their continued evacuation.
- **Fire Prevention** – As a result of the very dry summer, Parks, Bylaws and Fire staff and volunteers came together to check parks and created a comprehensive plan to make sure the Surrey's parks did not succumb to any fire threat.

A brief discussion ensued with respect to the recent reporting of needles found in Vancouver parks and what steps are being taken to address similar concerns in Surrey. Staff reported that Bylaws and Parks staff have been looking at best practices to address concerns. Currently there are community groups that have been providing assistance and the contract with 'look out', through Fraser Health, to provide needle cleanup is under review. Further information will be provided to the Committee at the next meeting.

The Committee noted that Unwin Park was very popular throughout the summer, experiencing a need for extra benches and picnic shelters. Parking was at a premium as well. Staff acknowledged the need for more sheltered benches.

J. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parks, Recreation and Sport Tourism Committee is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. on **Wednesday, October 18, 2017** in **Meeting Room 2E – Community Room A**.

K. ADJOURNMENT

It was

Moved by C. Annable  
Seconded by B. Burnside  
That the Parks, Recreation and Sport

Tourism Committee do now adjourn.

Carried

The Parks, Recreation and Sport Tourism Committee adjourned at 6:51 p.m.

---

Jane Sullivan, City Clerk

---

Councillor Bruce Hayne  
Parks, Recreation and Sport Tourism Committee