



Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Minutes

Thursday October 15, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 5:00pm with the following park board members in attendance:

Board Members present: Tim Manns, Jason Benson, and John Semrau, Greg Francioch, and Chris Allen

Staff Members and Representatives: Brian Adams

Public: Andy Basabe from Vamos Project

Board Discussion

Vamos is partnering with Burlington-Edison School District to provide programming in Skagit County Parks on Saturdays for Latinx youth. Burlington Parks are all closed, and we are working on transportation to get kids to the Skagit County Parks. They have chosen NSRA for its open and green space to facilitate their bilingual and environmental education activities.

Vamos Outdoors Project will provide outdoors programming for youth through the Gear-Up program. All programming will follow social distancing protocols as laid out by Vamos Outdoors Project, BESD, and the Skagit County Health Department, whichever is the most conservative. Vamos will provide insurance, supervision, and enrichment activities, provided by 2 trained outdoor educators. Gear-up will provide outreach, food, and one staff member from Gear-up or BESD. Families will arrive at parks of their own accord. Participants will meet at a local green space and spend 2.5 hours with Vamos. Vamos will provide 2 hours of activities, with ½ hour for lunch.

Vamos Outdoors Project is the culmination of many different inspirations on many different soils. VOP is inspired by a mother taking her sons to the top of Sauk Mountain as toddlers, to the alpine meadows, rivers and peaks of the Cascades as teenagers. It is a Spanish teacher realizing that the outdoors make for an ideal immersive classroom. It is an English teacher in Spain working with Moroccan immigrants in a public school wishing he could share a place as beautiful as Whatcom County through his teaching. It is a young man traveling through South America realizing that language is a key that opens doors to mountains, valleys, and rainforests across the world. It is a group of friends standing on the highest point in North America realizing that the reason they are there is because of the desire to find personal growth through engaging experiences in nature.

We work to bridge culture and language barriers through access to Environmental Education. We want the youth we serve to draw upon transformative experiences as they grow to love their bodies, their culture, their communities, and their landscapes.

The Vamos Project is aligned with the goals of environmental education as outlined in our Comprehensive Parks Plan. (Page 5-6):

- Utilize parklands, facilities, and programs to promote environmental education and encourage park visitors to become stewards of Skagit County's natural resources.

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- Support partnerships with environmental education organizations to provide programs at outdoor classrooms and other appropriate gathering places in Skagit County parks.

Brian asked the Board to comment on a “cost-free” partnership with Vamos based on their program being aligned with the goals of our Parks Plan. The Board agreed.

Park Board Recruitment:

We are still working on this. We may have a new recruit from District #1.

Staff Report: A report was provided and discussed.

Adjourn.

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