

May 3, 2020 BPC Development Meeting Notes

(Meeting held via Zoom)

Present: Peter Homann, Catharine Vader, Gaby Gaiz, Stephen Dillon, Gail McDonald, Pat McDonald, Karen Stark, Mark Livingston, Carsten Kroon, Jeannie, Smolleroff, Michael Chmel, Lola (Barbara) Hudson, Bob Hei, Rick Anderson, Dotti Berry, Barbara Goebel, Ed Goebel, Maggi Kriger, Terri Vossbeck

Next Meeting Date: **Tuesday June 2nd; 6:00PM via Zoom** (subject to change if relevant)

Updates, Input Requests, and Planning

> BPC Annual Membership Renewal Drive is May-June

BPC wants to encourage everyone to [renew \(or join\)](#) during May-June as is now our annual practice, even though we aren't currently playing or holding sessions. This is of great support for our treasurer/ bookkeeper, and for the effectiveness of BPC as we continue to advocate for pickleball in our community.

Due to the Covid-19 situation, everyone is welcome to pay whatever member fee works for them, even if it's \$0. Additionally, in support for our neighbors in need at this time, and as an incentive to complete renewals soon, BPC Board members will donate \$50 for every 10 members who renew or join during May-June. That's \$250 for 50 memberships, \$ 610 for 122 memberships, etc. These contributions will be split between the Whatcom YMCA, WhatcomHelpers.org, and local food banks. If anyone wants to add to these contributions, please contact Maggi @ bellinghampickle@gmail.com or 360.305-0304. (No BPC funds will be utilized for these donations as this is beyond the BPC mission.)

There was good discussion on this topic. The biggest concern was making clear that the funds were not to be mixed in with club funds, or taken from a person's standard dues. This is an "over-and-above" separate contribution simply to add incentive to renew soon, as well as to help our local neighbors in need.

The topic was tabled (for the board to decide later on the plan) as a few meeting participants, including one board member, still had concerns about whether it was appropriate for the club to do so since it is beyond the BPC mission. This was resolved with further discussion. Subsequently the board joined in consensus that this is an appropriate and community-minded effort in these extraordinary times, and doesn't conflict with the BPC mission since no BPC funds are being utilized.

> Membership/ Finance Report

BPC has 275 members, (with almost all memberships lapsing by the end of June 2020). We have a total bank balance of \$5755, however we owe \$1200 to the Bellingham School District for gym rentals. Our bank balance includes a \$1200 reserve for our "Facilities Capital Improvement" Fund.

> Park Department Update (news or no news)

There is no current timeline on court improvements, including installation of gravel pathway around outside of Cornwall pbball courts, pressure washing, or for line painting at Padden and Elizabeth Park courts. There is also no specified timeline or suggested process for return to play. Bids for a feasibility study for converting the Cornwall tennis courts to covered pickleball courts were due at the end of April, but we don't know if they have any acceptable proposals. The park department is a bit overwhelmed adjusting to changes, and external communication is less than usual.

> BPC Approach to Return to Play (when restrictions are eased)

It isn't clear to us from the Governor's [4-phase reopening outline](#) whether pickleball can resume in a restricted format in Phase 2 when some outdoor recreation for 5 or less people is allowed, or whether it will have to wait until Phase 3 when activities for up to 50 people are allowed. (We are currently in Phase 1. Phase 2 is likely to start around June 1st, unless delayed due to case increases. The earliest that Phase 3 will likely begin is the 4th week of June.) A draft of the BPC "Return to Play Guidance" with starting points of steps for safe play was shared with those who RSVPed for the meeting. We discussed this briefly, & then asked for each person's input.

There was general agreement in order to have a chance of persuading the Bellingham Parks & Rec Dept. to include pickleball in Phase 2 (rather than wait until Phase 3), we'd need to be *quite conservative* in our proposal.

Therefore, for the initial opening we suggest the following key considerations to the Bellingham Park Dept:

- > Singles play, including "skinny singles". (While household doubles partners fit federal, and WA State guidelines, it wouldn't be enforceable & could potentially encourage non-household members to play doubles as well.)
- > Clear signage at courts with current policy, and info posting via BPC website, email, and Facebook as well.
- > Limit on the number of people waiting to ensure sufficient distancing, and groups of no more than 5 people.
- > Block off middle courts so no two courts are adjacent, & all courts can be reached without passing through others.
- > No use of shared lockbox. If folks want to use a portable net, balls, or extra paddle, they must bring them. (Note: BPC might consider a bulk purchase of balls so each member has a ball or two of their own.)
- > Ability to reserve some of the courts if possible (via either the park dept, or via an app.)
- > Consider mask usage policy when off the court, or on person for wearing if distancing isn't possible.

Editor NOTE: Subsequent to the meeting, in preparing the proposal to the Park Department, there has been a decision to also include doubles for consideration (in a rotation group of 5 person or less) in Phase 2. Although we think that the Park Department may not support that direction, we decided to let them make that call, rather than BPC ruling it out prematurely.

There were other good suggestions such as creating bubbles of players so you only play with that set group for all of Phase 2. There are many other considerations related to health and safety in the "Return to Play Guidelines", but they aren't all included above because the proposal to the park department needs to be short and simple.

The board will submit a proposal to the Parks Department by May 15th requesting that we be allowed to play in Phase 2 with restrictions. An opportunity was offered to other meeting participants to review the proposal prior to submission, but no one felt the need to.