



**PORTLAND PARKS BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
April 2, 2014
8:00 – 9:30 a.m.
Lovejoy Room, City Hall**

Board members present: Judy BlueHorse Skelton, Nick Hardigg, Tony Magliano, Andy Nelson, Linda Robinson, Bob Sallinger, Christa Thoeresz, Tricia Tillman, Sue Van Brocklin, Julie Vigeland, Mauricio Villarreal

Board members absent: Mike Alexander, Mary Anne Cassin, Kathy Fong Stephens, Dion Jordan, Jim Owens, Meryl Redisch, Shelli Romero

Staff present: Mike Abbaté, Margaret Evans, Warren Jimenez, Deborah Lev, Todd Lofgren, Kia Selley, Jeff Shaffer, Jennifer Yocom

Call to order Andy Nelson, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:07 am.

Park of the Month Andy noted that the park of the month for March was Community Music Center. This month is Spring Garden Park. Mike Abbaté noted that Spring Garden is in Southwest. It's a small park that we have a master plan for. He noted that later in the meeting, we will be talking about SDC announcements, which will include some improvements at Spring Garden Park. About two years ago, he said, the neighborhood association got a \$10,000 grant for modest improvements, and a nature play area was added.

Approval of the minutes Christa Thoeresz moved to approve the March minutes. Julie Vigeland seconded this motion, and the Board voted unanimously to approve the March minutes. Julie Vigeland moved to approve the February minutes, Sue Van Brocklin seconded the motion, and the Board voted unanimously to approve the February minutes.

Chair Update Andy discussed the timing of the 2014 Parks Board Retreat, and noted that Megan will send out a doodle poll. He said that we typically have done this retreat on a Friday in May or June, but we may want to do this year's retreat in July so the new members will be on board. Julie Vigeland noted that several years ago, they did the retreat in June and included both the members who were rotating out as well as the people who were selected, but not yet official. She said this worked well and was a good way for people to get to know each other. The Board decided that we should do this again, and schedule the retreat in June. Mike Abbaté asked if the Board wants to replace the June meeting, and Julie noted that last time worked well, starting with a meeting and then having the retreat.

Park Foundation Update Nick Hardigg reported that the Parks Foundation is doing well. They have announced the dates for Parke Diem, which will be Friday, Oct. 10th and Saturday, October 11th. Their goal will be modest growth. For 2013, they had 73 projects, and while they are excited to grow the event, they care about the morale of the friends groups, and staff at PP&R, and don't want to strain relationships by taking on

too much. Modest growth is the goal. One of the main priorities is building networks and awareness. Parke Diem is about spreading the word of the needs in the parks. It's about building networks of organizations that have strong connections to parks, and also, hopefully, earning awareness in the media. Nick noted that there is a chance of having music performances at volunteer events. They want to keep things spontaneous and fun, and keep it exciting -- a new tradition. The fiscal sponsorship program is going well. He noted that they are in discussions with Verde, as well as the Native American Community Advisory Council and Judy Bluehorse Skelton for an intertribal gathering place.

**Parks Board
Nominating
Committee**

Andy reported that the Board has a large and robust nominating committee. Mike Alexander will host at the Urban League, and Julie Vigeland, Dion Jordan and Jim Owens will participate as well. Andy noted that they will select four new members. Three folks are terming off, including Bob Sallinger, Tricia Tillman, and Mary Anne Cassin. Shelli Romero is going to resign. The process will begin with a meeting with Commissioner Fritz on Monday (4/7/14) to discuss candidates to interview. The nominating committee will then conduct interviews, and we will vote in May, or June.

Julie Vigeland encouraged Board members to suggest people, and noted that it's incredibly important for the Board to reach out.

**Smoke free policy
update**

Andy Nelson thanked the smoking ban policy committee, Sue Van Brocklin, Julie Vigeland, Tricia Tillman, and Mary Anne Cassin.

Sue Van Brocklin presented for the group. She thanked PP&R staff member Cynthia Castro, who has been helping the subcommittee with coordination efforts. She also thanked Eric Vidstrand, of Multnomah County, who has been guiding the subcommittee through the process. Sue noted that he helps venues become smoke free, for example work sites, college campuses, and many other sites, including parks.

The subcommittee distributed four handouts:

- 1) List of tobacco, smoke free parks in counties and cities in Oregon
- 2) List of tobacco, smoke free parks in out-of-state cities and counties similar to Portland
- 3) Draft ordinance
- 4) One pager with recommendations

Sue noted that Commissioner Fritz has asked the Board to present something by mid-May.

Sue reported that in terms of other municipalities across the state, cities and counties that have gone 100% smoke free represent all geographies. We may think of Medford, Bend, Hillsboro, and Lincoln City as more conservative than Portland, she said, but places that seem less progressive are adopting smoke free policies. She noted that this is stretching across all counties of the state and region. Vancouver, Washington has turned down light rail vote after vote, but they have approved a smoke free parks policy.

Sue read the Smokefree Parks Policy Sample:

An ORDINANCE of the City Council of the City of Portland, Oregon prohibiting smoking and the use of tobacco products in all City parks.

Whereas prohibiting tobacco and other “smoking” product use in City parks aligns with Portland Parks and Recreation’s mission to support “Healthy Parks and a Healthy Portland,” and to provide safe places that promote health and wellness, and

Whereas studies have shown that children and youth exposed to smoking and tobacco use have greater incidents of smoking and tobacco use when they get older, and

Whereas secondhand smoke can trigger asthma attacks and other immediate adverse health effects for park users, and

Whereas tobacco related disease is still the leading cause of preventable death in Oregon and costs Multnomah County 223.5 in medical care and \$195.7 million in lost productivity, and

Whereas tobacco free laws have been shown to decrease daily tobacco consumption and to increase smoking cessation among smokers, and

Whereas smoking in parks results in the littering of cigarette butts, cigar butts, and other tobacco-related waste that can cause environmental degradation and pose a health risk to children and animals.

Be it ordained by the City of Portland:

Section I. Use of Tobacco Products Prohibited

No person shall use tobacco products in any part of City parks or natural areas.

Section II. Definition

“Tobacco product” means any product containing tobacco in any form including (but not limited to): cigarettes, cigars, pipes, chew, hookah, snuff, and smokeless tobacco. E-cigarettes and marijuana are also prohibited.

Sue noted that there is currently a lot of debate on which tobacco products to include in a smoke free or tobacco free policy. The subcommittee recommends banning the use of all products containing tobacco in any form including cigarettes, cigars, pipes, chew, hookah, snuff, and smokeless tobacco. They also recommend including E-cigarettes and marijuana in the list of prohibited products in an effort to get ahead of possible legalization of marijuana in the state of Oregon. Sue noted that Colorado and California are trying to get ahead of this issue as well.

Sue reported on the subcommittee's discussions on which Parks facilities would be included in the policy. She noted that other municipalities have acknowledged that it is difficult to prohibit smoking at golf courses. She noted that some argue that it is too hard to prohibit smoking in a place where users are paying to participate all day long. Golf courses are not like parks, where you can go for an hour, and then go back to your house and smoke. The subcommittee requested feedback from the Parks Board on extending the smokefree policy to include golf courses and the Portland International Raceway. Sue noted that the subcommittee has identified partnership groups to reach out to both before and after this policy recommendation is presented to Commissioner Fritz. Possible partner groups include: Multnomah County, Oregon Health Authority, NW Health Foundation, NAYA, Q Center, ONI, Portland Business Alliance, and Portland Neighborhood Associations.

Sue noted that the subcommittee would like to seek public feedback. She said that they feel strongly that there should be a public involvement piece, but will leave this up to the Commissioner, Mike Abbaté, and City Council. She said that they didn't want to dictate how much public involvement should be included, and that it is not their role to determine this.

Sue noted that the subcommittee has researched and discussed possible questions and issues that may come up. These include the following:

- Prohibitions on smoking and tobacco use might be perceived as a move that takes away a person's right.
- If a person pays to play at a golf course and/or PIR, they may feel that they should be allowed to smoke.
- The ban might adversely and disproportionately affect the homeless if the park is their home.
- How enforceable is a smoke free policy?

Sue asked for feedback and conversation from the Board.

Bob Sallinger said he had a general question, and asked if we have identified a real problem. He noted that he doesn't disagree with the subcommittee's report, but that he has also spent a lot of time in natural areas and parks, hanging out with kids for 30 years. He said that he has not heard from the public, or felt himself, that there is a problem. He commented that there are other issues he worries about for his kids, and in parks, but smoking has never been on the radar.

Sue said that she has had a dozen people approach her with this issue. She noted examples of families sitting at music performances or movies for 2 or 3 hours near someone smoking, as well as people hiking, and following someone smoking. She said that she is surprised that Bob has not encountered similar situations. Bob noted that he has encountered smoking in parks, but said that it hasn't been something he has felt that he couldn't get away from. Dogs, on the other hand, he said is something you can't get away from in Portland parks, but he said he can usually get away from smoke pretty fast. He noted that he is not saying we shouldn't do it, he is just saying he is not convinced that it is a real problem. He asked Parks staff if they receive complaints.

Mike Abbaté noted that we do get some complaints, though not many. The most complaints, day to day, is the litter from the cigarette butts. He noted that we worry about fire. That terrifies us because of the resource itself and proximity to houses. He noted that many of our parks are smokefree, including Director Park, Pioneer Courthouse Square, and areas near playgrounds. We've already determined that it is good to have a limit in place. The problem is primarily the litter. The secondhand smoke is less.

Bob noted that litter is bad whether it is a cigarette butt or a McDonald's bag and French fries. He said that he is playing devil's advocate, but why not start a litter campaign. Sue noted that the biggest litter source is cigarette butts. In terms of litter, that is part of the reason that state parks has made all of their parks smoke free, and beaches are next.

Tricia Tillman noted that there is the tangible problem of cigarette butts, but a smoke free policy is also part of Parks mission. This is about saying the Parks Board wants to uphold and uplift that "healthy parks healthy people" mission. We need to do what we can to change the cultural norm, and affirm that parks are a healthy place for kids.

Linda Robinson commented that a smoking ban doesn't do away with the litter problem. She noted that if you go two feet away from the Max station, you find all the cigarette butts are there. It just moves the problem. She suggested instead to extend the smoking ban in place for playgrounds and some parks to include public events like movies and concerts.

Sue noted that the subcommittee decided there is no reason not to include all Portland parks. All of these other counties in Oregon have done this. She said that they don't see any reason to take baby steps. Linda stated again that it will not solve the issue of littering cigarette butts. Tricia noted that not all public policies prevent all things.

Judy Bluehorse Skelton commented that smoking is not our largest problem, but it is a real problem for the seated events. She noted that the litter is already against the law, and Parks may need to enforce the littering more stringently in areas you know that is happening. She said that she is glad you will take this issue to the public involvement piece. This is critical. She noted that she thinks there are many ways that people try to get to health, and be healthy again. She expressed concern that the message from Parks will be that we can't help you get healthy so you are excluded from these beautiful places. She noted that this is a hard conversation, and can send a message, and she would like to find a compassionate piece. Recognize that people are trying to get healthy, and they may want to do that by reconnecting to nature and being out with their family. She noted that she was recently hiking with her brother, and he was smoking. At 59, he hasn't been able to quit. She said that she doesn't want to exclude people who are already feeling excluded in other ways. She noted that talking to the community will be helpful. She recommended finding places that are particularly congested for this policy, and possibly leaving a place for people who are transitioning, and trying to get healthy. She expressed particular concern with the notion of allowing smoking at the golf course while banning it at all other parks, noting that the message there is that you can pay to be

out in nature and play and smoke.

Tony Magliano thanked the subcommittee for all their work. He said that he kind of agrees that a blanket smoke free policy can be problematic. On the topic of golf courses and PIR, he noted that if he is paying, he would expect it to be a smoke free environment. We pay to go on a plane, or go in a club, and you can't smoke in these places. He commented that the priority is where large people gather. That is where there is the biggest risk, as opposed to a large open space, or someone hiking through the woods. He suggested maybe adding dispensers along the trail to curb litter. He noted that for smoke free areas, he would start with playgrounds, and events.

Christa Thoeresz asked if the subcommittee knows what fall out, if any, has occurred in the places that have approved a blanket smokefree policy. Cynthia Castro reported that she reached out to Austin and San Jose, and touched base with Seattle. She noted that Seattle wanted to do an across the board policy, and slip it into the code of conduct, but someone found out. She said that in talking to a representative, the culture in Seattle is that if there are a few people opposed, they tend to back off. In this case, they softened it, but they really want to go through with implementing a smokefree policy. She noted that this is something they will continue to pursue, and use the timing of the national emphasis on health. Cynthia said that Tacoma had a lot of support from the beginning, but they are having difficulty with enforcement. It is not a top priority for police, but overall the community has been supportive

Andy noted that the difference between a park and a golf course is that the golf course is a business enterprise. You can smoke there, and not on a plane because it's outside. He commented that he feels it would be fair to ban smoking at a park, and allow it at a golf course. He noted that this is just his initial reaction, and he will think about it. He also commented that if we're going to do it, let's do it. What do we stand for as a park system? Smoking is contrary to that. He said that he is open to nuance, and barriers, but his gut reaction is to ban.

Nick Hardigg commented that he wants our park system to be inclusive and welcoming. If people don't want kids to be around smoking, then the concern is that some may choose not to come if smoking is allowed. On the other hand, if a smoking ban makes some people feel pushed out, welcoming some and not others, that is a problem too. He noted that this is the metric that he thinks of.

Linda Robinson commented that she has family members who have taken steps to improve their health, but haven't been able to quit smoking. In dealing with an addiction, there's not always a choice. It is an addiction. She expressed concern with the potential message that you can't get healthy because you are not healthy, so you can't go to any of these places.

Sue noted that some of this conversation is as though people who smoke cannot smoke. She said that we are simply saying that for the time you are in the park, you can come, you just can't smoke. You are welcome. She noted that it is a little unfair to the spirit. We're not saying don't come. We're saying come for 45 minutes or an hour if you can without smoking, and next time come for an hour and 15 minutes if

you can. It's like when you go to a community center, or on a plane, or any place where you can't smoke.

Mauricio Villarreal commented on the golf course conversation, noting that it's a private enterprise. You have a lease with the provider. The provider could make a non-smoking policy. There can be a non-smoking policy at Heron Lakes, and you can go and smoke at another place, you can make a choice. He noted that having people come to a public park, and not smoke during that time, is a little different. The message is that this is a better choice than your choice; that is something we need to be careful about. Since I don't do this, I'm better than you. There is a consensus that smoking is not good for you, but there are people for whatever reason who cannot stop smoking. He noted that we need to be careful not to deliver the message that we don't smoke, so we are better.

Warren Jimenez said that they have begun internal discussions within the bureau. He noted that they discussed the proposed ban with PP&R's Leadership Team – which includes all supervisors and managers. He noted that feedback was similar about the need to be clear about the why. As implementers of policy, he said, we started to dive in to what it would mean to implement; we need to do that to test this policy. There may be pushing and pulling, internally. One challenge, he noted, will be enforcement. Enforcement will rely primarily on the ranger program. One concern is that this will be another enforcement activity, which takes away from the other part of the ranger program, which is the ambassadorship. Warren noted that we will continue to have these conversations, and will pull together an internal group.

Mike Abbaté noted that both golf and the Portland International Raceway are supported 100 percent by fees they generate. He relayed that some managers have concerns about the impact of a smoking ban on revenues. He noted that there are no conclusions, and that they are doing research on other golf courses and race tracks.

Tony Magliano commented that he is not saying to not allow smoking at golf courses, but rather that paying shouldn't be a criteria. He noted that there are other outdoor private enterprises that do not allow smoking, for example stadiums. Christa Thoresz noted that the Timbers do not allow smoking at their stadium.

Tricia Tillman commented on concern for smokers moving toward healthiness, noting that it is the tobacco free laws that have encouraged more tobacco cessation. We can think about our family members who used to smoke until they could no longer smoke in their workplace, or on a plane. When bars went smoke free there was a lot of talk about lost revenue, she noted, and that didn't happen. She encouraged the Board to think about how many people don't go to places where smoking is allowed (especially former smokers), and will return once it has been banned. Sue Van Brocklin added that when bars, restaurants, and bowling alleys went smokefree, people thought revenue would be lost and that it would be a problem, and it wasn't.

Bob Sallinger commented that in listening to the conversation, he feels like in parks, if there is a direct threat to the resource, then that is within the purview of what

we should be managing. When we get beyond that, he noted, and we don't like this or that habit, we are getting into a weird place. We could say we don't want fast food in the parks. There is a whole list of things we wish people didn't do. He noted that he wonders if this goes within our mandate. He noted that he doesn't like the blanket statement, and would like to make that case on more solid ground. He said that for each whereas statement, you can pick holes. Obviously, he noted, when there are a lot of people gathered there is a direct risk. If there is a risk of fire, we can say that. We need to be more precise. Otherwise, he noted, we get into a huge area of behaviors and habits that we may not approve of. He said that it seems like an overreach. It's a place for people to gather, but it's a place of freedom as well.

Andy suggested that we put the issue back on the table in May, noting that everyone needs more time to weigh in. He asked the subcommittee to draft a pros and cons document. We can be thoughtful about that, weigh it, work with the subcommittee, and if we feel comfortable, put it on the agenda in June for a vote. He noted that the Commissioner wants a recommendation by mid-May, but we don't want to force it.

**SDC
Announcements**

Mike Abbaté updated the Board on SDC announcements. He noted that there have been a number of announcements. He said that the vast majority of announcements have been made. There are 30 million dollars worth of projects that will start this year (2014 to 2016 list of projects). Some will start immediately, some will get started later this year. The Colwood acquisition has gone to Council and was approved. Thomas Cully Park has been underway, and we have brought money to that project. Two new parks in east Portland, Beech and Gateway, have been announced. Most recently, the Dennis property acquisition went to Council. If you read the paper, there was an article on acquiring that property. In addition to PP&R, some money for this acquisition is coming from Metro, from a Greenspaces bond measure. That is an amazing piece of property. Mike encouraged Board members to go out and look at the parcel. It is located at 148th and Division. It is 7.5 acres, and has been a piece of property we have wanted to acquire for a long time. We began talking to the owners in 2007, and they didn't want to sell. They finally put it on the market. You will see in the news that we are paying more than the appraised value, and that is true. You could not find something better in terms of number of houses it touches.

Nick Hardigg noted that appraisals are imprecise. He said that the article in the Oregonian doesn't do the process justice. He noted that he applauds the acquisition. It's a great thing for that neighborhood. With growth, he noted, these kinds of properties go away, and you can't get them back. Warren Jimenez noted that the appraisal for Colwood was eleven million, and we purchased it for five.

Mike noted that SDC funds are being used at Dawson Park as well. We had a play area with bark chips for surfacing, and some folks wanted a more accessible surface. We are allocating SDCs to put in a rubberized surface. Julie Vigeland noted that rubberized surface doesn't last as long, and asked about ongoing maintenance. Mike said that this is correct, and ongoing maintenance will be much higher.

Mike noted that new splash pads have been on the list for a while. We are excited about announcing the first recycling splash pad. It is very expensive to install, but

less to maintain. He noted that we will also be announcing 1.5 million to implement the master plan at Spring Garden Park. He noted this will be a grant match for the neighborhood association. Friends of April Hill worked with Metro, and we are helping them achieve the match. Jennifer Yocom noted that this has not been announced to the public yet, but will be soon.

Additionally, we are moving ahead with the contractor for South Waterfront Greenway phases 1 and 2. We got approval from Council, and will go all the way through to completion.

Mike noted that he wants the Board to have this list of new projects, and know what's going on. Internally, he noted, within the bureau, there will be a lot of new work for Warren Jimenez and Jennifer Yocom's group on public involvement, and also for Kia Selley's group.

Kia Selley noted that they have recently filled the city planner position, and will make an official announcement at the next meeting. Linda Robinson asked if this new person will work with Gateway Green, and Kia said no, they will need a capital projects person. There will be two new capital projects positions.

**Equity
Subcommittee
update**

Andy Nelson noted that last month we had a great conversation on equity, and asked if we are ready to approve the new statement of equity affirmation. The equity subcommittee said that they are not ready for that conversation. Andy noted that the final action will be to approve those performance measures. Details are in the minutes. He noted that they will put it on the agenda in May for final approval of performance measures.

Director's update

Mike Abbaté reported that today is day three of budget presentations. This year, the Parks budget is being presented in segments or themes. On Monday, we presented on the tree code. Yesterday, we talked about seasonal employees, the new equity and inclusion manager position, GRUNT, ADA accessibility. Today will be major maintenance, city infrastructure, and Mt. Tabor. Mike noted that he will talk about deferred maintenance. This is a common theme across all bureaus. He will hit upon the importance of the O&M requests that go in with projects. Every time we come to Council, for example with the Dennis property, we will include how much it will cost the City to maintain.

The next step, Mike noted, is for the Mayor to develop a proposed budget on May 1st. There has been some bad news budget wise. There were early expectations of 5.9 million ongoing funds to share between the bureaus. This has been lowered to 3.6, maybe 2.4. It is a much reduced amount of money to fund all of the asks from all of the bureaus.

Mike noted that he was in Washington DC last week, meeting with representatives from the offices of Senator Wyden, Senator Merkley, Representative Blumenauer and Representative Bonamici. He noted that they discussed land and water conservation, active transportation, and a lot of other legislative issues. He commented that it is amazing to see how many things parks touches, including community parks revitalizations, urban parks, and community lunches. If you are engaged with your elected, first of all thank them, and then emphasize the

importance of the land and water conservation reauthorization. Mike noted that there has been a lot of resistance to reauthorizing that funding, but toward the end of the week, he was hearing that there was a building consensus to reauthorize.

Mike noted that we are really excited about the new equity and inclusion manager position, posted this week. We will send the recruitment announcement via e-mail. He noted that this new position has been a high priority. This position will serve as a leader to identify barriers in our existing workforce, reach out to communities, facilities and our programs. He noted that he would appreciate it if board members can forward the e-mail link to their networks. This person will report to the Director, and we will look for him or her to help us transform the bureau. The next big thing is to have a designated leader for this effort.

Linda Robinson asked if this will be dependent on getting additional money allocated. Mike noted that we are not asking for more money for this position, but we do have an ask for the program funds, so that this person will have money for translation services, outreach events, and trainings. He noted that you have to have a budget to go with a person, and we really need that money to make this effective.

Jeff Shaffer noted that the Mayor will announce his proposed budget the first of May. He encouraged the Board members to attend the public budget forums, noting that this is where a lot of those decisions get made.

Adjourn Andy adjourned the meeting at 9:16 am.