



PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION

Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland

January 28, 2014

Mayor Charlie Hales
1221 SW 4th Ave., Ste. 300
Portland, OR 97204

Dear Mayor Hales:

For the past three years, the Portland Parks Board has been pleased to work with Portland Parks & Recreation staff and our labor partners to advise and make recommendations on the Portland Parks & Recreation Requested Budget. This year even more community members, including representatives from the neighborhood system, IRCO/Asian Family Center, and the downtown business community, joined us. Our role as the PP&R Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) is to inform and advise on the Requested Budget submitted by Director Abbaté and Commissioner Fritz.

After several consecutive years of reductions, we were heartened by the direction to work toward stabilization this year. Additionally, we were pleased at the prospect of some additional resources to begin to reverse the negative impacts of many years of budget reductions.

At the beginning of every Budget Advisory Process, Portland Parks & Recreation staff prepare a presentation on the state of the PP&R Budget. This year's presentation included a graph clearly depicting a gap in funding that has consistently grown over the years. These cuts and declining resources have translated directly to fewer staff to provide programs and service as well as diminished resources to maintain our park system. This issue, combined with a maintenance backlog of more than \$400 million, present significant challenges for our community.

While we were pleased to be discussing possible additional funds, it was still a challenging activity. In the face of significant shortfalls, where do you put your resources? We struggled with a pie that is not big enough.

Ultimately, we were united in our support for the Portland Parks & Recreation Requested Budget as presented by Commissioner Fritz and Director Abbaté. Additionally, the Budget Advisory Committee offers the following thoughts as the city's 2014-15 budget is developed:

- Maintenance is a priority – the significant backlog of capital maintenance needs will not be met with General Fund revenue; Portland Parks & Recreation needs a stable, long-term, dedicated funding strategy to address this gap.
- Equity must be incorporated into every project, program, and policy. Every Portlander has the right to parks and the social, environmental, and health benefits they confer on our communities.
- Staff are core to our work – Full-time permanent staff contribute to organizational stability and deep community relationships

On January 8, 2014, Portland Parks & Recreation held a public budget meeting. More than 100 community members participated. Participants were asked to review the same list of budget items presented to the BAC and provide their priorities. Happily, the public results aligned almost perfectly with the BAC results. We are confident that our work reflects the strong support and values of the community.

In addition to the PP&R Requested Budget, the Parks BAC also recommended that funding for the Tree Code not solely be the burden of PP&R.

On behalf of the PP&R Budget Advisory Committee, we are pleased to support the 2014-15 Portland Parks & Recreation Requested Budget. We know parks are a priority for you. We strongly encourage you to maximize the resources you are able to invest in parks. Thank you for your support of Portland Parks & Recreation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nelson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Andy Nelson
Parks Board President, on behalf of the PP&R Budget Advisory Committee

Budget Advisory Committee Members & Meeting Schedule

The Portland Parks & Recreation Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) is comprised of community members, PP&R supporters, and labor partners. The BAC represents a wide variety of interests from stakeholders across the city.

BAC Meetings

- November 5
- November 21
- December 5
- December 12
- January 16

Public Budget Meeting

- January 8

Portland Parks Board Members

Andy Nelson, Parks Board Chair

Mike Alexander

Judy Bluehorse Skelton

Mary Anne Cassin

Kathy Fong Stevens

Nick Hardigg (member ex-officio)

Dion Jordan

Tony Magliano (member ex-officio)

Jim Owens

Meryl Redisch (member ex-officio)

Linda Robinson

Shelli Romero

Bob Sallinger

Christa Thoeresz

Tricia Tillman

Sue Van Brocklin

Julie Vigeland

Mauricio Villarreal

Labor Partners

Scott Gibson (PP&R Park Services) - DCTU

Tim Haberman (PP&R Recreation) - Local 483

Gerry Verhoef (PP&R Engineering) – COPPEA

Coalition/Community Representatives

Angela Moos, North Portland Neighborhood Services

Amy Lewin, Southeast Uplift Neighborhood Office

Brenda McSweeney, East Portland Neighborhood Office

Carol Chesarek, Neighbors West/Northwest

Joshua Shirley, Central Northeast Neighbors

Paul Anthony, Northeast Coalition of Neighbors

Phil Kalberer, Downtown Business Community

Sokho Eath, IRCO/Asian Family Center

Steve Mullinax, Southwest Neighbors Inc.