



**PORTLAND PARKS BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES**

**April 1, 2015**

**8:00 – 9:30 a.m.**

**Lovejoy Room, City Hall**

---

**Board members present:** Judy BlueHorse Skelton, Kendall Clawson, Andy Nelson, Kathy Fong Stephens, Patricia Frobos, Tony Magliano, Jim Owens, Mauricio Villarreal Julie Vigeland, Linda Robinson, Gladys Ruiz, Christa Thoeresz

**Board members absent:** Mike Alexander, Tonya Booker, Nick Hardigg, Dion Jordan, Meryl Redisch, Sue Van Brocklin

**PP&R Staff present:** Mike Abbate, Margaret Evans, Art Hendricks, Warren Jimenez, Eileen Argentina, Kia Selley, Jeff Shaffer, Deb Lev

---

**Call to order** Kathy called the meeting to order at 8:00 am

**Park of the Month** Andy Nelson reported on Heron Lakes. He referred to it as a golf course wildlife refuge. There are two courses on extensive acreage. Incredible amount of birds there. Part of the course is built on the city of Vanport. The old course was designed by a famous landscape architect.

The next park of the month will be Argay Park. Kathy will be reporting on this park in May.

**Public Input to Board** No public testimony.

**Approval of the minutes** Jim Owens moved to pass the minutes from the March 2015 Parks Board Meeting, Judy BlueHorse Skelton seconded the motion, and the board unanimously voted to approve the minutes.

Judy asked that the minutes be amended, changing the word “Willamette” to

“Columbia”. Jim Owens moved to pass the minutes as amended, Judy BlueHorse Skelton seconded the motion, and the board unanimously voted to approve the minutes as amended.

**Chair/Board Business**    **Parks Foundation Update**

Jim Owens reported that the Parks Foundation will be hiring an interim director, Liz Field. Julie said, Liz is with the non-profit organization of Oregon. Liz has, for many years, has worked in interim positions.

**Chair Updates**

Judy will be leaving the official nominating committee, Kathy will be filling her place. Andy reported on the nominating committee. They have a great list of diverse candidates to choose from. They have created a great pipeline of talent for the coming years. Kendall said, they have a treasure trove of really good candidates. Now they need to look at who has the best assets to bring to the Parks Board.

Julie reported on the Equity Committee. Their next meeting will be on 4/29.

**Reports from committees**

Jim Owens reported on the SDC subcommittee. There has been some controversy over the SDCs. He recommended we close the loop between staff, commissioner and Parks Board members. Warren commented that the conversations on SDCs are fluid and closing the gap right now would be difficult. Mike said, it would be great if every parks board member could attend the council hearing on Parks SDCs. It is a time certain hearing at 2pm on 4/15. Patti agreed that conversations are very fluid right now and offered to come to present updates. We can share information with you via email when we have an update, as long as dialog won't ensue after, then we have issues with public meeting laws.

Julie is the liaison to the parking advisory committee for Washington Park. Regarding the intersection at Highway 26

Linda has been liaison to the Gateway park and plaza. Everyone is excited about the play area, which is completely inclusive.

Judy updated on the cully park, nothing planted in the tribal gathering garden yet, but 3 acres planted with native plants. Still not open yet, will be this spring.

Kathy mentioned that she would be able to be the interim spring garden liaison until someone can fill it.

**RVNA Letter**

Mauricio spoke about the RVNA decision. After public testimony last month, he was asked to write a letter about what happened. The RVNA PAC will be meeting on April 8<sup>th</sup>. Biking has been banned until there is a mountain biking plan, set to begin next year.

Kathy mentioned that there has been a letter drafted that we propose to send to the Commissioners Fritz and Fish.

Jim suggested that we request or set a timeline

Judy said, in a discussion with BES, they said, we are trying to fix 150 years of land mismanagement and mitigate issues to come. There is a variety of activities going on in the new South Waterfront Park, and we should think about what our role is in situations like these.

Kendall, we might want to connect with the confluence project. They've done a great job managing issues like these. We may be able to learn something from what they've done on the Columbia River.

Julie Vigeland moved to approve the RVNA Letter, Linda Robinson seconded the motion, and the board unanimously voted to approve the RVNA Letter.

**Update on Parks  
Bond  
Implementation**

MaryAnn Cassin is currently working as our interim Bond Manager, recruitment is currently open for the permanent Bond Manager. We've hired our first project manager, Robin Laughlin.

We are looking for four more Capital Project Managers. We are also looking to hire an administrative assistant for the bond team.

Most projects will begin in July. Projects are staggered, as you've seen on our spreadsheet, which is still on our website. We are doing some work now on some time sensitive projects.

We are planning for a round two of projects, of which the discussion will begin in the winter of 2016-17.

**Diversity Update**

Art Hendricks presented on the Equity and Inclusion Committee. He stepped into this position in August and has been very impressed by the breadth and enthusiasm of staff and volunteers. He applauded the work done by all involved. Completing the Affirmation of Equity Statement has been a great accomplishment by the Equity Committee.

He has contracted with Donna Maxie to do racial dialogs with our senior management team. He has also worked with PSU through intertwine to develop and equity plan for City Nature.

Parks race and ethnicity project (PREP) has been a great project and identifies who we serve. We have 50,000 people in our database and 15,000 people are represented in our PREP stats.

Mike said, while we have remained at a steady statistic of 80% (percentage of residents being served by PP&R) and we have been working hard to get to underserved areas, when taking into consideration the rising population growth in

Portland, you understand why we are still at 80%. We need to think about using some new metrics.

Gladys asked, is there is a plan to train the staff working with people? (not just upper management). Art – yes. We just required all of our managers and supervisors to attend Equity 101. We also have a training through PREP for staff who are registering people.

We conducted some focus groups to identify communities to see how accessible our centers are. What are some of the communication focus areas, how can we reach out to communities.

World cup soccer is an event coming up in July that provides opportunities for refugee and immigrant community members.

One of our goals is to recruit and hire diverse staff. How can we use our seasonal workforce as a pipeline to hire a dedicated permanent workforce and how we can make our permanent workforce more diverse? We are tracking our hiring by fiscal year. We are making small, but steady progress. 32% of our hires this fiscal year have been people of color (Out of 65 hires since July, 20 have been people of color). We have been around 15% over the past 15 years.

Judy said that we have talked about “how information is gathered” and there was no way to capture attendance at big events and whether or not communities want to be counted/measured.

Linda added, just with the free for all, how do you count those people?

Art, we want to institutionalize these systems so they are not person-dependent.

Jennifer mentioned that at summer free for all we will be doing audience intercepts.

**Accessibility  
Committee  
Introduction**

Art Hendricks. The committee was established in the early 90s to give feedback to staff about the planning and designing of parks staff. Now they can look at universal access approvals to work with the basic design of parks. The accessibility committee has really been focused on physical disabilities and we will be expanding the committee. We would like to include people who have cognitive or developmental disabilities. This committee will continue to provide input on our projects. They will start weighing in on our systems and programs to give feedback.

Art mentioned that Eilieen just did a study of AIR to see how we are providing services and are they accessible. Are we meeting the needs of individuals with cognitive or physical disability?

The ADA Title II Self-Assessment is our next big task. We have been working with the Office of Equity and Human Rights on this. Carla has been working on inventory. Cully Park is a great example, as staff and the committee have been working closely together through the planning phase to make sure the park is accessible, trails are no more than a 5% incline. K<sup>h</sup>unamokwst Park and Westmoreland Park are also parks that the Accessibility Committee has been able

to provide input during the planning phase.

One committee member spoke and said that he appreciates the opportunity to provide input on the park designs, not just making sure they are compliant with the law but that parks are thoroughly enjoyable for all to use. Sometimes we suggest simple changes, like providing one faucet handle instead of two to make it easier for those who may not be able to use two hands.

Another committee member spoke, mentioning that she hopes her contributions will make parks more enjoyable for people with cognitive disabilities.

A third committee member, David, works for the Office of Equity and Human Rights. He has been tasked Portland's ADA Transition Plan. We've done the assessment to system's physical/architectural barriers, including Parks. He really looks forward to looking at the systems and services. Not focusing so much on stairs, elevators, or signs, which are easy to identify. He is looking forward to the interaction with staff and policy and coming up with solutions where needed. There is a lot work to be done in identifying gaps.

Kathy mentioned that the Parks Board would like to hear an update on their progress in a year.

Jim asked, are there other bureaus with accessibility advisory committees or is this a unique model? Portland Commission on Disability has subcommittees that have bureau representation, but this Parks Advisory Committee is unique and parks is unique due to the services and enjoyment that people derive from our parks and centers.

**Director update** Revenue is on-track to reach 2.1 million dollars in revenue for parking in Washington Park. There is a new app, Passport, which allows you to pay for parking in Washington park without returning to your car.

Washington park TMA Board has voted to provide busses for transportation. Trimet has done us a favor in the past by providing extra transportation. These new busses will be on a 15 minute pick-up schedule.

Reservoir for Washington Park is being renovated. The zoo's education center is under construction.

In December, the Zoolights event was the highest attended ever with 214,000. With the TMA, we have a platform for discussion on how to improve the visitor experience.

Rangers now are not doing parking enforcement, we have parking enforcement officers. Warren did a great deal of negotiation to make this change happen. Heather McCrary and Victor Sanders have done great work to manage efforts.

## **Announcements**

**Meeting adjourned** Kathy adjourned the meeting at 9:22am.