



**PORTLAND PARKS BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES  
September 4, 2013  
8:00 – 9:30 a.m.  
Lovejoy Room, City Hall**

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**Board members present:** Mike Alexander, Judy BlueHorse Skelton, Nick Hardigg, Tony Magliano, Andy Nelson, Jim Owens, Meryl Redisch, Linda Robinson, Shelli Romero, Bob Sallinger, Kathy Fong Stephens, Tricia Tillman, Sue Van Brocklin, Julie Vigeland

**Board members absent:** Mary Anne Cassin, Dion Jordan, Christa Thoeresz, Mauricio Villarreal

**Staff present:** Eileen Argentina, Margaret Evans, Warren Jimenez, Todd Lofgren, Kia Selley, Jennifer Yocom

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**Call to order** The meeting was called to order at 7:30 a.m. by Chair Andy Nelson.

**Approval of the minutes** Julie Vigeland moved to approve the minutes, Mike Alexander seconded, Shelli Romero abstained because she was absent for the August 7<sup>th</sup> meeting. The motion to approve was passed.

**Park of the Month** Park of the month was Creston Park and Pool. Nick Hardigg said that he tried to go over Labor Day weekend, the busiest weekend of the year, and found that it was closed. He noted that this was no fault of the Parks Bureau, but rather the reality of stretching dollars, and not having enough funding to keep all the pools open for the whole summer. Eileen Argentina also noted that the aquatics program relies heavily on young people during the summer, and they go back to school in September, so it is difficult to stretch out the season for all pools. Nick noted that he and his family substituted Wilson pool, and though there was a 45 minute wait, it was fantastic, and the staff handled the large crowd really well. He said it was a great substitute experience.

Andy Nelson noted that Normandale Park is September's Park of the Month, and that there will be a lot of soccer played there in the coming weeks.

**Ad Hoc Communication** Sue Van Brocklin noted that the Communications group had done a lot of work over the summer months, and had given an update at the last meeting. She said that there was nothing new to report.

**Parks Foundation Update** Nick Hardigg reported that the Parks Foundation fine tuned outreach efforts this summer. He noted that they are increasing their membership base, and that 1500 people signed up for receiving information this summer. The Foundation was at 60 concerts, and they handed out 10,000 bags of popcorn at the Movies. Additionally, a promotional video/movie trailer, featuring Mike Abbaté and his support for the Parks Foundation, was shown at the Movies. Also, the entire back page of the Multnomah Arts Center catalogue was devoted to a Parke Diem advertisement. He noted that the Foundation's

biggest partner for Parke Diem is PP&R, and said that Steve Pixley's team, and volunteers have devoted countless hours to the effort. Nick reported that the list of projects for Parke Diem is being finalized. He noted that non profits are organizing their locations with the help of PP&R, and while it does take supervision, it is going well. Nick distributed a handout on Parke Diem, and talked about how Board members can participate by volunteering for a project. He noted that it is a 3-hour commitment on Friday or Saturday. It will not just be about pulling weeds, or painting something, but rather to be present, and engage with the community. Finally, he noted that Parke Diem has secured sponsorship with businesses. For example, Nike has donated 1000 shirts.

Andy Nelson asked if there is value in doing something together. Nick noted that spreading out would be his preference. The Parks Foundation can't be everywhere, he said, so it would help to have PP&R staff and Parks Board members spread out throughout the sites as ambassadors for the parks.

Nick noted that the Foundation expects a record setting effort, and they hope they are launching a new tradition. He said that in its inaugural year, they expect to have approximately 50 sites.

Tricia Tillman asked Nick how individuals should contact the Parks Foundation if they are interested in participating. Nick said that there is capacity for additional groups, and they can contact him or Jesse. He noted that individuals can also sign-up on the website; however, the posting online is taking some time. Information should be there soon for most projects.

**Strategic  
Plan/Performance  
Measures**

Andy noted that we will be presenting on the Strategic Plan as part of the effort to prepare the Board for the budget process well in advance.

Jim Owens asked about the Board's questions from last month's CIP presentations, and how those will be addressed. Warren Jimenez noted that the CIP follow-up will be part of the Director's Report.

Warren distributed two handouts on the Strategic Plan. He noted that they will look familiar. The first is a one-pager on the Strategic Plan. The second is a summary of the performance report. He noted that some information will be new, and that Jason Smith is joining us to walk us through some of the metrics. Warren noted that Jason is working on implementation of Strategic Plan, and that he is responsible for performance tracking and measures.

Jason discussed the process -- how we arrive at the 2012-2015 Strategic Plan, using the 2020 vision. Over the past years, he noted, we've developed incremental (3 year) strategic plans, through the 2020 vision. This year, looking at 2020 vision, we can see where we've performed well, and where we feel there are still needs. The one-pager summarizes the 2020 vision -- what the goals are. In spring 2009, he noted, the Parks Board issued a progress report. We can make those available for those that are interested. For the 2015 Strategic Plan that we are currently in process of implementing, there are 6 themes. Access/equity, trails, asset management, sustainability, health, recreation services. Under each, we have goals. We have approximately 30

initiatives, to further goals within each of these theme areas. Internally, we have identified project managers for each of the 30 initiatives. They are our theme champions -- Jennifer: access, Kia: asset management and trails, Todd: health, Eileen: recreation services, Deb: sustainability. Each theme champion is responsible for implementing goals.

Tricia Tillman noted that a number of these themes are not mutually exclusive, and asked if there was crossover. Warren said that this is absolutely right, and crossover is happening. Jennifer Yocom offered one example of equity and access and geographic questions intersecting with recreation services, and also health. One thing, she noted, that is on Eileen's list is a scholarship program, and that is something we need to work on together. This crosses over into Todd's issue of health as well. We know there are disparities in health outcomes in populations most in need, and one challenge is making sure that people are aware of the services available to them. She noted that they check in and provide updates at SMT meetings.

Warren said that we are working on coordinating a meeting on access and equity, and will be looking for input. Jennifer noted that Tricia's strategic thinking and state level experience would be really helpful.

Warren introduced PP&R performance measures. One thing we look at, he noted, is how do we know we are succeeding? We try to track this with our performance measures. In September and October, Jason will be updating this information and then we can identify new measures to track Strategic Plan goals. This is sometimes qualitative. For example, when looking at a new goal, we need to determine what performance measure to add to measure that success. Thinking about health and childhood obesity rates, for example, there will be some aspects that we have control over, but some will be more broad. Performance measures are an accountability tool – we can see where we have performed well, where we haven't made progress, where we've seen decrease. Warren turned to Jason for a summary of PP&R by the numbers. He noted that we want to talk about the summaries, leave this with you, and see if you have questions.

Jason noted that last month, we gave an intro to financials. He said that some of what was covered last month is also included here. For example, concerns over funding for facility maintenance were discussed last month. One thing to point out, he noted, is that the data is broken into different types of measures. Condition measures tell us how things are on ground. For example, the condition of our facilities. Perception measures are based on surveys of the public. We look for disconnects, and areas where we can improve. We also have intervention measures. For example with childhood obesity, we are limited because we are just one piece of the puzzle. But, we can look at the activity in the courses that we offer, and make sure we have a good number of courses. These are some of the types of intervention measures that we would track.

Jason turned to summary points, and noted that we look at households within ½ mile of a park, residents living within 3 miles of community center, and

regional trails. Warren said that we focused on regional trails as access to nature

Jason turned to the section on reach and community. He noted that we saw an increase in the number of visits to community centers and recreation programs between 2011 and 2012. But, we saw a decrease in the percentage of Portlanders participating in recreation activity. This information led us to look in more detail at neighborhoods. One thing that came up in the North zone was that significant staffing changes occurred in 2011. This may have affected recreation activity participation in that zone. He noted that this is one area we will be looking at next year to see how it moves.

Jason turned to the last page on internal measures (employee satisfaction, demographics). He noted that we are focusing on employee demographics. Warren noted that some updating needs to happen. Looking at race/ethnicity data, what does full time look like, as well as seasonal? Two different stories. Seasonal is much more diverse than the full time. He noted that it is critical as a management team to look at those numbers. Linda asked about looking at management positions vs. non management positions. Warren said, yes, they can do that.

Nick noted that the first thing that catches his eye is the first chart – facilities index. We have been talking about the backlog of maintenance issues, but the chart shows that condition is better than the goal. Jason clarifies that the chart only covers major facilities, and doesn't include all the bridges, and trails. He noted that we've been working on this for several years, and as we grow scope, we expect it to get worse.

Kia noted that when the facilities index was developed a few years ago, it was on the leading edge of asset management. However, we have evolved over the last couple of years with renewed emphasis on asset management. We may phase this out, because it doesn't give a comprehensive picture. It covers relative maintenance and condition of assets together, but it is an inaccurate picture of the full system. This index helps us make good decisions about where the worst issues are, and where we need to focus our attention. But, it doesn't give the full story to the public. We need to show the community the overall deferred maintenance. We all have deferred maintenance, Kia noted, on our homes, even in the private sector. We need to show that backlog, and show the growth piece too. We often talk in large ballpark numbers, but we need to parcel that out and be more clear with the community.

Jennifer agreed that we need to synthesize. We can't combine every asset. We can say that 60 of our playgrounds need to be replaced. That is half of our playgrounds. That is a number that can be clearly communicated. It's small and specific. We need to think about a series of graphs.

Kathy asked about the last chart on grant and donation revenue as expenditures. Where is Parks Foundation role in that? Do we include that? Why set 10 percent.

Jason noted that the 10 percent is a goal from the 2020 vision. He confirmed that whatever the Foundation raises – when it comes over, it's included. Todd noted just to clarify, that money raised by friends groups is also included, but not funds from all the various partners because that is difficult to track. But, for example if Friends of Forest Park provides money to Parks, it is included.

Tony asked about access/equity as a goal. He noted that it would be worthwhile to see that tracked, especially as it relates to access to parks. Warren noted that this is an important point. Jennifer reported that for the first time with recreation services, we are asking customers using the community centers to report on race and ethnicity and various demographic data. She noted that this was rolled out in June, and we have 6000 responses from the pilot sites over the last year. Jennifer said this is one set of data, focus grouping, and we are working with PSU. They are helping us with strategic synthesis particularly focusing on the Latino community first. She noted that Parks needs may vary from community to community, and we don't want to assume for any particular group what their needs are. Warren noted that this is a critical need, and we hope to broaden the data we are capturing.

Mike Alexander noted that this data set is impressive, and it's a good starting point. He said though that before it is put in front of the public, we need to more accurately reflect the current needs. He noted deferred maintenance, and the need to see the cumulative impact and lifecycle management -- what was planned, but will not happen – and include an impact map. Where does that occur within the community? Where are the impacts of deferred maintenance? Improvements that have been pushed back. What are we missing, and what's at stake? We can build on this data by including the impacts of this deferred maintenance.

Linda asked if it would be possible to track movement between seasonal and permanent employees, with the idea that you are using seasonal employment as a recruitment tool. In other words, how many seasonal workers are moving into permanent positions? Warren said this was a good question, and asked Jason if this was something we could do. Jason noted that this would be an extensive research project because it would involve time series data. He noted that we could possibly do that over the last 3 years, but it would be something you would want to look at over an extensive period of time.

Meryl noted that she didn't see target tree canopy coverage and wondered if this was only tracking parks, or if it included street trees as well. Jason noted that it was more than Parks trees, and included the whole city. Meryl said if that is the case, Friends of Trees, how to capture if that contract is going away, hope that something replaces it. Jason noted that Friends of Trees and BES efforts are included in the trees planted minus trees removed.

Jim said that he agreed with Nick and Mike, and the Performance Measures tells too nice a story, especially in maintenance and capital improvement projects. He also noted that for the partnership measures on the last page, it would be good to have a performance measure that tracks community volunteer hours. Nick noted that volunteer hours are a donation. It is a

collective story -- 3 million dollars in funds donated in some way but 10 million dollars worth of hours given each year. Jason agreed, and noted that it is really hard to measure this in a way we can replicate year after year.

Andy said we will have more discussion on all Performance Measures, and that we will get it back on the agenda in October or November. He noted that it is important for them to be more aware of what is measured, and how it is measured, and to have more q/a later.

**Commissioner  
Fritz: Priorities,  
East Portland,  
Bond Measure,  
Q&A**

Commissioner Fritz thanked everyone for their service. She announced that tonight she will be going to talk with Central NE neighbors, and tomorrow she will be in East Portland. She is working with Parks committees to engage communities in deciding their priorities. They are currently looking at which parks have master plans, and will be ready to go with SDCs. She sees permits coming in from BDS, and development is booming. She noted that there is approximately \$8 million in unallocated SDCs. She is looking to folks in various districts to identify their priorities. Parks has done an amazing job of pulling statistics. She sees exciting opportunities. City Council has money available, and she wants to get folks involved in helping make decisions. She noted that she will bring in Parks Board to share what she has heard, and directions she is going.

On the bond measure update, Commissioner Fritz said that we still don't know. At this point, challenging task of not going for November bond measure. She noted that the performance report shows people are really happy with their parks. She said they are working to determine where the needs are.

Commissioner Fritz noted that equity is still a top priority for her, and she feels there are huge opportunities here. On disability, she would like us to become a model employer on people with disabilities. She has been reviewing transition work and the inventory on parks facilities. One report on transition included a toilet paper roll that was 2 or 3 inches too high, and she was pleased to see the inventory go into that detail. More play for more people is a priority and a real goal. We need to communicate why we are making changes on these smaller projects. They are not all bright, shiny projects, but they can be just as important. She noted that it doesn't have to be either/or.

Andy asked how the Parks Board can help. Commissioner Fritz said she can drop in on the meetings. She noted that there are almost always last minute things right before Council, but she noted that she reads the Parks Board minutes. She will ask for subcommittee work, to give her recommendation for things she has asked for input on. She will look to the equity subcommittee, as well as specific recommendations from community boards. This kind of feedback is helpful as a starting point.

Andy asked about the upcoming budget. This year, he noted, we've made it a 12 month process. As a Board, we are educating ourselves on priorities. He asked if it would make sense to get together with Commissioner Fritz to debrief, and head into the process inline.

Commissioner Fritz said that this sort of briefing makes more sense than trying to cover it in a packed agenda. She noted that she wants to involve more community members in the budgeting process, and will look to the Board as experts. It is important to make it a year round process, as a way to do budgeting and involve the community to really see what the needs are.

Shelli asked about the Commissioner's thoughts on the E205 initiative.

Commissioner Fritz said she is looking at E205, part 2. She wants to look at which projects can get done. She noted that she wants to continue focusing on East Portland. There are areas that don't have as many developed parks. She noted that Parks has given her a map, and she can see that there are some neighborhoods that don't have any at all. Additionally, she is looking at acquisition.

Shelli asked about the criteria that will be used for selecting parks for projects from the \$8 million in SDCs. She asked how the funds will be spread, especially noting equity and access.

Commissioner Fritz said she is keeping an open mind, trusting community members, and Parks Board to give good advice. She said that she will make final decisions of course. Each district has come up, and there is a city wide priority list.

Jim asked about a proposed initiative for moving the Water bureau/BES out of city control. Commissioner Fritz abstained from answering because she noted that she is not allowed to discuss this topic while city staff is here.

Commissioner Fritz noted on an unrelated topic, that she has had preliminary conversations with Commissioner Fish on appropriate rates for the watershed, and Parks budget for the reservoirs. She said they will work together moving forward, but decisions will not be made until it is clear that they will remain a city asset.

Mike Alexander asked the Commissioner about what has surprised and concerned her the most with Parks.

Commissioner Fritz said she was most surprised by the dollars -- how much and yet how little there is to do everything we need. She noted that it is both an opportunity and a challenge. She sees an opportunity to engage more community members. After having been a park volunteer for years, she noted that we need to have community partners, as well as community push back. This is a special relationship that we can nurture and encourage. We can include all sides to grasp both challenges and opportunities and be a part of finding solutions. She will look to neighborhood associations, and also other organizations. She noted that the East Portland action plan is great example because it engages every section of the community.

Kathy asked about the Commissioner's thoughts on Parke Diem.

Commissioner Fritz said that it is hard for her to decide which project to do –

one 3 hour project, or a variety of 10 minute projects. She noted that she greatly appreciates the effort, and is looking forward to it. She also noted that she has been at more than 2 dozen events this summer, and the Parks Foundation was at every one of them. She said the staff and volunteers are absolutely amazing.

Andy thanked the Commissioner for coming.

**Director's report  
and  
Capital  
Improvement  
Program**

Warren noted that PP&R is working on bringing the diversity subcommittee together with a goal of coming back to the Parks Board in October.

Warren reported that there will be a wave of recruitments in October – with people transitioning, and restructuring. He noted that Parks Board may receive phone calls to participate in interview/hiring panels. He said current recruitments include a horticulturist, facility maintenance supervisor position, and that 4 – 5 positions will be open within next 60 days, including a partnership coordinator position with Jennifer's team.

Sarah Huggins returned with an update on the Capital Improvement Program draft criteria. She thanked the Board for their feedback, and noted that she made modifications, essentially adding two new criteria to the new draft. Equity – 20 points (most), as well as maintenance financing.

Sarah noted that the City has hired equity consultants, and has agreed to have those consultants work with Parks and Transportation. Parks requested they look at projects on the list, and the demographics of those service areas. We met with Planning, and Transportation for an initial brainstorming session. We asked them to look at income, age, ethnicity, density, health indicators. By mid-September they will come back with specific list for the lens of equity criteria. Sarah noted that she will be happy to follow up with Parks Board.

Jim noted that equity having 20 points may be too high, relative to 2020, and safety. He also noted that environment seems low at 10 points, and would like to see that go up.

Nick asked about the maximum points for set of subcriteria under public support, which had a max 10 points. In many cases, he noted, if it weren't a cap of 20 you could hit 30. He said it seemed like 2 different thresholds.

Sarah noted that it is not subcriteria, but rather levels within criteria, so it is either/or. You can't get points for both.

Andy asked about next steps. After the equity subcommittee meets, we can get more comprehensive feedback for you. Then, after we get recommendations from (Sarah) consultants, we can get it back on the agenda.

Kia noted that it will need to get back in October because our rating committee will meet soon after. Andy agreed that it would be put on the October agenda.

Meryl noted that one thing she heard from Commissioner Fritz was that Disability is a priority – she asked if this is included under equity. Sarah said that ADA is included under legal compliance.

**Announcements**

Nick noted Parke Diem.

Sue announced that on Sept. 15 Sunday, from 2 to 5 at Berkeley Park there will be a memorial event for Alex Rovello.

Sue also noted that every environmental group has come out against that BES/Water initiative, and asked if the Parks Board should come out with a position on it. Warren said that they should talk to the City Attorney on how best to have those conversations.

Linda announced that tomorrow they will launch Gateway Green, and they will try to raise \$100,000. She noted that Kaiser Permanente has promised a \$10,000 grant, which is a good start. She noted that the early donations are important, and she asked everyone to help spread the word.

**Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 a.m.