



**PORTLAND PARKS BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
October 1, 2014
8:00 – 9:30 a.m.
Lovejoy Room, City Hall**

Board members present: Tonya Booker, Judy BlueHorse Skelton, Kathy Fong Stephens, Patricia Frobles, Nick Hardigg, Dion Jordan, Tony Magliano, Jim Owens, Meryl Redisch, Linda Robinson, Gladys Ruiz, Christa Thoeresz, Sue Van Brocklin, Mauricio Villarreal

Board members absent: Mike Alexander, Kendall Clawson, Andy Nelson, Julie Vigeland

PP&R Staff present: Mike Abbaté, Eileen Argentina, Margaret Evans, Art Hendricks, Warren Jimenez, Deborah Lev, Todd Lofgren, Victor Sanders, Kia Selley, Jennifer Yocom

Call to order Kathy called the meeting to order at 8:00 am, and Parks Board members introduced themselves. Guests included Ryan Kinsella from the City Budget Office, Casey Parks of the Oregonian, Heather McCarey from the Washington Park Transportation Management Association, Tim Crail and Patti Howard from Commissioner Fritz's office, and Tom Carter and Jerry Moore from the Portland Water Bureau.

Kathy noted that the agenda was changed last Friday, 9/26/14. The Equity Subcommittee, looking at Parks Project Proposal Process, met on Thursday and decided they were not ready for a recommendation. Instead, they will give a short update.

Park of the Month Kathy noted that Kendall Clawson is absent, so she will not be reporting on Forest Park. She said that Meryl Redisch is here to report on Wallace park. Meryl noted that she went to Wallace Park on Sunday evening at 6pm, walking in from the 25th and Raleigh entrance. She noted that there were people at the dog park, and in the playground. In the amphitheater, she saw 400 - 500 people, perhaps more, waiting for the swifts performance. She noted that the park seemed to be heavily used. There were a lot of families, kids especially, down at the soccer fields. She noted a diverse range of users, young and old, enjoying the park both passively and actively.

Kathy noted that a couple of months ago, the Board talked about using the Park of the Month, not just to encourage all Board members to visit a particular park, but also having someone specifically go, talk to the people, and report back. She asked if there are any volunteers for October's Park of the Month (Sacajawea Park). Mike Abbaté noted that Sacajawea is a new park in the NE Cully neighborhood. PP&R recently opened a dog park, with the help of the Portland Trailblazers. Linda Robinson volunteered.

Approval of the minutes Christa Thoeresz moved to pass the minutes from the August meeting, Patricia Frobles seconded the motion, and the Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes.

Park Foundation Update Nick Hardigg noted that the Foundation is looking forward to the second annual Parke Diem. This two day event is one of the strategic priorities of the foundation, and they are interested in having Parks Board members participate. He noted that he sent out a message to Board members inviting them to be involved. Parke Diem is set for October 10th and 11th. He noted that the Foundation is thrilled with the effort of PP&R, and that 73 projects have been approved for volunteering. The work precedes the Foundation's effort for the bond measure, which he noted they hope will pass in November. Kathy recommended that Board members look online, and volunteer for a project.

Chair updates Kathy noted that she met with Commissioner Fritz early last week, and set up a regular time to meet, every other month. As we check in and look at upcoming meetings, she said that she would like to bring a board member with her each time, sometimes two. She noted that Tim Crail and Patti Howard will be in those meetings. She will let the Board know when the next one will be.

Committee Updates Kathy reported that Andy Nelson is not here to give an update for the Nominating Committee, but that he has been talking to potential ex-officio members. She noted that they will not be nominating until spring 2015.

Jim Owens reported that the System Development Charges (SDC) Committee did meet last week, but that he wasn't able to attend, and he has not yet been briefed. He noted that every two years, the SDC program is reviewed and updated. A variety of issues have been brought before that group by staff to assess how funds are computed. The committee looks at the calculations used to apply to development to generate SDCs. He noted that he doesn't know if they are going to get into questions of distribution.

Jim Owens reported that the Comprehensive Plan subcommittee will meet next week, and is looking at an update of the City's Comprehensive Plan. They have already been briefed by staff as to how the updated plan responds to previous comments.

Equity Subcommittee update on Parks Proposal Process Kathy Fong Stephens noted that at Commissioner Fritz's request the Equity Subcommittee has been involved in reviewing the Park Proposal Process. The Parks Proposal Process has not been funded during the last couple of years because of budget deficits. They are starting it up again, and the Commissioner would like a recommendation from the Parks Board on how to make the process more equitable. Kathy noted that the first meeting of that committee was in late August, but only a few people could come. They met again last week, with Julie Vigeland chairing. Kathy noted that she checked in with them after their meeting, and they were not ready to make a recommendation to commissioner. Since Julie is absent, Kathy noted that Dion Jordan will give an update on how the committee sees things going forward.

Dion Jordan reported that the Committee spent some time looking at and understanding the difference between the Parks Proposal Projects (PPP) and Capital Improvement Projects (CIP). The CIPs are larger scale projects, while the PPPs come from the community, and are typically smaller scale – adding a bench, or a trail, or dog park, etc. Dion noted that the committee looked at where the PPPs

are being generated, and how do we allow some of those communities to go through that process, while other communities may not even know the process is available to them. One of the things, he noted, was talking about equity and not equality. Not you have a dog park, so we get a dog park. That may be equal but not equity. He said the committee focused on using equity as a filter.

Judy BlueHorse Skelton added that it was a really informative meeting. They looked at the difference between the CIP and PPP, and how PP&R has built an equity lens into the CIP process. The PPP is a little different. She noted that they got a chance to look at the list – the projects are much smaller in terms of dollar amount for the PPP. They talked about more outreach, more education, recognizing that the processes are not readily known. Not all communities are connected to the Internet. Language is sometimes a barrier. Judy noted that they are looking at how we can make the process more accessible to more people. Tony Magliano added that last week's meeting was about information gathering, and also considering what other organizations are doing.

Kathy asked the subcommittee if they discussed a timeline for their recommendation. Art Hendricks noted that the committee has scheduled a meeting next month. After giving the committee information about PPP and CIP, Art noted that he thinks they can make progress on recommendations to the board at the next meeting. He added that the first two meetings were really information gathering.

Meryl Redisch asked if there is a plan for a response to the Oregonian article. Mike Abbaté responded that staff will be talking to Commissioner Fritz's office and see what she would like to do.

Kathy noted, she wants to be clear, that the Board will not be coming forward with a recommendation at this time.

Jim Owens expressed concern over the press portraying this issue as a haves vs. have nots. Mike Abbaté noted that the Parks Proposal Process was created in response to PP&R getting requests from all over the City all the time. The process was established as a framework for evaluating those requests, and a way to respond to communities when they come and say my neighborhood needs this or that. To Jim's point, he noted, it's not something we just get from certain neighborhoods. Kathy asked what kind of projects typically are proposed. Mike responded that they tend to be small. Projects on the CIP list are over \$10k. The PPP tend to be smaller.

Linda Robinson asked if the process is available to anyone, and if there has been any analysis on where they are coming from and where they aren't.

Art noted that they provided a list to the committee, which identifies where proposals have come from. The Committee has also looked at where we are making improvements across the entire system, outside the PPP.

Linda noted that there are some in east Portland, who are not even aware of the process.

Mike Abbaté noted that the Parks Proposal Process was a way of responding to requests that come in, as opposed to going out and asking people – hey what do you want? He noted that they need to consider the impacts of raising expectations and not being able to deliver. He said that is something the committee will need to talk about. Make the process open, but also transparent to everyone, and within a realistic framework.

Kathy thanked everyone for their work.

Washington Park Parking

Mike Abbaté noted that Todd Lofgren and Victor Sanders will give an update on Washington Park parking, and that Heather McCarey, Executive Director of the Washington Park Transportation Management Association (TMA), is here as well. Mike noted that Pay to Park at Washington Park has been active since early January 2014, and we wanted to give the Board an update on how it has gone in the first summer—challenges, as well as plans moving forward.

Todd Lofgren noted that in December 2012 City Council passed an ordinance, authorizing paid parking up at Washington Park. For almost a decade, he noted, we had a voluntary pay to park. Since January of this year, the Pay to Park system has been in place. One of the key drivers leading to success has been our partnership with the Washington Park TMA. The WPTMA is a new nonprofit that gives monthly feedback, and includes representatives from a number of key stakeholder groups, including at large members appointed by the Commissioner, representatives from the Sylvan Highlands Neighborhood Association, and Arlington Heights Neighborhood Association, the World Forestry center, friends of Hoyt Arboretum, the Children’s Museum. Heather McCarey is the Executive Director, and Victor Sanders (Parking Program Specialist) is the PP&R staff member leading the effort. Todd noted that Victor will walk us through what we’ve done this past calendar year.

Victor noted that he has Parking been with Parks for about a year, and it has been a joy to work with Parks. He has really appreciated the work group, and he noted that if implementing a parking plan was easy, we’d be doing something wrong.

Victor noted that work has included implementing a management program, increasing transportation maintenance and repair, increasing ranger presence, and developing and improving parking policies. A main focus has been learning, listening and engaging our stakeholders, and recognizing that what works for some areas, and some people, may not work for everyone. The WPTMA has implemented customer service staff and travel Portland volunteers at new kiosks in the Rose Garden, and near the Max station. We have that expertise in the park. They have also implemented a free park-wide shuttle – so visitors can take Max, or take the shuttle to any of the venues. Victor noted that they have seen a 50% increase in ridership over the previous years, and the shuttle has been so busy they had to add an additional line to the route. They have been gathering baseline data using surveys. Additionally, they have focused on transportation maintenance, including parking taken over from the Zoo, and have already improved roadway paving, and pothole fillings. He noted that some maintenance includes difficult projects, but there have been some easy projects that we could get done right away.

Victor noted that they have increased park ranger presence. The Pay to Park system pays for 3 full-time rangers, plus seasonals, as well as traffic management. He noted that traffic can back into Hwy 26 on busy days, and traffic management was previously done by Metro. They have focused on how to make things more safe, and come up with solutions for traffic problems. Rangers have been responsible for nearly 70 camp abatements. They have been working to get people out of camps and into transitional or permanent housing. When we first started working, he noted, we found out about “party hill” now it’s just a hill. Victor noted that car prowls continue to be a problem and we’re working with partners to combat these.

Victor stated that they are also working with stakeholders on implementing a pay by phone program where customers can purchase parking via cell phone. He noted that he is happy to report that we’ll be signing a contract within the next few weeks to pay by phone. Mike Abbaté added that with this pay by phone system, visitors can also extend their parking if they are in the park, but originally paid by kiosk.

Victor noted that they continue to work on cueing issues, to alert visitors to where traffic is heaviest, and streamlining the instructions and processing at meters. Making the system easy to use is a top priority.

Victor reported that the year to date revenue is \$1,745,000, and they project revenue will be at \$2 million by one year. He noted that we are dropping off a bit now that school is back in session, but we should still meet that \$2 million projection. Todd Lofgren added that all revenue is reinvested in infrastructure, or parking improvements at Washington Park.

What’s next? Victor noted that they will continue to monitor issues, and invest in technology to streamline processes. They are working on simplifying the process for getting permits for volunteers, and staff. They will continue to engage stakeholders. They are working on finding ways to communicate where parking is available to reduce circling, particularly at the South part of the park at the Zoo and Museum area. They hope to implement Pre-trip information so that people can decide beforehand whether to use Max, bus, or drive.

Meryl Redisch asked if the Zoo has seen any difference in attendance. She also noted that she recently visited Pittock Mansion, which was overflowing, and asked if there were any plans to put parking meters there. Victor noted that it is too soon to tell if the pay to park system has affected attendance, but we will check in January with our partners. Todd noted that they do not have plans to expand pay to park, but recognize that Pittock Mansion is a challenge. Meryl commented that she wondered if people are going there (to Pittock) so they don’t have to pay at Washington park. Todd responded that he hasn’t gotten that feedback.

Jim Owens noted that PBOT is working on a citywide transportation policy, and wondered if the Pay to Park model at Washington Park might inform that. Todd responded that PBOT is a partner using the same pay stations, for over 1000 pay stations throughout the city, and they have the opportunity to learn what we are learning. Jim noted that there have been increased parking problems in neighborhoods, and suggested using this model to address some of those issues.

Nick Hardigg noted that he would like to see the data on whether attendance has been affected once it's available. He noted that he is always interested in taxes or fees that affects behavior, particularly if it is costing people enough to change their behavior, and we are losing visitors to the park.

Mike noted that attendance at the Zoo can also be greatly affected by the weather, so they would want to draw out the overlapping effects of parking and weather.

Gladys Ruiz asked about language and signage on the pay to park kiosks. Victor noted that there is a Spanish button, and they use pictograms as much as possible. Additionally, there is a customer service phone number at the kiosk for additional languages. He noted that it has been helpful to have customer service staff on the ground. They are working aggressively to make sure that it is as easy as possible for users.

Linda Robinson asked if the kiosks take cash, and Todd responded that they accept coin, and credit cards. Linda commented that she used it once and found it very difficult. She added that not everyone has credit cards.

Mike Abbaté asked Victor to talk a little bit about what the initial concerns were, as well as what they were hearing at the end of summer. Victor said that they initially concerned citizens thought the pay to park system would keep people from visiting the park. These concerns lessened, he noted, when they heard that all funds would be used in the park, knowing that fees will actually be used to make the park more accessible. At the end of the summer, he said, there were fewer concerns, and less confusion. He noted that they are currently seeing 95 to 98 percent compliance, which is excellent for a parking system. Kathy asked about the cost of citations, and Victor noted that they are \$39.

Washington Park Reservoirs

Tom Carter, Senior City Planner, and Jerry Moore, project manager and engineer, from the Portland Water Bureau updated the Board on the Washington Park Reservoirs.

Tom reported that they started the project in June of 2013. This is a very large project – replacing open reservoirs with covered storage. He noted that it is also a complicated project because of the reservoirs designation in a Historic district, so they have had zoning, code, and other things to address. Tom noted that they used a community sounding board, rather than full advisory committee. PP&R was represented on that sounding board. The sounding board worked through various options. Tom said that we no longer need reservoir 4, and it has been out of use. It will be used for stormwater and to catch overflow. The process has included demolition overview, historic review, as well as interacting with the public a lot.

Jerry noted that the upper reservoir is the active site, clean water will come in, and the upper pool will cascade to a lower pool. The dam will remain in place. There will be some work to buttress against the slide coming from rose garden. Tom noted that this landslide started 100 years ago. The lower reservoir will be reclaimed by nature, and the upper will be open, and ADA accessible, although there will be one steep spot. People will be able to get a lot closer.

Jerry noted that they went through a public process with the sounding board, and reviewed several options. He showed the Board a large graphic of the future site, and noted that what you see before you is the final decision for what will sit on top of all our piping and our buried reservoirs. This is challenging from the point of view that we have an ancient landslide, goes all the way up and includes Japanese garden. When they excavated the reservoirs 100 years ago, they got a rude awakening when it moved 19 inches. They have done a lot of work to stabilize, but it still moves 1/8 to 1/4 inch a year. To counteract the landslide, you need to get water off the slope, and the second thing you do is put weight at the bottom. Jerry noted that we have a series of tunnels designed to remove the water, as well as buttressing at the bottom. It is an interesting site, though restrictive. The upper reflective pool will be on top of a concrete structure underneath.

Jerry discussed some of the impacts during construction, including traffic impacts. They will be putting in a pile wall, to give them a platform to work on the reservoir. It will be a vertical wall, 50 feet high. They need to build this large structure to get in and build the reservoir. This initial work will take 6 to 9 months to complete, and will impact traffic coming on Sherwood Blvd. from the rose garden, which continues down to soccer field. This road will be completely destroyed during that work, with no access through there until they build a bypass. Jerry noted that they are currently doing traffic control, and will have to remove 1/2 parking to allow two way traffic. They will need to reroute traffic, to bring folks in and out of park. Planning for this has been part of the 15 month public process. Construction is slated to begin July 1st, 2016. Jerry said that they anticipate looking at sequential removal of one reservoir, do all work in one location, and then all work in the other. They estimate 5 years for construction, but Jerry noted that if they can take everything off line at once they can cut that timeline down to 3 years. The initial construction of the wall will be 6 to 9 months for the road closure, and then they will reestablish road on the other side of the piles. He noted that they believe they will have to also divert pedestrian traffic.

Jim Owens asked about earthquake preparedness. Jerry answered that they have done seismic studies, and the structure is being built to withstand all different types of earthquakes. There will be a mechanically stabilized wall, which ties everything back, and can take and reduce the strain that would be put on the reservoirs.

Meryl Redisch asked if there will be a separate bike path along with the pedestrian path to get down to city center. Jerry responded that they will have to look at that. They haven't addressed it yet. He noted that they may have to create a stairwell of some sort to get to a pedestrian or bike route.

Kathy asked if there are individuals on the board, who are closely following the project and would like to participate in the sounding board, is there a potential for joining? Tom noted that the sounding board is already in place, and their last meeting will be end of month. He noted that they have been together for the past 15 months. The Water Bureau will continue to work with them, but only for occasional meetings. Tom said that Parks Board members who are interested in joining can contact him (Tom Carter, Tom.Carter@portlandoregon.gov)

Mike Abbaté noted that the sounding board came together to look at options for what to do with the reservoir, now it will be about how it will impact the park.

Kathy Fong Stephens asked about the implications for this project and the reservoirs at Mt. Tabor. Tom responded that if you look at their system, Mt. Tabor, Powell Butte, and Washington park – the Washington Park reservoir project doesn't really tie to Tabor or Powell Butte. He noted that this is west side storage, and doesn't impact the east side. Mike Abbaté encouraged Tom to stay for the next agenda item to discuss Mt. Tabor, Beech and Gateway Parks.

**Mt. Tabor
Reservoir update**

Mike Abbaté noted that as Tom mentioned, the reservoir at Mt. Tabor, as functioning water storage, is going away. Once Powell Butte and Kelly Butte underground storage comes online, the water at Mt. Tabor will no longer be needed. Mike noted that Commissioner Fritz and Commissioner Fish have been in conversations with the community. The assets will likely not be handed over to PP&R. The Water Bureau would retain ownership. Mike noted that it's really about aesthetics, and how they fit in the park. He noted that the Commissioners will continue to have conversations about the future of the reservoirs. Options include keeping them filled with water, even though they wouldn't be connected to the water supply. This option would perhaps be the easiest.

Tom Carter added that there is a land use application for work at Mt. Tabor, which can be found online. He noted that they are going to disconnect, but they can still drain to sewer, clean them out. He said that the actual changes in the park are rather minor. He noted that there is a rendering on their website. They will be digging things up, and putting them back.

Kathy Fong Stephens added that when she met with Commissioner Fritz, the Commissioner said that she would like the Board to weigh in on the process for the Mt. Tabor reservoirs. There will be a Public Involvement meeting in November, and they will be laying out options, and costs.

**Beech & Gateway
Parks update**

Kia Selley told the Board that work is well under way for the development of both Beech Park and Gateway Park & Plaza. For both projects, the next step is to go to Council to request an alternative bidding process. The alternative process would involve changes to the contractor form of bidding, and bringing in a construction manager in to the design team, which would allow us to do more quickly. Kia noted that the Commissioner will also unveil a Community Benefits Plan – modeled after a Community Benefits Agreement. Kia noted that the Commissioner wants the community to benefit from the economic boost of these parks. They will be providing funds for each minority and women owned business, as well as training to increase the pipeline for women and minorities in the trades. Kia noted that she would be happy to walk through the full plan with individuals.

Kia noted that we will visit Council on the 15th or 22nd of this month (October). We expect to engage the community this winter, and there will be Project Advisory Committees for both projects. Kia noted that this is already underway for Gateway, and Beech is one step behind. Mike Abbaté asked for volunteers. Linda Robinson volunteered to participate in the Project Advisory Committee for Gateway. Meryl Redisch suggested that the invitation to participate in the advisory committees be

extended to Urban Forestry Commission.

Kia noted that Gateway is 3.2 acre site, part of a larger parcel. 4.2 acre development parcel. She noted that PP&R owns with PDC, and they have been working closely. They want to catalyze a block of development, and have an east side version of Pioneer Courthouse Square. She noted that this park will be different from what we've seen in east Portland so far. It will have the ability to be programmed. They have selected a design team, and will be asking Council this month for the alternative bidding process. Again bringing in a contractor earlier in the process, to develop the park more quickly.

Kia noted that they expect completion for both projects by spring 2017, and they will provide regular updates. She added that Board members are always welcome to call her, or George Lozovoy, project manager for Gateway, or Britta Herwig, project manager for Beech.

Mike noted that we would love to have someone for the Beech Advisory Committee, and Meryl volunteered. Meryl asked if PP&R expects Council to approve the alternative bidding process, and Kia responded that she does, but we always appreciate people coming in to express support.

Mike Abbaté noted that we have learned that park projects are complicated. There are people who believe they can build parks projects but don't have experience with all the various elements—the fountains, and paving, etc. Through past projects, we've learned that we do better to bring a contractor in during the design phase. Kia has worked with procurement to explain that we need sophisticated contractors who can build parks. Mike noted that the alternative process is also the only way we can assure that they comply with the Community Benefits Plan. Additionally, as we move through the design process, we can begin construction in phases, for example moving dirt around next summer. This allows us more flexibility to deliver better projects, in a shorter amount of time.

Judy BlueHorse Skelton commented that this really addresses equity issues, and noted that it is really great.

Director update Mike Abbaté noted that Commissioner Fritz suffered a tragic loss last week, but she is back at work, and at Council this morning. Mike noted that he doesn't have a budget calendar to share at this time, since he has not been able to go it with the Commissioner. He said that they will be scheduling a Budget 101, which will likely be the week of Nov. 10. The first general BAC meeting will likely be the week of November 19th, but we will work with the Commissioner's office to finalize dates. The budget 101 may be of interest primarily to new members, but Mike noted that he would encourage everyone to attend if you want a refresher.

Mike noted that last year the BAC supported converting some seasonal rangers to permanent positions. This request was not funded in our budget this year. We still have the same number, with the exception of hiring new rangers for Washington Park. This may be something the BAC will want to discuss again this year. Linda Robinson said that she thought some positions were converted to permanent, and Mike confirmed that we were able to convert 20 recreation staff to permanent.

Mike noted that contract negotiations are continuing for the Ranger program.

Jim Owens commented that at the last meeting, he suggested looking at the budget programmatically. He said that part of that will be finding an appropriate balance with seasonals and permanent positions. We will want to do some research on what other jurisdictions are doing, and there will be labor issues as well. This is a big programmatic question, and Jim noted that he doubts we'll get through in one budget cycle, but it will be good to start working through.

Meryl Redisch asked about the design and community benefits for Beech and Gateway Parks, and about what happens to the funds allocated for a given project if you are able to get the park done at a lower cost. Mike noted that for both of those parks (Beech and Gateway), looking at the cost estimates for the projects, unfortunately, we are not going to have that problem. He noted that bids are high now because everyone's busy. Theoretically, Mike noted if it's general fund dollars, we can reallocate. If it's SDC, it goes back to SDCs, which must go to building new things.

Announcements Kathy Fong Stephens encouraged all Board members to be at the Nov. 5th meeting. We'll hear bond results and next steps, as well as an update from the smoke free policy committee.

Judy BlueHorse Skelton invited everyone to the Oct. 25th Westmoreland reopening from 11:00 am – 4:00 pm. She thanked to Public Involvement Manager Elizabeth Kennedy-Wong for her work, and noted that they have been meeting with the Native Advisory Committee and U.S. fish and wildlife have been coming. She noted that the Confederated Tribes of Siletz, Warm Springs, and Grand Ronde will all be there. There will be games. The nature play area is spectacular. Salmon parade, revitalization of metro salmon. For folks who don't know, she added, it is the only unimpeded salmon run. The Oct. 25th event is a really exciting celebration of that, and is a recognition of parks as this and more.

Mike asked Megan to send out an invitation to the Board on the Westmoreland Grand Reopening event.

Meeting adjourned Kathy adjourned the meeting at 9:30.