



**PORTLAND PARKS BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
November 5, 2014
8:00 – 9:30 a.m.
Lovejoy Room, City Hall**

Board members present: Mike Alexander, Tonya Booker, Judy BlueHorse Skelton, Kendall Clawson, Kathy Fong Stephens, Patricia Frobos, Nick Hardigg, Dion Jordan, Tony Magliano, Andy Nelson, Jim Owens, Meryl Redisch, Linda Robinson, Gladys Ruiz, Christa Thoeresz, Sue Van Brocklin, Julie Vigeland

Board members absent: Tony Magliano, Mauricio Villarreal

PP&R Staff present: Eileen Argentina, Margaret Evans, Art Hendricks, Warren Jimenez, Todd Lofgren, Kia Selley, Jeff Shaffer, Jennifer Yocom

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

Park of the Month Kendall Clawson noted that she spent a couple of hours at Forest Park, and talked to a number of visitors. She said that Forest Park is the shining star of the system, and she didn't hear a lot of negative. Feedback included comments about Forest Park being the greatest place ever. In the City, yet easy to escape even for 10 minutes. People commented on how family friendly the park is, with proximity to other things you can do with kids such as the Zoo, and Rose Garden. People expressed appreciation for the connections. She said that one bicyclist talked about how limited other places are around bikes, and that he appreciated the trails that allowed bikes. One dog owner noted that it is really nice to take her dogs into the park, and said it would be even better if there was a special meadow, not with chain link fence, but a meadow where dogs could run and gallop, and parents could socialize. Kendall noted in talking to various people, she found she had a lot in common with them. Kathy Fong Stephens noted that there is a meadow in Forest Park, and for a long time she thought it was a dog park, but it is not.

Linda Robinson reported on Sacajawea Park. She said that it is a cute park, but noted that the only people using it were the people in the dog park. She noted that there was a picnic table, as well as a soft path around the outside of the fenced dog park. The park is on 75th at the end of two dead end streets, so you have to enter from NE Prescott St. It is right next to a school. The path is well worn. Linda noted that she talked to dog owners. She said that some walk, and others drive, especially those looking for a fenced area. Linda asked if a playground structure was planned. Warren Jimenez answered that recent improvements included only a dog park and path, though there is a long term vision there. He added that PP&R owns additional property right behind, just north of the Park.

Kathy noted that Westmoreland Park will be the park of the month for November. Warren noted that a big event was held recently to celebrate the grand reopening of Westmoreland Park, and in particular the return of the salmon. He said that for

those who couldn't attend, he heard many great things. It was a really important community event and opportunity to celebrate improvements, and the natural play area, as well as all the environmental improvements, and return of the salmon. It is really a neat, special place. Encourage you all to check it out. Gladys will visit and report.

Approval of the minutes Julie Vigeland moved to pass the minutes from the October meeting, Nick Hardigg seconded the motion, and the Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes.

Park Foundation Update Nick Hardigg reported on the passage of the Parks Bond, noting that the huge margin of victory speaks so well to the great job that our system does. Voters have confidence that money spent on parks is spent well, and the remarkable number (73% approved) speaks to how engaged people were. Nick noted that he had direct work with every person here (at Parks Board meeting). With compressed time, Nick noted that there was a huge effort from PP&R staff, who put in a huge amount of work to get data together before the bond was referred. Nick said that our Commissioner was a huge force on this, noting that Commissioner Fritz was at so many summer concerts, and neighborhood meetings. She even asked us to drive her, so she could focus on the task at hand. Nick noted that our campaign manager, Amy Ruiz, did a fantastic job, and that many from Pioneer Courthouse Square stepped up for fundraising efforts.

Nick noted that the key message from the Foundation is that this is phase one. We must maintain our current park system. We don't want to downsize, we want every child, every family to have access to play. It is a basic human right to have that joy. Nick noted that the Foundation will not back down, and will continue to work with PP&R, and continue to work with those engaged. Charge for the future will be to continue fundraising. Nick noted that there is still much work to be done to give this great legacy to every citizen. He thanked everyone for coming out, and noted that it has been such a great experience, bringing the Board, Foundation and coalition together. It was a huge job for PP&R.

On Parke Diem, Nick reported that over 1300 people participated for 71 projects. Participation was almost the same as last year -- slightly smaller, equally successful, and messaging was strong. People are understanding the positive impact of 500,000 volunteer hours a year that are donated.

Chair updates Kathy Fong Stephens noted that she will be meeting with Commissioner Fritz on Monday, November 10th with Sue Van Brocklin. She told the Board that she and the Commissioner have set up a reoccurring meeting, every other month, and that she will ask different people to join her for those meetings.

Kathy noted that a year and a half ago, the Board started talking about public input. She noted that the Parks Board bylaws say we are a forum, but do not lay out how we take input from the public. We are not a voting, decision making Board, like the planning commission. Kathy noted that they put the process on hold a year ago, partly because we had a new Commissioner, and wanted to know her priorities. She went out to neighborhoods, her base, and expanded the BAC. Kathy noted that the subject came up again on how we will take public input. She said that the Commissioner has asked, when looking at a smoke free policy to look at how we

might take public input about that. Kathy added that the Commissioner has asked if we could co-sponsor a forum. Kathy noted that there has been reluctance on behalf of this board to get involved in that. There is the time commitment in addition to the monthly meetings, and the BAC schedule. Also, we are not sure if that is the role of this Board. Kathy said that she has worked with Sue Van Brocklin, Andy Nelson and the communications subcommittee. They have pulled together notes from past Board discussions on this subject. She noted that there is no time to discuss now, but that they will discuss and vote next week. She added that a change to public input process wouldn't require a bylaws or City Charter change. The process would be 10 minutes of public input taken at the beginning of each meeting – with a link on the website to sign up. If no speakers sign up, we would begin with the regular agenda items. Individuals addressing the Board would each have 2 minutes, and we would accept proposals for longer presentations. There would also be an option for e-mailing communication with the Parks Board.

**Committee
Updates**

Jim Owens noted that Board members should have received a memo from the Comprehensive Plan subcommittee. Last February, Jim said, the subcommittee developed a set of comments on the Bureau of Planning & Sustainability's (BPS) working draft. They submitted these comments to the Planning and Sustainability commission. PP&R and BPS staff met and worked out a response to their comments. The subcommittee met with staff, and staff walked the subcommittee through their responses to comments, and changes made to the new draft of the comprehensive plan. Jim noted that the subcommittee felt issues raised had been adequately responded to. He said that the memo includes two things – an acknowledgement on the work and extra effort on behalf of staff to respond to our comments, as well as an expression of support to BPS for the comprehensive plan.

Meryl Redisch thanked Jim and members of the subcommittee. She noted that she doesn't want to add more work, but attended the planning and sustainability meeting last night and was concerned about some comments that she hears. She said that Audubon, and a few others, noted a few things in the comprehensive plan that had been changed since the initial draft, particularly for natural areas. She noted that there were changes to the language that she thinks we will all be interested in. She noted that there was testimony on parks, and that she would like to see that testimony before we vote on this. Meryl said that she can get that, and see if there is anything relevant that the Board should be reviewing.

Judy Bluehorse Skelton added that she too was at the BPS testimony last night. She expressed concern regarding the language in the comprehensive plan on the industrial land use section. While parks is identifying prioritizing healthy communities with Westmoreland and the salmon celebration, she was surprised to see the language on this section turning back to the 1950s. She said that it is ironic that the 30 year plan is looking to do the same things that we will be asking communities to clean up later. Judy noted that she wanted to alert folks on the Board, and said that March 13th is the deadline for written comments. For Parks Board, we may have the opportunity to weigh in a little earlier.

Kathy Fong Stephens suggested that the subcommittee meet again, and that Meryl and Judy attend. Meryl, Judy, Kathy, and Jim agreed to pull a meeting together in the next couple of weeks.

**Equity
Subcommittee
update on Parks
Proposal Process**

Julie Vigeland gave an update for the Equity Subcommittee, noting that a draft recommendation had been e-mailed out to the Board and printed copies have been made available. The subcommittee includes Judy Bluehorse Skelton, Dion Jordan, Tony Magliano, Tonya Booker, Linda Robinson, Julie Vigeland, Nafisa Fai (recommended by Tricia when she was unable to continue on the committee). The subcommittee has been working with PP&R staff, Art Hendricks and Maija Spencer. Julie thanked everyone, and noted that what started seemingly as a straight forward, easy question from Commissioner Fritz has turned out to not be so simple. The Commissioner asked the subcommittee to look at the Parks Proposal Process, and whether affluent neighbors should be able to help raise funds for projects in their communities without widening the gap. Julie noted that they reviewed a few key things: they talked about how the process works now. She said they wanted to know the number of projects elevated to be considered, and the number of projects actually funded. They considered whether this is the place to start a different equity process. Julie noted that the committee has been incredible. She said that conversations have gotten deeper and deeper, perhaps making a decision regarding a recommendation more difficult. Julie referred the Board to the last page, and read a paragraph reflection from their last meeting.

“It is also worth noting that in our pursuit to offer recommendations for the PPP, we came to the realization that possibly the best starting point to improve this process is to have a more robust push in creating accessibility on the ground level for communities of color. We agreed if we don’t solve the issues of having these communities feel invited, empowered, and knowledgeable concerning the opportunities of the PPP, then the equity issues will always remain within the process.”

Julie said that this reflection is relevant to looking at where we go from here, noting that we may have to start from a different place in pursuit of a recommendation. She noted that possibly the best starting point is to push ground level for communities of color. They want to try to build up in a different way, and as a result, came up with 8 recommendations:

1. Differentiation between the Capital Improvement Pan (CIP) process and the PPP.
2. Clarification as to how proposals are placed on the CIP.
3. Determination of dollar amount limit for a project. Recommended amount is \$10,000. If over that amount the project moves onto the CIP list.
4. Applying an equity lens across all funding decision processes and applying this lens to the park proposal review process. As part of this process ensuring the diversification of PP&R staff in the review for each proposal.
5. Focused outreach to communities that may not know about PPP or how to utilize it
6. Information and application provided in languages other than English
7. Printed materials provided in community centers and parks for those who do not have internet access
8. Application of equity criteria similar to the CIP in the PPP review process.

Julie noted that it was important to the committee that an equity lens be applied across all decisions, including diversification of staff on the panel or group that

reviews the PPP. She noted there should be focused outreach to communities that may not know how to utilize the process. Julie added that this outreach will have to balance what Mike made clear in the last meeting. We are not wanting to be overwhelmed with applications that can't be handled. However, we want to make it equal across board, so that everyone knows there is this opportunity. She added that the process should not just be on the web, but in community centers, so that it is accessible to everyone. She also noted that the process should be available in languages other than English. The bottom line, she noted, is that we are seeing a difference between the CIP and PPP. She added that what we don't want is for the PPP to be such a difficult process, that those who want to apply, will have too many hoops, and projects will never get done.

Linda Robinson asked for clarification on how things get on the CIP list. She asked if there is a way to bring a project to someone's attention. Warren said that we can come back and talk about the CIP process, and Kathy added that we only have a few more minute for discussion, and it doesn't seem like we are ready to vote.

Jim Owens asked if the committee looked at a total amount to be dedicated to PPP. Julie noted that it has been approximately 100k. Art said that there are completed projects, as well as some that have been approved. Some, like a skate park, would be quite a bit of investment. Jim said that he wants to make sure it's not a negative effect on the CIP projects. He noted that there are over 900 projects on the CIP, and there is a process to review and rank CIP projects. He added that if you haven't looked at the criteria for CIP, it screens for equity. Jim noted that he wants to be sure we are not taking significant money away from CIP.

Andy Nelson asked about the initial question that got us to the place of studying the process. The issue of Grant Park dog off leash area, and the question – can a neighborhood fundraise for something specific for their own park. Does that leave out neighborhoods that can't? Andy noted that he thinks of school funding, and when neighborhoods fundraise for their own school, a portion of that goes to the district. Julie noted that really was the question. Can one group, if they have the money, spend the money. We backed into that. One thing, she added, is that dog parks and skate parks are outside that process. Perhaps the best solution would be if there is a pot of money that would be equally distributed relative to dog parks and skate parks.

Kathy added that the Grant Park neighbors are still waiting for an answer from Commissioner Fritz. She had many concerns. First thought, if you can pay for it, and the Parks Proposal Process has been resurrected, then should the project be allowed to move forward? Then there is the equity issue. There is an impact on CIP, but also she was concerned about inequities, and staff time. If you bring out the process, but without staff time to dedicate to the projects, it creates pressure on the system and a demand that can't be fulfilled. Julie noted that Mike Abbaté had said that at the last meeting, and talked about the balance of getting the word out, but not being able to address all the requests.

Kathy said that she and Sue Van Brocklin will talk to staff a bit more, and talk to Commissioner Fritz on Monday. She added that she knows the Commissioner is feeling pressure to get back to that community.

Nick Hardigg noted that on the other end of spectrum are park proposal enhancement projects. Think about whether process facilitates or hinders. He said that we wouldn't want analysis to lead to paralysis. When a community really wants to do something, and it is relatively simple, like adding bushes, there should be a process to get permission without having to go through an extended process.

Warren noted that the PPP is one opportunity to collect ideas. We have zone managers, and Parks staff engaged with friends groups. There are other processes for taking feedback for improvements in our system. Linda added that Jeff Milkes comes out to their meetings, and we talk about signs and replacing bushes. She added that when you want really small changes, come to the monthly meetings. Kathy noted that the Foundation is also a player in park improvements.

Julie noted that they want input on the review process. One thing they discussed was identifying a source of funding, or if assistance was needed. They want to try to make the process accessible for neighborhoods that don't have the resources. What we don't want to do is add so much that it becomes onerous.

Kathy asked Board members to please get back to Julie with input.

Bond Warren gave an update on next steps for the bond. He noted that internally, we've been structured with dedicated staff toward different phases. Warren served as bond champion internally. Jennifer Yocom was project manager, and did most of heavy lifting. Post bond referral, we switched to an external campaign. We continued to gather facts and data, due diligence process through a committee internally formed. Warren noted that they are continuing that work, with project scoping and costing. Wrap up that work as next step, good timeline to implement bond. Warren noted that PP&R will be recruiting for a bond program manager, and it will be key to fill that role with the right expertise. He said that PP&R will share that recruitment, so that Board members can reach out to their networks. Warren noted that he envisions staffing up in other ways, to complete projects. One of the immediate steps will be to issue the bonds. We expect that to come to Council in late February, early March. We will state with first issuance, what projects we will complete. As it comes to Council, there will be another opportunity to weigh in on your support. By July, we will have cash in hand to move forward, and we will shift into high gear to staff up to deliver.

Kathy asked about a bond oversight committee, and Warren noted that this decision will be up to City Council, and will come with the bond issuance in February or March.

Jim Owens noted that the City has a skilled bond manager, and asked if PP&R needs its own. Warren answered that we've made the decision to have a bond program manager at Parks, though some work may be contracted out. He noted that we see a need to build in that internal oversight. Jennifer Yocom asked if Jim is referring to Jonas Biery, and noted that it is a different skillset. Jonas is the Debt Manager, and PP&R will be working with him.

Smokefree Parks Sue passed out the subcommittee's draft recommendation, and proposed that the Board vote in December. She said that she had great help from Cynthia Castro at PP&R and Eric at Multnomah County, noting that they did all of the research. Sue noted that questions arose regarding how to implement a smoke free policy at the golf courses and Portland International Raceway (PIR). She noted that visitors to these facilities spend longer amounts of time, sometimes all day, compared with parks where people may spend just a couple of hours. She noted that the Board will see research on these types of facilities in the packet of information distributed. She said that they looked at cities from Roseburg to Los Angeles to see how others have taken their golf courses and raceways smokefree. She noted that later ones have included e-cigarettes and marijuana in their smoking bans. She said that members of the subcommittee met with the managers of PP&R's PIR and golf courses to ask them if a smokefree policy would be a problem for them, being self-supporting. Sue said that they didn't envision it affecting their bottom line, and that she thought that was encouraging. She noted that the subcommittee's recommendation for Golf and PIR will be to allow those two to have designated smoking areas, which would be phased out in 3 years.

Sue noted that we we want to be supportive of PP&R's mission – Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland. She added that it seems like allowing smoking is contrary to that mission. Sue noted that there is mounting evidence that reducing exposure for residents, and especially young people, will help them not start the habit. Additionally, Sue said that the subcommittee is concerned about fire hazards, and the degradation of the environment, noting that cigarette butts are the most common form of litter. She said they also believe a smokefree policy will encourage those who are trying to quit, or have already quit. Sue noted that their recommendations include allowance for ceremonial use of tobacco, which was an idea that came from Judy Bluehorse Skelton. Sue said that they are recommending all properties be smoke free, with designated smoking areas for PIR and golf. Their recommendation includes prohibiting all forms of tobacco, as well as e-cigarettes and marijuana. She noted that they hope this will be referred to Council for approval in time for the world no tobacco day in May.

Sue added that when they started looking into a smokefree policy for Portland Parks, there were 57 cities and counties in Oregon with smokefree policies. That number is now up to 64. Sue noted that Metro parks are all smoke free, and the State of Oregon's parks are smoke free. Sue thanked the subcommittee members, Jim Owens, Christa Thoeresz, Julie Vigeland, and the spirits of Tricia Tillman and Mary Ann Cassin (who termed off the Board), as well as Cynthia Castro and Eric.

She noted that they did not address employee areas, or enforcement because they felt those decisions were better made by the Bureau.

Tonya Booker asked about designated smoking areas, noting that as part of Portland Community College's tobacco free policies, they found that people went to the neighborhoods to smoke. Sue said that she believes the state has addressed this, and that you can't smoke in a park, but you can smoke in a car in parking lots. She noted that this is something that the Parks Bureau and Commissioner can discussed.

Eileen Argentina noted that the Golf Advisory Committee has expressed a lot of interest in this process, and said that she hopes there will be time to discuss this with them.

Linda Robinson asked how the subcommittee decided on the timeline for phasing out designated smoking areas at PIR and golf courses. Sue noted that this decision was fairly arbitrary, and that Jim made the suggestion to pick a time to phase out. It could be 2, or it could be 4 years. She noted that there is a public education aspect in that you are advising users of golf and PIR that smoking areas are designated now, but will be phased out over time. Jim Owens noted that the majority of users at PIR are non-smokers already, and that of the many events held at PIR, racing events are minority events. He said there are more bike racing events than car racing, and we shouldn't think of it as a car raceway, it's much more.

Andy Nelson thanked Sue for her leadership and consistency on this. He noted that this issue and our public involvement issue are linked. He noted that we are recommending this as a group that represents the City, and asking City Council to go through their process. Andy noted that it is related to what Kathy talked about earlier. He asked if we have work to do on making sure we are representing the community. Sue noted that other groups—PSU, PCC, Tobacco Free Coalition, LGBT communities, Young Group Rebel (high school kids)—recommending to come to us. Sue noted that the subcommittee envisions that City Council will want to hear from those groups. She stated that there are lots of groups poised, and eager to talk.

Kathy Fong Stephens noted that the last time she talked to Commissioner Fritz, her timeline was to vote at City Council in mid-December, before break. She said that she is not sure if that is still the timeline, but will check with her.

Judy Bluehorse Skelton thanked the subcommittee and Sue, and noted that she did speak with the Bow and Arrow Club, who organize the Delta Park Pow Wow. She noted that this is a smoke free event, but it runs all weekend, so they do have a designated smoke area. She noted that for all weekend events like this, they were excited, but concerned for the veterans. Warren said that perhaps this could be addressed in the permitting process, noting that we allow alcohol via permitting process for certain events.

Linda Robinson noted that when Trimet issued a smoke free policy at bus stops, and max stops, it created problems for the bike path. Smokers were blocking the paths, which were outside the smoke free zones, but close enough to run back and get the train. Linda said that we need to look at impacts, and modify if needed. She noted that Trimet put up fences, which helped.

Jim Owens added that it we need to be clear that this is an expansion of existing policy, not a new policy.

Sue Van Brocklin added that the City of Seattle did not pass a smoke free policy for parks, and they are now struggling with marijuana use in their parks. She noted that police are having a hard time with it.

Budget update Warren Jimenez gave an update on the budget process, and distributed budget packets for the Board to review going into the budget advisory process. He noted that some information may be repeated when we go into the first BAC meeting. He noted that the packet includes a memo from Mayor Hales, strategic plan, and performance report. He said that we are finalizing the 2014 performance report, and will give that to folks at the first BAC meeting.

In essence, Warren said, the budget process will look similar to last year. Mayor Hales has said this will be another budget stabilization year. Again, similar to last year, they will be looking for budget submittals to stay within existing resources, with a few exceptions to that. Warren noted the packet includes preliminary forecast numbers, and that final numbers will come out in December. The preliminary numbers include approximately 5 million in ongoing. The general fund is upwards of 400 million, and 5 million is a small number, considering the level of needs across city. One time resources – about 10 million, which will primarily be used for capital projects. We have a large maintenance backlog, and will continue to chip away at that. Warren said that at the work session held by Council on the budget, it was noted that one time resources will likely be in play next year as well, approximately same amount. There will be an opportunity for this year, and going forward with possibly a multi-year strategy. Warren noted that the economist talked about risk, and predicted an economic slowdown within the 5-year forecast. We don't balance to one year, we balance to a five-year forecast. Over five years, the economist is projecting a bit of a downturn, but doesn't see as big of a downturn as when the housing bubble burst. The last expansion we had was approximately 8 years.

Warren noted that in his memo, the Mayor really talks about focusing on primary goals within existing resources. If we pitch a different priority, a new priority for the Bureau, we will be asked to supplement with what we would cut to fund the new priority. That is a requirement of this year's budget process. He is looking for efficiencies going forward. The themes are similar to last year. This year's themes – equity, opportunity, complete neighborhoods, emergency preparedness.

Warren noted that the purpose in handing out the strategic plan, and performance report is for you to begin thinking about what lenses we should we be looking through to give feedback to the Bureau moving forward. Take a look, and be thinking about the strategic plan, which connects to Vision 2020.

The other piece, Warren said, will be to identify areas to focus on, and potential gaps. Performance report shows what we are doing well, and what we are not doing so well. What's the right level of feedback? As you look at critical information, where should we be prioritizing?

Kathy Fong Stephens asked if the updated report will cover the auditor's report on asset management. Warren said yes, that will be a performance metric. We can also add that to the agenda for BAC.

Warren noted that the BAC new member orientation is one week from Thursday (11/13), and we hope new members will attend. The 2nd BAC meeting is one that everyone needs to get to if they can, and is scheduled for November 19th.

Warren noted that the BAC will be similar to last year's roster. We have had a good response from folks, and will continue to do outreach to communities of color to fill the rest of the committee.

Director update Warren noted that there will be an opportunity for folks to be engaged in the Mt. Tabor Reservoir conversations, led by Commissioner Fritz and Commissioner Fish. The first meeting will be Tuesday, November 18th, and the conversation will be about the future of the reservoirs. He encouraged Parks Board members to take part in that process.

Warren distributed the Summer Free For All report, and noted that fundraising has begun for summer 2015. Linda Robinson added that in her experience fundraising for 2014, we were asking businesses in January, and they told us they made funding decisions in fall, so now is the time.

Warren noted that it is Native American awareness month, and there will be a proclamation today at Council (11/5/14). Judy Bluehorse Skelton added that the reception will be at 10:00 am.

Announcements Kathy Fong Stephens thanked the Board for their great attendance at this meeting. She noted that she really appreciates both participation in meetings and at the committees.

Meeting adjourned Kathy adjourned the meeting at 9:30