



**PORTLAND PARKS BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES**

**May 6, 2015**

**8:00 – 9:30 a.m.**

**Lovejoy Room, City Hall**

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**Board members present:** Mike Alexander, Judy BlueHorse Skelton, Kendall Clawson, Liz Field, Kathy Fong Stephens, Patricia Frobes, Dion Jordan, Andy Nelson, Jim Owens, Meryl Redisch, Linda Robinson, Gladys Ruiz, Christa Thoeresz, Sue Van Brocklin

**Board members absent:** Tonya Booker, Tony Magliano, Julie Vigeland, Mauricio Villarreal

**PP&R Staff present:** Mike Abbate, Margaret Evans, Art Hendricks, Warren Jimenez, Eileen Argentina, Deborah Lev, Jennifer Yocom

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**Call to order** Kathy called the meeting to order at 8:00 am. Kathy welcomed Megan Dirks back (from maternity leave), and introduced Liz Field as Interim Director for the Portland Parks Foundation.

**Park of the Month** Kathy reported on her visit to Argay Park. She noted that it is about 9 acres, and a ½ mile to shaver elementary. Kathy visited the park with David Nail, from the Parks Accessibility Advisory Committee. He wanted to look at accessible features, and he was impressed. She noted that the paths are partly paved, and partly sawdust. David was able to get around the entire park. The bus (22) runs right past the park, and it was easy for him to get there. The tennis courts are in disrepair, and Mike says they are getting upgraded in the bond. There is one honey bucket restroom that is not accessible. There is a playground, dog off-leash area, basketball court, baseball and soccer fields, and picnic tables. She noted that the water fountain works, and there is signage in both English and Spanish. Kathy had the opportunity to talk to a couple of moms in Spanish, and they loved the park, and had wonderful things to say about it, which was really nice to hear.

Marshall Park will be park of the month for May. Mike noted that it is a great park, with a new play area. The park is primarily a natural area, and spans Tryon Creek. Like many parks in SW, Mike noted, Marshall Park has both natural area, and is a neighborhood park. We had to pull out the old play equipment because it was unsafe, and the Friends of Marshall Park helped write a grant to replace the

playground. It is a great time to go see it. The park has been jam packed because of the new equipment, and the neighbors love it. Pat Frobes volunteered to go and report back to the Board.

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

**Commissioner Fritz** Kathy reported that Commissioner Fritz has recommended setting aside a couple of minutes on our agenda to ask questions of her through Patti and Tim. She is not able to stop in because the time is right before City Council. This will now be a regular agenda item, so that the Board can bring up any issues they want to ask the Commissioner about, and give her the opportunity to share information with the Board.

Tim Crail reported that the Mayor has decided to fund the Mountain Bike Master Plan during the BMP. Last week was the first reading of the BMP. Today (May 6<sup>th</sup>) will be the second. Tim noted that there was a staff capacity concern, so the decision is for \$300,000 of funds to go to planning, and \$50,000 to go to Parks for a liaison to work on the master plan. There will be an opportunity to look at all properties for mountain biking. Planning will lead, and Parks will have involvement.

Kathy noted that the PAC for River View Natural Area restarted April 8<sup>th</sup>, and they had an open house on May 4<sup>th</sup>. There may be more meetings to draft a concept plan. The PAC voted to consider River View as a potential site in the Mountain Bike Master Plan. It was a close, almost 50/50 vote, but they would like it be considered.

Mike Abbaté noted that he attended a public open house on Tuesday night for River View Natural Area. Jim Haggerman (from BES) was there, and nearly 100 people turned out. Two main stakeholder groups were in attendance, Collinsview neighbors, and mountain biking advocates. They discussed a loop trail around the perimeter, and an upper loop. The goal is for the management plan to be done by end of calendar year.

Patti Howard said that with regards to a citywide mountain biking planning process, we are waiting for word from the Mayor on who the point person will be. Patti said that she is not the point person, but is finding out who is from the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability and the Mayor's office and she will pass that on. Planning for River View is moving forward without mountain biking, and we will pass along those questions to the Mayor's office

Jim Owens asked, if the BMP is approved, will the process begin quickly, and is River View natural area not going to be considered? Mike Abbaté answered that we are not going to consider mountain biking for the River View management plan, but all properties will be considered for the Citywide Mountain Bike Master Plan (including River View). Linda Robinson asked if Parks would then amend the River

View management plan. Kathy said yes, which you would do for any property considered.

**Approval of the minutes**

Linda Robinson noted a change for the bottom of page 2, which should say biking has been banned not disbanded. Judy Bluehorse Skelton noted that the 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph on page 3 should read BES not BDS. Kendall Clawson noted that her name has 2 ls. Liz Field noted that her name does not have an s at the end. Changes have been made to the May minutes

With changes, Jim Owens moved to pass the minutes from the May 2015 Parks Board Meeting, Judy Bluehorse Skelton seconded the motion, and the board unanimously voted to approve the minutes.

**Chair/Board Business Parks Foundation Update**

Liz Field said that it is great to be here. She noted that the Foundation is preparing for a half day retreat next month. They will look broadly to the future of the Foundation, and how it relates to the Bureau. They are also in the process of recruiting a new program and communications manager—the person who will be taking lead on Parke Diem, and working closely with the Bureau. She noted that her role has included helping to maintain momentum.

Jim Owens said that we are thrilled to have Liz aboard.

Kathy Fong Stephens told Liz that we look forward to having her come to meetings, and we will add her to the distribution list.

**Chair Updates**

Kathy announced that Mike Alexander is leaving the Board after 2 full terms. We have a couple of reappointments, and changes to ex-officio members. We have our upcoming retreat June 12<sup>th</sup>, but we will plan to vote on nominations to the board on June 3<sup>rd</sup>. She asked how many people are able to come to the June 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting, counted 8, and noted that we may need to have a couple of people call in to vote.

Mike Abbaté noted that we will need to set up transportation and food for the Board tour on June 12<sup>th</sup>, and asked board members to send Megan their RSVPs.

Kathy noted that on June 12<sup>th</sup>, besides touring, we will have a brief meeting to brainstorm priorities for the 2015-16 work plan. Will look for chair and vice chair to help work on that work plan.

Mike Abbaté announced that Todd Lofgren went to Morocco. He was an amazing part of the Parks team, but we are fortunate to have hired Trang Lam. She has been with PDC for many years. A former small business owner, she went to PDC, and was instrumental in planning for the Gateway Urban Renewal Area. She brings great experience negotiating deals, and in real estate. Next month at Parks Board, she will

be here and can introduce herself.

Linda Robinson noted that she knows Trang Lam from Gateway. Linda said that Trang was the first person from PDC who actually came out and talked to business owners in the Gateway area. Linda said that she was really impressed.

Kathy participated on the interview panel, and said it was a great process. She encouraged other members of the board, if asked, to participate.

Kathy noted that Gladys Ruiz asked to be added to the Equity and Diversity committee. She said if anyone else is interested in joining one of the subcommittees, to let her know.

## **Reports from committees**

### **Equity**

Judy Bluehorse Skelton reported that Art Hendricks sent out an implicit bias test – which can be used for panelists. Judy noted that the committee discussed how this will be a long term process, given bias of the past. While there is a real recognized need, and they are honoring the process, it takes time. Judy said that she was excited to be a part of the process. It is healing too, and she thanked everyone for that.

Art Hendricks noted that when we look at criteria for positions, we look at upward mobility, and formulating training opportunities. He said it is important to have the committee as a sounding board. Art thanked the committee for acting as an external lens in terms of looking at how we do recruitment.

Mike Alexander noted that he doesn't sit on the committee, but applauds the decision to use the implicit bias tool. In Oregon, he said, we will never be able to diversify as quickly as we would like. He noted that it is not what people do, it's what they think. He added that the implicit bias test is a great tool. It stays with people long after.

Gladys Ruiz asked if Art could send out the link, and Art said yes. He noted that there are a number of tests, not just around race, but also gender, religion, etc..

Mike Alexander added that the tool is not just for people in majority, it's for everyone, noting that you will find that people even within their own race hold bias.

Gladys said it would be great to have an agenda item at the retreat to have that discussion on a board level.

### **Washington Park Entrance**

Kathy noted that Julie Vigeland has been the liaison for the Washington Park entrance off Hwy 26. She is in Morocco, but reported to Kathy that they have had good, robust meetings, good talking and listening. The changes will not be

implemented for a few years.

The board asked about the changes planned. Mike Abbaté noted that it's complicated – if you take Hwy 26, and get off at the Zoo exit, as soon as you exit, you are entering the park, which you may or may not know. Mike noted that it can be confusing. The Zoo has a big construction project, a new education center that will further impact the entry. Mike noted that they are looking at the entry experience, in concert with the Children's Museum, the Zoo, and the Transportation Management Association. Though it won't be implemented right away, they want to do planning now.

Mike Abbaté noted that the K<sup>h</sup>unamokwst Park grand opening event will be on May 16<sup>th</sup>. Judy Bluehorse Skelton added that it will be from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm. Mike said that the fences are down. Art Hendricks added that he lives a block and a half from the park, and the minute the fence was down, there was a ton of activity. Lots of folks in the neighborhood have come out, it's a big hit with families, and they love the playground. He added that there has been lots of vitality and diversity. It has been full. Mike encouraged the board to come to the event on May 16<sup>th</sup>.

Gladys noted that Audubon will have tabling at the event, and there are lots of activities planned. It sounds like it's going to be amazing

### **Capital Projects Rating Committee**

Jim Owens reported that he and Patricia Frobes serve on the Capital Projects Rating Committee. They met yesterday to deal with major maintenance emergency requests. Every spring, the committee looks at spending funds set aside for maintenance emergencies. The good news was that the amount of emergency requests was limited, so the committee was able to propose reallocation of some of the funds for other repairs, including sidewalk repairs. Annual allocation for sidewalk repair is \$100,000, and there was the opportunity to bump that up.

### **Nominating Committee**

Dion Jordan reported that we had one opening on the Board this year, and the nominating committee started the process in February. The committee includes Mike Alexander, Mike Abbaté, Kendall Clawson, Tim Crail, and Dion Jordan. They received 6 to 7 great applications. Dion noted that they went through filter to determine our need. A few stood out more than others, including looking for representation from East Portland, the Hispanic community, the disability community, and someone with a financial background. They interviewed a gentleman last week, Ian Jaquiss, who is a disability awareness trainer at OHSU, and was formerly with the Portland Trailblazers. Dion noted that he is a great guy, well spoken, and has passion.

Kathy asked Dion to bring Ian's resume to the next meeting. Kathy noted that we

will do reappointments at that time as well.

Meryl noted that there is an access committee looking at parks and natural areas, they have a website that speaks to access, with videos, and really detailed information. She added that she volunteered to work with them at Powell Butte – their team approach her in the first part of June. The Group is called Access Recreation. Kathy asked if they are aware of the Parks accessibility committee. Meryl said that she thinks so. Mike asked if the group is locally based, Meryl said yes, and that they received a grant from Metro.

### **Ex-Officio Sub committee**

Andy Nelson reported that the Parks Board bylaws say we can have up to 3 ex officio members. We've had PPS, the Parks Foundation, and Urban Forestry Commission. They are looking to bring back Urban Forestry, PPS, and looking at adding another. In June, he will have a report. Andy noted that he enjoyed working on the nominating committee. They had a great list of candidates, which was exciting to see for succession planning. We have a great pool of really talented people who want to be a part of the Parks Board.

**Strategic Plan** Warren Jimenez reported on the Strategic Plan, noting that it will be a condensed version, and won't be last time we talk about this. They will look again in December. At the end of 2015, we will be completing the 3 year strategic plan. This will be a time to acknowledge gains, as well as where we weren't able to make progress. Warren noted that we sent out the power point ahead of time to give the Board some time to review. He also distributed handouts, and asked the Board to provide feedback on goals and initiatives. He noted that the handout is a visual demonstration on the vision 2020 and strategic plan cross over. We want to ensure that the plan furthers the goals of 2020.

We have the Vision 2020, Strategic Plan, and Performance Report, which is intended to show us baseline metrics of how we are doing as a bureau, as well as how we are doing on the strategic plan.

Warren talked about the Play Gap – making sure our system is inclusive for all, and that we are identifying gaps. He discussed the 6 themes: Health, Recreation, Access & Equity, Asset Management, Trails, and Sustainability. We assign champions to each theme. Their roles are to work with project managers to ensure we achieve those goals. We have 30 initiatives total, and Warren noted that he is happy to report today that we are going to accomplish a lot of those initiatives. Some we will not. But we are going to accomplish a lot of them.

Our recreation program goals include connecting to more youth. Warren noted that with each initiative, they have a status check and showed the chart for recreation initiatives – green on track, blue accomplished, red means needs work.

Scholarships – this was an important item for the Budget Advisory Committee, and

was a budget request. They will be updating scholarships to build in more consistency, and build equity.

Rec Revolution – this body of work was in response to increasing participation in our recreation programming. It aims to look at efficiency across our bureau. It has been a big body of work led by Eileen Argentina and her team. It is really important work, and aims to bring more consistency in how we provide services. Our summer camp hiring process was kicked off last week with a big job fair. Hundreds of people came to Mt. Scott to do in-person interviews.

Warren did not report on Access and Equity because he noted that Art Hendricks covered this at an earlier meeting.

Asset Management – implementation of our asset management program. Lowering risk of failure by establishing certain levels with our assets. One is not on track – which is to prepare asset management plans – one of our key members, Randy Webster, is retiring and moving on. Warren noted that we feel really good about 4 of the 5 goals being on track. Development of asset risk profiles. Through process, prioritize mission critical assets in our portfolio – risk of failure across those assets. This work helped inform our parks bond.

Trails – Warren noted that key theme areas include several goals – meeting demand, closing gaps in trail system, strengthen management. Warren noted that 4 of the 5 initiatives are on track. One of the key examples of deliverables, is updating design and construction standards – providing uniform design, and maintenance of our trails.

Health – Warren talked about two goals: partnering with public health community – and improving health outcomes for youth by increasing their activity levels.

Key initiatives include deepening partnerships with public health community through RX Play. The main focus of this initiative is prescriptions for activity for our youth. When we applied for innovative grants – it was funded through our City's innovative grant program.

Sustainability – Warren noted that this theme includes extending ecological landscape management practices, energy efficiency, reducing consumption of water. One initiative, Ecologically Sustainable Landscapes, is really groundbreaking work for us as a bureau. Emily Roth's work – we talked about as bureau. Judy Bluehorse Skelton asked for the paper that Emily Roth did, and Warren said yes, we will send out.

Warren noted that he will come back to the Board in December with a full report on the strategic plan – and full evaluation of each of these initiatives. He will report on lessons learned after in depth debrief with theme champions.

Kathy noted that on the Sustainable Landscape initiative, we are scheduled to talk about that soon, in August.

Kathy asked about what input the Board can provide in the meantime. Warren said to think about how you want to be engaged, in fall and winter. We'll give thought to

what the next iteration looks like. Warren said that we would like to get feedback on that. Mike Abbaté added that some initiatives will not be complete, so thinking about whether to roll those in to the next strategic plan

### **Mayor's Initiative**

Mike noted that he will give a report on the budget later, but introduced Eileen Argentina to talk about the Mayor's youth initiative, noting that the Mayor has committed \$2 million for youth. \$1.7 to come to parks, for programs particularly for teens. This includes gang involved or at risk, but also the full spectrum. Eileen and her team are working on what that might look like.

Eileen noted that the initiative will focus on teen services, and youth violence prevention. There are four components: one is a focus on high risk/already gang involved, making community centers available at nights, with community partners with expertise at 4 locations. The centers would be closed otherwise, and they will be discontinuing some programming in order to make this happen.

The centers are Matt Dishman Community Center, Mt. Scott Community Center, East Portland Community Center, and St. Johns Community Center. This could change if partners want to work at different locations (Saturday night).

We have an existing teen program, with very little budget to work with, but they are finding innovative ways to engage kids.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> element will be an increase in drop in activities for all youth, and teens at Matt Dishman Community Center.

The 4<sup>th</sup> element will be a full time teen center at Montavilla Community Center. We will discontinue other use, though the preschool program would still be available. Eileen noted that the Mayor has been great – he has recognized that Parks has become so revenue driven. We will be able to pull back some of our revenue targets, and make all of our gyms more available. This may displace some existing use. We prioritize kids, which means that others single adult activities, and some family activities may seek other places. It is an incredible opportunity, may change before budget gets adopted.

Strong interest by community partners, working with youth, to have a space to bring kids. They've got kids, we've got facilities, so we are looking at how best to make matches.

Mike Abbaté added that it is an incredible affirmation of our programs, and staff. The Commissioner and Mayor both recognize that we have become dependent on fee generation, and the impacts of that. Our managers have done what we asked them to do, and it's time to think about changing that model.

Mike Alexander commented that he thinks this is fantastic. He suggested that the wording is changed to high risk youth, rather than gang involved youth, noting that the intention will change how people view the programs. If you call it high risk, in neighborhoods that have been underserved – that's enough.

Gladys commented that it is wonderful, and agreed with Mike Alexander. She noted that not all kids will be interested in recreation. She added that Audubon has a huge draw in our nature programs and it may be time to elevate the nature aspect piece. Eileen said that with expenditure in our teen programs, we would look for opportunities outdoors. Amount of resources to extend beyond our walls.

Andy Nelson noted that as one of the organizations working with kids, having access to spaces is huge. Big Brothers Big Sisters are among many who would benefit

Meryl Redisch added that it seems like RX play is a good fit.

### **Urban Forestry Commission**

Meryl reported on the role of the Urban Forestry Commission (UFC).

As a Commission, Meryl noted, they hear from the entire City. They are an advisory body with eleven members, representing all sectors. They have a good, broad geographic mix. Like the Parks Board, they hear about policies, practices, and they are asked to advise. Similar to the Parks Board's 2020 vision, the UFC has the Urban Forestry Management Plan. This plan helps them prioritize, and allows them to get things done.

The UFC has a regulatory role for the Tree Code. One example is their appeals board, which is a subcommittee of the Commission. Residents, homeowners can have due process. If a decision by the Urban Forester is made about the removal of a tree, and if homeowners disagree, they can come forward. Meryl noted that they hear ½ dozen appeals per year.

Another role is the heritage tree program. If a tree is designated a heritage tree, it is protected in perpetuity. The Commission uses the heritage tree program for protecting trees across the city. It can be a slippery slope, you don't want to dilute the program. If everything people want to protect gets deemed a heritage tree, it loses its affect.

The Urban Forestry Commission also has an education and outreach committee, which works with staff on community engagement in schools and at the community level. One charge is to manage and organize the annual Arbor Day event, and to recruit and select for the Bill Naito award.

They have community inventory programs, stewardship programs, and are always looking to recruit new people to come onto the Commission. The UFC policy committee is important in terms of advocacy.

Like the Parks Board, UFC advocates around increased budget. About 5 years ago, City Council authorized a rewrite of the tree code. An enormous amount of work from volunteers and staff, including hours of public testimony, went into that effort. The Commission was instrumental in this work. The new tree code went into effect January 2015. The UFC lead advocacy around those issues.

Meryl noted that Commissioner Fritz has directed staff to implement a new rule

with the tree code. The Commission will work to figure out this new administrative rule. A lot of work will go on. The new rule will put a cap of \$1200 on mitigation fees per tree.

Mike Abbaté noted that this fee cap concerns the mitigation required, and the fees paid in lieu of planting a new tree. Meryl added that she didn't mean to go into depth on this new rule, but wanted to give the Parks Board a heads up on the UFC work plan.

Meryl noted that the Urban Forestry Management Plan contains relevant policies and guidelines, but also some outdated issues and topics, and it doesn't include some of the things (climate, equity, diversity, issues around infill and development) that are important to the City and the Commission.

Meryl noted that the UFC wants to be intentional about recruiting, and look for areas where we can work together, where there can be crossover/intersections with Parks Board. The UFC would like an ex-officio member of Parks Board on the Commission.

**Director update** Mike Abbaté reported that the vote on the new methodology for System Development Charges has been postponed two weeks. The Mayor and Commissioner Fritz met yesterday to talk about it. The Mayor is supportive, but has been focused on the budget. He wants some time to look at the proposed update before the vote.

Mike gave the Board an update on the Mayor's proposed budget, noting that PP&R received all ongoing funding requests. He added that PP&R got 25% of all the ongoing (new) money for the City. We usually get 10 – 12%. Of the one-time funding requests, we got 60 to 70 percent of our requests. Details will be in a follow-up e-mail. Mike added that we got all of our O&M requests for Beech, Gateway, Spring Garden, and Leach. Mike added that Eileen talked about the \$1.7 million for enhanced youth services.

Mike added that the Mayor's proposed budget includes money for Parks for new Portlanders, as well as many capital maintenance requests. He said that it is amazing – really an amazing proposed budget.

On behalf of our Commissioner, Mike added, she is not done yet, and is working on a couple of things as well that are not in the budget.

Mike noted that a sporting goods company is coming to town – Under Armour – and they want to make a big contribution to PP&R. We are in discussion.

Christa Thoeresz noted that they are taking over YMCA, and asked if they are updating the track and field. Mike said that we are talking to them about a number of projects. Christa noted that it's a Nike track, so she assumed they were going to do something.

Jim Owens asked Mike to keep the Board informed on the additional budget items

that the Commissioner is working on. Mike noted that they include additional rangers, tree code staff, and the scholarship program. Things that were not funded in the budget. She's advocating for the things that we wanted, but were not included.

**Announcements** Mike asked Board members to raise their hands if they have ever been to the Oregon Rail Heritage Foundation, and asked if they knew that PP&R owns trains. This is where the Parklandians unite activity is happening, May 26<sup>th</sup> at 6:30. Mike thanked Liz and the Foundation, our partners on this event, and encouraged Board members to attend.

**Meeting adjourned** Kathy adjourned the meeting at 9:30 am.