



**PORTLAND PARKS BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
February 1, 2016
4:00 – 5:30 p.m.
Community Music Center**

Board members present: Jeff Anderson, Tonya Booker, Judy Bluehorse Skelton, Kendall Clawson, Kathy Fong Stephens, Patricia Frobes, Dion Jordan, Jim Owens, Meryl Redisch, Linda Robinson, Gladys Ruiz, Christa Stout, Sue Van Brocklin,

Board members absent: Ian Jaquiss, Tony Magliano, Andy Nelson, Julie Vigeland

PP&R Staff present: Mike Abbaté, Pooja Bhatt, Jenn Cairo, Margaret Evans, Commissioner Fritz, Art Hendricks, Warren Jimenez, Kia Selley, Jennifer Yocom

Call to order Judy Bluehorse Skelton called the meeting to order at 4:10. She thanked the Community Music Center for hosting the Board, and for leading them on a tour of the facility.

Park of the Month Gladys Ruiz has not had a chance to go to Piccolo Park, but will report next month.

Tonya Booker reported on Hillside Community Center, noting that it is surrounded by beautiful old growth trees, and is tucked into the hillside. It has a beautiful gym. It has limited programming, but good programming. Her friends take advantage of the winter break program, and there is quality summer scheduling as well. She noted that the center has at least one adult basketball drop in time on the schedule. It is a nice facility.

Commissioner's Update Commissioner Fritz thanked the Parks Board for inviting her. She began her update with sad news, noting that PP&R's beloved Doug Brenner had a heart attack this past weekend. Mike Abbaté noted that Doug had been with the Bureau for 30 years, and oversaw athletics and aquatics for PP&R. Commissioner Fritz added that he had also served as director at Southwest Community Center.

Commissioner Fritz reported on recent conversations regarding camping on City property. She stated that camping in parks is still not allowed. We used to have a policy of enforcement, but we have limited rangers. Commissioner Fritz noted that just like the Native American Community came out, making the invisible visible, the community living outdoors have become a lot more visible.

The Commissioner noted that she attended a recent community meeting at St. Philips Neri Church to have SE folks talk with Right 2 Dream Too. She said the conversation went well, thanks to Resolutions NW. The policy will still be that people are not allowed to live in parks. Some members of the public think that we do not have a plan. We do have a plan. We know how to get people help. Commissioner Fritz noted that in the 1980s, Reagan cut federal housing by 3 quarters, and it has been cut ever since. It is a community problem, not a Parks problem. She added that parks are for everyone. You get to be in a park during park hours. You do not get to live in a park and claim it as a personal place. The

Mayor is looking into finding ways to permit camping in some areas. However, it is not reasonable to assume large groups will all get along, and be safe in confined areas. If a certain amount of people are affiliated with a non-profit similar to Right 2 Dream, we can look into permits, and establishing fencing and rules.

Linda Robinson asked if all enforcement is being managed by rangers, not police. Commissioner Fritz said that clean ups and criminal behavior are managed by the police. Some front line staff are not getting the message from Bureau Directors, or Commissioners. Rangers are our ambassadors, and are trained on how to make that approach. We need more to do this ambassador work. Some misinformation is out there.

Mike Abbaté noted that the Mayor's office is going to release a policy statement, and we will use it to clarify for our staff. Right now, there is some confusion. Different bureaus have taken different approaches, and that is why the Mayor and staff are working hard on this issue to clarify our approach moving forward.

Commissioner Fritz noted that there is a distinction between sleeping in parks and camping in parks. Sleeping we define as overnight, and gone. She added that we want to treat everyone with their civil rights. There are people living outside that may conflict with Saturday market, and we are having discussions and involving the right people. When you sit people down with facilitators, when they listen to each other and talk to each other, and you include a wide variety of people, they come up with good solutions.

Jim Owens asked the Commissioner about supported infrastructure, specifically restrooms, for people living outside. He noted that there has been some attention in the media focused on businesses closing in the Park Blocks.

Commissioner Fritz noted that 7 restaurants in Portland have recently closed. It is a tenuous business and she doesn't want to speculate on the business that closed on the Park Blocks. She added that we have put a lot of attention and work in the Parks Blocks. If we have these permitted sites, it's up to us to provide basic services to them. She noted that Mike and his team have been terrific. She noted that PP&R has provided bathroom services at Overlook Park for the camp at Greely, and there has been a huge effort to get water before pipes freeze. She added that there is always going to be the need for transitional communities, and there will always be individuals who may not go into permanent housing.

Mike added that we have a Request for Proposals out for activating the park blocks, and we are looking at alternative uses like food or coffee. He noted that Jenn Cairo is here, and that Urban Forestry spent a great deal of time opening up the canopy, so that the turf can better survive. There has been a lot of work done in the last couple of months.

Gladys Ruiz asked if maintenance workers are allowed to go up to people and ask them to move, she is wondering about the training. She added that she didn't see a budget line item for that, and it's incredibly important to the success.

Commissioner Fritz noted that in the original sleeping policy, we said don't wake

before 8:00 am, for some it may start earlier.

Mike noted that for our Park Techs, having homeless folks in our parks is not new, though the scale can in some places be greater than ever. We've not had problems generally, but we've seen a difference in tone lately. He noted that he has instructed folks to be polite, and if someone pushes back, to disengage.

Art Hendricks added that we do training in tactical communication that is meant to be respectful, and give staff the opportunity to diagnose the situation. Barb and Galina provided some mental health training because that can sometimes be an issue with folks living outside. We want our staff to be respectful, and also safe.

Commissioner Fritz added that we have asked people how they would like to be asked.

Kendall noted that there are some wraparound services, adding that she knows the focus is on long term strategy, and wondered if there is a funding source to help get people to services, mental health, etc.

Commissioner Fritz said that rangers and maintenance workers are becoming more and more skilled at not just handing a brochure, but checking in with people and helping them get those services. She added that we have made a budget request for money allocated for housing to help us do that. She stated that every neighborhood wants to put it in someone else's neighborhood, but housing isn't going to be able to do this themselves, they need to bring the rest of us along and make it a focused approach.

Judy Bluehorse Skelton asked the Commissioner to please keep the Board up to date on when those forums are happening.

Commissioner Fritz noted that the next work session is set for next Tuesday morning (2/9/16). They've come up with a plan, now we have to make sure everyone knows about it.

Judy said that she has heard the Feds have said if someone doesn't have a place to stay, they can't be pushed off federal lands.

Commissioner Fritz said that we want to find places, alternatives, for people. That is different than saying there is nowhere you are allowed. If they said you have to provide places, that would be a huge amount of money.

Judy noted that she appreciates everyone for their work on the budget letter, which highlights what parks is already doing, what is the fatigue, triaged out (new verb), being on the front lines of how to engage without a full set of skills. Plan for that without giving the impression that this is part of what Parks does.

Judy added that there is an area at Ross Island making it very uncomfortable for children to swim. Changing landscape as people are looking for a place to live.

Public Testimony None

Approval of the Minutes Meryl noted that on page 3, 40 inches should be 48 inches. Jim Owens moved to approve the minutes with Meryl's amendment. Tonya Booker seconded. The Board approved the minutes for January.

Parks Foundation Update Jeff Anderson noted that in December, he mentioned the Foundation's year end appeal, a pitch for everyone to pitch in. The Foundation beat its fundraising goal, with unrestricted gifts from 330 individuals, \$54,000. They just received word that an additional \$200,000 will come in this year. The Board voted in November to add seven voting positions, strengthen fundraising connections, and leadership. Two new seats are filled, Jim Francesconi and Mary Ruble, and they are looking to fill five more spots. The Foundation is looking potentially for new office space. Substantial increase over 2015 budget. They are working on two major capital projects – including the footbridge over Burnside. They are working on a similar document for a private donor campaign for Cully Park – to close the gap on that project. They are also working with City Staff on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

Kendall Clawson asked Jeff how many people of color are on the board. Jeff said that the Board is not diverse, that is one goal.

Kendall asked if he has a plan. Jeff noted that they are soliciting names from Verde. They do not have a written plan, and they haven't developed an equity plan. In 2017, he added, when they have stabilized operations they will want to look at long term planning and a more equitable board is an absolute goal. Jeff said that he welcomes suggestions from Kendall, or anyone else.

Kendall said that she doesn't know why they would need to stabilize operations before working toward a more diverse board. She noted that they are doing good work in Cully. It is still a diverse community, and hasn't become too gentrified. Jeff agreed, and noted that there is concern about gentrification.

Equity Subcommittee Update Tonya Booker noted that the equity subcommittee held their meeting last week in EPCC; it was nice to be out in the community. She added that they need more than an hour because their group is lively, with lots of ideas. They talked about what they want to work on for the next 6 months. One of their roles is to be a sounding board for PP&R staff, and they will review the equity roadmap assessment in March. They are hoping to spend time with new employees. One thing they talked about is getting a better understanding of Parks commitment to equity and inclusion. That might involve bringing more staff to meetings. There is a feeling of needing more commitment to the goals. One area they talked about was the Budget process, and wanting to be part of the process, and improvement of the process, and engagement. She added that suggestions were made, and not implemented. There is an opportunity to focus on equity and inclusion in the budget office. The other thing they talked about, Tonya noted is their hope to deep dive with the board as part of the retreat with equity and inclusion. As a follow up from last year.

Commissioner Fritz said that she is not sure if she received the subcommittees' recommendations on the budget process.

Mike Abbaté noted that one recommendation was to host the public meeting in a

different locations and focus on getting around the city.

Gladys Ruiz added that they talked about structure.

Linda Robinson added that they were also concerned about timing and response.

Mike said that this is an important issue for the Board to spend time on, and we've talked about starting in July. Jim Owens commented that sooner is better than later.

Commissioner Fritz noted that we don't get budget direction from the Mayor until we get the financial forecast, usually in December. She added that we can have discussions in advance, if it's an expansion what would we do, if it is a cut year, what do we do, but it's a little bit of a waste of people's time to dream about expansion if the direction is to make cuts.

Tonya noted that some of the subcommittee's concerns focused on involving people in the process, and that engagement be on a deep level. She added that you are there as a representative, but how much do you collaborate in the process?

Commissioner Fritz said that she would like to hear input on the work session we did at Hacienda.

Judy said that there is a need to weigh in on the process when it's fresh. There is the process itself, how it is facilitated, even if we don't know the Mayor's direction. There is a way to engage and organize people in advance.

Mike said that they can spend time at an upcoming meeting reflecting on this year's budget process. It can't be before April because in March we have Mayoral candidates coming. In April we could do a budget debrief.

Commissioner Fritz added that it's hard to hear we didn't do what we told you to do, and not know what that was. She added that the community representatives have been more engaged. The thing we didn't do, she noted, and wished we could was add representatives from the Diversity and Civic Leadership Programs through the Office of Neighborhood Involvement. (These five groups include: Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization –IRCO, Latino Network, NAYA Portland Youth & Elders Council, Center for intercultural Organizing – CIO, the Urban League of Portland).

Judy noted that if we went around after a budget process, and it was fresh, we could brainstorm ideas.

Commissioner Fritz noted that she wants to honor Gladys (Ruiz), who made a comment at a crucial part, saying, "let's remember equity." She added that it was unfortunate that she didn't say it, but it was extremely well done and she thanked Gladys for that.

Gladys thanked Commissioner Fritz, and noted that she thinks if she is still the one saying that, then we are not where we want to be. Last year, she noted that she was one of the only persons of color.

Mike asked if the subcommittee would be willing to put together recommendations.

Tonya said that the committee is coming from a positive place; this is an important process. One idea they talked about is the possibility to do more at community centers, so that people can participate out in communities. Some people are feeling a bit of tokenism, if that's true or not, how do we make sure people feel they can be a part of the process? There is a feeling that we need to have a better understanding of where your voice fits in this process.

Warren Jimenez noted that the dynamic is interesting in that we have this city adopted process that creates this structure. We get into this lead in to the structured process, and get that feedback and inject it into the formal process. We appreciate that. Maybe there is opportunity to look at the process itself. If we are all bought in as a City at making this an equitable process, are we achieving our goals? There may be a way to bring those ideas and work with our Commissioner. Warren added that when he compares last year's public meeting and this year's public meeting. Last year's was much more inclusive.

Judy added that there was a driving rain storm that night.

Kendall Clawson noted that the subcommittee is not trying to come at people. She said that it's important that people of color are not always the ones to bring these things up, but our allies as well. We don't have to react, we can be proactive. The equity committee is largely made up of people of color, we want to bring this to the entire board. That's what we are talking about. She added that we don't want to get caught up in weeds of how the budget process works.

**Urban Forestry
Commission**

Meryl Redisch reported that the Urban Forestry Commission (UFC) held a public hearing. They were surprised they didn't have the numbers. Planning & Sustainability Commission (PSC) had a similar hearing. UFC voted unanimously for a number of recommendations. They heard public testimony, they read the proposals from Commissioners Fritz and Saltzman, and looked at data from practicing foresters. All of these things informed their decision. Meryl directed the Board to look at a handout listing all of the proposals. She noted that the UFC recommendations are a little left of the other proposals, noting a 30 inch diameter as the threshold. Remember only 2% are over 48 inches. She added that the UFC is interested in ensuring that the trees we have now get to be 48 and 50 inches. We should start promoting and increasing the mitigation costs of replacing those trees. Meryl said that the UFC is asking the Parks Board to support the UFC recommendations. She noted one update is number 7 (page 2), which now reads that we authorize City Council to authorize sufficient resources, financial and personnel to review and revise the tree code in a sufficient way and do that as soon as possible. If you are looking for more detail, she added, the minutes last month captured her presentation.

Jenn Cairo added that the Parks Bureau as a whole supports the UFC recommendations.

Patricia Frobos said that she supports, but reminded the Board that Andy said we

should hear both sides.

Jenn Cairo said that the Forestry Commission proposal is the most protective in valuing trees. The development community is concerned about the cost of replacing trees – that is the primary opposing view. The notification period in the proposals varies from no notification, 7 days, to 30 days, but notifications are all courtesy in nature. None would allow time for someone to appeal, or go to land use board. There is some concern that there is no time for action. Neighbors have expressed a lot of interest in hearing when a tree would be cut down, and wanting notice in case they are able to explore other options.

Jenn added that in the current code, an applicant is supposed to try to retain 1/3 of trees on property, unless dead, but they can pay in lieu of retaining the trees. They don't need to provide notice. In Eastmoreland, the neighbors came up with another solution.

Judy asked if developers or builders came to testify at the UFC hearing.

Meryl said that they heard from the public, but didn't hear from any developers.

Jenn said that Portland's Bureau of Development Services' (BDS) Development Review Advisory Committee (DRAC) proposed proposal B (Parks proposal is proposal A). The protection threshold for a large tree is larger in the BDS proposal, and instead of inch per inch it was a graduated scale, with maximum being \$1000.

Jim Owens noted that there are pretty significant differences in the UFC recommendations. In the draft letter, he noted, he would like to see the full recommendations from both sides, and would like to see how the UFC came up with pretty significant deviations

Meryl said to be honest, there may be some things you (the Parks Board) don't agree with, it's up to this group. She offered to send the Board their minutes from the UFC public hearing to show you how they arrived at recommendations.

Jim asked for one more clarification, which proposal does Parks support.

Mike said that there are variations – we put something on table, BDS did, Planning & Sustainability did something. UFC is in line with what Parks wants.

Kathy noted that in reflecting on the SDC process, she thinks it's very interesting that you didn't have developers come.

Mike noted that developers support the BDS recommendations.

Commissioner Fritz added that only 2 out of 16 on the advisory committee are not developers.

Commissioner Fritz said that there are some City Bureaus that are concerned

about costs, and their ability to develop on city owned land.

Mike asked if there is a group that wants to work between now and March to look at recommendations and draft a letter. Gladys asked if there is a sunset date. Mike noted that it is set to expire after code changes, so this would be a stop gap measure in an interim period

Jim asked for a basis for recommendations. Why are these proposed? Meryl said that she could send out more information to the Board. Megan can collect comments after Board members have time to look at data.

Meryl added that wherever there is consensus on UFC, she would draft a letter on behalf of the Board.

Patricia Frobos noted that to the extent if the development community presented anything about potential costs, any discussions about special exemptions for affordable housing would be great to see.

Meryl noted that we need lots of greenspaces, and trees around affordable housing.

Kathy asked if the development fees collected from this will go to BDS development fees, do they get back into CIP, do we get any?

Jenn noted that all of these funds are mediation funds, they go into a trust fund, tree planting and preservation fund – used by PP&R to purchase property where there are significant trees, to protect, and to plant trees.

Commissioner Fritz stated that while she is commissioner, we will not be buying small lots with big trees on them.

Bond Update Mary Anne Cassin, Program Manager for the Parks Replacement Bond, gave the Board an update on the replacement bond. She noted that we are 7 months into program, there are 7 focus areas, with a ceiling or floor on each category. There were 32 projects in the first list, when bond was passed – \$48 million this is what they are. Projects on the second list, \$20 million will be later, and have not been identified. Of the 32 that are up and going, 27 are underway, one is under construction – Grant pool with the goal of opening by pool season. Most likely, the pool will not be ready by day one, but they are doing their best.

Mary Anne noted that subconsultants are hired, it has been an amazing and enriching experience. They are slightly ahead of schedule. Staff have a lot of experience. Consultant fees are coming in a little high, which is not a surprise. The economy is good. Startup costs were high, initially no one is getting any work done; we are getting staff hired, and trained. Administrative costs are coming down. There are some concerns about construction costs; the economy is picking up. For example, Mary Anne noted that they only received 2 bidders for temporary fences. It was not a great, competitive pool. They are refining public information outreach, spending a lot of time looking at individual projects, and working on overview now. Mary Anne noted that she is pleased with our initial M/W/ESB utilization. Aspiration is 20 %, and currently we are at 37%. ESB is higher than the minority and women,

and we are taking a look at that. Sometimes it's easy, we hired architects and got 75%, but it's not as good for engineers. We have goals for diversity and equity, staff are looking at – who did we hire, who are our subconsultants, and outreach – are we reaching out to the people these projects will affect?

Mary Anne talked about the Bond Oversight Committee, tasked with project oversight, noting they gave an initial report in the fall. Dion is part of that committee. We have obvious performance goals, and they are working on their own performance metrics.

There will be a professional audit – hired for in depth review.

City council has been very supportive so far.

The second issue, Mary Anne noted is prioritizing fixes and repairs. We are starting internally on issues we are aware of, and we will start going over these initial lists with the BAC. It will be internal until August.

Commissioner Fritz added that with this, we manage the timeline, so we absolutely control the process.

Mary Anne added that we know there are going to be more playgrounds, we promised them, so expect those when the 2nd list gets finalized next year.

The Washington Park Rose Garden is our signature ADA project, the only reason we are touching it is to remove the ADA barriers, Grant Pool construction, Pioneer Courthouse Square is the single biggest project – pulling up all the bricks, fixing leaks, putting bricks back.

Director's Update Mike announced that for the March meeting, we've invited all the mayoral candidates, 6 are confirmed. Patricia Frobes and Jim Owens are meeting with Mike to draft questions.

Meeting Adjourned Judy adjourned the meeting at 5:35 pm.