

**BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
MEETING MINUTES
June 26, 2003**

Present: Sarah Neilson, Acting Chair
James Fearn
Kate Pflaumer
Joanna Grist
Terry Holme

Excused: Bruce Bentley, Chair

Staff: Fritz Hedges, Acting Deputy Superintendent
Sandy Brooks, Park Board Coordinator

Chair Bruce Bentley was out of town on Park Board business. Acting Chair Sarah Neilson called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. **Kate moved and Terry seconded that the agenda consent items be approved, including the June 26 agenda, June 12 minutes as amended, and the acknowledgment of correspondence. The vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.**

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Ken Bounds was out of town on Park Department business. Acting Deputy Superintendent Fritz Hedges reported on the following:

Summer Programs Begin: Many of our summer programs and facilities have opened, including wading pools, summer playgrounds, and swimming beaches. Seven summer beach locations opened on Saturday, June 21. There has been some concern that two of the nine summer beach locations, East Green Lake Beach and Pritchard Beach, have been closed this year due to budget cuts.

Sand Point Magnuson Park FSEIS Appealed: Friends of Magnuson Park, a neighborhood organization, filed an appeal to the Hearing Examiner on the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (FSEIS). Consequently, the proposed Park Board's ballfield lighting tour has been delayed until this fall when lights will come on earlier in the evening.

West Point Settlement Agreement: The Parks Department held a public meeting this week to review the King County Settlement Agreement proposal to provide \$5 million in additional Shoreline Park Improvement Fund (SPIF) money for a slate of projects in Discovery Park as recommended by a King County Citizens Advisory Committee. The meeting was well attended and Parks received extensive feedback on the projects. There was discussion on the future of the NIKE building, a former missile facility site which is currently used by Parks for storage. The Committee recommended removing it; however, Parks must first find a replacement storage facility.

Associated Recreation Council (ARC) Board Meets: At this week's meeting the ARC Board and Parks Department discussed standardizing all out-of-school program fees. Work on this proposal will continue over the summer.

Seward Park Environmental and Audubon Center Agreement Update: The City Council passed legislation authorizing agreement between the City and the National Audubon Society regarding how Parks and Audubon will jointly fund and renovate the Seward Park Annex Building and the Seward Park Fish Hatchery for environmental programs. The design phase will begin in July and construction is scheduled to begin in 2004.

Wallingford Playfield: A gala opening, with an enthusiastic crowd of adults, kids, and Friends of Wallingford Playfield, was held to celebrate the dedication of the renovated playfield.

Hiawatha Playfield: A Pro Parks project is underway at this park. At the June 12 Park Board meeting, Dennis Ross of Admiral Community Council urged that the allocated funds not be spent on an irrigation system. The scoping process continues. There is more scope than budget. Staff will try to develop a balanced list of project elements.

Open Space in University District: Also at the June 12 Park Board meeting, Brian Ramey of Friends of Brooklyn came before the Park Board to voice his concerns with the pace of securing open space for the University District neighborhood. \$1 million is available from King County to secure open space in this area. Parks is trying to seek a substantial increase in the funds available to purchase open space in the area. Staff are working with both residents and developers; however, there is no consensus yet as to a site or sites. Securing open space is in progress and should have a good outcome; however, it may not be progressing as quickly as Mr. Ramey would like.

Healthy Aging: Parks started a new program this summer at seven community centers, in partnership with AARP, to sponsor senior adult walking programs. Over 400 senior adults have registered. Recently, advertising for this program was included in the Val-Pak coupons that are delivered to homes. This advertising has been very effective.

Terry asked about the request from Friends of Brooklyn asking the Board to get involved in securing open space. Terry's understanding is that this is a Pro Parks Levy project and is it appropriate for the Park Board to become involved? Fritz will discuss this with Superintendent Bounds and report back to the Board.

A speaker from the audience honked a loud horn and said "Excuse me, there is an addendum to the Superintendent's report" and continued talking loudly about the killing of Canada geese. The Chair stated that this is not the public comment portion of the meeting and asked the speaker to sign up for the public comment portion of the meeting and share his concerns at that time. The speaker continued talking loudly and several

audience members honked horns. The Chair repeatedly asked the speaker to wait until the public comment period and used the gavel repeatedly.

Another audience member asked Fritz to speak to the issue of killing Canada geese in parks. Fritz stated that there has been an exchange of letters between Superintendent Bounds, PAWS, and the Humane Society. Many e-mails have been received by the Superintendent.

Fritz began reading a portion of the letter and was interrupted repeatedly by audience members honking horns and making loud comments. The Chair again requested that those audience members interrupting wait until the public comment period to speak.

Fritz read the following excerpt from a June 17, 2003, letter from Parks Superintendent Ken Bounds to Progressive Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) and to the Humane Society of the United States:

"This is to respond to your letter of June 13 requesting that I request USDA to place a moratorium on the use of lethal means to control the non-migratory population of Canada geese in 2003 rather than waiting until 2004. I am grateful for the offers from PAWS and HSUS volunteers to: help clean parks, educate the public, apply repellents and implement other non-lethal means. As I stated in our meeting on June 11, I am prepared to advocate for a moratorium on the use of lethal means to the Waterfowl Management Committee for 2004, and I am committed to working closely with PAWS and HSUS volunteers in Seattle parks, accordingly.

However, to alter our successful approach for 2003 at this late date would be a mistake. As I stated in the 'volunteer' meeting on May 28th and again on June 11th, I am not prepared to abandon our approach this year. As representatives from various agencies around Lake Washington, the Waterfowl Management Committee has been working on effective means to manage the Canada geese population for over 15 years. We have made incredible progress, especially over the last three years, when USDA not only continued to aggressively addle eggs, but also began capturing geese in Seattle parks and other public spaces within the region."

Fritz stated that Parks has subsequently asked its Aquatics Manager and Conservation Resources Coordinator to contact these organizations and hopefully begin working with them on the offers they have made to help clean parks, educate the public, apply repellants, and implement other non-lethal means later this summer.

Oral Requests and Communication from the Audience

Sarah explained that the general public comment portion of the agenda is reserved for topics that have not had or are not scheduled for a public hearing. Testimony is limited to three minutes per speaker and if testimony can be given in less than three minutes, it is appreciated. Sarah also reminded speakers not to make personal attacks on anyone in the room. An audience member shouted a comment back at the Chair.

25 people signed up to give testimony on non-public hearing topics:

Gail Chiarello: came before the Park Board to remind the Board that it is the citizen overseers of the Parks Department. She has no doubt that the Parks Department does lots of good, but the Board must remember that every large department is a bureaucracy and has its own vested interest in maintaining its own longevity. Be critical of the information that Parks presents, ask hard analytical questions, and don't always assume that everything you hear is the complete story. She does not endorse interrupting public meetings, but she thinks that what the geese people are saying - in a more disruptive way than she is trying to say - is you do have to question the information you get. You may not get all the information you need. The people depend on you to ask those questions. She said that she speaks for people who are concerned about the environment at Sand Point Magnuson Park and others will also speak to that issue tonight. Don't see your role as rubber stamping Park's recommendations on Sand Point Magnuson Park. Remember what happened at Enron. Don't assume you are getting all the information you need.

The Board briefly discussed whether Sand Point Magnuson Park is in a public hearing process.

Diana Kincaid: spoke on Sand Point Magnuson Park. She is a member of Seattle Audubon Society. She stated that the impact of the noise and light pollution will destroy the habitat at the park, there will be a net loss of 10 acres of wetland, and the birds and wildlife will not return. A study was completed by Johnson Edell in 2000 concluding that over 65% of the developed wetlands in Washington State fail. Please take that into consideration.

Bosia Belza: spoke on Sand Point Magnuson Park sports complex. She asked the Board to help her understand how we have a \$62 million proposal and only have \$12 million allocated so far. The project was scheduled to begin this month and has now been re-scheduled to January 2004 and will be built over the next 10 years. And yet, we have no formalized needs assessment to really provide the evidence of the number and types of fields we need and where they should be built. How can we justify a complex of that size without adequate baseline data?

Maggie Kitsch: spoke on Sand Point Magnuson Park. She is a formerly homeless person who now lives at Santos Place transitional housing in the park. She uses the park every day, as her front yard and back yard. Her front yard is where the sports complex will be built. She showed a vision of Magnuson Park from 1994 and urged the Park Board to review the document. The horns being used by audience members in tonight's meeting really got to her. When people are out on the fields playing, there will be no controls over the air horns that will be used by spectators. Work on the other fields where lights can be installed.

Kim Wells: spoke on Sand Point Magnuson Park. She is a business person and understands that you can't please all the people all of the time. However, if her staff came to her and said "we'll change our business plan and it's only going to tick off 50% of our

customers", she would tell her staff to go back to the drawing board to get more positive feedback from the customers. She asks that the Park Board does the same. She has educated herself on this issue and encourages the Board to go back through the public comments given in the EIS. Some comments favor more fields; however, most people are shocked and horrified at the scale and the lights that will go in at the park. There has to be a solution that satisfies at least 90% of the people. Consider that solution, if not from a moral or ethical standpoint, then from a business and environmental standpoint.

James Fearn stated that tonight's agenda, approved by the Board, called for a public hearing on South Lake Union Park, which was scheduled to begin at 7:15 p.m. James said the Board was about to have a public hearing on a number of issues that were not on the agenda. **He moved that the Board adhere to the agenda and resume public testimony after the scheduled agenda is completed.** James said he thought it was unfair to the people who came for the issues that are on the agenda to delay the regular agenda until 9:00 or 10:00 p.m.

Several audience members began commenting loudly. The Chair reminded the audience that they must be recognized by the Chair to speak. **Terry seconded the motion. The vote was taken and was approved unanimously.**

The next item on the agenda was a briefing on the South Lake Union Park project, to be followed by a public hearing. When the presenters began the briefing, members of the audience began honking horns and speaking loudly, which continued until the meeting adjourned. Kate stated that the choices are: if the briefing is not allowed to go forward and the audience wants to continue honking and disrupting the meeting, then the meeting will adjourn and the agenda continued at a later date. It will be an inconvenience for all those who came for tonight's regular agenda. A number of the audience continued honking horns and shouting.

James moved that the meeting be adjourned, Kate seconded. The vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

APPROVED _____ DATE _____
Bruce Bentley, Chair