



Department of Parks and Recreation

Seattle Board of Park Commissioners
<http://www.seattle.gov/parks/parkboard/>

Meeting Minutes
May 10, 2007

Board of Park Commissioners:

Present:

John Barber
Terry Holme
Jackie Ramels
Amit Ranade

Seattle Parks and Recreation Staff:

B.J. Brooks, Interim Superintendent
Sandy Brooks, Coordinator

Commissioner Ranade called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Commissioner Holme moved, and Commissioner Ramels seconded, approval of the agenda and April 26 minutes as amended. The vote was taken and motion passed.

Commissioner Barber was welcomed as the Board's newest member, appointed by the City Council

Superintendent's Report

Interim Superintendent Brooks reported on the following items. For more information on Seattle Parks and Recreation, please visit the web pages at <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/>.

Teen Summit and Mayor's Town Hall: Participation at this year's event exceeded the 200 participant registration cap. The Summit combined with the 5th Annual Mayor's Town Hall to provide a full day of civic engagement workshops and roundtable discussions with city leaders. This is a great partnership of the Mayor's Office, the Seattle Center, Seattle Parks, and the YMCA.

Women of the World Swim: A special, 6-month program intended to provide free swimming opportunities for women whose culture or religion prevent them from co-ed swimming has begun at two of Seattle Parks pools. Through a grant, the Women of the World Swims rent either Rainier Beach or Southwest Pool every Saturday from April to September for free swimming for women. The project was started to provide swimming opportunities for Muslim women, but the program is open to any women of any age, race, religion, or background.

Dennis Cook Wins Austin Foundation Award: The Austin Foundation held its annual breakfast with more than 200 people attending the annual fund raiser. While there were many bright stars at the event, no star shone brighter than the Parks and Recreation's 2007 Austin Foundation Community Champion award winner, **Dennis Cook** (Parks' Athletics Manager). The long time mentor and community leader received a standing ovation for his tireless contributions to the community. Organizers lauded Dennis for his perseverance, patience, and can-do attitude.

Victor Steinbrueck Park: The Interim Superintendent recently sent information to the City Clerk's office to change the hours of operation at this park to close at 10:00 pm, instead of at 11:00 pm. This is an emergency 90-day permit, at the request of Seattle Police Department and the community due to behaviors in the park. The Park Board has scheduled a public hearing to consider permanent change of the hours at its July 12 meeting.

UPCOMING CELEBRATIONS

Chief Sealth Trail Grand Opening: Saturday, May 12 will be the grand opening and dedication of the Chief Sealth Trail, which was partially funded by the Pro Parks Levy. The celebration will be between 10:00a.m. and noon, at 32nd Ave. S and S. Willow St., which is in the New Holly neighborhood.

Ella Bailey Park: This Pro Park Levy-funded park was opened to the public on the afternoon of May 4. The formal Ella Bailey Park dedication and celebration will be held on May 12, 2007 beginning at 1:30 p.m. The event will include music by La Bande Pastiche, children's entertainment, soccer fun, a hot dog stand, cupcakes and light refreshments.

Delridge Parks: An Opening Day Dedication event will take place on Saturday, May 19, from 11:00a.m. to 3:00p.m. to celebrate completion of Pro Parks projects at Greg Davis, Cottage Grove and Puget Boulevard Parks in the Delridge neighborhood (between Delridge Way SW and 26th Ave S, north of SW Brandon St.). The actual dedication/ribbon cutting will be at 2:00.

Commissioner Holme asked that Parks staff send notices of these celebrations to the Park Board. Staff will follow up on this request.

Oral Requests and Communication from the Audience

The Chair explained that this portion of the agenda is reserved for topics that have not had, or are not scheduled for, a public hearing. Speakers are limited to three minutes each and will be timed. The Board's usual process is for 15 minutes of testimony to be heard at this time, with additional testimony heard after the regular agenda and just before Board of Park Commissioner's business. No one signed up to testify.

Briefing: Seattle Parks Foundation *Bands of Green*

Woody Wheeler, Seattle Parks Foundation Program Director, presented a briefing on the Seattle Parks Foundation *Bands of Green*. Commissioners received both a written and verbal briefing. Commissioners received both a written and verbal briefing.

Written Briefing

Requested Board Action

No immediate action will be requested. The briefing is for informational purposes with the intent of gaining the Park Board's support of *Bands of Green* as a means of enhancing and expanding the City's park system.

Project Description and Background

Bands of Green is a set of recommendations for the continuing development of bicycle and pedestrian trails, boulevards, and linear parks in Seattle. It is an updated version of the original 1990 report prepared for Seattle Parks.

Recognizing the value of *Bands of Green I*, and the fact that 16 years had passed, Seattle Parks Foundation hired Cedar River Associates to bring the original report up to date.

Public Involvement Process

Bands of Green was developed over a two-year period with extensive input from a variety of sources. The ideas for *Bands of Green* were derived from the original Olmsted Park Plan, the Bogue Plan, the Comprehensive Parks Plan, and the 38 neighborhood plans. The report has since been vetted by: Seattle Parks Department, Seattle Department of Transportation, Friends of Seattle's Olmsted parks, the Open Space Advocates, and Seattle Department of Planning and Development. Currently, *Bands of Green* resides on our website, where we continue to compile comments so that it is a "living document."

Issues

The main issue is how to mobilize not only City Parks, but other City departments to implement recommendations from *Bands of Green*. Comments on the report have been 95% positive on our website and in response to the Seattle PI's front page story [http://seattlepi.nwsource.com/local/303334_bandgreen12.html] The few negative comments we have heard had to do with corrections and omissions.

Budget

Bands of Green relies primarily upon existing rather than new funding. However, a renewed parks levy with funds for capital projects would definitely aid in its implementation. In the meantime, here are examples of ways that Bands of Green can be incrementally implemented with existing funding:

- During scheduling replacement or repair of streets identified as potential boulevards, the City will be able to accommodate the recommended improvements.
- When major utility projects are undertaken, they will integrate boulevards and trails as well as use the list of recommendations when it mitigates for project impacts.
- When private development projects are undertaken, the City will direct construction of parts of trails, waterfront access, and boulevard development, in addition to or in lieu of on-site or open space mitigation.

The City's utilities will seek opportunities to use new linear parks as corridors for underground utilities.

Schedule

The roll-out of *Bands of Green* is nearly completed and implementation is underway. The City has assigned a staff person to implement *Bands of Green* and has already taken steps to include it as a layer in the City's GIS mapping system. In addition, the City has developed a matrix listing all 50+ project ideas in *Bands of Green*, broken out by geographical quadrants of Seattle, urging various departments to undertake *Bands of Green* projects as they conduct their business as usual. Meanwhile, Seattle Parks Foundation is leading the effort to implement part of the Inland Waterways Open Space Network by raising funds to build Lake Union Park, advocating for a Lake Union Trail, and by renovating Waterway #18 along the north shore of Lake Union. The Foundation also intends to support the Duwamish Open Space Network recommendations by seeking a park project in this area, and by advocating for continuation of the West Duwamish bicycle trail through South Park.

Verbal Briefing/Board Discussion

Mr. Wheeler gave a brief history of the Seattle Parks Foundation and detail on the *Bands of Green* program. He also gave a Powerpoint presentation. To read more detailed information on the Foundation, see <http://www.seattleparksfoundation.org>. For the 140-page report or to download a map of *Bands of Green*, see http://www.seattleparksfoundation.org/project_BandsOfGreen.html.

Commissioner Ramels commented that Seattle is lucky to have the Seattle Parks Foundation and believes the Foundation is doing great work. She recently met with Councilmember Rasmussen and part of the discussion was how the Bands of Green projects can be integrated into neighborhood projects or city processes. She noted it would be useful to have an implementation "handbook" with pragmatic steps for incorporating the projects into everyday governance. Mr. Wheeler noted this suggestion and commented that Bands of Green already is

encouraging City departments to reference the GIS system for Bands of Green projects to try to incorporate into upcoming city project. She also recommended that he contact Charles Redmond of the Delridge Neighborhood Development Association, which has been working on an extensive trail system in the entire West Seattle area, from Alki to White Center, for at least past year and probably much longer..

Commissioner Holme believes there is a potential for duplication of efforts, with the Street Levy, Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) bike path program, and others. He asked if the Mayor's staff person assigned to Bands of Green is centralizing all these efforts and whether the Foundation can help with the centralizing. Mr. Wheeler answered that he met with the mayor's staff and a number of the City's department heads. The message there was for all to work together. Following that meeting, Miranda Allen was assigned as the City's staff person. The Foundation is working with Ms. Allen to some extent, but he does not know how the various efforts are being centralized. Commissioner Holme recommended the Foundation ask the Mayor's office that this staff position be ongoing and not for the short-term. It is important that the right hand knows what the left hand is doing.

Commissioner Holme asked if a goal of the program is to add new space to Seattle's parks. Mr. Wheeler answered that some of the property belongs to Seattle Parks (notably the boulevards), some to Seattle Public Utilities, some to the Port of Seattle, and the lion share is Seattle Department of Transportation property. The goals are to get more agencies involved in this program and cut across boundaries. Commissioner Holme asked if the department heads will be committed to maintaining the properties. He has concerns that if the sites are built, who will maintain them.

Interim Superintendent Brooks commented that Anne Fiske-Zuniga is the deputy director of SDOT and is that department's lead on the City's roadwork and bike plan. Ms. Fiske-Zuniga's contact information will be sent to Mr. Wheeler.

Commissioner Holme is especially interested that the City's transportation bond, "Bridging the Gap", work closely with the Bands of Green project. Mr. Wheeler commented that this partnership is a nice opportunity for the City.

Commissioner Barber sees lots of opportunities with the Band of Green program and recommended that the Foundation not be shy in asking for more funds to implement these proposals. There is strong support in the community. He is interested in how the Foundation will jumpstart to the next steps. He suggested overlays of opportunity for each of the agencies be shown on the map and then the opportunities prioritized. Look for areas of intersection among the agencies and then work together to build a better project. He asked if Mr. Wheeler has Seattle Park's specific list of projects. Mr. Wheeler answered that he doesn't, but it would be useful information. The Interim Superintendent agreed that it would be useful to look for opportunities in Seattle Parks' plans. Mr. Wheeler will follow up with Parks staff on linking Parks projects to particular Bands of Green projects.

Commissioner Ramels commented that it was her impression that when the Bands of Green Plan was first presented, it was more of a vision than an implementation handbook; now the Foundation is determining how to implement the projects defined in the plan. Commissioner Holme observed that when the specific projects are identified, those could help drive another parks levy.

Commissioners thanked Mr. Wheeler for the presentation.

Update Briefing: Marra-Desimone Park

Kevin Bergsrud, Seattle Parks' project planner, presented an update briefing on Marra-Desimone Park. The Park Board heard a staff briefing, followed by a public hearing at its October 26, 2006, meeting. For minutes from that meeting, see <http://www.cityofseattle.net/parks/parkboard/minutes/2006/10-26-06.pdf>. At its November 9 meeting, the Board held moved to recommend to the Superintendent adoption of the Long-term Development Plan as proposed by staff. The motion carried.

Written Briefing

Requested Board Action

Staff is providing an update on the long term development plan for the Marra – Desimone Park. The Board previously held a public hearing on October 26, 2006 and recommended approval of the plan at their November 6, 2006 meeting.

Introduction and Background

Attached is the briefing from October 2006 that provides project history.

Marra-Desimone park is an 8.7 acre site, located at 9026 4th Ave S, was transferred from King County ownership to Seattle Parks in December 2004.

Long Range Development Plan

The Marra Farm Coalition (MFC) submitted an application to the Pro Parks Opportunity Fund to build a number of site improvements, and received \$180,000 with the stipulation that they work with Parks to create a long range plan in addition to making some physical improvements. Parks staff has worked with the MFC and the community on a long term development plan for the new park as well as defining small scale improvements that will be built later this fall. Early community meetings confirmed the basic project goals outlined in the Pro Parks Opportunity Fund.

- Develop a long-term plan that guides future growth and programming.
- Assist in the development of a Memorandum of Agreement between the City and MFC that supports the Marra Farm long-term development plan.
- Install and/or construct some improvements consistent with the scope of the long-term plan. These may include paths, park furnishings, and improved parking areas.

Marra Farm Coalition

The MFC is comprised of the following organizations

- **Lettuce Link** a program of the Fremont Public Assoc. that grows produce on .75-acre for South Park food banks. They also teach neighbors and local students about farming, nutrition and environmental stewardship, and support a children's garden.
- **Seattle Youth Garden Works (SYGW)** SYGW empowers youth with garden-based education, training, and employment. SYGW tends plots and sells produce at farmer's markets.
- **P-patch program** is supported by Department of Neighborhood staff. In 2004, around 20 gardeners maintained plots at Marra Farm.
- **Mien Community Garden** is connected to WSU/King County Master Gardeners. Mien community members farm on .75-acre using traditional Mien agricultural techniques. The produce supports the Mien community and local food banks. They are proposed to be incorporated within the P-Patch program.
- **IMAPAL** worked with volunteers and the King County Conservation District on a program that day-lighted and restored a stream on the Park's western boundary.
- **Master Composters/ Master Soil Builders** have recently located informational programs on the farm. The program is operated through SPU.
- **South Park Area Redevelopment Committee (SPARC)** is the neighborhood plan stewardship group and provides the MFC with meeting space and liability insurance.

Project Status

The following are the planned improvements and changes and/or updates to what was discussed in November:

- Establish a hierarchy of trails to encourage public enjoyment of the site and to allow maintenance. The 2006 briefing proposed a hierarchy of trails ranging in width from 16' to accommodate both pedestrians and maintenance vehicles to 6' wide for pedestrians only. Following the Park Board briefing and Recommendation, the MFC raised concerns about the width of the Sun Arc. The MFC and Parks agreed that the path would be 6' wide with a foot on each side for landscaping. Due to the narrow width, Parks will not provide any maintenance in the farm area that would require use of a vehicle. Maintenance access will be limited to the south access road, paths leading to community buildings and pavilion, that may be constructed in the future, and to the SPU drainage swales if they are constructed.

- Work with SPU to explore accommodating detention facility on-site. Parks has been working with SPU to integrate a drainage project in a manner that achieves a significant portion of the grading needed on the eastern portion of the site.
- Grade the eastern portion of the site to integrate it with the western portion. Preliminary designs created by SPU indicate that their project can be designed in a manner that achieves the grades needed to better integrate the eastern and western portions of the site.
- Relocate parking and gathering green to eastern portion of the site. This may be accomplished through the SPU project.
- Develop several smaller social areas amongst the farm plots. The revision to the Arc Path means that the main social areas will be the gathering green and children's play area. There will now be one sitting and picnic opportunity area integrated along the Sun Arc path to re-enforce the public interaction with farming activities.
- Expand of gardening/farming opportunities. To be undertaken by MFC in the future.
- Add a children's play area that features creative play elements with a farm theme. Future project
- Site a community pavilion. Future project
- Identify a site for a potential education center. Future project

Near Term Improvements

The Opportunity Fund Grant also provides approximately \$50,000 to purchase furnishing and construct small improvements. Staff has been working with the MFC to identify a project, but it has been delayed due to the MFC's concerns about path widths. The likely projects include some of the following:

- Installation of entry gateways, a rainbow sign
- Construction of a main accessible path
- Provision of picnic tables.

Public Involvement Process

No additional public outreach has occurred since the Park Board hearing and recommendation.

Issues

Memorandum of Agreement - Staff and the MFC have been developing a MOU to delineate maintenance and management responsibilities, expectations about community involvement and outreach. It is in the final stages of staff review.

Budget

The Pro Parks Levy Opportunity Fund provided \$180,000 to complete the development plan and implement small scale improvements. The final plan will have rough construction costs estimates. Currently there is no budget to implement the plan. Parks expects that the MFC will continue to pursue grants for their elements.

Schedule

Construction of the small improvements will occur by early summer.

Staff Recommendation

Not Applicable.

Additional Information

The web site at: <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/proparks/projects/marrafarm.htm> provides information about the project, photos, and pertinent updates.

Contact Information

Kevin Bergsrud, Project Planner
800 Maynard Ave. S., 3rd Floor
Seattle, WA 98134

206-684-5831

kevin.bergsrud@seattle.gov

Verbal Briefing/Commissioners Comments

Mr. Bergsrud described the project and the changes since the Board was last briefed in October. Cathy Tuttle and David Goldberg, project planners who have since left the Department, were the previous project managers. Mr. Bergsrud was recently assigned to this project to take it to completion.

The primary issue he is dealing with is the trail. It was originally slated to be wide enough for Parks' maintenance vehicles to use; however, the community would like a more narrow trail. The second issue is the community's concerns with the water drainage swales. Installing these bioswales is fairly common. The water pools slowly, the plants slow down the water, and help remove heavy metals from the water before it gets into the stormwater/sewage system.

He received good news this week that the grading will make the site more level, enabling better visibility into the park. Seattle Parks will work closely with Seattle Public Utilities on this during the next few months.

Commissioner Ramels commented that this is a wonderful project and asked for follow-up on several items. Mr. Bergsrud will send additional information to the Board on these issues:

-- Commissioner Ramels recalled that at the October 26 briefing, the community was concerned with proposed tree removal and wondered whether there are any remaining concerns. Mr. Bergsrud commented that Seattle Parks' Senior Urban Forester had recently inventoried the trees and there are 20-30 trees slated for removal. Many of those are smaller caliper trees. Any of significant size must be replaced 2 for 1, per the City's tree replacement policy. Efforts are being made to save the large madrona in the park.

-- She asked about the effectiveness of the interpreters at the community meetings. She is curious on the effectiveness of these efforts.

-- She asked about the LRP completion costs for the entire project and commented that the information would be helpful for any other Pro Parks Levy project. Commissioner Holme commented that at the October briefing the project manager was waiting to see what SPU would fund on this project, then the coalition was to do fundraising. Follow up on that would be helpful, too.

Commissioner Holme asked what amount of Pro Park Levy funds remain and what the amount might pay for in this project. Mr. Bergsrud answered that there is \$30-35,000 remaining. It is slated for use on the path (Seattle Conservation Corp will help with this construction), two picnic tables, and some fencing. Toilets are not included.

Commissioner Barber commented that this project is going in a great direction. He asked about the strategy to control weeds in the large and exposed common area. Neighborhood groups may donate the plants. He urged that weed control methods be incorporated into any planting plan for this area. It is good to get this part of the project right. He asked if there are eyes on the park. Mr. Bergsrud answered that there are some houses nearby that afford a good line of vision into the park, but as the trees grow that will diminish. The site with the most visibility into the park is next to the swales. Part of Seattle Parks' discussion with Seattle Public Utilities has focused on removing the excess soil and raising the berm area at this location. The two departments will continue working together on this effort.

Interim Superintendent Brooks commented that citizens are delighted that Seattle Parks re-considered and negotiated reduction of the size of the path and inclusion of the name "Marra Farms" on the rainbow sign at the park entrance. She complimented Mr. Bergsrud for his recent work on this project and suggested that this is a good project for Seattle Park Foundation to consider as it is looking for a project to take on in this area of the city.

Commissioners thanked Mr. Bergsrud for the update briefing.

Briefing: Seattle Parks Strategic Business Plan

Kevin Stoops, Seattle Parks' interim policy advisory, and Carol Everson, Seattle Parks' Budget Director, briefed the Board on the Department's Strategic Business Plan. Commissioners received both a written and verbal briefing. Information on the Plan and the latest updates are available at <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/Publications/BusinessPlan.htm>.

Written Briefing

Requested Board Action

No action at this time. This will only be a briefing on the status the preparation of a Strategic Business Plan for Seattle Parks and Recreation. The approach and schedule for the preparation of the plan will be presented. Additional briefings will be scheduled over the balance of 2007, culminating in a public hearing on a draft plan before the Board, and Board recommendations to the Superintendent at the end of the year.

Project Description and Background

The Strategic Business Plan is intended to be a guide to determine funding, operations, and capital actions to align services, programs, and facilities to meet recreational demands within the City's financial capabilities over a five-year period, beginning with the 2009-2010 biennium. It will address park operations in the post Pro-Parks Levy era as well as outline actions necessary to meet evolving recreational demands in the immediate future. This will be a plan focused on park operations, which will be different than a comprehensive park and recreation plan as was suggested in briefings to the Board in early 2006.

To prepare for the production of the Strategic Business Plan, Parks staff have previously updated the Gap Analysis and undertaken analyses of the 2000 census. Reports on these were made to the Board in 2006. Research has also been undertaken with regard to recreational demands on national, state, and local scales. Analyses are now underway on Parks' various "lines of business" to identify the costs of such operations and options associated with such operations. In order to be more efficient, Parks will investigate moving to more of a business model to allocate funding and staffing resources to manage parks and recreation facilities. Emphasis will be on preserving core programs with the City's General Fund support and leveraging of other funds for other programs and services.

Attached is a summary of Parks Mission Statement; draft Vision and Values Statements for the Strategic Business Plan; and draft Objectives and possible strategies to satisfy the Vision and Values. [See link to website noted above.]

Public Involvement Process

An extensive public process will be associated with the preparation of the Strategic Business Plan, including two rounds of public meetings. The first round of public meetings, three of which will be done in a workshop format, are set for late June to gather input on priority programs and services; the second round in September will be set to review the draft plan. A public opinion survey will be conducted this summer to elicit input across a broader spectrum of the public than may be obtained from the public meetings. All the public meetings will be announced with extensive mailings of fliers, posters at community centers, swimming pools, "Little City Halls" and libraries; ads in daily and community newspapers; and announcements on Parks' public access network web page.

The public process will culminate with briefings and a hearing before the Board this fall. The Board's recommendations will be incorporated into the final plan that will be submitted to the Mayor and then the Council in early 2008.

Attached is a draft schedule for the public involvement process. [See link to website noted above.]

Issues

The Strategic Business Plan will be broad in scope and controversy may be expected. Issues may arise around program consolidation, changes in maintenance services, and increased fees and charges.

Budget

The Strategic Business Plan involves a budget of \$250,000 to provide for consultants, planning staff support, and costs of mailing, printing, and the like. This is General Fund money appropriated in the 2007 Operating Budget. This money does not include other staff costs associated with the existing staff that are contributing to background analyses and report production.

Schedule

As indicated above, the Strategic Business Plan is to be prepared in 2007 and submitted to the Seattle City Council in early 2008 in order to inform the post Pro-Parks era that begins with the 2009-2010 biennium.

Staff Recommendation

None at this time.

Additional Information

For more information, please do not hesitate to call me at 206 684-7053 or e-mail me at Kevin.stoops@seattle.gov.

Verbal Briefing/Discussion

Mr. Stoops gave a background summary of the process and introduced Ms. Everson to review the timeline. She gave detailed information on the Plan's vision, values, objectives, and possible strategies of the plan. [See link to website listed above, for the latest version.] Mr. Stoops then reviewed the revised timeline and reviewed the proposed dates shown on the timeline. The Park Board is scheduled to hold a public hearing in late 2007.

Commissioner Ranade believes the timeline is well thought out and he especially appreciates that there are three opportunities for the public to give input.

Commissioner Ramels strongly agrees that the Department should charge market rate fees for its facilities, as she has observed that some users are making a profit from using the facilities. She asked for clarification on Objective C and maintenance costs. Mr. Stoops and Ms. Everson gave additional information on this and on budgeted maintenance amounts. She asked how the core values and strategic plan impact and coordinate with the values and goals of Parks' key partners, such as the Associated Recreation Council. Mr. Stoops answered that the section on core values is still being refined.

Commissioner Holme asked for further explanation on the naming option. Mr. Stoops answered that this would allow the Department to (1) sell the name of a facility or portion of a facility and (2) allow special events to be underwritten by corporations. Commissioner Holme noted that there was a reference to parking fees in the first version received by the Commissioners and that was removed from the new version given tonight. He noted that Stanley Park in Vancouver, B.C., is now charging parking fees. Mr. Stoops answered that the parking proposal would raise money for the department and it would help better allocate parking, as it would force a turnover of vehicles in spaces. Ms. Everson observed that the Plan is going through many revisions, with a number of staff updating the plan. Work on the parking objective is still ongoing. Mr. Stoops stated that other items in the Plan are still abstract. The most current version is on the website.

Commissioner Barber appreciates Parks taking its Strategic Business Plan to the community and explaining it. His observation is that neighbors identify with their neighborhood parks and will revolt over commercial sponsorship of the parks. The public owns the parks and many of them are mini-neighborhood centers. Commissioner Barber stated that building community is already one of the core values

Commissioners thanked Mr. Stoops and Ms. Everson for the briefing.

New/Old Business

Citizen Correspondence: Over the last month, the Board received a lengthy series of e-mails from a citizen who wanted to correspond directly with the Board members, without the involvement of the appropriate project staff. The Board's Coordinator related a large amount of information to the citizen on the Board's role as an advisory group to the Superintendent, Mayor, and City Council. The Board also responded to the citizen to reinforce the information relayed by the Coordinator and added that it would discuss the concerns further at its annual retreat.

Commissioners agreed with the Mayor's Office protocol that all members of the City's Boards and Commissions are volunteers and it is inappropriate for these volunteers to send private responses to citizens or speak for the city. All correspondence to the Boards and Commissions must go through that Board's staff person. Commissioners must function in the public for all to see and cannot meet and discuss issues outside of the public eye. Board members have a limited knowledge of projects and if the communication is of any substance, they must depend on staff for detailed knowledge. To give credible advice, the Commissioners must gather as much information as possible and follow the open meeting policy. Members of the public, besides writing the Board, may also come to the meetings and give direct testimony to the Board during the Oral Communications segment of the meeting.

Commissioners were concerned with a comment in the correspondence that the only people at the Board's public hearing are paid lobbyists. While some lobbyists have testified to the Board, they have three minutes to speak, just like all others who testify.

Response to West Seattle Kiwanis Club: This group wrote Commissioner Ramels after she spoke at one of their meetings earlier this year. She turned the letter over to Parks staff at the April 26 meeting and clarified that she wanted the letter to come from Parks staff, not her. The Board's Coordinator will verify that this is the case.

Queen Anne Ballfield – Commissioner Ranade was recently at this field and noted that the baseball field bases are sinking. The Coordinator will contact Seattle Parks' Recreation Coordinator, Dennis Cook, with this information and ask him to respond to the Board.

Park Board Vacancies: Commissioner Holme asked if there is new information on the vacant City Council and Mayoral position to the Board. Interim Superintendent Brooks will ask Mayor Nickels for information at her next meeting with him. Parks staff will continue checking with Council staff and the Mayor's Boards and Commission staff on what progress has been made to fill the vacancies.

Park Board Handbooks: The Coordinator recently updated the handbooks and gave copies to all four Commissioners. Commissioners thanked the Coordinator. Commissioner Barber asked that a copy of the Open Meeting Policy be added and the Coordinator agreed to do so.

May 24 Meeting Update: A public hearing is scheduled on the Wallingford Playground/Hamilton Middle School proposal. A large crowd is anticipated so the meeting will be held at the Woodland Park Zoo's Education Center. The entrance is at the northeast corner of the south parking lot.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

APPROVED: _____

Amit Ranade, Chair
Board of Park Commissioners

DATE _____