

Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation

Seattle Board of Park Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
March 22, 2012

Web site: <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/parkboard/>
(Includes agendas and minutes from 2001-present)

Also, view Seattle Channel tapes of meetings, June 12, 2008-most current, at
<http://www.seattlechannel.org/videos/watchVideos.asp?program=Parks>

Board of Park Commissioners

Present:

Antoinette Angulo
John Barber
Megan Heahlke
Jourdan Keith
Diana Kincaid, Acting Chair
Brice Maryman
Barbara Wright

Appointee:

Yazmin Mehdi, Mayoral Appointee

Seattle Parks and Recreation Staff

Christopher Williams, Acting Superintendent
Eric Friedli, Acting Deputy Superintendent
Sandy Brooks, Park Board Coordinator

This meeting was held at Seattle Park Headquarters, 100 Dexter Avenue North. Acting Chair Diana Kincaid called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm, welcomed members of the audience, and reviewed the meeting agenda. **Commissioner Barber moved approval of the March 22 meeting agenda, March 8 minutes, and acknowledgment of correspondence. Commissioner Angulo seconded. The vote was taken and motion carried.**

Superintendent's Report

Acting Superintendent Williams reported on the following. To hear the full report, see <http://www.seattlechannel.org/videos/video.asp?ID=6106> and move cursor to position .50.

Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center: The renovation at this site is nearly complete, with a re-opening planned for May 1 and the film festival event scheduled April 14-22.

Aquarium and Pier 59: On March 20, a barge broke loose during high winds and collided with the end of Pier 59, where the Seattle Aquarium is located. Aquarium staff do not believe there is structural damage; however, they are working with contractors who will assess the pier over the next six months.

Budget Revenue: In 1988 Seattle Parks signed an agreement with Sprint to run fiber optic lines under the Burke-Gilman Trail at a value of \$1 million. Parks believes the value has increased and has hired a consultant to determine the current value and re-negotiate with Sprint.

Magnuson Park: Building 30 at Magnuson Park needs approximately \$9 million for upgrades. \$5 million was acquired through debit financing and most of that went towards a seismic retrofit for the building. The mayor recently allocated the remaining amount to complete the remodel. Parks is paying to relocate tenants to other Magnuson Park sites and hope they will return to Building 30, once the remodel is complete.

Seattle Parks Department Holds Staff Retreat: For the first time in two years, the Department held an all-staff retreat. The March 14 event was a day for staff to reconnect with Parks' values and with each other. A number of employees presented information on the work they do and feedback from the retreat was very positive. Commissioners Barber and Kincaid and Commissioner-elect Mehdi attended.

Commissioner Barber stated it was a profound experience to hear Acting Superintendent Williams talk to staff about his health. He noted that there was near silence in the room of 800-900 people who were listening intently. He was very moved by the employee's regard for the Acting Superintendent and praised him for his courage. Commissioner Kincaid also enjoyed the retreat and the opportunity to talk to a number of the staff. She, too, was moved when the Acting Superintendent addressed staff. Commissioner Mehdi stated it was fabulous to see the vibrancy and commitment of the Department's staff.

2013 Budget Update: Department staff have been meeting with the Mayor and Budget Office on the outlook for next year's budget. The outlook for 2013 is dire, with Parks at risk of a \$15 million cut, on top of the cuts it has taken the past few years. New ideas are needed to help fund the work of the Department. To help, a Parks Transformation Work Group has been launched, with Parks staff, several Park Board commissioners, the public, labor representatives, and staff from the City Budget Office and City Council. Two consultants will lead the process, which will begin in April and last six-seven weeks. The work of this group to find new funding ideas will be a benchmark and go beyond what Parks can do alone.

Commissioner Keith asked if Parks staff feel good about this proposal. Acting Superintendent Williams stated that King County's budget was in worse shape than Seattle's and the County executive mandated such a process. The County has authority to work in a more entrepreneurial manner than does the City. He hopes the recommendations of the work group will receive the community and City's support.

Kinnear Park Off-Leash Area: Last week the Department received a petition in support of a new off-leash area on the lower west side of Kinnear Park. The area has illegal camping and illicit behavior and the off-leash area would help deter this behavior. However, the Justice Department has audited the City's compliance to the stricter 2009 Americans with Disability Act (ADA) and there is concern that the area is too steep to be ADA compliant. Parks staff met with the community and will continue working on this issue to follow Justice Department requirements, while getting the greatest benefit for the community.

Commissioner Mehdi asked if there is a precedent for doing pre-work with the Justice Department to receive ADA waivers.

Oral Requests and Communication from the Audience

The Chair explained 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 two-to-three minutes each, will be timed, and are asked to stand at the podium to speak. The Board's usual process is for 10 minutes of testimony to be heard at this time, with additional testimony heard after the regular agenda and just before Old/New Business. No one testified.

Presentation: John C. Little, Sr. Spirit Award

Each year at a Park Board meeting, the Superintendent presents the John C. Little, Sr. Spirit Award to a department staff member who demonstrates the following characteristics: mentoring Seattle's youth, providing leadership in the community, making a difference in young lives, and going above and beyond the call of duty.

The 2011 recipient is Diane Jones, Aquatics Center Coordinator. The following comments were made in her nomination:

- Through her efforts children have learned to swim, been guided into swim aide opportunities, trained in water safety skills, and employed as lifeguards or swim instructors. This career path mentoring has resulted in strong connections to the community and development of an ethnically diverse work force.
- Diane has taken water safety into Seattle Public School classrooms with presentations to elementary school children. Her well-trained staff have become "Aquatic Ambassadors" as they demonstrate lifejacket safety and encourage awareness.
- In a four-step process that extends over many years, she has taught children to swim, found scholarship dollars to make sure programs were affordable, recruited them as volunteers and, finally, hired them as intermittent employees. The changing profile of staff has helped to make our facilities gain a greater community acceptance through increased diversity.
- She has organized press conferences, recruited models and worked in partnership with the Health Department and Children's Hospital to run fashion shows with teens wearing lifejackets. This makes teen aquatic safety a priority and shows this age group that lifejackets can be fashionable and fun while still saving lives.
- Diane has implemented outreach programs in the Vietnamese and Eastern African communities that were identified as high risk populations to reduce incidents of drowning in our city – which is surrounded by water.
- Diane has actively recruited ethnically diverse teens for future employment and helped provide them with the necessary skills and experience to be successful.
- As part of the Health Department "Everyone Swims" grant, she has led an effort to remove obstacles and make connection with youth in various ethnic communities. This success is seen in the swim lesson program at Southwest Pool, which has revenue that is 27% higher than last year and offers more scholarships than ever.

Acting Deputy Superintendent Williams reviewed Diane's many efforts on behalf of youth and presented her with the award. A representative of Mr. William's family described his values and beliefs and congratulated Ms. Jones on her win.

Aquatics staff attended the event and served refreshments as part of the celebration. Commissioners took a short break to meet the recipient, Mr. Williams' family, and other guests.

Briefing: Magnuson Park Strategic Development Plan

Rebecca Salinas, Seattle Parks Department Partnership Unit and Magnuson Park Manager, presented an update briefing on the Magnuson Park Strategic Development Plan. To hear the full presentation and Powerpoint and hear the Board's discussion, see <http://www.seattlechannel.org/videos/video.asp?ID=6106> and move cursor to position 32.45. Prior to the meeting, Commissioners received a number of documents, including a written briefing paper, included below. Ms. Salinas most recently briefed the Board on the Development Plan at its February 23 meeting. The Board will hold a public hearing at its May 24 meeting and make a recommendation to the Acting Superintendent.

Written Briefing

Requested Board Action

No board action is requested at this time. Staff will provide the Board with a brief update on the strategic planning process that is underway and a revised timeline for completion of the plan.

Staff would like the Board's input into the capital improvements and programmatic priorities that have thus far been collaboratively identified by city staff and a community advisory group, using eight Key Values developed by the advisory group.

Brief Background of the Park

Naval Air Station Seattle properties, conveyed by the Navy to the City, Solid Ground and the University of Washington, total 336 acres. The 309 acres which comprise Warren G. Magnuson Park have slowly transformed in over 30 years from large paved runways, aging buildings and a leveled topography, to a park offering users a variety of activities, both recreational and passive, provided by Parks and our many partner organizations.

The City of Seattle has invested over \$42 million and completed 40 capital improvement projects. Our partners have invested more than \$33 million, transforming seriously deteriorated buildings into safe and attractive public recreational facilities. Solid Ground and the University of Washington (UW) have invested over \$54 million for property under their jurisdiction and ownership. UW has fully renovated three of the five buildings located on their properties; Solid Ground has renovated six buildings and constructed three new buildings located on their properties.

The Sand Point Historic District now has federal, State and City historic district designations requiring the 42 historic structures (Parks, Seattle Department of Transportation, Solid Ground and UW owned) be maintained to preserve district landmark status. The federal designation provides developers eligibility for federal historic tax credits.

Park Planning

Over the years, in collaboration with many interested citizens, the city has developed extensive planning documents and legal agreements that have provided the vision for the park, including a Master Plan adopted by the City Council in 1997 and amended in 1999 and 2004. Many of the recommendations from the various plans have been implemented, the latest of which is the renovation of Building 30, scheduled to begin in October, 2012. However, there is almost \$70 million in estimated projects still needing completion, including building, site and infrastructure improvements and major maintenance.

The goals of the current planning effort are to:

- Reconfirm the vision of the park as a multi-use regional park;
- Prioritize unfunded capital improvements;
- Identify desired programming, activities and amenities for the park; and
- Submit a plan for City Council approval that provides direction on the strategic development and near-term actions for general park improvements, programs and buildings.

Planning Implementation Process

Parks convened the Magnuson Park Strategic Planning Work Group, made up of City staff and community members, along with a small City staff work group to provide research and analysis as needed (see attached group rosters). Both groups now meet together and will have their fourth planning meeting in May.

Parks wants to have meaningful engagement by the public in the planning process and to ensure the process is as transparent as possible. On February 11 a public workshop was held to gather comments on the unfunded projects and on programs/services in the park. Seventy-five people attended the workshop and over 200 people have provided their comments electronically. The Magnuson Park Advisory Committee will hold a special meeting in April (see attached calendar) to receive public comments on the first draft of the Strategic Development Plan. There will also be the opportunity for the public to provide comments on the draft plan electronically. And, on May 24 and July 19 the public can provide comments on the final version of the plan to the Park Board and City Council, respectively.

Current Prioritization of Wish List Items

A Wish List comprised of all unfunded capital improvements and major maintenance projects, as well as potential programs and amenities for Magnuson, was created (see attached Wish List). It is from this list that the Strategic Planning Work Group members and the public have selected their priorities. The Wish List has been divided into four categories: Buildings, Land, Infrastructure and Programs/Amenities.

In order to come up with priorities from the long Wish List, the Work Group agreed on eight Key Values upon which to base their decisions (see attached Key Values). The Work Group was divided into four groups reflecting the four Wish List categories and were asked to come up with a draft list of priorities. Each group carefully examined their Wish List items using the Key Values, public input, and information provided by staff.

Attached is the draft list of priorities for the four categories. At times, there was tension between certain Key Values (for example, revenue generation versus public access) and groups had to carefully discuss and then prioritize the Key Values that were most important to them and which they believed were most critical to park development in their Wish List category. This was not an easy task; but each group fully engaged in the process and arrived at heartfelt decisions.

Verbal Briefing and Board Discussion

Ms. Salinas introduced herself and reviewed information in the written documents, including the calendar and priorities list (below.) She last attended the February 23 Park Board meeting to review results of the February 11 public meeting on the Strategic Development Plan and will relay progress made since that meeting.

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING PROCESS CALENDAR

- February 11 – Public Workshop
- February 25 – Public Comment forms available – Park website, electronic mailings, hard copies
- February 23 - Park Board of Commissioners Plan update
- March 13 – Deadline for Public Comment forms submission
- March 22 – Park Board of Commissioners Plan update
- April 2 – Draft of Plan available – Parks website, electronic mailings – *Opportunity for public input*
- April 25 – Special Magnuson Park Advisory Committee Public Meeting – *Opportunity for public input*
- May 10 – Final Version of Strategic Development Plan completed
- May 11 – Final Version of Plan available – Parks website, electronic mailings – *Opportunity for public input*
- May 24 - Park Board of Commissioners, Presentation of Final Version of Plan; recommendation to Acting Superintendent – *Opportunity for public input*
- June 18 – Final Plan available – Parks website
- July 19 – Resolution presentation to City Council for approval and adoption of Plan – *Opportunity for public input*

Infrastructure Priorities

Magnuson Park Strategic Development Plan Working Group
3/15/12 Meeting Notes

- 1) Make NE NOAA Drive the prime north entrance into Magnuson Park and the Historic Campus. Construct improvements which provide a coordinated access into the park, increase traffic, pedestrian and bicycle safety, and ease traffic circulation. Meets values 1, 2, 3, 4,
- 2) Construct Historic Campus-wide traffic and pedestrian safety improvements. Meets values 1, 2, 3.
These improvements include:
 - a. North-south road (Avenue A) which links NE 74th Street and the North Shore Recreation Area, in particular areas adjacent to The Mountaineers Headquarters.
 - b. NE 74th Street particularly where it intersects Sand Point Way NE and Avenue A. May include major reconstruction of the Sand Point Way NE intersection.
 - c. Burke-Gilman Trail Spur connection (approximately NE 82nd St) - providing a safe pedestrian and bicycle crossing to the east side of Sand Point Way NE.
- 3) Modernize Historic Campus electrical system, connect all Campus buildings to Seattle City Light (SCL), and where needed increase electrical capacity to support future redevelopment. Meets values 2, 3, 4.

- 4) Construct a primary trail loop (like around Green Lake), and enhance connectedness to the trail loop by providing landscape features (seating, lighting, comfort stations) and commercial concessions, such as restaurants, where people can stop (rest, people watch, eat, etc.). Meets values 1, 4.
- 5) Install signage – wayfinding, directional, and historic interpretive. Meets values 1, 4.
- 6) Construct additional comfort stations (public restrooms), at athletic fields, 24 hour access, near off-leash dog park and playground. Meets values 1, 2, 3.
- 7) Use and manage existing parking resources through active parking management and enforcement, rather than construct entirely new parking areas, structures, etc. Meets values 1, 7.
- 8) Ensure the provision of 1-percent for art on all capital improvement projects. Meets values 3, 4.

LAND PRIORITIES

Magnuson Strategic Development Plan Working Group
March 15, 2012 – Meeting Notes

- Vegetation Management – highest priority
 1. Invasive plant removal
 - SR 520 wetland mitigation area
 - 'Headwaters project' area
 - North shoreline area
 - Between Kite Hill and Sportsmeadow
 2. Restoration - west and south areas of the park
 3. Add swallow habitat
- Shoreline Restoration*
 1. Restoration of shoreline (erosion control, debris removal, addition of gravel)
 - South of Boat ramp
 - North of swimming beach
 2. Reopen NOAA shoreline trail
- Maintaining and preserving open space*
 1. North park area (between Bldg 11, to north park boundary and Sandpoint Way)
 2. South meadow (south of boat ramp parking)
- Develop sportsfield in the master plan*
 1. Next fields to be developed should be the proposed fields west of the existing fields.

*no consensus was reached on the priority order of Shoreline Restoration, Maintaining and preserving open space and Sportsfield Development categories.

Other Magnuson projects priorities (not in Land category):

- Loop trails through the park
- Interpretive signage
- Parking
 - assessment of usage
 - management

BUILDINGS – PRIORITIES

Magnuson Park Strategic Development Plan Working Group
3/15/12 Discussion Notes

Priority 1:

- √ *Stabilize Building 18 as soon as possible.*
- √ *Implement a development strategy in the very near future - Agree on a strategy for building Work with Cascade Bicycle to agree on a development timeline, or, issue an RFP for development of building 18 to which Cascade Bike could apply.*

Key Values:

- *Responsible stewardship of physical assets – especially, preserving the historic character of the park*
- *Sustainability – look for revenue generating opportunities*
- *High levels of Public Access – park to be used for the public benefit*

• Building 18

- An important contributing building to the historic district and to the surrounding neighborhood
- It is in an important location; at the entrance on NE 74th St
- After renovation it is likely to be very appealing as a rental space; could be a very useable space for programs/services.
- If outside organization developed the building, rental offsets for capital improvements could be negotiated.
- It is in critical need of stabilization. The cost of stabilization – roof replacement, interior scaffolding and seismic= \$500K. There is still \$175K that was earmarked for demolition. Perhaps re-allocate that \$\$ for stabilization; community organizations could work with Parks to find balance of \$\$ needed.
- Cascade Bicycle Club, via legislation, has first right to develop the building. A feasibility study would have to be completed, followed by a capital campaign. This could take minimum of 5 years.
- Maybe worth hiring a development consultant to help with regional marketing and putting development package together (UW used consultant for Bldg 9 RFQ process)

• Building 2

- Very significant contributing building to the historic district
- Needs roof replacement now, at a cost of \$3M; extensive additional work needs to be done for a Certificate of Occupancy – total renovation \$24M
- Will require a very specialized developer/tenant due to its large size and design as a hangar
- Larger spaces like building 2 are harder to rent and generate revenue to cover development costs; Seattle Center is struggling to find tenants.
- There should be a decision soon on the future of this building. Mothballing is an option; will require funding (\$200K initially)

• Buildings 406 (the Brig). 47 (Magnuson Community Center) and 138

- Building 47 is a contributing building to the historic district; 406 is not, although it is in close proximity to the historic district and the NE 74th Street entrance
- 406 and 47 are now providing programs/services to the public and generating revenue for parks. However, south end of Bldg 47 is not renovated and not used.
- Bldg 138 is partially renovated; the space is being used as offices for Cascade Bicycle Club
- 406 is widely used by community organizations via rental space (\$76,000K annual rental revenue)
- Renovation could generate more revenue, but not a significant increase. They could provide increased program space if renovated (i.e. lifelong learning in 406)
- Because these buildings are in okay shape now and are currently providing programming to the community they are not seen as priorities at this time.

Programming Priorities
Magnuson Park Strategic Advisory Committee
Meeting Notes on 3/15/12

The programming subcommittee first did an inventory of the key programming themes that got the most “green dots” (most public votes). They were:

- Senior programming (with dedicated space & staff)
- Arts Programs with more music & theater in the park
- Environmental Learning Centers (ELCs) education and more nature & historical amenities
- Public and Private Partnerships
- Restaurants in the park and seasonal food amenities
- Enhance recreation for all
- Preserving Programming space that is accessible to all and not exclusive to one use.

Of the above themes, Senior Programming had the most green dots (14), with public/private partnerships second (9). The subcommittee then weighed each of these programming themes against the 8 Key Values. The results are:

	High levels of public access	Sustainability	Good stewardship	Integrate physical assets	Develop support and ties with regional community	Programs responsive to community	Good neighbor	Achieve city-wide values and goals for use
Senior Programs	Yes	Yes—if program fees can be retained for Parks	Yes		Meeting needs of a growing population region wide	Yes	Yes	Programs will meet regulations
Arts	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes-tie to Bldg 30 Work	Yes—meeting a growing arts focus	Yes	Yes	Programs will meet regulations
ELCs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, via habitats & Landscape	Yes	Yes	Yes	Programs will meet regulations
Public/Private partnership	Yes if leases are framed to benefit Parks and the public	Yes with non public investments and new income	Yes	Yes—when space used appropriately and optimally			Yes	Programs will meet regulations
Restaurant		Yes						Programs will meet regulations
Enhance Recreation for all	Ties with all themes above							Programs will meet regulations
Preserving Programs space	Ties with all themes above			If programming space is NOT exclusive.				Programs will meet regulations

Based on the above tally the program themes in rank order of best in meeting most of the key values are:

1. Environmental Learning Center

2. Arts

3. Senior Programs

4. Public/private Partnerships

5. Restaurants

Enhancing recreation and preserving program space reflect an overall core value for programming for the park and the team felt all the programs should align with these core values.

Other notes of interest:

- A member wondered why there weren't more youth programs requested—other team members indicated that arts and ELC programs draw quite a bit of youth participants.
- We should consider a pilot in which Magnuson Park (Bldg 406) is used as a self sustaining, non ARC programming site, since increase of programming will increase revenues to Parks.
- Designate a Magnuson Park web site outside of City of Seattle Web site link
- Create a single entity to create synergy between groups that offer programs.

Discussion

Responding to a question from Commissioner Maryman on restaurants at the park, Ms. Salinas answered that some would like to come to the park and stay all day and be able to purchase meals while there. Fare Start restaurant has been discussed as a potential candidate. People also asked for permanent restrooms, rather than port-a-potties. These were not at the top of the list, but definitely are wanted.

Commissioner Maryman also suggested Parks work with Seattle City Light to collaborate on installing solar panels at Magnuson Park.

Commissioner Mehdi asked if food trucks are being considered. Ms. Salinas responded they are; two trucks have already sold items at the park and discussions are underway how to enhance this. Commissioner Mehdi observed the group is planning for the park's future and will then figure out how to fund the components. Ms. Salinas agreed. Responding to a question from Commissioner Barber whether staff have ideas for raising the needed funds, Ms. Salinas stated that is a much longer discussion and will occur later.

Commissioner Kincaid has heard rumors of a movie production company's interest in Building 2. Ms. Salinas stated the building is a park in perpetuity and that designation would have to be lifted before it could become a movie studio. Commissioner Kincaid asked that Parks discuss the need for sidewalks on Sand Point Way with both Seattle Department of Transportation and Washington State Department of Transportation. Ms. Salinas answered that Parks staff have had many discussions about this; SDOT has determined there isn't yet enough foot traffic to warrant new sidewalks.

Ms. Salinas summarized tonight's update as a quick snapshot of the Plan. She will return to the Park Board's May 24 meeting, where a briefing and public hearing are scheduled and commissioners will be asked to vote on a recommendation on the Strategic Development Plan. Commissioners thanked Ms. Salinas for the update.

Recreation Division – Maintenance Levels of Service

Sue Goodwin, Recreation Division Director, presented a briefing on the Division's maintenance levels of service, including a detailed Powerpoint presentation.

Prior to the meeting, the Board received a written briefing, which was also available to the public on the Board's web page and as hard copies at the meeting. A copy is included below. To view the full verbal and Powerpoint presentation and listen to the Board's discussion see

<http://www.seattlechannel.org/videos/video.asp?ID=6106> and move cursor to position 54.00.

Written Briefing

Requested Board Action

This briefing is for information only and no Board action is requested. Following the staff briefing we expect to engage the Board in an active discussion on levels of service in the Recreation Division.

Background

Recreation is an essential element of any healthy and vibrant community, providing individual, social, and economic value. People rely on Seattle's recreation programs for many benefits, ranging from the pursuit of health and fitness to the desire for self-education, finding a connection with nature, or simply seeking a sense of belonging. The Recreation Division operates a range of facilities devoted to providing health, recreation, and education opportunities. These facilities include community centers, teen life centers, environmental learning centers, arts venues, athletic facilities, pools, tennis courts, fishing piers, and golf courses. Recreational programming and special events offered within and outside of these facilities enrich the lives of all people and provide special focus for at-risk youth, people with disabilities, immigrant and refugee populations, seniors, minorities, and families.

Community Center Operations in 2012

In 2011, in response to the continuing need for budget reductions and direction from the City Council, Parks staff conducted an inclusive, data-driven analysis and process to examine alternative models for staffing and operating Parks 26 community centers. Parks formed the Community Center Advisory Team (CCAT), a committee of citizens, City Council staff, City Budget Office staff, labor unions, representatives of the Associated Recreation Council (ARC), and members of the Park Board to analyze data, hold public meetings, conduct a public survey, and design the alternatives from which the recommended model was chosen. The work of the committee was an exemplary collaboration among citizens, unions, Parks' nonprofit partner ARC, and staff from the agencies mentioned above.

The work of the CCAT, combined with a separate staff working group, led to a Mayor's budget recommendation that reorganized community center operations. In November 2011, the City Council adopted the Mayor's community center budget and added \$100,000 in funding to support additional hours, as well as added funding for "people counters" at community centers to enhance Parks' data-gathering efforts.

The community center reorganization saved \$1.23 million, of which \$784,000 is achieved through budget reductions. The remaining \$446,000 comes to Parks from the Associated Recreation Council, to partially cover community center expenses. Staff reductions totaled 13.63 full-time positions and reduced the hours of 75 people.

The new operating model is comprised of five geographically-based service areas, each with five community centers, staffed by a team led by a Senior Recreation Coordinator. The new operating model preserves services to the greatest extent possible by keeping the centers open with varying levels of service. A service level 1 center is open for general use 70 hours per week, a service level 2a center is open 45 hours, and a service level 2b center is open 25 hours.

The presentation to the Board will showcase current levels of service and, in more detail, explain how reduced staffing levels in community centers might impact the available public and programmed hours at the centers, which could affect the number of participants in programs throughout the system. Discussion at the end of the presentation will identify possible high-level solutions to budget impacts that may help identify what level of service is applicable for Seattle residents provided by the Recreation Division.

Additional Information

Sue Goodwin, sue.goodwin@seattle.gov, or call 684-7157.

Verbal Briefing/Discussion

Ms. Goodwin introduced herself and reviewed information in the written briefing paper and the Powerpoint presentation. Commissioners had a number of questions and observations.

Commissioner Keith is unclear which programs and partnerships are bringing in revenue and wondered where the Department now generates its revenues and where it expects new revenues to come from. She also asked that attendance counts be differentiated between single use and group class use. Acting Superintendent Williams stated that revenue from the Department's programs do not substantially increase revenues. About 50% of program revenues come from those 25-49 years old, and they are underserved. Much of the programming focus is on children, although their participation in programs have the lowest numbers. The best opportunities to increase revenues are through partnerships, sponsorships, and concessions.

Commissioner Keith asked about charging more for partners that use the Department's facilities. Acting Deputy Superintendent Friedli stated each large non-profit is evaluated on the basis of what it can pay. Some also maintain the buildings they use and that is a cost reduction to the City.

Commissioner Maryman referred to asset management and suggested Parks staff also reflect how many functions each asset serves. He also noted that each child that participate in programs may bring along one, or possibly both, parents. What opportunities could the Department develop for the parents to participate in programs? He complimented Ms. Goodwin's passion for recreation and stated it shines through. It is a compelling story; however, Parks doesn't often go out in the community and say "we do amazing things." He suggested an event such as an annual breakfast to help share the story. Ms. Goodwin agreed with this suggestion.

He would also like to see the levels of service compared with the figures of how many are served. How will the Department bridge gaps as its budget is reduced? Acting Superintendent Williams answered that his question jumps to the core mission of the department. Parks is facing a difficult set of choices for reductions, as each program has its vocal supporters. The Department wants to brainstorm these choices with the Park Board.

Commissioner Mehdi agrees with the suggestion of parents of children in programs becoming new users; however, not everyone in the 25-49 age group has children. Parks provides a base level of service in many areas and she suggested the Department look at different variations of this base level. She believes some of the programs are priced at a very low cost and wondered if the cost should increase. A stronger marketing strategy for the Department is needed, as not everyone is aware of the various services and programs it offers. Acting Superintendent Williams will take these suggestions to the Partnership Development staff working to find other funding opportunities.

Commissioner Angulo asked that the Department protect the Teen Life programs, as they help keep teens busy, especially in summer months. These programs benefit the entire city. She asked if Seattle Police Department would help fund this type of program. Ms. Goodwin agreed; the Department is looking at this as a new way to leverage funding for City programs.

Commissioner Barber asked Parks to look at its "big ticket items", such as pools and community centers and increase entrance fees. He also suggested that it look for more ways to involve volunteers. Ms. Goodwin responded the department is looking at increasing its volunteers; however, there are also unions and union contracts to work with.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Heahlke on the people counters, Ms. Goodwin answered that previously the department had no way of knowing how many people used the community centers. Last year a pilot "people counter" was used at Northgate Community Center and now funding is secured to add them at the other 24 centers. Commissioner Keith stated she is amazed by the generosity of people in Seattle and feels many of them would be willing to donate \$3 or so to the Department, once they are aware of the need.

Commissioners thanked Ms. Goodwin for the excellent presentation. The levels of service discussion will continue at upcoming Park Board meetings.

Old/New Business

Ad Hoc Committee for May 10 Park Board Meeting: Prior to this meeting, Susan Golub, Seattle Parks strategic advisor prepared a briefing paper for an ad hoc Board Committee to review dodge ball/bike polo pilot.

Requested Board Action

Parks staff are requesting Board members serve on an ad hoc committee to consider the pilot that allowed dodge ball and bike polo to be played on select tennis courts.

Background

In October 2010, the Park Board recommended a pilot project to allow one tennis court at Cal Anderson Park be used for dodge ball, and the tennis courts at Judkins Park be used for bike polo. The Superintendent concurred with the recommendation. The pilot project is nearing the end of its 18-month term and Parks wants to bring the issue back to the Board for a recommendation on whether the alternate uses of the tennis courts should become permanent.

Background information on what led to the Board's recommendation is provided in the attachment to this paper in the form of an excerpt from the July 8, 2010 and October 28, 2010 Board minutes. Of special note is the Public Involvement Process section from October 28 (page 5) which shows the high level of community interest; the motion approved by the Board is at the bottom of page 8. Parks initial approach was to develop a tiered rating system to guide selection of courts suitable for alternate use. This proposal was not pursued, so your review need not focus on the tier discussion (pages 5-6).

Ad Hoc Committee Proposal

When the decision was made to change Board meeting dates from twice a month to once a month, it was recognized that there would be issues that merited, whether due to public interest or complexity, additional Board review. Because of the high interest from the tennis, dodge ball and bike polo communities, Parks has decided that alternate tennis court use warrants a more extensive review than is possible at the once a month meeting. Therefore, Parks is asking Board members to serve on an ad hoc committee that will convene once to hear public testimony, discuss and make a recommendation on the question of whether the alternate tennis court pilot should become permanent.

The ad hoc committee will meet Thursday, May 10 at 7:00 p.m. in the Park Board Room. A minimum of five Board members is needed; all are welcome. The meeting will be advertised to the public in the same manner as all Board meetings and will include a public hearing. At least a week before the meeting, the Board will receive a briefing paper describing the results of the pilot and all written public testimony.

Additional Information

On alternative use of tennis courts: Dennis Cook at dennis.cook@seattle.gov

On ad hoc committee formation: Susan Golub at susan.golub@seattle.gov

Ms. Golub asked that any commissioners interested in participating in the May 10 ad hoc public hearing for bike polo on tennis courts contact her.

Metro Decreasing Bus Service to Parks: Commissioner Barber voiced concern that Metro will decrease its bus service to several parks, as this negatively affects a core value of keeping parks accessible to all. **He moved that the Park Board write a letter to Metro stating its concerns. Commissioner Keith seconded. The vote was taken and unanimous in approval. Motion carried.**

Commissioner Barber agreed to draft the letter for the Board's review; Parks staff will finalize and distribute.

Proposed Parking Garage Over I-5: Commissioner Maryman referred to a proposal to place a parking garage over a portion of Interstate 5, which would affect some Seattle Parks. He understands there is an interagency group working on this proposal and asked about the Park Board's role.

There being no other new business, Commissioner Barber moved the meeting be adjourned at 9:28 pm. Commissioner Keith seconded. The vote was unanimous in approval. Meeting adjourned.

APPROVED: _____

Diana Kincaid, Acting Chair
Board of Park Commissioners

DATE _____