



## Department of Parks and Recreation

Seattle Board of Park Commissioners  
Meeting Minutes  
September 13, 2007

### ***Board of Park Commissioners:***

Present:

Jackie Ramels, Acting Chair  
Neal Adams  
John Barber  
Terry Holme

Excused:

Amit Ranade, Chair

### ***Seattle Parks and Recreation Staff:***

Christopher Williams, Interim Superintendent  
Sandy Brooks, Park Board Coordinator

Commissioner Ramels called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. **Commissioner Barber moved, and Commissioner Holme seconded, approval of the agenda. Commissioner Barber moved, and Commissioner Adams seconded, approval of the July 26 minutes as presented. Commissioner Holme abstained from voting on the minutes as he was absent from the August 9 meeting. Motions carried.** Commissioner Ramels acknowledged the correspondence the Board has received since the August 9 meeting.

Board members and the Interim Superintendent welcomed guest and mayoral appointee Christine Larsen to the Park Board. Ms. Larsen is scheduled for confirmation before City Council's Parks, Education, Libraries and Labor (PELL) Committee at its September 19 meeting. Expectations are that she will be a voting member of the Park Board at its September 27 meeting.

## **Superintendent's Report**

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

Department Staffing Changes: Mayor Greg Nickels has nominated Timothy Gallagher as the new Superintendent of Seattle Parks and Recreation. It was noted that Mr. Gallagher is currently hiking the 2,500-mile Pacific Crest Trail and runs an average of 150 miles per week. Mr. Gallagher formerly directed Los Angeles County's Department of Park and Recreation, overseeing a parks system with regional and neighborhood parks, 19 golf courses, arts and entertainment facilities, and community centers. He has led parks and recreation departments in California for the City of Yreka, San Luis Obispo County, the City of Stockton, and Los Angeles County. Before that he was a sports editor for the Pioneer Press, and a naturalist for California State Parks and the National Parks Service. On Monday he met a number of staff and talked about his management style.

Interim Superintendent and former Deputy Superintendent B.J. Brooks has stepped aside. Seattle Parks and Recreation Deputy Director Christopher Williams will be the Interim Superintendent until Mr. Gallagher comes on board. It is anticipated that he will begin work with Seattle Parks in early October and staff look forward to welcoming him to the department. Commissioners asked why Ms. Brooks stepped aside. Superintendent Williams answered that she decided to move aside so the new Superintendent could choose his Deputy Superintendent.

Commissioner Holme stated that the Board appreciates Ms. Brooks' efforts, especially on the Center City Parks Initiative. She worked hard and showed real leadership which will be missed. Commissioner Ramels added that the 2006 National Recreation and Parks convention held in Seattle, with Ms. Brooks as the principal planner, was the best one she has ever attended. Commissioners agreed to write Ms. Brooks a letter thanking her for her hard work and requested Commissioner Ranade to draft the letter for all five Commissioners' signature.

Loyal Heights Playfield: After hearing community complaints about non-compliance with the terms set out by the Hearing Examiner's decision and then-Superintendent Ken Bounds' decision letter of August 2005 regarding use of Loyal Heights Playfield, Parks began working with Ballard Little League Football team to ensure their compliance with the terms of the agreement. The League has not observed the stipulations and the teams have been moved to the Soundview Playfield. Parks staff members are working to resolve the issue. For more information on Loyal Heights Playfield, see [http://www.seattle.gov/parks/park\\_detail.asp?ID=289](http://www.seattle.gov/parks/park_detail.asp?ID=289). For more information on the Loyal Heights Pro Parks Levy project, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/proparks/projects/loyalheightsplayfield.htm>.

Wallingford Playground/Hamilton Middle School Decision: Parks announced this week that it will support the Seattle Public School's (SPS) request for a 27-foot lot boundary adjustment so SPS may build a gym with a community-accessible foyer and bathrooms. Parks will receive an equal sized portion of land adjacent to Wallingford Playfield and Woodlawn Avenue North. Parks will also support the installation of geothermal wells at Wallingford Playfield. SPS has hired a professional facilitator to help both SPS and Parks work with the community to determine appropriate construction mitigation, which will include discussions about the future of the Sunken Garden. Parks' sees this as a win-win situation, as the project supports education, preserves the Sunken Garden, improves the ballfields, and provides mitigation for the project. The public will be involved in the design and other aspects. For more information on Wallingford Playground, see [http://www.seattle.gov/parks/park\\_detail.asp?ID=449](http://www.seattle.gov/parks/park_detail.asp?ID=449). For more information on the remodel of adjoining Hamilton Middle School, see <http://www.seattleschools.org/schools/hamilton/About/habout.htm>.

Commissioner Barber commented that his motion following the Park Board's public hearing asked for Seattle Public Schools and Parks to look at all aspects of the project. He asked what the scope of the mediation will be. Interim Superintendent Williams answered that the Department of Planning and Development will move forward with mediation geared to mitigate the impacts of the current design, with protection of the sunken garden. Commissioner Barber stated that the Friends of Wallingford Park are disappointed with this outcome and had forwarded a drawing of the proposed gymnasium to him that shows the visual impact the building will have on the park. Interim Superintendent Williams will ask staff to determine if this is an accurate depiction.

Later in the meeting, Commissioner Barber asked Interim Superintendent Williams for further clarification on the Hamilton/Wallingford proposal. Seattle Public Schools held meetings, then the Park Board held a public hearing, and a project advisory team (PAT) was formed. He asked what themes were heard from the community and what was the nature of their objections. Interim Superintendent Williams answered that public sentiment seemed to be split evenly

between those who supported and those who opposed the project. Seattle Parks knew it would be a difficult decision. The Parks Department does not have authority to re-design the Seattle Public School's building. Once the design is finalized, mitigation from the design will be discussed. The Wallingford Park comfort station was recently vandalized by arson and repair of the building may be one mitigation request.

Commissioner Adams commented that he keeps hearing a recurring theme from the public: they came to a meeting, thought they were being heard, and then feel they have been ignored. He asked if the public was heard on this proposal and Interim Superintendent Williams answered yes, that the Department went further than usual in getting input from the neighbors. The decision was not based on just the results of one community meeting.

Commissioner Ramels commented that this was a very difficult decision.

Rainier Beach Community Center: ARC Architects has completed the building assessment report for the Rainier Beach Community Center structure including a portion of the structure that is currently owned by the Seattle Public Schools and used by Seattle Parks through a joint use agreement. SPS has offered to give the 47,000 square foot structure to Parks and the department is now exploring how it would use the facility. The building assessment report found that most of the mechanical systems have reached, or are very near, the end of their usable lives. Renovating the facility will cost \$14 million; demolishing and rebuilding the facility will cost \$19 million. Parks staff will brief the Mayor on September 19 on the state of the structure, associated mechanical systems, potential options, and associated costs. The Superintendent will keep the Board updated on this. For more information on Rainier Beach Community Center, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/Centers/rainierbeach.htm>.

PELL to Consider Capehart Legislation on September 19: Only Councilmember Della was in attendance at the last Parks, Education, Libraries and Labor meeting. The Discovery Park Capehart legislation was discussed, but will be brought back to PELL for consideration on September 19. For more information on the Capehart site, see [http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/fortlawton/ft\\_lawton\\_properties/faq.htm](http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/fortlawton/ft_lawton_properties/faq.htm).

Commissioner Holme asked about the City Council legislation and Interim Superintendent Williams answered that the ordinance will move ahead as quickly as possible. It is now in the Mayor's office and will next go to the City Council's Parks, Education, Libraries and Labor Committee.

Commissioners commented on the controversy of this legislation. Low-income housing advocates see the 64 housing sites, proposed to be torn down, as potential housing. Interim Superintendent Williams commented that Seattle Parks' intent was to bring this before the Park Board for a public hearing; however, the timeline for action has moved too quickly for this to be scheduled.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED): At the neighborhood's request, Northeast Parks' staff worked with Seattle Police and neighbors around Cowen Park to establish a plan to reopen vistas from Brooklyn Avenue and 62nd Street Northeast to discourage camping and illegal activities at the park. Approximately 40 cubic yards of vegetation were taken out of the park. The vegetation that grows back will be maintained at a level that allows visibility into the park. The improved visibility will help the Seattle Police further deter illegal activities in Cowen Park. They can drive by and more easily see into the park and help keep it safer. For more information on Cowen Park, see [http://www.seattle.gov/parks/park\\_detail.asp?ID=483](http://www.seattle.gov/parks/park_detail.asp?ID=483). For more information on CPTED, see <http://www.seattle.gov/police/prevention/Tips/CPTED.htm>.

Aquarium High School Volunteers Excel: Forty-eight summer session teens completed 5,207 hours of work at the Aquarium from June 15 through August 31. The financial value of their work is \$97,713. The school year session begins on September 15 with 43 returning teens. For more information on Seattle Aquarium and volunteer opportunities, see <http://www.seattleaquarium.org/NetCommunity/Page.aspx?&pid=183&srcid=-2>,

Women of the World Swims: A final group planning meeting was held in preparation for resuming Women of the World swims at Rainier Beach Pool. The swim sessions are being scheduled for the third Saturday of each month beginning

October 20. These swim sessions, funded by the University of Washington, allow Islamic women, whose beliefs do not allow them to participate in the all-swim sessions, to enjoy swimming at the pools. The Women of the World swim sessions are scheduled for women only.

Commissioner Ramels asked why the sponsor (UW) pulled out of its support for the program. Interim Superintendent Williams answered that some of the women brought their children and 60-70 people showed up for the sessions, which were designed for a maximum of 40 people. Some pushing and shoving ensued. The planning meetings were held to resolve the problems so this popular program could be resumed.

Langston Teen Summer Musical awarded \$5,000: The Center's popular arts program was awarded \$5,000 from the Rainier Valley Pepsi Partnership fund. This year's program was wildly successful, providing 60 youth with expert arts instruction and 6,000 audience members with a quality cultural production. The program exceeded all of its revenue goals; most notably, ticket revenue by \$14,000. Preliminary forecasts show a \$5,000 profit on this year's program. For more information on Langston Hughes, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/Centers/langston.htm>.

Long-time Parks Staff Member Passes Away: Duane Penttila, Manager of the Department's Horticulture and Forestry Services unit, died recently from an aortic aneurysm. Duane worked for 24 years for Seattle Parks, first as a landscape planner. He played major roles in a number of the Department's horticulture policies, including the Best Practices policy, tree maintenance policy, and urban trail policy. A memorial service is planned for Wednesday, October 3, at South Lake Union Armory. Duane will be sorely missed.

### **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: Citizen's for Off-Leash Areas (COLA)**

Charles Sablan, Manager in Seattle Parks' Operation Division, introduced Michele Ferris, attorney and chair of the Citizens for Off-leash Areas (COLA.)

Ms. Ferris showed a Powerpoint presentation highlighting 10 of Seattle's 11 off-leash areas (OLAs.) The Magnuson park off-leash area is the largest, has an extensive group of volunteers, and is maintained separately from COLA. Ten years ago, Seattle City Council passed a resolution for the creation of OLAs. COLA is a large network of volunteers who work with the City to operate the OLAs. It is a 501c3, consisting of 100% volunteers, and is a public-private partnership with Seattle Parks. Each off-leash area has a site steward who signs an agreement with Seattle Parks.

For more information on COLA, please see <http://www.coladog.org/>. For more information on Seattle Parks' off-leash areas, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/offleash.asp>.

Currently there are 11 off-leash area sites: Dr. Jose Rizal Park, Genesee Park and Playfield, Golden Gardens Park, I-5 Colonnade, Northacres Park, Plymouth Pillars Park, Regrade Park, Sam Smith Park, Warren G. Magnuson Park, Westcrest Park, and Woodland Park. Two more sites have been approved and are in the works: Magnolia Manor and Lower Kinnear.

Ms. Ferris showed photos of many of the off-leash sites and gave a brief description of some, as follows:

1. Northacres Park: the vegetation has been fenced off with mesh to protect it. COLA volunteers worked hard to install fencing that added to the appearance of the park. This site is superbly maintained. It has an annual bbq to which the public is invited, with caterers donating both the food and service.
2. Westcrest Park: This is the second largest off-leash area; only the site at Magnuson Park is larger. There is an area for "timid/small/elderly" dogs to play and the site has heavy steward involvement.

3. Regrade Park: this is the first downtown off-leash area and has proven to be very popular. There have been complaints of excessive noise from the dogs and the site steward and volunteers installed signage which has helped to lessen the noise. Starbucks is a partner with COLA at this site and its employees help maintain the OLA. Starbucks and COLA sponsor the cleanups and several homeless people, who enjoy watching the dogs play, assisted in the cleanup.
4. Woodland Park: this site is a wooded area, with several play areas for the dogs. It did not have a site steward for awhile. Now there is a new steward who has scheduled several work parties and the site is once again in good shape.
5. Plymouth Pillars: this is one of the two locations for tonight's Park Board hearing. It serves the nearby neighbors who walk there with their dogs. There was a problem with the original gravel being too large and it has been replaced. A smaller type of gravel has been installed, which has stopped the complaints. The OLA provides good eyes on the park and the illegal behavior at this small park has decreased since the OLA has been in use.
6. I-5 Colonnade: this is the second of the two locations for tonight's Park Board hearing. It is the only covered off-leash area in the system. It has great views of Lake Union for the dog owners to enjoy and it also has helped decrease vagrant activity at this park. Ms. Ferris is the site steward for this location.

Parking can be an issue at some of the larger off-leash areas, especially during hours of peak use. COLA does not condone dogs being off leash outside of the off-leash areas, and has designed and printed maps of the off-leash areas that include directions to the sites. These maps are distributed at area veterinary offices. Seattle Animal Control officers distribute copies of the maps when they issue tickets for dogs that are illegally off leash. Mud Bay Printing printed 10,000 copies free of charge.

Dog-O-Ween, a special costume event for dogs, is scheduled at Genesee Park on Saturday, October 27, 11:00 am-2:00 pm. Dogs are dressed in costumes for this wonderful family event.

#### *Board Discussion*

Commissioner Ramels commented that the off-leash area at Westcrest Park is fabulous and COLA provides a very valuable service. She asked how Seattle Parks and COLA work together at the sites and Ms. Ferris answered that the Parks staff pick up the garbage, do any work that requires heavy equipment, and the district crew chief works closely with the site steward. Interim Superintendent Williams complimented the work that Mr. Sablan does in working with COLA and the off-leash areas and stated that COLA's relationship with Seattle Parks has blossomed over the years. COLA is a model for volunteerism.

Commissioner Barber asked who maintains the grass and Mr. Sablan answered that Parks staff cuts the grass every four weeks during the growing season and less frequently at other times. They also repair the fences. Commissioner Barber asked what surfaces are the most suitable for off-leash areas. Mr. Sablan answered that it depends on the particular site's drainage conditions. Some sites have wood chips, some soil, some rocks, and some are grassy knolls. Ms. Ferris commented that sharp rocks are not a good surface for the off-leash areas.

Commissioner Barber is concerned with bacteria from dog waste from these sites being hauled to the landfills. He uses an easy pooper scooper and dumps the waste into the comfort station's restroom. In London, the parks have separate containers for dog waste. He referred to an e-mail the Board received this week from a citizen regarding the dog waste, and urges the Department to devise a system for the waste to go into tanks and be carted off. Mr. Sablan is working with an environmentalist at Cascade and the University of Washington on ways to recycle the waste. Some of the sites have porta-potties and the plastic bags being used to pick up the waste are often thrown away with the waste. Mr. Sablan is also working with Seattle Public Utilities on better solutions for the waste.

The Board thanked Ms. Ferris for the update briefing.

## **Briefing/Public Hearing: Make the Pilot Off-leash Areas at Plymouth Pillar and I-5 Colonnade Parks a Permanent Element**

Charles Sablan, Seattle Parks' Operations Division Manager, next briefed the Board on the proposal to make the pilot off-leash areas at Plymouth Pillar and I-5 Colonnade Parks a permanent element. Commissioners received a written copy of the briefing paper prior to this meeting.

### *Written Briefing*

#### **Requested Board Action**

At the conclusion of the 18-month I-5 Colonnade and Plymouth Pillars off leash area (OLA) pilot periods, staff requests that the Board of Park Commissioners review the evaluations and make a recommendation to the Superintendent. The question is whether to make these two OLAs permanent.

#### **Project Description and Background**

In December 2005, the Board of Park Commissioners recommended that Parks create a pilot OLA at I-5 Colonnade. In January 2005, the Board recommended that Parks establish a pilot OLA at Plymouth Pillars. The I-5 Colonnade site opened in December 2005, the Plymouth OLA in January 2006. Authorization of off-leash areas, outlined in City Council Resolution 29628, requires:

- a local stewardship committee formed under the auspices of Citizens for Off Leash Areas (COLA);
- an agreement signed by COLA and the City;
- periodic monitoring of the agreement; and
- after an appropriate period of operating experience, an evaluation and recommendation on whether the OLA should become permanent.

#### **Public Involvement Process**

On June 1, 2007, Parks staff sent e-mails soliciting input to the local community stakeholders in the vicinity of each park, and posted solicitations for input at both sites, giving 30 days in which to comment.

#### **Issues**

After the 30 day comment period, one citizen advocate advised Parks that he was not informed about the comment period and would like an opportunity to make a statement, so Parks re-posted the solicitation for comments memo at the pilot sites and extended the period until August 31, 2007.

All of the input received by email or on voice mail was in favor of making both OLAs permanent sites. The overall theme of the comments is that the site builds community, discourages illegal activity, and serves urban dog owner needs. There were concerns among the dog owners that the rocks used as surface cover are cutting their dogs' paws.

#### **Budget**

The site is budgeted for ongoing operations and maintenance. In the future as Parks funding is stretched, Parks will depend more on COLA for fund raising and financial support.

#### **Staff Recommendation**

The staff recommends that the sites be added to the network of OLAs operated at Seattle Parks and Recreation facilities in partnership with COLA.

**Additional Information:** Charles Sablan, 386-1273, [charles.sablan@seattle.gov](mailto:charles.sablan@seattle.gov).

### *Verbal Briefing*

Mr. Sablan commented that COLA has many fine volunteers who have donated 55,000 hours this year to the off-leash areas. Seattle Parks depends on these volunteers and the work they accomplish. He reviewed information in the written briefing paper. All new off-leash areas undergo an 18-month pilot period. Both the I-5 Colonnade and Plymouth Pillars Park have just completed their pilot and the Park Board is being asked to recommend to the Superintendent that these two off-leash areas become permanent elements of the parks.

A criteria list of 13 items is used to evaluate whether a site is appropriate for an off-leash area and these sites meet the criteria. Only one negative comment has been received. It was in regards to the surface that cut the dogs' paws, and which has now been replaced.

### ***Board Discussion***

Commissioner Holme commended COLA on the Powerpoint presentation. He appreciates their honesty in acknowledging some problems with off-leash areas. He pointed out that some Pro Parks Levy funds are used to support the two off-leash areas. He asked if the irrigation system at I-5 Colonnade Park is an interim or long-term system and how it will be monitored. Mr. Sablan answered that it is turned on for two hours on Sunday evening and washes the fecal coliform into the ground and into the sewer system. This will be continued into the future. The gardener for this park monitors the site closely. Interim Superintendent Williams stated that Seattle Parks previously had a contract with Seattle Public Utilities to monitor the ground and check it during the 18-month pilot project. Commissioner Holme stated that the irrigation of the off-leash area seems to be working well and recommended that staff continue a long-term monitoring program.

Commissioner Holme asked about the public involvement policy used for the request to make these two sites permanent elements and whether any non-park users were contacted. He believes it is very important to contact those who aren't regular users of the parks. Mr. Sablan answered that information was sent to the chamber of commerce, neighborhood groups, and initial park planners. Commissioner Holme referred to page 5 of the evaluation form and asked when Seattle Animal Control patrols this site. Mr. Sablan answered that their regular patrol is on Wednesday and Thursday and they may stop by at other times. Commissioner Holme recommended that they visit the sites in a more unpredictable pattern to ensure dogs are not un-leashed except in the designated off-leash areas. He also referred to information in the briefing paper that encampments of homeless were displaced by the off-leash area.

Commissioner Barber stated that he visited Plymouth Pillars earlier in the day and asked if there is any seating. Mr. Sablan answered that there are benches outside the off-leash area. Commissioner Barber asked if pine needles, which are biodegradable, can be used for the surface. Mr. Sablan will investigate the use of this material. He is in contact with other municipalities and they share information on what materials have been used successfully at off-leash areas. They have learned that finely crushed gravel turns to dust and must be replaced more frequently.

### ***Public Hearing***

The public hearing began. Audience members were reminded that each person signed up to testify has up to three minutes to speak and will be timed. Eight people spoke or submitted written testimony.

Patrick Jones: Mr. Jones signed up to testify, but had to leave prior to the public hearing. He submitted written testimony instead. He is the site steward at Plymouth Pillars Park and asked the Commissioners to support the recommendation to make the two sites permanent elements.

Pam Masse: She urged the Commissioners to vote in favor of both sites becoming permanent. The off-leash areas help bring together people with common interests. It is a wonderful way to meet people, make new friends, displace bad behavior, and exercise dogs. Patrick Jones is an excellent steward and is working with the district crew chief, Bob Baines, on a wish list of benches, trees, and boulders to be installed at Plymouth Pillars Park.

Michelle Ferris: She is Chair of the Board of Citizen's for Off-Leash Areas (COLA) and urged the Commissioners to approve both sites as permanent elements.

Carina Van Derleest: She is a former site steward at the Golden Gardens off-leash area. There are many lonely dogs and lonely people and the off-leash areas provide a sense of community for both. The off-leash areas are people parks, too, with luncheons and potlucks scheduled. When regular users of the off-leash areas don't show up, other users become concerned. She requested the Commissioners to approve both sites as permanent elements.

Toni Imfeld: He is a COLA Board member and a member of the planning group for the new Magnolia Manor off-leash area. He supports making both sites permanent. Both the I-5 Colonnade and Regrade off-leash sites represent a revolution in how off-leash areas are viewed. Originally, the thinking was that the OLAs should be large, remote, and users would need to travel some distance to get to them. Now, planners have found that the small neighborhood parks serve the off-leash area need very well for dog owners who live nearby. The smaller neighborhood sites are easier to get to, require less travel time, and neighbors can use these sites more frequently. COLA is doing a new public information and education campaign focused on encouraging and recognizing OLA users for scooping and picking up dog waste.

John Covello: He supports making both sites permanent. They are important to neighborhoods and provide social opportunities for both people and dogs.

Chris Leman: He asks that the sites not be made permanent until improvements are made: install a kiosk; post the off-leash rules; list the phone # of the current site steward at the park; keep the COLA website (and contact information for the site stewards) current; and resolve safety issues and the west side fence issue. He believes that Seattle Parks' public involvement policy is very lax and has slipped in the past few years. He and other neighborhood leaders, Eastlake District Council and Friends of Olmsted Parks, were not notified of this proposal. He happened to see the notice at the I-5 Colonnade Park. Mr. Leman agreed to send additional comments in writing to the Board.

Sharon Levine: She stated that she shares some of Mr. Leman's concerns with community outreach; however she asks that the sites be made permanent elements of the parks. She is a founding member of COLA and a current Board member. She agreed that there had been some lapse in the OLA oversight at I-5 Colonnade Park when the site steward left the position. Then Michele Ferris and Ms. Levine stepped in and really rehabilitated the site. There are several blue laminated flyers posted at the site that list Michele's name as the site steward. Mr. Leman's concerns were valid ones, but they have already been addressed. A young couple has volunteered to take over the website to help keep information current. She talks to many residents and this OLA is important to the community. The kiosks cost \$5,000, which is a major investment and Seattle Parks does not install them until the site is made a permanent off-leash area.

The public hearing concluded.

### *Comments/Questions*

Commissioner Barber referred to the 13-point site evaluation and asked if every item is addressed. Mr. Sablan answered yes and that every site has an individual agreement that is signed by the site steward and himself. The Seattle Parks' crew chief for that site meets with the steward and works closely with them. Commissioner Barber suggested a smaller kiosk be installed at the 18-month pilot sites so that the public has access to information.

Commissioner Ramels asked for details on the agreement signed by the site steward and Mr. Sablan agreed to send a copy. She commented that it is clear that there are different users and distinctions at the OLAs, with some sites being large regional ones and others being small neighborhood sites. She asked if notification was sent to the District Councils. Mr. Sablan answered that he received the contact list for these two sites from the Department's communication staff and mailed to those on the list.

Commissioner Holme appreciates the comments on the size of the off-leash areas and parks. When parks are studied for future off-site areas, this information will be valuable. Commissioner Barber is a planner by trade and encouraged staff to consider and document other impacts, such as whether an off-leash area at a neighborhood park reduces the use at a nearby park.

The Commissioners thanked Mr. Sablan for presenting the briefing and answering their questions. Written testimony will be accepted through Wednesday, September 26. Commissioners plan to discuss and vote on the recommendation at the September 27 meeting.



**Old/New Business**

Commissioner Ramels: Commissioner Ramels asked about the most effective way for a donor she knows who wants to donate \$20,000 to a park. The donor’s first effort to donate the money was unsuccessful. Interim Superintendent Williams answered that the donor may contact him directly or contact Seattle Parks Foundation, which handles most donations to Seattle Parks.

Magnuson Park Habitat/Wetland & Athletic Fields Briefing: Commissioner Holme asked that Parks staff present an update briefing on this project to the Board. He feels the project is languishing and time is money. Interim Superintendent Williams asked staff to add this briefing to the Board’s September 27 meeting agenda.

Commissioner Barber reported on the following:

- The Lake Washington Boulevard Project Advisory Team, at which he represents the Board, cancelled its September member. The PAT has asked Senior Urban Forester to report on a permit issued to a homeowner to cut trees along the Boulevard.
- He has been attending meetings of the Green Legacy Committee, which is working to renew the Pro Parks Levy for 2008. The Committee, chaired by Bryce Merriman, is working with the Conservancy for Public Land. They are working on a poll to gauge support for renewal of the levy. Mayor Nickels wants focus on two other ballot issues: \$60 million for Seattle Center and \$20-30 million for Pike Place Market. Commissioner Holme suggested the group review how many Seattleites voted approval for the recent King County Parks Levy to help gauge interest in renewing the levy.
- He attended the Earthwork Celebration in Kent on Sunday and met the director of greenmuseum.org. This organization sponsors environmental projects that combine art and the environment and strives to have the artists tuned into the community where the projects are installed. He suggested using this group’s toolbox to help select the artists for future art projects in Seattle’s parks.
- He attended the annual recognition of parks volunteers with the Interim Superintendent.
- He also attended the Parks Department’s annual picnic. The Department has 1,600 employees, and he was pleased to attend. He is very impressed with the broad scale of the Park Department and its employees.
- He is also working, not as a Park Board member, but in his other roles, on a response to a list serve group re: the Hamilton School/Wallingford Playground project.

Statue of Liberty Returns to Alki Park: Commissioner Ramels attended the 9/11 event to celebrate the return of the Statue of Liberty to Alki Park. Mayor Nickels, many community members, and quite a few of the media attended this very nice and patriotic event. Repair of this well-loved community statue has been a controversy in West Seattle. Commissioner Ramels recognized Gary Gaffner, who attends all Park Board meetings, as being singled out at the West Seattle celebration as one of the Seattle Council of Boy Scouts of America who helped install the Statue in 1952.

Committee Reports: Commissioners asked that the Coordinator add “Committee Reports” under New/Old Business to an agenda in the near future.

City’s Reception for Boards and Commissions: Interim Superintendent Williams invited the Commissioners to a reception for all the City’s boards and commissions on October 24 in the Berthe Landes Room at City Hall. The event is being hosted by Mayor Nickels and City Council President Nick Licata. Formal invitations will be mailed.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

Jackie Ramels, Vice-Chair  
Board of Park Commissioners

DATE \_\_\_\_\_