

Seattle Board of Park Commissioners  
Meeting Minutes  
100 Dexter Avenue North  
March 27, 2008  
Web site: <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/parkboard/>

***Board of Park Commissioners:***

Present:

Neal Adams  
John Barber  
Donna Kostka  
Christine Larsen  
Jackie Ramels, Vice-chair  
Amit Ranade, Chair

Excused:

Terry Holme

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

Carol Everson, Finance Director  
Sandy Brooks, Park Board Coordinator

Commissioner Ranade called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Commissioners acknowledged the extensive record of correspondence received by the Board since its last regular meeting of March 13, 2008.

**Commissioner Barber moved, and Commissioner Adams seconded, approval of the agenda. The vote was taken and the motion carried.** The Chair stated for the record that the Board wants to give firsthand comments to both the Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent on the Strategic Action Plan.

Commissioners received draft copies of the minutes for review prior to the meeting. **Commissioner Barber moved, and Commissioner Ramels seconded, approval of the March 13 minutes as corrected. The motion was voted on and carried.**

## **Superintendent's Report**

Finance Director Carol Everson represented Superintendent Gallagher, who was out of town, and reported on the following items. For more information on Seattle Parks and Recreation, visit the web pages at <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/>.

Community Meeting on Youth Violence and Gang Activity in Northgate: Northgate Community Center hosted a March 12 community meeting to discuss youth violence and gang activity. Approximately 40 citizens heard Seattle Police, Seattle Public Library staff, and Parks staff present information about current intervention activities to create a safe environment at the Northgate Community Center and Library. For more information on Northgate Community Center, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/centers/Northgate.htm>.

Public Outreach on Construction Impacts at Magnuson Park: Staff developed outreach materials to inform Magnuson Park patrons and tenants of the closure of the tennis court parking lot, reduced picnic shelter availability, and potential traffic slowdowns during construction of the wetland and athletic fields. Staff emailed notices to tenants and Park users who have reserved fields or picnic shelters. Additional signs will inform the public where and how to access alternate parking lots. A press walk-through of the construction impacts will be scheduled in the next few weeks. For more information on Magnuson Park and projects, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/Magnuson/>.

Lake Union Park Update: The protective fence surrounding Phase I completion of Lake Union Park has come down. This is the first portion of what will end up being the focal point of the Lake Union area and one of Seattle's premier parks. Phase II of the park's development, which is estimated to take two years, commences in mid-July. For more information, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/parkspaces/lakeunionpark.htm>.

Beach Naturalist Program Will Begin Soon: The Aquarium began training 94 returning naturalists and 40 new naturalists for its popular beach naturalist program. Beginning in May, these naturalists will be at Seattle area beaches to teach visitors about beach stewardship. For more information on the Beach Naturalist program, see <http://www.seattleaquarium.org/NetCommunity/Page.aspx?pid=267&srcid=183>.

All-Staff Retreat Held: Last Friday Parks held its first ever all-day All-Staff retreat at Fischer Pavilion in Seattle Center. More than 900 employees attended. We had two nationally recognized Park and Recreation professionals speak, Charles Jordan, previous Superintendent of Portland's Parks and Recreation, and Jane Adams, from the California Parks and Recreation Association. Mayor Greg Nickels and Councilmember Tom Rasmussen also made brief remarks. Training sessions were offered in the afternoon, ranging from risk management to customer service. The event was well received by staff and from all reports resulted in an increase in employee morale.

Focus Group for Older Citizens: On Monday, Green Lake Community Center and Life Long Learning hosted a focus group for people aged 50 and over. The objective of this 20-citizen focus group was to find out if Seattle Parks is meeting the needs of the over-50 population. For more information on the Life Long Learning program, see <http://cityofseattle.net/parks/seniors/index.htm>.

Center for Wooden Boats: The Center for Wooden Boats (CWB) has achieved a major breakthrough in the decades-long effort to coalesce the various maritime groups involved in Lake Union Park into an entity that can be promoted collectively. CWB took the lead on this effort in 2006. Last month, all the groups agreed on creating a single website, [www.atLakeUnionPark.org](http://www.atLakeUnionPark.org), which will allow each to retain its individual nature, but participate as a part of the whole. CWB plans to launch the new website in time for the park opening on April 30th.

Draft Strategic Action Plan: The Draft Strategic Action Plan is now available for public view at <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/Publications/ParksActionPlan.htm>. Seattle Parks will hold a second round of public meetings in April to gather public response to this draft. In addition, several all-staff meetings are scheduled at Lake Union Armory on April 9, 10, 15 and 16 to gather employee input. Brenda Kramer will present a briefing on the Plan later in this meeting.

Spring Hunts: Last weekend, more than 2,000 youth participated in Seattle Parks' community center Spring Hunt Special Events. Activities included teen flashlight hunts on Friday night and youth hunts for various age groups on Saturday morning. Events included coloring contests, egg painting, and prizes. For more information on programs for children and youth, see <http://cityofseattle.net/parks/Children/index.htm>.

"Dewcure" Tested at Two Golf Courses: Golf greens are one of the most difficult challenges to reduce pesticide use. Two golf courses are participating in trials of a new product, "Dewcure," designed to reduce the heavy formation of dew on the grass blades of tee and putting green playing surfaces. It is showing promising signs and could be a significant component in Seattle Parks' efforts to reduce pesticide applications on tee and putting green turf, greens, and tees during colder weather days. For more information on Seattle's golf courses, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/athletics/golfrse.htm>.

Subsidy Task Force Convened: A group of 22 people attended the first of a series of meetings intended to look at the overall range of subsidy options and practices throughout Seattle Parks and Associated Recreation Council. Over a period of six weeks, the group will develop a series of recommendations to simplify the various scholarship, discount, and subsidy efforts and ensure the policies for these are the same across the Department.

Seattle Conservation Corp Planting More Trees: Seattle Conservation Corp (SCC) has been awarded an annual tree planting contract with Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT.) This contract and agreement provides for SCC to plant trees throughout Seattle neighborhoods, with the first group to be planted in the Delridge neighborhood of West Seattle during early spring 2008. There will be another round of tree planting in the fall, in another neighborhood selected by SDOT. All trees are delivered to the SCC facility as "bare root" stock, for nurturing prior to installation. The agreement is for time and materials for budget purposes, and will likely continue into 2009 and beyond, based on installation performance, budget, and demand. Parks is pleased with the contract, as it gives the Conservation Corp another source of steady work. For more information on the Seattle Conservation Corp, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/scc/>.

Seward Park – Environmental Center with Seattle Audubon: The building for the Seattle Audubon Society at Seward Park is now complete and Parks has the Certificate of Occupancy. Seattle Parks and the Audubon Society are coordinating the programming of classes and working on arrangements for the scheduled move in. The Audubon Society is planning a Grand Opening on April 26, 2008. For more information on Seward Park, see <http://www.seattle.gov/Parks/environment/seward.htm>. For more information on the Seattle Audubon Society, see <http://www.seattleaudubon.org/>.

### **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' Financial Division**

Carol Everson, Seattle Parks' Finance Director, briefed the Board on Seattle Park's Finance and Administrative Services Division. In 2008, the Department's Directors are briefing the Park Board on each division to include

information on staff, types of work the division is responsible for, budget, etc. Commissioners received a written briefing prior to the meeting, included below.

### **Written Briefing**

The Finance and Administrative Services Division provides the financial, technological and business support necessary to ensure effective delivery of the Department's services. The Division employs 41 Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) and has an annual operating budget of \$4,954,419.

#### **Accounting:** (Lewis Turner, Mgr) (22.5 FTE)

- Payroll - Processes 38,000 checks annually for an average of 1,500 Parks and Recreation employees and about \$80 million in payroll and benefits costs
- Accounts Payable – Processes \$100 million in annual vendor payments
- Revenue – Processes about \$160 million in annual revenue
- General Ledger and Financial Reporting – Provides about 200 monthly financial reports plus other financial information for Parks and City staff, State Auditors and others.

#### **Information Technology** (John Tomlinson, Mgr) (8 FTE)

- Support the computing infrastructure (desktops, servers, standard software) for 1,000+ Parks and Recreation computer users at 650+ computers at 70 locations
  - In 2007 responded to 6,467 service requests including 4,575 trouble tickets and 1,134 service changes or additions
  - Anticipate, budget for, purchase, and install equipment and software replacements
- Coordinate with and participate in Citywide technology projects, delivery of Citywide products and services and setting technology policies

#### **Fleets and Telecommunications** (August Drake-Erickson, Sup) (4 FTE)

- Central ordering of fleet and telecommunications equipment
- Coordination with the Fleet and Facilities Dept. and Dept of Information Technology
- 100 Dexter front desk and response to customers calling the general Parks and Recreation phone number

#### **Budget (Grace Harris, Operating Budget Mgr, Korie Voorheis, Capital Improvement Program Budget Mgr) (5 FTE)**

- Lead the Department in preparation, defense, monitoring, and management of \$125.3 million operating budget
- Lead the Department in preparation, defense, monitoring, and management of \$39.3 million capital budget

#### **Utility Conservation** (David Broustis, Mgr) (1 FTE – in Pro Parks Org)

- Co-chair of Utility Committee that works to identify conservation opportunities
- Manages operating and capital budgets dedicated to utility conservation measures
- In first year of position, saved
  - \$37,000 in one-time and annual billing error corrections and credits,
  - \$119,205 annual wastewater savings on irrigation accounts,
  - \$31,818 and 6.4 million gallons/year in water savings,
  - \$30,242 and 521MWh/yr in electricity savings, and
  - \$43,622 and 37k therms in natural gas savings.
    - also resulted in CO<sub>2</sub> reductions of 253 tons/yr.

#### **Upcoming Challenges and Opportunities**

##### Strategic Action Plan (SAP)

- Creating the IT systems, infrastructure, and organizations needed to support the analysis called for in the SAP
- Identifying those portions of the SAP that will need additional resources and requesting them via the budget process

##### 2009-2010 Operating Budget

- Prepare using newly-redeveloped budget system
  - Major project to develop new system
  - Intended to be used city-wide eventually
  - Parks, Dept of Executive Administration (DEA), and Dept of Finance (DOF) will be preparing budgets on it this year
  - Has prompted good exchange of ideas between DOF and Parks
  - Has led to realization that each department does things differently
- Implementing SAP while in a "hold-the-line" economic environment
- Integrating Pro Parks operating programs into the rest of the Department
- Size project management staff appropriately for declining CIP level

#### 2009-2015 Capital Investment Plan (CIP)

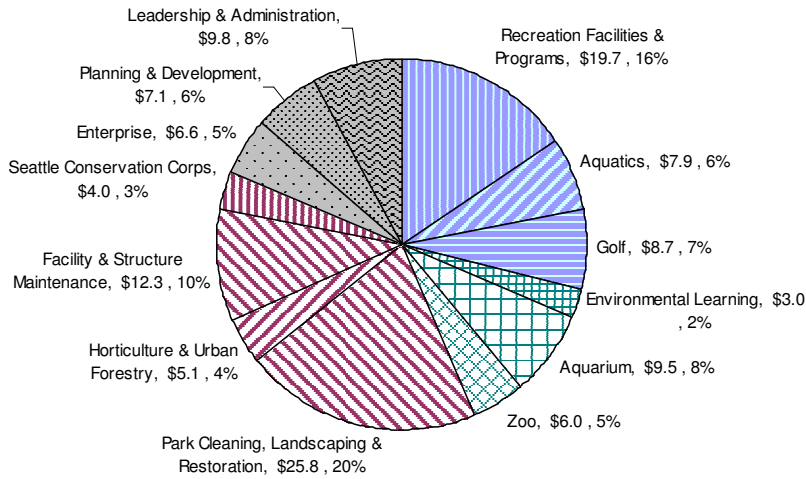
- Winding down of Pro Parks projects
- Projected decline in Cumulative Reserve Subfund revenues available for Parks projects
- Improving Asset Management systems and analysis
  - Coordinating with maintenance management

#### Participation in Citywide initiatives

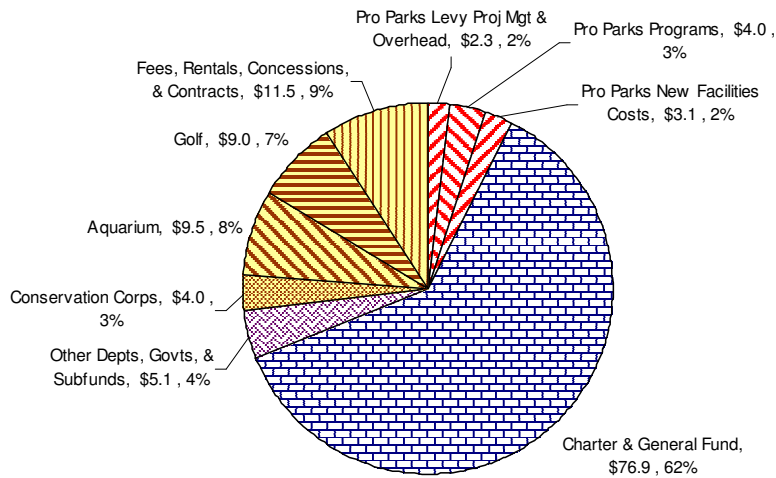
- Climate Action Now
- Analysis of use of Summit financial system for accounting, purchasing, and treasury functions
- Groupwise to Exchange Migration (GEM) – City e-mail system change
  - 1<sup>st</sup> step in movement to all-Microsoft environment
  - requires deployment of Office 2007

# Operating Budget

**Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation  
2008 \$125.3 Million Operating Budget by Program Type  
(million \$)**

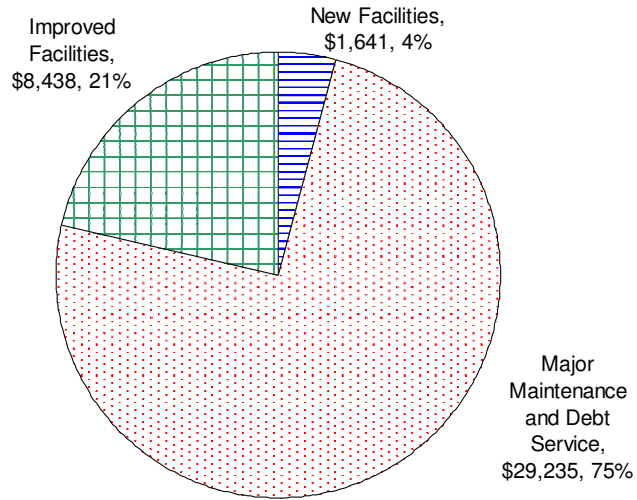


**Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation  
2008 \$125.3 Million Operating Budget by Revenue Source  
(million \$)**

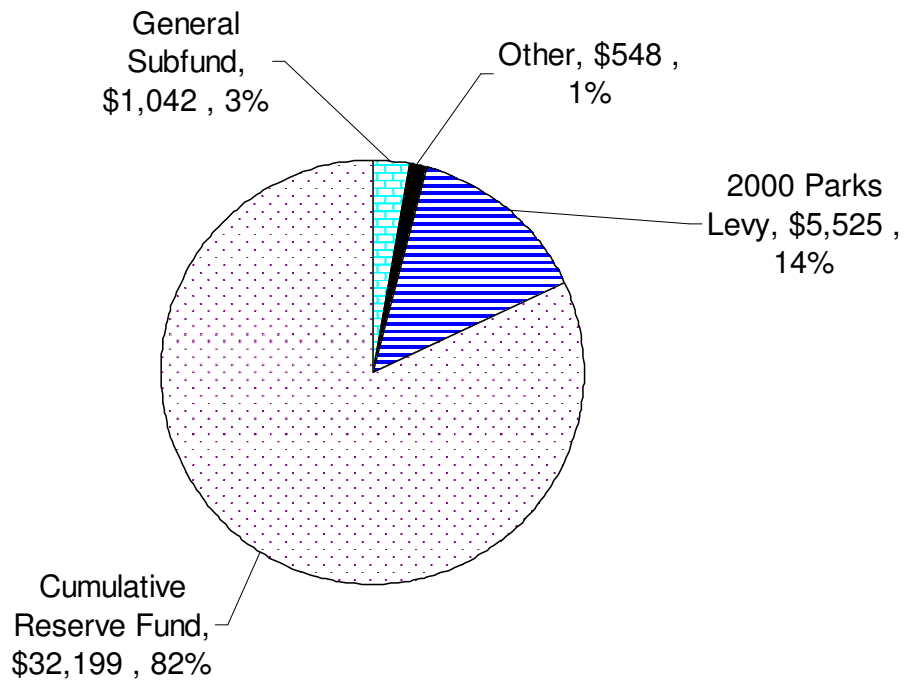


# Capital Budget

\$39.3 million New Appropriation in 2008  
for Capital Projects by Type of Project  
(thousand \$)



\$39.3 million New Appropriation in 2008  
for Capital Projects by Revenue Source  
(thousand \$)



### ***Verbal Briefing/Board Discussion***

Ms. Everson reviewed the information in the written briefing paper. The Finance and Administration Division works behind the scenes and serves the rest of the Department. She believes it is an efficient and effective division with only 41 staff members covering an array of responsibilities.

Commissioners were especially interested in the charts depicting budget allocations for the Department and Ms. Everson gave quite a bit of detail on the figures. Commissioner Adams asked about the second graph on the first page of graphs and how the Pro Parks Levy amounts were determined. Ms. Everson answered that it was an administrative decision by the City during a good financial time. The Pro Parks Levy was originally scheduled to sunset at the end of 2008. Mayor Nickels added funding from the 2008 general fund for Pro Parks, which was not anticipated. City Council adopted a budget that includes \$9.4 million in the 2008 budget to continue this important work. The Levy has resulted in 91 new park facilities and this money will help take care of what has already been built and also ensure that the work of the Pro Parks Levy is continued. Commissioner Adams, who is a member of the Pro Parks Levy Oversight Committee, is reassured with this funding and Ms. Everson commented that she is thrilled with the decision.

Commissioner Larsen noted that the Strategic Action Plan calls for more information technology (IT) staff and asked Ms. Everson if more IT staff would be added. The Plan looks great on paper but it is clear more IT staff will be needed to implement what the draft SAP is calling for. Ms. Everson doesn't yet know if additional staff will be added to the budget. She noted that, along with the eight fulltime IT staff in the Finance Division, there are also 2.6 IT staff in the Parks Division.

Commissioner Larsen commented that David Broustis, the Utility Conservation Manager, is doing a great job, especially with the reductions in net carbon output. Ms. Everson noted that Karen Galt (Seattle Parks' landscape designer) has taken on an additional role as lead in training Parks staff how to maximize the Maxicon irrigation system. Increased training and use of this system will save a great deal of water. In addition, Dawn Blanche is the Department's lead on reducing paper usage and implementing best management practices.

Commissioner Larsen referred to the first chart (2008 operating budget) and noted that 7% of the budget is spent at the golf courses – which are environmentally unfriendly. She wondered how many people the golf courses really serve for that 7%. For instance, how much is spent to maintain the Washington Park Arboretum, in comparison to what is spent at the golf courses? Ms. Everson answered that some studies show that the quality of water that enters the golf courses is improved when it leaves the courses. Seattle Parks has reduced its use of many pesticides at the golf courses. Also, the 7% figure for golf includes both the operating expenses and what is transferred for capital projects. The excess golf revenue goes to support other Seattle Parks' programs.

Commissioner Adams commented that he volunteers frequently at West Seattle golf and the staff there are highly trained and are doing a good job at reducing pesticide use. Thousands of citizens use the golf courses and they have lots of good programs for youth. He urged the other Commissioners to walk through one of the courses. Commissioner Larsen commented that her point was that the Arboretum also has needs and it is not listed separately on the charts, as are the golf courses.

Commissioners thanked Ms. Everson for the informative overview of the Division.

### **Briefing: Strategic Action Plan**

Brenda Kramer, Seattle Parks Strategic Advisor, presented a briefing on the Department's Draft Strategic Action Plan. Commissioners heard an initial briefing on the Plan in January. Ms. Kramer prepared a written briefing, which was sent to the Commissioners prior to tonight's meeting. They were also sent a link to the Draft Plan, which was released on Tuesday, March 25.



## *Written Briefing*

### **Requested Board Action**

This briefing is for information purposes – to provide the Board of Park Commissioners with an update on the Department's Strategic Action Plan. The Board was last briefed on the Plan on January 10, 2008.

### **Project Description and Background**

Seattle Parks and Recreation is developing a Strategic Action Plan to establish a vision and guide decisions over the next five years. Parks has developed a first draft of the plan with the assistance of the consulting firm of Berk & Associates and with feedback from an Executive Steering Committee (comprised of Mayor's Office and Department of Finance staff), the public and Parks' employees. The draft plan will be available to the public early next week and can be viewed on our website at <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/Publications/ParksActionPlan.htm>. We are on schedule to present the first draft to the Parks and Seattle Center (PASC) Committee in April. We will hold a second round of public and staff meetings between April 8 and 24 to allow for response on the first draft from the community and employees.

We will prepare a second draft of the plan in May – based on feedback from the second round of public involvement – with a target of submitting the final plan to the Mayor in June. We are excited about the plan; we believe it is aligned with the Mayor's priorities, local community desires, emerging issues, and national trends.

### **About the Plan: Vision, Mission, Values**

The Strategic Action Plan is designed to serve as a work plan that identifies goals that Parks and Recreation will focus on over the next five years, as well as outlines specific action strategies that will help accomplish these goals. When the Final Plan is developed, it will include a prioritized, date-specific work plan.

Included in the draft Plan is a new **vision statement** for the Department:

"Creating community through people, parks and programs."

The vision statement is intended to provide an ideal description of what Parks and Recreation wants to strive toward.

The current **mission statement** remains the same:

"Seattle Parks and Recreation will work with all citizens to be good stewards of our environment, and to provide safe and welcoming opportunities to play, learn, contemplate and build community."

Providing the underpinning for how Parks and Recreation will operate, interact with the community and prioritize its work, are **values**. These are qualities that represent the public and Parks highest beliefs. The values are:

#### **People**

- Strengthen Relationships and Sense of Community
- Provide Accessible, Safe, and Welcoming Spaces to All People and Communities
- Promote Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Deliver Outstanding Customer Service

#### **Parks**

- Enhance Ecological Preservation and Environmental Sustainability
- Continue the Preservation of the Olmsted Legacy

#### **Programs**

- Encourage Health and Fitness
- Provide Opportunities for Lifelong Play, Creativity, Learning, and Discovery

- Strengthen Accountability for Projects and Programs

#### About the Plan: Goals and Strategic Initiatives

The draft Plan is comprised of six goals, each with its own set of strategic initiatives, action strategies and tasks. The first four goals are externally focused:

- Providing active stewardship for the City's parks and open spaces;
- Supporting healthy lifestyles and diversity through recreation opportunities;
- Strengthening relationships with the public; and
- Maintaining Parks and Recreation land and facilities.

The last two goals are internally focused and are dedicated to:

- Building capacity and culture within Parks and Recreation; and
- Strengthening structures and systems across the Department to more effectively serve our needs.

#### **Public Involvement Process**

As we reported to you previously, the first round of public input, which directly led to the draft plan, included 35 community meetings and 4 all-staff meetings, during November and December 2007. We also conducted an on-line and paper survey, seeking information from the public about their interests and concerns regarding Parks and Recreation. A full report of the first phase public involvement process is available on Parks web site at:

<http://www.seattle.gov/parks/Publications/ParksActionPlan.htm>

For the second round of public meetings, staff will make these outreach efforts:

- Two news releases to daily newspapers, community newspapers, ethnic newspapers, and a number of blogs and community e-newsletters;
- Direct e-mail to a new list of over 700 organizations;
- Direct e-mail to a list of 13,000 people, including those who attended one of the public meetings in the first round, and to those who responded to our online survey;
- Poster distribution to Neighborhood Service Centers, Libraries, all Parks facilities, Senior Centers, nonprofit organizations and youth organizations;
- Translation of publicity materials into seven languages;
- Yard sign postings in our regional parks and on park boulevards to reach people who use our parks but not our facilities;
- Attend naturalization and citizenship classes to get input from immigrants; and
- Attend ongoing meetings of African-American and Native-American organizations

To support all of this outreach we are developing a content-rich project website, which includes a copy of the draft Strategic Action Plan for public viewing and an online comment form.

#### **Schedule**

- April 8 – City Council Parks and Seattle Center Committee briefing
- April 8-24 – second round public outreach
- May – final plan development
- June – submit final plan to Mayor

#### **Additional Information**

Brenda Kramer, Strategic Action Plan Project Manager: 386-9094; [brenda.kramer@seattle.gov](mailto:brenda.kramer@seattle.gov)

#### ***Verbal Briefing/Board Discussion***

Ms. Kramer briefed the Board in January on the Strategic Action Plan. Since then there has been a re-organization in the Superintendent's office to include three new units: Community Connections, with Mickey

Fearn as Manager; Partnerships, with Eric Friedli as Director; and Policy and Business Analysis, with Rebecca Salinas as Manager. Ms. Salinas was in the audience and was introduced by Ms. Kramer.

Staff have been working very hard on the Strategic Action Plan, and have produced 15-20 draft versions. These drafts are the result of a number of public and staff meetings, an online survey, input from the Department's Executive Steering Committee, Mayor, Department of Finance, Seattle Parks Foundation, Associated Recreation Council, and Parks staff. Nearly all City Councilmembers have had individual briefings on the draft plan and it will be presented to Council's Parks and Seattle Center Committee on April 8.

Tonight the Park Board is asked to give feedback to staff on the Draft Plan.

Ms. Kramer next reviewed the main segments of the plan. [To read the entire plan, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/Publications/ParksActionPlan.htm>.] The Strategic Action Plan is a five-year plan to guide Seattle Parks and part of what must be developed in the plan includes: which of the actions will be undertaken in the first year, second year, etc. Will the new actions be paid for with existing funding or will the Department require new funding? The Plan cannot be just a "wish list". Staff are taking a hard look at how best to follow through with it.

The second round public meetings will be held in April, with 30 scheduled. In addition, three more all-staff meetings are scheduled. At the meetings, facilitators will ask whether the goals are the correct goals, what parts of the Plan do they support or not support, and what is missing from the Plan.

Ms. Kramer next read the goals developed in the draft [see page 8] and described each:

1. Steward Seattle's Parks and Open Spaces for Long-Term Sustainability
2. Provide Recreation and Learning Opportunities to Support Healthy and Diverse Communities.
3. Actively Engage and Build Relationships with Seattle's Diverse Population
4. Maintain Parks and Recreation's Land and Facilities
5. Develop Team Capacity and Organizational Culture
6. Strengthen Organizational Systems and Structures

Ms. Kramer stated that staff recognize that the plan must be in languages for all readers to help educate the public on the plan. There is a link on the website plan for those who submitted questions titled "Where to find your questions and answers on the Strategic Action Plan."

She believes the plan will allow Parks to set goals and a work plan, as well as limits and boundaries. It is an ambitious schedule.

### ***Board Discussion***

Commissioner Ramels had several observations:

- (1) asked that staff be careful to include the designation of Hispanic and Asian;
- (2) she agrees that it is high time to change how fees are set;
- (3) the community centers already do a good job of engaging Seattle's diverse population; are there other areas in Parks that do so? Ms. Kramer answered that a new focus will be on the Environmental Learning Center, schools, and performing arts center. Staff are working to be more proactive in programming at these sites. Mickey Fearn is the Department's Director of the new Community Connections unit and will help determine the best ways for this programming.
- (4) how is the Department's Public Involvement Policy integrated into the Plan? Ms. Kramer stated that there was an organized effort by aquatics supporters in the public meetings and the survey. Staff ensured that equal weight was given to every comment. This plan recognizes the need to analyze, research, and document what is now in place and make an informed decision on what needs to change. The first and possibly second year of the

plan will mostly involve internal staff work. Commissioner Ramels asked how the Department will explain this to the public. Commissioner Ranade stated that the Plan should contain information that the Department has heard the comments and is working on the specifics to restructure the Department and come up with the system to implement the changes.

Commissioner Adams stated that he has led a number of strategic planning sessions and observed that this plan has no goal #7 of "How We Will Implement this Plan" and "How We Will Respond to Those who Commented While Developing the Plan"

Commissioner Larsen commented that the Plan should ensure that any group that wants to organize around an issue (to use Ms. Kramers' example of aquatics) is evaluated in the same way as any other group that organizes around an issue (such as citywide skate parks.)

Ms. Kramer stated that this is the first draft of the Plan and there will be changes. In the first round, few teens, immigrants, or people of color made comments. Staff are working very hard to involve them during the second round of comments. Commissioner Ranade asked how many attended the first round of meetings and Ms. Kramer answered that 650 people attended the public meetings, 850 staff were at the all-staff meetings, and 1,900 people responded to the online survey.

Commissioner Barber stated that he is very encouraged by the refinement of the draft and believes the Plan is starting to come together. He supports the decision to involve Parks staff; however, he suggests that any Parks staff who attend the public meetings wear Park Department identification badges to make it clear they work for the Department. He believes the goals are all encompassing, and he likes this open vision and hopes it is retained through the final Plan.

Commissioner Kostka believes that Goal 1 (Steward Seattle's Parks and Open Spaces for Long-Term Sustainability) and Goal 4 (Maintain Parks and Recreation's Land and Facilities) need more definition and asked if staff considered combining the two. She also suggested that the word "increase" in Goal 1B be changed to "ensure." Ms. Kramer answered that the intent is to acknowledge the existing efforts to increase restoration efforts of Seattle's natural ecosystem, and increase and build on those efforts.

Ms. Kramer added that the two goals were originally combined; however, after all the feedback at the meetings, it was decided to make them two separate goals. The general consensus was that Goal 1 applies to taking care of the facilities the Department has now and Goal 2 refers to new opportunities. Commissioner Barber commented that employees and volunteers are all stewards of the parks and he would also support combining the two goals. He also suggested that wording be added to a new Goal 7 that "underneath all the goals is a concept of continual improvement."

Commissioner Adams urged that the Plan be clear about its target, as staff and the public might have different perceptions.

Commissioner Ramels referred to the comment that outreach will be increased to immigrants or others not engaged and asked what is the Department hoping to gain from the outreach. Ms. Kramer answered that the goals are to find out their needs, and to educate them on what Parks does and does not have. Staff are still determining what an ongoing dialogue might be. At this time, the Department has made a commitment to listen, incorporate feedback into the Strategic Plan, and revisit the groups. Commissioner Ramels commented that when people are asked for their input, frequently their expectations are that their input will result in something specific. Ms. Kramer responded that for the Strategic Action Plan, the outreach is to education and start a dialogue, not a commitment to do anything specific. Commissioner Ramels suggested the plan include wording to the effect "this is what we heard."

Commissioner Larsen stated that staff are doing a great job with the draft plan. She had several comments/suggestions:

1. in reference to partnerships in Goal #4, she recommended that staff connect with the University of Washington's Information School (I3M Institute) Re: disaster response project
2. suggested that the Arboretum Foundation be added under "partners" in Goal 6.
3. asked why there isn't a reference to "Friends of" groups and other advocacy groups and suggested that type of volunteer organization be listed as distinct partners.
4. suggested removing the word "rocketing" when describing the popularity of lacrosse
5. doesn't think a new oversight group is needed for the Plan. There are many groups already, including the Board of Park Commissioners, who advocate for parks. She sees another group as diluting the existing groups' leadership.

Commissioner Ramels responded to point #5 and stated that it was a citizen advisory group that conceived and led the Pro Parks Levy through. She sees value in adding a new group with a specific job to help evaluate the possibility of, and potential projects for, a levy. The Park Board advises on all issues within the department, and meets only twice a month.

Commissioner Ranade noted that the Park Board is scheduled to hear a third and final briefing on the Plan at its June 12 meeting. He thanked Ms. Kramer for the informative briefing. Ms. Kramer commented that staff are proud of the work so far on the Strategic Action Plan and appreciate the Park Board's helpful feedback.

## **Old/New Business**

Citywide Review Team: Commissioner Ramels reported that she has been selected to serve on the Citywide Review Team to review Neighborhood Matching Fund projects.

Letter to Councilmember Rasmussen: Commissioner Ranade shared a thank you letter he wrote, as Park Board chair, to Councilmember Rasmussen to thank him for his support of the Park Board.

Pro Parks Levy: Commissioner Barber asked that Parks staff schedule time on an upcoming agenda to discuss the final report of accounting of the Pro Parks Levy. Commissioner Adams and Holme are both members of the Pro Parks Levy Oversight Committee. Commissioner Adams stated that the final report on the levy is not yet final. Once it is released, staff will schedule this item on an agenda.

Potential New Pro Parks Levy: Commissioner Larsen referred to a previous question from Commissioner Ramels asking whether the Board should make a statement with regard to the potential new Parks levy. No action was taken.

Magnuson Park: Commissioner Barber asked for follow up on his question of when the \$400,000+ will be spent to install a uniform signage and wayfinding system at Magnuson Park. There is currently quite a proliferation of styles and sizes of signs at the park. Commissioners asked that Superintendent Gallagher give an update report on Magnuson Park at the April 10 meeting.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

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

Jackie Ramels, Vice-chair  
Board of Park Commissioners

DATE \_\_\_\_\_