

Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation

Seattle Board of Park Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
February 9, 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:

John Barber
Terry Holme, Chair
Diana Kincaid, Vice-chair
Jackie Ramels

Excused:

Antoinette Angulo
Jourdan Keith

Appointees:

Megan Heahlke, City Council Appointee
Brice Maryman, 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. Commissioner Holme called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and reviewed the meeting agenda. **Commissioner Barber moved approval of the meeting agenda, the minutes of the November 10 and December 8, 2011, meetings as presented, and the record of correspondence. Commissioner Kincaid seconded. The vote was taken and the motion carried. Commissioner Holme complimented the quality of the minutes.**

Superintendent's Report

Acting Deputy Superintendent Friedli reported on the following topics in both a verbal and written report available to the Board and audience. To listen to the report, see <http://www.seattlechannel.org/videos/watchVideos.asp?program=Parks> and move cursor to position 1.45.

New Park Board Commissioners: In late 2011, City Council approved legislation increasing the Board's membership from seven to nine commissioners. Commissioner Holmes, Kostka, and Ramels' terms ended on December 31, 2011. Both Holmes and Ramels agreed to attend 2012 Park Board meetings as voting members until Mayor McGinn and City Council appointed their replacements. Mayor McGinn appointed Brice Maryman to replace Commissioner Ramels; City Council's Parks and Neighborhoods Committee appointed Barbara Wright to replace Commissioner Holme. Both are scheduled for a confirmation hearing before full City Council on February 16.

The Parks and Neighborhood Committee has also appointed Megan Heahlke to the one of the two new positions on the Board and Mayor McGinn is nearing selection of the eighth commissioner. The ninth position will be filled in September with a youth representative from the Get Engaged program. The new appointees were invited to join the Board at this meeting as non-voting members and Mr. Maryman and Ms. Heahlke were available to do so. Acting Deputy Superintendent Friedli introduced the appointees to the commissioners and the audience.

Magnuson Park Long-Term Strategy: A public meeting is scheduled for Saturday, February 12, to help develop a long-term strategy and vision for Magnuson Park. Agenda packets for the meeting were distributed to the Commissioners.

Magnuson Park Building 30: Renovation of this building is expected to begin in September.

Rainier Beach Community Center: Construction will begin soon, with an anticipated opening in fall of 2014. Parks is working with Associated Recreation Council (ARC) in hopes of developing a partnership and will also issue a Request for Interest (RFI) to explore all options for operating classes at the new center and keeping it open for as many hours as possible and accessible to all.

Commissioner Ramels asked if there is a new operating model for this facility. Acting Deputy Superintendent Friedli responded there is, with the center and aquatic center being managed separately. Expectations are especially high for the new facility. Responding to a question from Commissioner Ramels whether the "Y" is a candidate for operating the facility, he answered it is. However, issues have been raised on the Y's operations. Parks will also continue working with ARC. The process of selecting an operator should be completed by June, in order to submit the information with the Department's proposed 2013 budget.

Commissioner Barber referred to the recent news stories of crime in Southeast Seattle and asked if Seattle Parks is operating its facilities there at full strength. Acting Deputy Superintendent Friedli responded the Department is doing even more at Rainier Community Center. The youth who attend programs at the centers generally aren't in gangs, but the gangs do try to reach them. Parks believes it has been successful with the kids it has reached and who participate in its programs.

Madison Park Fence: In late 2011, the Park Board held a highly-visible public hearing on removing a waterfront fence at Madison Park. The Board recommended the fence be removed and the Superintendent concurred. Since then, eight community members have agreed to work with Parks staff to develop a plan for the site and will begin work in March.

Thornton Creek Beaver Pond: Commissioners may have read news stories of a number of trees vandalized at the Thornton Creek Beaver Pond area. It is believed a nearby neighbor cut the trees in the belief it would improve safety and sightlines into the area. Parks crews cleaned up the area and trimmed the butchered tree limbs, and also met with the community to discuss safety concerns. The Department most likely won't prosecute the neighbor who vandalized the trees.

All Staff Retreat: The Department will hold an all-staff, half day retreat on Wednesday, March 14. It has been two years since the last retreat.

Volunteer Park Conservatory: Whether the Department can keep Volunteer Park Conservatory open is of major concern. A Friends of the Conservatory group has formed and is raising funds for the costly repairs needed to restore and maintain the historic site. In addition, a consultant has been hired to determine practices used by financially successful conservatories. The consultant's report is expected in March.

Commissioner Kincaid asked if entry fees would be adequate to fund the Conservatory or if the facility will require additional budget funds. Acting Deputy Superintendent Friedli responded even the most successful

conservatories appear to be only 40% self-funded and have the capacity to hold larger events (weddings, parties, etc.) which would require expansion of Volunteer Park Conservatory in some manner. Challenges to that possibility include its designation as a historic landmark and concerns about parking. Parks may look at corporate sponsorship and additional private fundraising to help keep the Conservatory open.

Central Waterfront: Parks staff continue discussions on its role in developing the new Central Waterfront project, and is urging the community to look at ways to connect the parks in Seattle's downtown urban core with the new waterfront park. This is a great opportunity and shouldn't be missed.

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 signed up to testify.

Park Board Operations

Susan Golub, Seattle Parks Strategic Advisor, presented a briefing on Park Board operations. Prior to this meeting, the Board received a copy of the briefing, which was also available to the public on the Board's web page and as hard copies at the meeting. A copy of the briefing is included below. To hear the presentation and Board's discussion, see <http://www.seattlechannel.org/videos/watchVideos.asp?program=Parks> and move cursor to position 21.00.

Written Briefing

Requested Board Action

No Board action is requested at this time. Staff will provide the Board with information on membership, operating procedures and agenda/calendar news.

Membership Changes

Beginning with the Park Board retreat in 2010, the Board began exploring options for eliminating the requirement that six members of the Board select the seventh. Seventh member selection began in 2007 when the City Council passed Ordinance 122332, changing how Commissioners are appointed. Before the ordinance was passed, all Commissioners were nominated by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council. The new appointment process had three members nominated by the Mayor and three by the City Council with the seventh member selected by the other six members. In 2007 the Park Board selected the seventh member, conducting the entire process, from candidate interviews to discussion of the merits of the candidates, in public session as required by the Washington State Open Public Meetings Act. The process proved to be very difficult and time-consuming.

The option implemented by Parks and Recreation, after review by the Park Board and approval by the Mayor and City Council, replaces the seventh member with a young adult selected through the YMCA Get Engaged Program, and adds two new members to the Board, increasing the Board from seven to nine members. Get Engaged has a well-established history of placing young adults on City Boards and Commissions, and Parks looks forward to increasing the young adult voice in Park deliberations. The Get Engaged Commissioner will serve a one-year term, beginning in September of each year.

With the expiration of the terms of two Commissioners at the end of 2011 (Terry Holme and Jackie Ramels), and the addition of two new positions on the Board, the Mayor and City Councilmember Bagshaw each have two vacant positions. Parks is pleased to welcome to the Board Mayor McGinn's appointee, Brice Maryman, and Councilmember Bagshaw's appointee, Barbara Wright. Mr. Maryman and Ms. Wright are scheduled for Parks and Neighborhoods' Committee confirmation on February 16. Two additional new members will be

announced soon, with their confirmation scheduled for March 1. All four of the new members will serve three-year terms, expiring at the end of March 2015.

Operating Procedures – Meeting Frequency

Due to the struggling economy, Parks and Recreation has seen consecutive years of significant budget reductions. All areas of the department, including the Superintendent’s Office which provides staff support for the Board, have had to explore new ways of doing business in order to meet the needs of the community with smaller budgets. In response, Parks leadership team re-evaluated Board operations and determined that revising the way the Board operates could conserve staff hours, continue to effectively use volunteer time and meet the commitment to the public. The change, which will be implemented beginning in April upon approval by the City Council, will be to have Park Board meetings once a month instead of twice.

Agendas for the monthly meeting will focus on long-term planning, budget and management issues. A 2006 report by the Trust for Public Land titled “The Excellent City Park System,” provides examples of the type of issues the Board may address, such as “The Seven Measures of an Excellent City Park System.” Additionally the Board will be asked to provide guidance on the 2012 City Council Statements of Legislative Intent regarding long-term financing and arts funding. The goal is to move towards engaging the board in in-depth discussions on issues, perhaps with a panel of staff participating, moving away from the traditional staff briefing. Current members of the board will recall the November 9, 2011, discussion on Magnuson Park that included a panel discussion with staff.

Operational issues of significance to the public, such as the recent question of whether to remove the fence at the North Madison Park beach, will be addressed by the Board through the creation of an ad hoc committee to address each issue. Parks leadership is continuing to develop the format for an operational ad hoc committee – more to follow in the next few meetings on how this will function.

Calendar

As noted, two meetings a month, the regular second and fourth Thursday, will continue for February and March. Assuming City Council approval of the move to one meeting a month, the April meeting will occur on the fourth Thursday, April 26, and the May meeting on the fourth Thursday, May 24. Thereafter meetings will be on the first Thursday. Yes, this is confusing! For the long-term the second Thursday is best because it accommodates the holidays in November and December; for the short term the fourth Thursday is best because of staff and Commissioner schedules. Parks will extensively advertize the meeting dates.

2012 Park Board Meeting Dates

Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
9	8	26	24	14	12	9	13	11	8	13
23	22									

Additional Information

Susan Golub: susan.golub@seattle.gov
684-7046

Discussion

Ms. Golub introduced herself and stated there are two reasons the Department has requested a monthly meeting schedule for the Park Board. Currently, City legislation requires the Board to meet two times each month and the Board is out of compliance each time it doesn’t do so. [The second meeting in August, November, and December is regularly cancelled.] In addition, the Department would like the agendas to focus on in-depth, higher level, and long-range issues the Department faces, such as its budget – and less on the Department’s operations.

Parks staff are working with the City's Law Department and other Boards and Commissions whether an ad hoc system for the Park Board's public hearings is viable. The Board has several vacancies and is also expanding per recent City Council legislation. Barbara Wright and Brice Maryman have been appointed to two of the terms and are scheduled for confirmation on February 16. City Council and the Mayor have one additional appointment each to make and a Get Engaged member will join the Board in September.

Commissioner Ramels asked why the Department is expanding the Board's membership at the same time it is retracting its functions. Acting Deputy Superintendent Friedli responded that the Department is expanding the role of the Board, rather than decreasing it. Previously, the Board's agendas have had a number of topics at each meeting, with small amounts of time allotted for each. Much of the Board's focus has been on the Department's operations and, while some operational issues will continue to be brought to the Board, the meetings will focus on larger and far-reaching topics. The Board's ad hoc committee will be asked to focus on just the operational issues requiring a public hearing, rather than on a number of issues.

Commissioner Barber agreed the Board has struggled with having adequate discussion time so that each commissioner can be heard and feels the members need more time to hear and discuss the issues. He thinks each commissioner needs quite a bit of time to discuss each issue and that is why the Board increased its meeting time from 2 to 2-1/2 hours. Now the Board is being expanded to nine members and the number of meetings reduced, leaving less time for each commissioner to speak. Acting Deputy Superintendent Friedli responded that the number of issues will be reduced, allowing for more time for each. Parks staff reviewed the upcoming February 23 agenda and scheduled two agenda items, the Department's budget and work plan. This allows for much more time to be spent on these big issues. At the following two meetings, Division directors will address levels of service, with 1-1/2 hours allotted for each discussion. The Board will then be asked to look at those presentations and discussions to help Parks prioritize issues for its 2013 budget preparation.

Commissioners voiced concern that a larger Board makes it difficult to get to know one another. Ms. Golub responded that the Board's retreat is being scheduled for spring as well as an event to recognize the Commissioners whose terms have ended. These events are also ways for the Board to interact and get to know one another. Acting Deputy Superintendent Friedli acknowledged the Department has experienced many staff reductions and having fewer meetings also takes some pressure off staff.

Commissioner Kincaid stated she agrees with the Board having more time to discuss the Department's big picture items. She welcomes that change; however, she doesn't believe the Board can do that and pay enough attention to the public's concerns. She noted that staffing an ad hoc committee will also take staff time. Acting Deputy Superintendent Friedli acknowledged that for issues like the recent Madison Park fence removal, Parks staff would have had to have several public meetings with the community, which would have used different staff time; instead, the Park Board held a public hearing, followed by a discussion and recommendation. The Department doesn't want to lose that connection with the community that is provided by the Park Board. He added that the public hasn't had an opportunity to weigh in on the new levels of service and the Park Board will provide an opportunity for them to do so, while focusing on higher level issues facing the Department.

Commissioner Kincaid asked how Parks will inform the public of the new structure of, and interaction with, the Park Board. Acting Deputy Superintendent Friedli stated he isn't sure the structure would change much from current operations. Parks staff and the Superintendent have historically determined which issues come to the Park Board for a public hearing. Commissioner Ramels stressed that Parks must let the public know there have been major changes to the focus of the Park Board and should use good social media to do so.

She asked for the major reason for this change. Acting Deputy Superintendent Friedli answered that the Board has voiced its frustration that it doesn't receive information on the Department's budget issues early enough to give its input. Previously, Parks was not setting the agendas in a way that worked for the Board to do so. He believes those high-level budget discussions will ferret out good information and the new structure will help with this.

Commissioner Barber believes the ad hoc committee will require a lot of thought and asked how its work would be documented. Acting Deputy Superintendent Friedli stated that the meetings would be public, as the Board's meetings are now. Parks staff will put together guidelines on how the ad hoc committee might work and bring back to the Board for discussion. Ms. Golub noted the City's Planning Commission has standing sub-committees. Responding to a question from Commissioner Ramels on how many members the Planning Commission has, Ms. Golub answered nine members, with one a Get Engaged position.

Commissioner Holme finds it odd the Department did not bring this change to the Park Board for discussion and believes the Board should have been involved. He stated the Board has two roles: to be advisory to the Department and represent the citizens. He believes an ad hoc committee less than the full membership of the Board would be inappropriate. Otherwise, he believes the City Council will step in to determine issues, such as the Madison Park fence.

He asked if the Executive (mayor) has changed his perception of the Board's involvement in the budget process. Acting Deputy Superintendent Friedli responded that it is the Department that wants to bring information to the Park Board earlier and get its input before the time when Departments submit proposed budgets to the mayor and a "cone of silence" falls where they may not discuss the budget further until the Mayor announces the proposed budget [usually in late September.]

Commissioner Holme asked whether the long-range vision discussions fit with the Department's Strategic Action Plan (SAP.) Acting Deputy Superintendent Friedli stated the SAP, developed in 2008, is more of a "to do" list and doesn't contain the vision/direction of where the Department wants to be in five-ten years. However, the Department wants to evolve the SAP so it does include that type of important information.

Commissioner Holme observed that Parks will still need to provide staffing for the ad hoc meetings. He doesn't think this change is entirely a bad one, but urged the Department to think through the changes carefully. When he joined the Park Board in 2003, the Department's public involvement policy was under fire and very controversial. Keep this change out in front of the public and ensure they are part of any change.

Commissioner Ramels asked why Parks didn't involve the current Board in the discussions about changing the meeting frequency. Acting Deputy Superintendent Friedli answered this is a fairly recent development. The Board is currently experiencing a high rate of turnover [three of seven commissioners' terms expired on 12/31/11] and two new positions are being added. It is a good time to look at operations. Commissioner Holme commented it is fair for the Department to make this change, but believes it is profound and staff should have told the Board it was considering the change. Commissioner Kincaid agreed that the Department should have asked the Board's opinion. Commissioners have a lot of experience and they are the ones who should say whether the current structure is or isn't working and should then determine the solution.

City Council's Parks and Neighborhoods Committee will consider the legislation to change the Board's mandatory meetings from two times monthly to one time at its February 16 meeting.

Update: Seattle Parks Community Center Operations

Sue Goodwin, Seattle Parks Recreation Division Director, presented a briefing on recent operational changes to the Department's 26 community centers. Ms. Goodwin reviewed a Powerpoint presentation to help explain how the community centers previously operated and the new geographic operating system begun in 2012. To hear the full presentation and the Board's discussion, see <http://www.seattlechannel.org/videos/watchVideos.asp?program=Parks> and move cursor to position 59.00.

Discussion

Ms. Goodwin explained this change was in response to a 2011 City Council Statement of Legislative Intent. To learn more about these changes and current operations, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/centers/operations.htm>. A team comprised of members of the public and Parks

and other City staff worked during 2011 to design the new geographic teams. City Council members agreed with the team's recommendation, then 26 meetings were scheduled in November 2011 – one for each community center. The same five questions were asked at each meeting, in a world café format, and the discussions were very valuable.

Ms. Goodwin noted that community centers are closing all around the country, due to the current economic situation, and it is a big deal that Seattle Parks has been able to keep all 26 centers open. While some Parks staff are still in “shock” at the drastic changes, most believe the new operating system will succeed.

Board Discussion/Comments

Commissioner Ramels stated she was also on the community center team and she observed that City staff came to the meetings with a plan they pushed forward – and it was not driven by the public. She just wanted to say that at her final Park Board meeting. Don't forget these are public parks and don't just get money wherever the City can and let that drive everything else.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Barber on how the geographic system has changed staffing at community centers, Ms. Goodwin responded that the centers are ranked in different tiers. A Level 1 center now has 4.5 full-time employees (FTE), a Level 2A has 3.5 FTE, and Level 2B has 2.0 FTE. A center must have two staff present at all times it is open to the public. Parks also reduced the number of Assistant Coordinators. And, the Associated Recreation Council, is contributing \$440,000 annually to help pay for the geographic team staffing. Acting Deputy Superintendent Friedli added that the community center's budgets have been cut by 20% over the past several years and, while hours have been dramatically reduced, none of the centers are closed. The Department anticipates that during better financial times the hours will be added back.

Commissioner Barber asked if the Department has been able to protect its youth programs and whether any kids have to travel further to reach a community center. Ms. Goodwin responded that youth programs have been protected, with all the late night recreation programs fully funded. Late night recreation is not a part of this geographic change. She has not heard of any issues from kids having to travel further to reach a program. She noted the focus is currently on basketball programs. The needs will be different in spring and Parks staff will tweak the hours of operation to meet those needs.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Kincaid whether Senior Programs have been reduced, Ms. Goodwin stated they haven't. A member of the audience stated that community centers can be open more than the public hours if there are paid private programs scheduled. This is the case at Queen Anne Community Center, which is a 2A. Commissioner Ramels asked if community centers will share hours, such as a Level 1 sharing hours with 2 and 2A, when/if the need arises. Ms. Goodwin responded that the new system has only been in place six weeks. If the need arises, Parks staff will go back and talk to the affected communities and help make the determination.

Commissioner Kincaid stated she wanted to acknowledge how hard Parks staff work and how fortunate the City is to have such a dedicated workforce. Commissioner Holme and others agreed.

Commissioner Holme asked if the changes have resulted in negative impacts to Associated Recreation Council (ARC.) Ms. Goodwin responded that it hasn't. Parks and ARC have an excellent working relationship that is only getting better. She met with ARC's Executive Director Bill Keller today and they keep in close contact. Commissioner Holme asked that staff report on any impacts to ARC in future updates to the Park Board. Ms. Goodwin agreed and added that Parks and ARC staff are also planning a joint retreat.

Commissioner Holme expressed compliments to Cheryl Fraser, formerly the Department's manager for Natural Resources in the Parks Division. Ms. Fraser was recently selected as Deputy Director of the Recreation Division. He believes Ms. Fraser is one of the gems of the Department.

Commissioners thanked Ms. Goodwin for the update.

Update Briefing: Green Seattle Partnership

Mark Mead, Seattle Parks Senior Urban Forester, presented an update briefing on the Green Seattle Partnership. Prior to this meeting, Commissioners received a written briefing, which was also available on the Board's web and as hard copies at this meeting. To hear the full presentation and the Board's discussion, see <http://www.seattlechannel.org/videos/watchVideos.asp?program=Parks> and move cursor to position 1.45.

Written Briefing

Requested Board Action

No formal vote is requested. This an update to the Park Board following a briefing in April 2011 on the Green Seattle Partnership's (GSP) Five-Year Strategic Plan and budgeting.

Project or Policy Description and Background

In 2004 the City of Seattle embarked on the innovative 20-year GSP effort to restore 2,500 acres of urban forested parkland, a restoration effort that has become one of the largest and most successful programs of its kind in the country. This effort would not be possible without inspiring levels of volunteerism, a dedication to appropriate ecosystem science and high levels of executive and managerial support across the City and within our community. This project involves tireless investment of citizens, community leaders, agencies, non-profits, companies and the City. Forterra (formerly Cascade Land Conservancy) is the program's major partner and has replicated the Green Seattle Partnership model in four other cities in the region.

Since the program's inception, over 732 acres have been brought into active restoration through: City investment of \$9 million from a combination of funds from the City's Cumulative Reserve Fund (CRF), the Pro Parks Levy and the 2008 Parks and Green Spaces Levy; community investment of over 500,000 hours of volunteer support; and \$4 million in community donations and grants.

The Partnership's Executive Council reviewed potential options in the face of current and projected funding reductions and opted for the development of strategies that will reach the original goals of the 20-Year Strategic Plan over a slightly longer timeframe. The Executive Council is in the process of developing an updated supplement to the 20-Year Strategic Plan outlining a strategy for the next five years with revised high level benchmarks, goals and outcomes. An annual plan will be created each year with more detailed tasks and deliverables.

Forterra has reached its original goal to raise \$3 million for the Partnership by 2011, and will now enter into a contractual phase with the City, with Parks and Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) paying Forterra for GSP work. The Partnership will seek additional members and projects changes in its current governance over the next five years. Funding challenges are being addressed currently through the development of funding resources outside of Parks.

Budget

The GSP is at a critical juncture in funding. Funds from the 2008 Parks and Green Spaces Levy has buoyed the GSP budget, as CRF funding for the program has declined due to the difficult economy. (CRF funds accrue from the Real Estate Excise Tax, a tax on new development and real estate transactions.)

The GSP 5-Year Strategy includes goals and deliverables in three categories; **Community, Field and Resources**. The following chart shows the goals for the next five years and a comparison with current planned funding from Parks.

5-Year Strategy Goals

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Community					
Forest Stewards	120	130	140	150	150
Volunteer hours	80,000	90,000	95,000	100,000	100,000
Field					
Acres to maintain	737	812	912	1037	1187
New Acres per year	75	100	125	150	150
Resources					
CRF & Levy Funding	\$2,500,000	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000
O&M Funding (Natural Area Crew)	\$525,803	\$599,139	\$741,191	\$883,243	\$1,025,295
Actual Planned Resources					
CRF & Levy Funding (with Inflation spending)	\$1,220,000	\$1,283,000	\$1,403,000	\$1,194,000	?
O&M Funding (assume consistent funding)	\$350,000	\$350,000	\$350,000	\$350,000	\$350,000
Difference					
CRF & Levy Funding	(\$1,280,000)	(\$1,717,000)	(\$1,597,000)	(\$1,806,000)	
O&M Funding	(\$175,803)	(\$249,139)	(\$391,191)	(\$533,243)	(\$675,295)

Because of the reduction in CRF funding, the 2012 CRF/Levy portion of the budget is \$1,220,000 a \$500,000 decline from the 2011 level. In addition, Forterra will not be able to sustain their funding and are at the end of their commitment for direct contributions to the GSP activities. To support Forterra's work for the GSP, in 2012 Parks and SPU will contract services with Forterra for \$145,000, with \$45,000 coming from Parks and \$100,000 from SPU. The impact of reduced funding from both Forterra and the City has led to an overall reduction in the budget of \$952,243 (from \$2,636,400 in 2011 to \$1,570,000 in 2012). Parks has been fortunate in that two grants were received for work directed at specific sites in 2011: \$500,000 for West Duwamish and \$250,000 for Lewis Park to be allocated over three years (2011-2013).

Public Involvement Process

In a sense, the over 700 volunteer events held annually by the GSP are public meetings. Since 2004 the annual Green Seattle Day has been held on the first weekend of November; in 2011 over 800 people attended. It is estimated that over 25,000 citizens participated in at least one GSP event in 2011. There are now 130 active volunteer Forest Stewards that donate Saturdays every month, hundreds of small and large companies that donate staff time and resources, over 20 non-profits that leverage City funding, and over 70 schools that participate annually in the Partnership. While these numbers are impressive, of concern to the Partnership is the 10% reduction in volunteer hours in 2011 as compared to 2010. With volunteerism suffering across the state and country, the Partnership will be seeking methods to increase volunteerism with non-profit partners.

In September of 2011, the GSP held its first Shareholders Meeting to describe the accomplishments of the program and to discuss the funding challenge. Citizens and non-profit partners were asked to provide suggestions on a series of Partnership related issues.

Environmental Sustainability

The intention of the Green Seattle Partnership is to improve the overall environmental and community health of Seattle by modeling a sustainable program that directly improves the urban forest, creates the management infrastructure to support these efforts and creates a community of knowledgeable and engaged stewards. The GSP is creating a successful model of Environmental Sustainability.

Issues

No major issues of public conflict have been encountered during the last five years of the Green Seattle Partnership. Some issues, such as working in and around encampments, slope stability, worker safety, loss of privacy and potential view conflicts have come up and are addressed through applicable City procedures or measures.

Schedule

The Partnership was originally developed as a 20-year plan. Budget reductions have increased the timeline such that current estimates are that restoration of 2,500 acres will take 25 to 30 years.

Additional Information

The Green Seattle Partnership can be found at <http://greenseattle.org/>. For more information, contact Mark Mead: mark.mead@seattle.gov

Verbal Briefing and Board Discussion

Mr. Mead reviewed an extensive Powerpoint presentation and presented a great deal of information on the Green Seattle Partnership. To view the full overview, see <http://www.seattlechannel.org/videos/video.asp?ID=6072> and move cursor to position 1.45.

Commissioners applauded the presentation and the work being accomplished by the Green Seattle Partnership and Commissioner Ramels stated it is very impressive! Commissioner Barber recalled when Duane Penttila headed the Department's Natural Resources group and estimated the Department owns 6,500 acres; 2,800 of those are developed lands, leaving 3,700 undeveloped. With GSP planning to restore 2,500 acres, what happens to the remaining 1,200 acres? Mr. Mead responded that 800 acres are underwater (lakes, streams, shoreline, etc.) GSP hopes to add the remaining acres as it moves ahead with restoration efforts.

Commissioner Kincaid asked if the Department has changed its plant selections due to climate change. Mr. Mead responded that climate change isn't predicted to be as drastic in this area as in some other places; however, some other aspects of the restoration are being adjusted.

Commissioner-elect Maryman referred to the great service urban forests provide by handling stormwater drainage – a major benefit to the City. Mr. Mead responded that GSP is working to set an annual range of benefit, with the amount somewhere in the \$3 million range. He added that Seattle Public Utilities is making a wise investment by partnering on the forest reforestation. Commissioner-elect Maryman suggested GSP look at developing a volunteer program that would provide young professionals (teachers, attorneys, etc.) a loan deferral by volunteering for GSP. Mr. Mead stated GSP would be interested, if a partner steps forward to fund the deferrals. GSP is also looking to align with the U.S. Forest Service. He noted that GSP also employs Goodwill Industry trainees, with Goodwill paying their salary.

Commissioners thanked Mr. Mead for the informative briefing.

Old/New Business

Thank You to Commissioners Holme and Ramels:

Commissioner Ramels stated being a Board of Parks Commissioner has enriched her life and she will miss everyone. She reminded the group she will be watching its operations on Seattle TV! Acting Superintendent Williams complimented Commissioner Ramels for skillfully running Park Board meetings when she served as

chair and vice chair. He admires how she was always prepared for every meeting and topic and praised her passion for providing opportunities for youth. Acting Deputy Superintendent Friedli added that Commissioner Ramels always asked great questions. As he prepared for Park Board briefings, he would ask himself how she especially would react to, or think about, a project or proposal. She was always respectful and showed a real love for Seattle's park system.

Acting Superintendent Williams thanked Commissioner Holme for his nine years as a Park Board Commissioner. He described Commissioner Holme as coming from a background of strong athletic interests, but caring about all aspects of parks and recreation. It was very important to him to keep the Park Board moving in a forward direction. He also took a reasonable approach on issues brought to the Board. Acting Deputy Superintendent Friedli added that Commissioner Holme's presence on the Board has made a great difference to him, as he always asked great questions and pushed staff to think about issues more deeply, and did so with a nurturing approach. Both Commissioners will be missed!

Commissioner Ramels noted Commissioner Holme also regularly attends many of the Department's public events and his approach to various issues is very thorough. Commissioner Barber values the many helpful discussions and thanked both for being such effective commissioners. Commissioner Holme believes people volunteer because of their interest in parks; he will keep volunteering for the Department because of the people who work for it. He appreciates the Department and this opportunity.

There being no other new business, the meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m. Following adjournment, Parks staff served refreshments in honor of Commissioners Ramels and Holme.

APPROVED: _____
Diana Kincaid, Acting Chair
Board of Park Commissioners

DATE _____