

Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation

Seattle Board of Park Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
July 26, 2012

Web site: <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/parkboard/>
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<http://www.seattlechannel.org/videos/watchVideos.asp?program=Parks>

Board of Park Commissioners

Present:

Antoinette Angulo
John Barber
Megan Heahlke
Jourdan Keith, Vice-chair
Brice Maryman
Yazmin Mehdi
Barbara Wright

Excused:

Diana Kincaid, Chair

Seattle Parks and Recreation Staff

Christopher Williams, Acting Superintendent
Sandy Brooks, Park Board Coordinator

This meeting was held at Seattle Park Headquarters, 100 Dexter Avenue North. Vice-chair Jourdan Keith called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm, welcomed members of the audience, and reviewed the meeting agenda.

Commissioner Barber moved approval of the consent items including the meeting agenda, acknowledgment of correspondence received by the Board since its last meeting, and the minutes from the April 26 and May 24 meetings as presented. Commissioner Angulo seconded. The vote was taken and was unanimous in favor. Motion carried.

Commissioners Barber, Heahlke, and Maryman held an ad hoc public meeting on May 10. **Commissioner Barber moved approval of the meeting minutes as presented. Commissioner Heahlke seconded. The vote was taken, with the three commissioners voting their approval. Motion carried.**

Superintendent's Report

Acting Superintendent Williams reported on the following. To hear the full report, see <http://www.seattlechannel.org/videos/video.asp?ID=6199> and move cursor to position 2.06.

Thank You to Park Board: On this beautiful summer evening, the commissioners have many choices how to spend their time. The Department is very grateful they choose to volunteer a great deal of their time to help Seattle Parks and Recreation.

New Director in Parks Division: Dan Johnson, who has been the acting director of the Parks Division, was recently appointed as the permanent director. Acting Deputy Superintendent Williams thanked Commissioner Wright for participating in the selection process.

Lincoln Park High Ropes Course: After the Fauntleroy Community Association meeting on July 10, Parks decided not to proceed with a proposal to build a five-to-six acre high ropes course in West Seattle's Lincoln Park. This was a very difficult meeting for the two Parks staff working on the proposal, which was in the conceptual stages. Acting Superintendent Williams explained that the Department was approached by GoApes. Parks staff had evaluated the proposal and developed a full public involvement plan, and had just begun its public outreach on the concept. Low and high ropes courses are gaining in popularity worldwide, and are among a number of emerging sports and other outdoor activities Parks and Recreation is working hard to accommodate. Acting Superintendent Williams will also meet with the Friends of Lincoln Park on Tuesday, August 31; Commissioners were invited to attend the meeting.

Bench Pads at Green Lake: Parks will host a public meeting on Tuesday, July 31, at the Green Lake Community Center to discuss the design and use of the Green Lake bench pads. A number of double-backed benches were removed from Westlake Park and staff thought the nice benches needed a new home. Nine cement pads were poured on the east side of Green Lake between the community center and pool; however, some community members are unhappy with the number and size of the concrete pads. Parks is now working with the community to decide if all the pads should be kept and whether there are other suitable uses, such as bbq pads, giant checker/chess board, etc.

Commissioner Mehdi voiced concern with the reports of the high rope courses and the bench pads. At a time when every dollar counts, how does the Department best determine when to go forward and when to back up. It is a waste of money to remove park elements that have just been installed or to stop the potential of bringing in more needed revenues. She asked how the Department is educating the public about Seattle Parks' financial parameters. She is worried about wasted dollars when the Department must choose between removing new bench pads or having funds to water its parks. She asked how the Park Board can help with these difficult decisions. Commissioner Maryman has similar concerns. The Department quickly backed off two ideas that must have initially seemed like good ideas. He is also interested in the Department's policies in such situations and hopes to hear more as the Strategic Plan is updated.

Acting Superintendent Williams responded the Department doesn't back off ideas that protect broad community access, such as the recent fence removal at Madison Park. For the Green Lake bench pads, Parks staff know when a community process should be held and failed to do so with the installations, thus violating its own policy. Parks erred and must have the courage to say so. For the Lincoln Park high ropes course, Parks is being urged to find new funding sources – and high ropes courses are a new emerging sport and a potential source of funds. He noted that one recently opened at Northwest Trek <http://seattle.cbslocal.com/2012/07/14/nw-trek-opens-new-zip-line-and-ropes-course/>. However, Parks must also preserve its relationship with the community. Staff did a lot of work on the high ropes idea but it was unpopular with the community. Now the Department will go back to the community and work on new ideas for park funding. Commissioner Barber heard from many community members the high ropes course wasn't a well-crafted idea. Those folk visit and treasure parks for their ambience, sense of well being, and for relaxing. He believes this is parks' strongest asset and people are passionate about protecting that.

He asked if a ropes course was installed at Camp Long. Acting Superintendent Williams responded that Camp Long's advisory council supported the installation, which was funded by both the Department of Neighborhoods Large Matching Fund and the King County Sports Youth Facility Grant. The Challenge Course is well used, with Phase II, the High Ropes Course, now underway. Construction is slated for the beginning of August with completion by the end of September. For more information, see http://www.seattle.gov/parks/projects/camp_long_course/.

Commissioner Angulo agreed public support is critical to the Department and it is wise to nurture and protect that support. Commissioner Mehdi appreciates hearing the Superintendents' perspective and agrees that hard decisions must be made.

Volunteers in Parks (VIP) Day: Volunteers donate approximately 350,000 hours each year — equivalent to \$7 million — to Seattle Parks and Recreation. On Friday, July 20, volunteer teams will have another opportunity to roll up their sleeves and spend a summer day working together at several Seattle parks, including Lower Woodland Park, Dr. Jose Rizal Park, Lincoln Park, and Katie Black's Garden. The event is being organized by Seattle Parks Foundation in partnership with Seattle Parks and Recreation, REI, EarthCorps, and Seneca Group. Following the VIP workday, a thank you party is scheduled at Lake Union Park from 3 to 7 p.m. featuring live bands, free clam chowder, food trucks, and plenty of fun activities. All volunteers will receive a commemorative t-shirt, and all corporate partners will be acknowledged with their logo on signage displayed at the work site, on the website, on all VIP Day posters and publications, and at the appreciation party.

Westlake Park Play Area: Seattle Parks is working with Downtown Seattle Association(DSA) to create a play space at Westlake Park. This project is the result of DSA's recognizing there are more children living downtown, promoting the need for a play space, and being willing to fund its construction. This is one of the many ways the Parks/DSA partnership supports a healthy downtown. Acting Superintendent Williams recognized Kate Joncas, DSA president, for her great work and noted DSA raised \$40k of the needed \$100k for the new play area.

South Lake Union Incentive Zoning: Parks staff and Brennon Staley from the City's Department of Planning and Development presented the Tax Increment Financing proposal to the Park Board on June 28. The briefing explained the potential impacts to Denny Park of the idea to build a school and community center in the park. The Park Board opposed the idea of adding a school in Seattle's first park. The Denny family opposes the idea of a school but would support a community center.

Georgetown, Northacres and Beacon Mountain Sprayparks: These three new sprayparks are complete and operational, and kids and families love them. These projects converted existing wading pools to sprayparks. Sprayparks offer a more interactive play experience that appeal to a broader age group of kids, compared to wading pools. Sprayparks are operated with a longer season and longer hours than existing wading pools, providing more access to play. Sprayparks also use approximately 1,000,000 gallons less water than wading pools each season.

Montlake Playfield: Synthetic turf must be replaced on a frequent and regular basis for college play and the material is often still in good condition. Ohno Construction recently removed synthetic turf at the University of Washington, installed it at Montlake Playfield at no cost, and added several yards soil to build up the marshy area – at no charge! Ohno's crews spent hundreds of hours completing the work and the field is now available for scheduling. There is minor work still to be done on the track and the end zone. The renovated field increases playable hours, promotes safety with an even surface, reduces year-round and annual costs of field maintenance, reduces field preparation expenses, conserves water, and reduces the use of fertilizer and soil amendments. This was a very generous gift!

During New/Old Business, Commissioner Maryman also voiced thanks to Mr. Ohno for his generosity.

Magnuson Park Updates:

Tennis Center Sand Point: After many years of planning, construction will begin within the next week on the Tennis Center Sand Point. This project is a public-private partnership between Seattle Parks and Recreation and the Tennis Center Sand Point, LLC. The new tennis center will be located east of 62nd Avenue NE and just south of NE 74th Street. Construction is expected to take approximately 11 months.

Sail Sand Point: Parks staff are working on a long-term lease for Sail Sand Point for boat storage and programming adjacent to the office space in Building 11. The City currently has a five-year agreement with Sail Sand Point; they are seeking a longer term, for security and to attract fundraising opportunities.

Nature Programs: Magnuson Community Center's Nature Programs are in full swing. Besides weekly camps, the Center has offered nighttime nature walks. On July 6, 40 people participated in the Full Moon Owl Walk and experienced numerous tree frogs, pond water examinations including a very late tadpole, and a Great Horned owl pellet dissection. On July 2, Magnuson Community Center also hosted a special wetlands field trip for park partner Outdoors-for-All. Fifteen autistic children and young adults were led by Emily Bishton, Magnuson Nature Programs Director, through the wetlands. They explored the trails, examined pond water samples, and observed birds and dragonflies.

Woodland Park Play Area: The first public meeting for this play area renovation is scheduled for Wednesday, July 18. Funded by the Parks and Green Spaces Levy, this project will replace play equipment, improve access and complete other work at this existing play area.

Specialized Adult Programs Demand is Greater than Capacity: The Specialized Programs' adult summer programs have kicked off and are in much demand as shown by the high levels of registration. Cooking class sessions are full with a waiting list of seven people at Delridge Community Center and 17 people at Northgate Community Center. Demand for these programs outweighs the capacity. Classes at both locations are ending after community center hours of operation, which requires Specialized Programs staff to lock and secure the building.

Seacrest Boathouse: Parks received word from the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) that the Seacrest Boathouse Master Use Plan (MUP) was ready. This means Marination restaurant will be able to begin construction soon to revamp the building into a new kitchen. The hope is to open the restaurant for business by Labor Day. An interim agreement has been signed in order for Marination to proceed before presenting the long-term agreement to City Council for approval.

Acting Superintendent Williams explained the building had never received permits to be used as a restaurant, although the previous concessionaire had done so for 10 years. With the new lease to Marination, DPD required a Master Use Permit and the building required reconfiguring. The community is disappointed with the delay in opening the restaurant, which is a popular summer site. The issues are now resolved and the restaurant is scheduled to open on August 14.

Commissioner Mehdi requested that Seattle Parks explore ways to expedite such permits with other City departments. Everyone benefits from this restaurant opening sooner – the community gets to enjoy a new restaurant earlier in the summer season, and both the business and Seattle Parks and Recreation are earning revenues.

Scholarship Donation: Evans Pool received a generous \$2,500 donation from a citizen who participates at the pool on a regular basis. The funds are to be used to provide swim lessons to children who could not otherwise afford them.

Seattle Parks' Summer Youth Readiness Programs: The Youth Employment Programs Summer of Service, Student-Teen Employment Preparation (STEPS), and Youth Engaged in Service (YES) Programs started July 9. These programs target at-risk, low-income, immigrant/refugee, and youth with developmental disabilities, between the ages of 12 to 19, and combine job work experience, leadership training, and safety education.

Specialized Programs Holds Two Weeks of Youth Summer Camp: The Specialized Programs Section of the Department offers year-round activities for people with disabilities. The purpose is to provide recreational opportunities for individuals who may choose to participate in activities specifically designed and conducted by trained staff to best meet their needs. The program provides a source of respite for families, with a two-week camp each summer. The first week consisted of an overnight program at Camp Long and the second week

was a day camp program at Lower Woodland Park. This summer's program went very well and families really look forward to this camp.

Jefferson Jubilee Held on July 14: City Councilmember Bagshaw spoke at this well-attended event which celebrated the remodeled park, and several Park Board commissioners were also present. Over \$13 million has been invested in the park, which went through a long planning process. The community produced the event and the sunny day and great organization put smiles on the faces of the over 1,000 attendees. Participants ranged from Samoan cricket players to Ultimate Frisbee players, to bike polo players, to amazing new and old skateboarders, to the kids playing in the spraypark and play area. For more information on the Jubilee, see <http://beaconhill.seattle.wa.us/2012/07/15/a-busy-day-at-the-jefferson-park-jubilee>.

Tony Hawk Skate Park Event: Seattle Parks is bringing professional skateboarder Tony Hawk to Jefferson Park Thursday, July 26, at noon. For more on Mr. Hawk, see <http://www.tonyhawk.com/>.

Colman Pool Opens: After 70 years as Seattle's only outdoor saltwater swim facility, the 50-meter Colman Pool underwent extensive repairs. The pool re-opened as scheduled on June 30 and had a sellout day (772 swimmers) on Sunday, July 8.

Boat Ramps: Boat ramp revenue came in at about \$12,000 for the first week of July compared to the first week of June which came in at \$1,700. The substantial increase is credited to the good weather.

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. Two people signed up to testify. A brief summary follows; to hear the full testimony, see <http://www.seattlechannel.org/videos/video.asp?ID=6199> and move cursor to position 35.45.

Nancy Malmgren: Ms. Malmgren is a long-time volunteer for Carkeek Park. She distributed a handout and asked for the Board's support in protecting the park from sewage spills at Seattle Public Utilities' combined sewer overflows inside the park. The spills are unhealthy and should be eliminated. She and Jamie Pranfil displayed a poster board showing the site of a January 2012 sewer overflow near the salmon imprint pond.

Jamie Pranfil: Ms. Pranfil is involved with two environmental groups and is also concerned with the spills. She is a water quality expert and has observed combined sewer outlet overflows at Carkeek Park's manholes, trails, and into Piper's Creek during heavy rainfall. Responding to a question from Acting Superintendent Williams whether the manhole covers are flooded, Ms. Pranfil answered yes. She next showed poster boards and described the service and treatment areas. She sees at least three overflows each year in the park and the areas smell even when there isn't a spill. She and Miss Malmgren have been extracting information from Seattle Public Utilities.

Commissioner Heahlke asked if the two speakers have communicated their concerns to SPU. Ms. Malmgren stated it has been 40 years since the Clean Water Act became law. She has been working with SPU for many years, with the problems identified but not corrected. In 1999, SPU updated the Piper Creek Action Plan, but hasn't put the plan into practice. It isn't good when park visitors are smelling raw sewage.

Commissioner Keith thanked Ms. Malmgren for her comments. This is good information and the Board will follow up on it. Acting Superintendent Williams recognized Ms. Malmgren's many years of advocating for, and working at, Carkeek Park. She has been an extraordinary advocate for the park and won a Jefferson Award for her volunteer efforts. Commissioner Maryman disclosed that he is currently consulting with SPU on improving the water flow at Piper's Creek.

Donna Hartmann-Miller: Ms. Hartmann-Miller had comments on the Department's Strategic Plan. She suggests that public outreach include more than a survey and recommended focus groups and community meetings to pursue conversations with the stakeholders.

She is also disappointed the Lincoln Park high line idea was cancelled and asked if Seattle Parks will consider it for other parks. She also complimented the "Salmonchanted Evening" fundraising dinner scheduled at Victor Steinbrueck Park this next weekend. She hopes everyone will attend and take their families.

Seattle Parks Human Resources Division

In 2012, four new commissioners joined the Park Board. To give them a better understanding of the Department, and its responsibilities and challenges, Parks staff have presented a series of briefings on its major divisions: Finance, Parks, Planning and Development, and Recreation. Tonight the final of these briefings was presented and focused on the Human Resources Division.

Michele Finnegan, Seattle Parks Human Resources Division Director, presented the briefing. Prior to this meeting, Commissioners received a written briefing, copied below and available to the public on the Board's web page. To listen to the full presentation, see <http://www.seattlechannel.org/videos/video.asp?ID=6199> and move cursor to position 55.00.

Written Briefing

At the July 26 Park Board meeting, Parks staff will provide the Board with an overview of Parks' human resources in general and the Human Resources Division in particular.

Parks Human Resources – As our Superintendent often says, "we are a people driven organization with a people driven mission." As such, our people are our greatest asset. These assets include:

- Regular Employees: In 2012, we have 979 regular positions (293 or 30% of whom are part time)
- Temporary/Intermittent Employees: In recent years, we average over 700 temporary employees working during the year.
- Volunteers: In 2011, 32,000 individuals donated a total of 394,000 hours in support of our mission.
- Partners: Our mission is also furthered by partners working at the organizational level and at individual work site/program levels.

Human Resources Division: The Human Resources Division provides a support function within Parks. As such, we see ourselves as customer service providers to our individual employees, to our business unit partners and to the organization as a whole. At any given time our roles transition between strategic activities (policy/program development), transactional activities (hiring processes, employee inquiries) and compliance activities (investigations, required trainings).

- Budget and FTE: The Division budget is approximately \$1.5 million, 90% of which covers salaries and benefits of our 15 person team (14 FTE). The rest covers operating expenses (computers, phones, supplies, etc., and a minimal centralized training budget).
- Functional Teams: While individual assignments may vary, in large part the Division operates in functional teams.
 - *Employment Services* – This includes hiring processes for regular and temporary employees, recruitment activities, background checks (criminal, driver's license/abstract verification, and references), new employee orientation, and records management.
 - *Employee and Labor Relations* – Work includes internal and external investigations, grievances, consultative services such as performance improvement plans, and representing the department in collective bargaining, program development (e.g., mentorship).
 - *Safety and Health* – Staff oversee accident prevention program development/monitoring, OSHA/WISHA compliance, medical monitoring programs, worksite safety inspections, consultative services such as safety plan development/review, worker's compensation claims

management, return to work programs, leave management, and ADA accommodation processes.

- *Training* – This unit's work includes coordinating, scheduling, communicating and registering participants for department sponsored training and coordinating with other departments on Citywide training.
- *Administration* – This work includes strategy and policy development, position management, coordination with City Personnel and the Law Department, information management, and Project Hire coordination.
- In addition, our Payroll Team in the Finance Division also provides a key human resources function department-wide, as does our Volunteer Programs Office housed in the Parks Division.

Opportunities in Managing our Human Resources:

- The incredible commitment of our “human resources” to the organization’s mission.
- Superintendent and Executive Team commitment to leading/managing people.
- Positive working relationships with our Labor partners.

Challenges in Managing our Human Resources:

- Impact of budget changes on our employees and on staff capacity.
 - *2011*: 194 employees (approximately 20% of the workforce) were at risk of a negative impact; 124 experienced a financial impact and 32 others experienced an assignment change; 38 others were not negatively affected but experienced the stress of the possibility.
 - *2012*: 96 employees (approximately 10% of the workforce) were at risk of a negative impact; 45 experienced a financial impact and 33 others experienced an assignment change; 18 others were not negatively impacted but experienced the stress of the possibility.
 - *2013*: To be determined.
- High number of employees eligible for retirement – knowledge of management issues; workforce development issues.
- Investing in our people during times of financial constraints;

¹ “Viewing employees as ‘human capital’ means seeing them as assets or investments to be managed, rather than ‘human resources’ which are consumed with the goal of minimizing costs.” Succession Planning Guide – GSA Office of Governmentwide Policy, Summer 2001.

Discussion

Ms. Finnegan reviewed information in the written briefing paper and Powerpoint presentation, and answered Commissioner’s questions. She also thanked Commissioner Wright for participating in a recent hiring process to select the Parks Division director.

Commissioner Maryman asked if the Department has an overarching Americans With Disabilities Act requirement. Acting Superintendent Williams responded that Parks has the largest ADA requirement of any City department and works with the Law Department on compliance. The requirement stems from the many facilities Parks provides for public use and its many recreation, daycare, and other programs.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Barber whether there are any unions exclusive to the Parks Department, Ms. Finnegan responded the Department has lifeguards and they are members of a union. She added that the City handles most negotiations with the unions, with Parks staff assisting.

Commissioners thanked Ms. Finnegan for the informative briefing.

Briefing: Seattle Parks New Strategic Planning Process

Susan Golub and Susanne Rockwell, Seattle Parks Strategic Advisors, presented a briefing on the Department’s new Strategic Planning Process. Prior to the meeting, Commissioners received a written briefing paper, included below in these minutes, and available to the public on both the Board’s web page and as handouts at

this meeting. To view the full presentation and Powerpoint and hear the Board's discussion, see <http://www.seattlechannel.org/videos/video.asp?ID=6199> and move cursor to position 76.00.

Written Briefing

Requested Board Action

No Board action is requested at this time. This is the first of several briefings before the Board on the strategic plan update.

Project Description and Background

Seattle Parks and Recreation is embarking on a planning process to develop a strategic direction for the future. Questions to be addressed include:

- What are Parks' Vision, Mission, Values, and Outcomes?
- Are our resources deployed in the most effective manner?
- What is the public view of our park system?

Working with Parks' key partners, the Associated Recreation Council and Seattle Parks Foundation, and being led by the Board of Park Commissioners, the first phase of the plan will be the development of shared Vision, Mission' and Values statements. The second phase will be a programmatic review, telling the story of Parks and Recreation: what we do, who we serve, how we are funded. Emerging recreation trends will be examined, as will the latest census data. We anticipate conducting a statistically valid survey citywide to gather information on how our park system is used, frequency of use, and citizen concerns. Phase three will be a look to the future, providing a framework for a sustainable parks and recreation system.

Background

In 2009, Seattle Parks and Recreation concluded a strategic planning process with the publication of the Strategic Action Plan, a five-year 'to do' list which provided direction for stewardship of the park system. Many of the Strategic Action Plan tasks have been accomplished, while others have been delayed due to the economic recession. Parks Legacy Plan will be an update of the 2009 Plan, with a focus on data collection and analysis.

Schedule

- Phase 1: The shared Vision, Mission, and Values and Outcomes statements are scheduled for consideration by the Board of Park Commissioners in January 2013;
- Phase 2: Programmatic review due March 31, 2013;
- Phase 3: Strategic plan for the future to be completed by January 2014.

Budget

Parks has contracted for consulting services to help with the development of Phase 1: Shared Vision, Mission, Values and Outcomes (Steve Boyd); and will be hiring a public relations firm to conduct the public survey. The combined costs for these contracts is expected to be under \$100,000.

Public Involvement

Input from Parks staff and the public on the Legacy Plan will occur at many junctures over the next year and a half. The Park Board will provide the public review forum for Phase 1, Vision, Mission and Values and Outcomes. Phase 2 will include a public survey and staff and community review in spring 2013, with Phase 3 being reviewed by the public and staff in fall 2013. Progress reports for the Board of Park Commissioners will occur regularly throughout Plan development.

Additional information: Susan Golub: susan.golub@seattle.gov
Susanne Rockwell: susanne.rockwell@seattle.gov

Verbal Briefing/Discussion

Ms. Golub and Ms. Rockwell introduced themselves, reviewed information in the written briefing paper, and shared additional information in a Powerpoint presentation. The timeline is very ambitious, and they are relying on a great deal of outside data for the needs assessment portion to help determine emerging trends. Parks will work with the Department of Neighborhoods and its public outreach system to develop the survey and reach a broad audience. (For more information, see <http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/poe/>.) Information from the Parks Department's CLASS and PLANTS data collection systems will be incorporated. People counters have been installed at the community centers and staff are also analyzing that data. The findings and comparisons will include related planning efforts, City demographics, core services, levels of service, analysis of park classifications, and possible level of services per program. Ms. Friedman responded to public comment heard earlier in this meeting that outreach include more than a survey. The survey will be used during Phase I, followed by a robust community involvement plan in the following phases.

Acting Superintendent Williams remarked that a strong team is leading this effort. There is a constituents group for each of the Department's programs. The analysis will show current and emerging trends and how those affect Seattle Parks. The Strategic Plan will guide the Department set goals. The Mayor's office, City Council, and Seattle Parks Foundation and its partners are all looking at new funding mechanisms for Seattle's park system. The Department wants to be the "right" size Department if new funding is developed. And if new funding isn't found, it must make tough decisions on what programs and services it can no longer provide.

Commissioner Angulo asked if Commissioners will have an opportunity to review outreach to underserved populations. Ms. Rockwell responded that Parks will contract with the Department of Neighborhoods for this work. DON staff will assist those who need help translating the survey, and Parks staff will then analyze the information. Young people will also be involved in this outreach.

Commissioner Barber believes this approach will look primarily at activities. However, it's important to also quantify the health benefits of, and what draws people to, parks. Ms. Rockwell agreed; these questions will be in the survey.

Commissioner Maryman observed the Department is looking inward towards its functions. He suggested that, at the same time, the team observe how Seattle's parks fit in the larger Seattle ecosystem. He believes this dual effort will be mutually beneficial as it will fit with the City Planning Commission's efforts and volunteered to help with this. Acting Superintendent Williams responded this is a good idea; Parks hadn't considered taking its Strategic Plan to the Commission. Commissioner Maryman also suggested that the roles and parameters of the mayor, City Council, citizens, and Park Board; Commissioner Heahlke agreed. Ms. Golub asked both commissioners to work with the team to help with this. Commissioners Keith, Kincaid, Maryman, and Mehdi are members of the Shared Vision Committee. Commissioner Heahlke asked that all commissioners help develop questions for the Shared Vision Committee's focus. Ms. Rockwell added the team will bring the Plan back to the Park Board on a frequent basis for review and input.

Commissioner Mehdi suggested the survey be designed to help determine what respondents know about the park system. The feedback may not be as robust as it could be if respondents are unfamiliar with the system. The survey should incorporate language that informs as it asks. She recommended the team also engage the public frequently and not just by survey. Acting Deputy Superintendent Williams agreed; the Trust for Public Land recommends park systems get regular feedback from users and Seattle Parks doesn't do so. He wants a regular report card form the public to learn how they think the Department is doing. Commissioner Mehdi added that surveys can be skewed, and it's important they be balanced and always available. That can help people understand the context in which the Department makes decisions.

Commissioner Wright is curious how Seattle Parks Foundation, Associated Recreation Council, and Seattle Parks come to a clear and joint decision on the "big picture" of Seattle's park system – and that be included in the Strategic Plan. Acting Superintendent Williams agreed; it is important for the three to be on the same path

with common goals. Ms. Golub stated the three, along with Park Board commissioners, have met to work on this and will be meeting more regularly.

Commissioner Wright added she has heard statistic-driven goals are being assessed. However, there is an advocacy voice missing if decisions are based on statistics alone. Parks have an importance that goes beyond statistics — pleasure, joy — how is that measured and included?

Ms. Rockwell stated staff are researching new sponsorships, marketing strategies, and restaurants. That work will also be folded into this effort. Ms. Golub gave additional information on the phases of the Plan and timeline. Commissioner Maryman suggested the team consider the recommendations of the Trust for Public Lands for inclusion in the Plan.

Commissioner Keith thanked the team for their work. There is so much information to read, consider, and utilize for this Plan — and for the Park Board to brainstorm. She would like to see the online survey that is always available.

Ms. Rockwell believes a statistically valid survey captures the economic and other demographics in a snapshot of a certain time. Some components can't be statistically valid, but the information is vitally important and provides user information.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Keith how information is collected on summer camps, Ms. Rockwell stated staff will do intercept surveys and will target a particular day, a few key parks, and regional, neighborhood, and pocket parks. Staff and partner groups will be at the sites all day doing the surveys. Acting Superintendent Williams added the Department will also do targeted surveys as it issues permits to various users. It is critical the survey be designed to avoid "ballot stuffing/popularity contests."

Commissioners thanked Parks staff for the briefing and look forward to the next update.

Old/New Business

Carkeek Park Watershed: Following testimony from Ms. Malmgren and Ms. Pranfil during Oral Communications, Commissioner Mehdi asked what is the Board's role when they hear public testimony. Ms. Malmgren is asking the Park Board to have a strong voice. While she believes Ms. Malmgren has the strongest voice in the issue, the Board does have a strong voice. Acting Superintendent Williams commented that when the Board hears public comment on a particular issue, there is usually lots more information and background about the topic. Seattle Parks has known about the overflow for years. When it happens, Seattle Public Utilities are quick to respond and clean up the site. The Park Board could take a stand on this, if its' members agree to do so; however, he urged commissioners to take stands on policies and not on the department's operations.

Commissioner Maryman recommend Ms. Malmgren's information be sent to Seattle Public Utilities and, rather than taking a formal position on CSOs at this time, commissioners become well educated on the CSOs. He noted that Seattle Park's urban forests help with the City's CSO needs. Commissioner Keith stated she is obsessed with CSOs being located in Seattle's parks. The Park Board doesn't take stands on many issues; except at public hearings, and it could take stands on many more.

Commissioner Mehdi suggested the Superintendent discuss the Board's concerns with the SPU Director. Commissioner Keith responded if the Board hears concerns from the public, it should follow up on those concerns. Acting Superintendent Williams stated the Department is also listening and following up. Commissioner Barber asked if the concerns of CSO contamination to parks is being addressed. Acting Superintendent Williams stated it is; and this concern has resulted in new stormwater rules. For more information on Seattle Public Utilities' CSO program, see

<http://www.seattle.gov/util/Services/Drainage & Sewer/Keep Water Safe & Clean/CSO/index.htm>.

South Lake Union Zoning Follow Up: Commissioner Maryman suggested Forterra (formerly Cascade Land Conservancy) be invited to a Park Board meeting in response to the recent Department of Planning and Development briefing on the South Lake Union zoning. In conjunction, he requested a briefing on Seattle Parks' North Downtown Park Plan.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 9:27 pm.

APPROVED: _____

Jourdan Keith, Vice-chair
Board of Park Commissioners

DATE _____