

Seattle Board of Park Commissioners  
Meeting Minutes  
January 25, 2018

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

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**Board of Park Commissioners**

Present:

Tom Byers, Chair  
Dennis Cook  
Marlon Herrera  
Evan Hundley  
William Lowe, Vice Chair  
Kelly McCaffrey  
Rachel Anne Williams

Excused:

Andréa Akita  
Barbara Wright

**Seattle Parks and Recreation Staff**

Christopher Williams, Acting Superintendent  
Paula Hoff, Strategic Advisor

The meeting is held at 100 Dexter Avenue North. Commissioner Hundley calls the meeting to order at 6:30pm. Commissioner Hundley calls for approval of the Consent Items: the January 25 agenda; Commissioner McCaffrey moves, Commissioner Herrera seconds and the Consent Item is approved unanimously.

**Oral Requests and Communication from the Audience**

Melissa Hall – PFM Roller Derby – Been skating at Magnuson Park and are working on creating a combined program. Would like to partner on grants program to help include others.

Tom Kelly – Forest Steward. Please do more to protect restoration work from camping in the parks. It makes it hard for us to do our work. Impacts are great and they are harming capital investments.

Anne Brink/Susan Darling – Would like City Light property to be acquired for the Loyal Heights community as park space. The school park is being significantly reduced in the redevelopment project. We need more land for the increased density we are facing.

### **Superintendent's Report**

*Presented by Christopher Williams, Acting Superintendent, Seattle Parks and Recreation*

Park District – Briefing the Deputy Mayor on Development of the Strategic Plan for future spending

Can we raise the tax rate? Does the Mayor have a neighborhood plan? Look at the difference between a 6-year and 12-year plan. To what extent does the Mayor support debt financing? How does SPR tie in affordability and livability and tie in with Urban Villages. Acting Superintendent Williams will share his learning with the Board.

Commissioner Byers wants to make sure the Mayor's office is aware of the challenges. Make sure the presentation includes SPR's role in the Waterfront Project.

Viewpoint taskforce. Inventory SPR viewpoints around the City and figure out if the department can fund and maintain them. Feasibility work needs to be done. Setting up a task force for Athletic Fields, and other big issues that need to be prioritized for the next round of Park District funding.

Open Space funding partner meeting with the Mayor and partners.

Magnuson Park Issues – concerns about scholarships for those who live in affordable housing. SPR is making it easier. The community wants SPR to do more outreach and have more diversity of programs to make sure the greater neighborhood participates. Assess community capacity to transfer into a PDA or another model that serves the park well. Work on a 5-year plan to work with MPAC for a consultant to see what this could look like.

### **Partnership Spotlight: Friends of Seattle's Olmsted Parks**

*Presented by Jenifer Rees, President, Friends of Seattle's Olmsted Parks*

Jenifer introduces Doug Luetjen, President Elect and Andy Mitton, past President who are here with her. Friends of Seattle's Olmsted Parks (FSOP) is a volunteer-based organization established in 1983. SPR staff initiated the forming of FSOP who maintain focus on the Olmsted Legacy. FSOP has proven a constructive counterpoint to other development of parks. Enjoy a cooperative relationship with SPR.

Many large cities have Olmsted Parks or Park systems. They were also involved in National and State parks. Parks are egalitarian elements to an otherwise stratified society. In 1902, the Board of Park Commissioners invited the Olmsted Brothers to come and design the park system.

Olmsted principles were: healthful properties of outdoor activities, easy access; highlighting and improving features for views; using boulevards for more greenspace.

They were contracted to build 37 parks. They gave the people of Seattle public shorelines, playgrounds, ball fields, greenspaces, views, boulevards – green corridors threading our city.

Present educational materials at local events; input to local groups; maintain a website; lead public walking tours through different parks. They will have a seat on the upcoming Olmsted Taskforce.

**Briefing and Discussion: Olmsted Taskforce**

*Presented by Danyal Lotfi, Community Engagement Advisor, Seattle Parks and Recreation*

**Written Briefing**

**MEMORANDUM**

Date: January 25, 2018  
To: Seattle Board of Park Commissioners  
From: Danyal Lotfi, SPR Community Engagement Advisor  
Subject: Creation of the Olmsted Legacy Taskforce

The purpose of this memo is to explain the new Olmsted Legacy Taskforce and reasons for its creation. This memo includes information on the goals and values of this Taskforce and will serve as a guiding document during this presentation at the Board of Park Commissioners meeting.

**What We Are Proposing and Why**

Recognizing the significance of preserving and sustaining our city’s rich park heritage, Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) is proposing the creation of an Olmsted Legacy Taskforce. Friends of Seattle Olmsted Parks (FSOP) and SPR have worked together for decades to protect, preserve and expand the Olmsted design ideals, philosophy and influence, outlined in the Olmsted Brothers’ 1903 plan. With growing density in our city, we are facing new challenges that Olmsted Brothers could not anticipate, such as increased urbanization, traffic, parking and ADA accessibility, among others. These challenges require more intention in the way we manage the Olmsted legacy. Therefore, SPR is proposing the creation of an Olmsted Legacy Taskforce with FSOP and other stakeholders to better address these rising challenges.

Goals of the Taskforce

Over an 8-month period, this taskforce will meet once a month and is charged with developing a set of recommendations to the Superintendent and the Board of Park Commissioners that provides a common-sense approach to preservation, protection and curation of our historic Olmsted landscapes. The taskforce would focus on specific strategies that enhance the sustainability and character of these parks from an aesthetic, historical and landscape management standpoint. This includes recommendations on maintaining character, park furniture, lighting, benches, signage, landscaping, and renovations in our Olmsted parks and boulevard system. The taskforce will not focus on the use, activities or special events for these parks. All the proposed work must be consistent with Best Management Practices, as well as local, state, and federal regulations, e.g., Environmentally Critical Areas (ECA) or Shorelines, among others. Additionally, the taskforce could recommend that the department develop a proposal for additional funding to support the enhancement and protection of Olmsted parks.

Values and Principles

“Equity” is the cornerstone of this work, principally the concept that all parks in all neighborhoods deserve equitable levels of investment. Olmsted Parks and non-Olmsted park users deserve safe, well maintained, well cared spaces for public parks. We will need to be mindful of our limited resources and our basic stewardship responsibility as such, to make equitable investments across the system. This is especially important when it comes to our most underserved neighborhoods in the city so we want to ensure that we give equal weight and prioritization to those parks.

Formation

<b>Board of Park Commissioners (1) (Co-chair)</b>	<b>FSOP Chairperson (1) (Co-chair)</b>	<b>Representative from FSOP (2)</b>	<b>Volunteer Park Trust (1)</b>	<b>Friends of Athletic Fields (1)</b>	<b>Historic Seattle (1)</b>	<b>Human Rights Commission (1)</b>	<b>Park District Oversight Committee (1)</b>	<b>Associated Recreation Council (1)</b>	<b>Teen Representative (1)</b>
Tom Byers (Board of Park Commissioners Chair)	Doug Luetjen (FSOP President-elect)	Jenifer Rees (current President), Andy Mitton (immediate past President)	Jennifer Ott (member/FSOP liaison)	Ed D'Alessandro (Executive Director)	Eugenia Woo (member)	Jeremy Wood (co-chair of HRC)	Patti Wilma (member)	Zoe Kasperzyk	TBD

Proposed Taskforce Timeline and Topics

<b>Meeting #</b>	<b>Proposed Date (flexible)</b>	<b>Topic(s)</b>
First	March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductions; charge of the task force</li> <li>• Presentation on Olmsted legacy background &amp; history</li> </ul>

Second	April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploring enhancement practices in other jurisdictions w/Olmsted parks</li> <li>• Discuss proposed timeline/topics</li> <li>• Discuss value statements and how equity impacts this work</li> </ul>
Third	May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss the Olmsted design and standards &amp; new challenges</li> <li>• Maintenance staff to give presentation on regulations/maintenance standards and realities on the ground</li> </ul>
Fourth	June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working session</li> <li>• Discuss how we can enhance &amp; protect the Olmsted legacy - issues may include funding, assessments, lists of priorities, and maintenance</li> </ul>
<b>First report to Board of Park Commissioners by Task Force members</b>		
Fifth	July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue working session on recommendations from Board of Park Commissioners</li> <li>• Determine actions that need to take place to ensure sustainability of these recommendations</li> <li>• Break out topics based on issue identification from meeting #4</li> </ul>
Sixth	August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finalize draft recommendations to present to Board of Park Commissioners</li> </ul>
<b>Second report to Board of Park Commissioners</b>		
Seventh	September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate input from Board of Park Commissioners and others (internal divisions) into recommendations</li> </ul>
Eighth	October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finalize recommendations; determine next steps in the process</li> </ul>
<b>Present final recommendations to Board of Park Commissioners</b>		

Questions or Comments?

### **Discussion**

Commissioner Hundley would like to make sure that there is not too much demand for funding, there are so many competing interests and not much money for this.

Commissioner McCaffrey – does the historical map be the priorities? The group will need to agree on the priorities and equity will be critical.

Commissioner Byers thought this would be looking at underserved communities - the parts of the City that did not benefit from the original plans.

Connectivity among Parks. Commissioner Byers would like to see SPR work with SDOT and SPU on this project. Some of the gaps can benefit from funding and buy-in from other Departments.

Commissioner Lowe wants to know how the department will sustain equity in this work. Acting Superintendent Williams states that being intentional about this is imperative and figuring out what type of outcomes the department wants.

Commissioner McCaffrey would like everything to be overlapped in order for these efforts to be more affordable and successful.

**Old/New Business**

**There being no other business, the meeting adjourns at 8:30pm.**

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_  
Tom Byers, Chair  
Board of Park Commissioners