



Minutes

Board of Park Commissioners
100 Dexter Avenue North, Seattle 98109
Thursday, August 23, 2018
6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Commissioners:

Andréa Akita, Vice Chair	Jessica Farmer
Dennis Cook	Evan Hundley
Excused, Marlon Herrera	Kelly McCaffrey
William Lowe, Chair	Rachel Anne Williams
Excused, Tom Byers	

Welcome and Introductions

Commissioner Lowe calls the meeting to order at 6:30pm The board introduces themselves.

This is Rachel Anne Williams' last meeting. She has been a great board member. She says she has learned a lot and it has been a great experience. Interim Superintendent Williams and the Commissioners thank Rachel Anne for her contributions and all her efforts.

Commissioner Lowe asks for approval of the Consent items: July 12 meeting minutes and August 23 agenda, Commissioner Hundley moves and Commissioner Williams seconds, the Consent Items are approved.

Public Comment

Ellen Taft – She has witnessed smoking at Mt. Baker Rowing and Sailing in open areas where kids get dropped off. Seattle Police Department said they cannot enforce no smoking in parks. The bathrooms are not restocked. Bianca Hill, new Aquatics Manager, is difficult. Other conditions have improved at Mt. Baker Rowing and Sailing. The signage was completely misplaced and the wording is unclear. She still has not received an apology from Jon.

Rosemary Sult – Dahl playfield parking lot is being used by University Prep and the fields are being used daily by University Prep gym classes. They have never obtained a permit. SPR has notified U Prep repeatedly and this has been ignored. The neighborhood wants U Prep to obtain permits for gym class and ensure compliance with the parking.

Superintendent's Report

Presented by Christopher Williams, Interim Superintendent, Seattle Parks and Recreation

Seattle Parks and Recreation completed the naming process for 3 new Parks:

Web site: <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/parkboard/>

Alice Ball Park – a new park in the Phinney/Greenwood neighborhood. This suggestion came as a result of an 8-year old who wrote to SPR about her. Alice Ball is an African American woman who invented an effective treatment for leprosy.

Fritz Hedges Waterway – Fritz Hedges was a director at Seattle Parks and Recreation and a mentor to Interim Superintendent Williams. He wrote Shoreline Plan, Street End Plan and first Seattle Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan.

Urban Triangle Park – This is the new park at Westlake and Lenora. It is the old Enterprise Car Rental site. It will be an open plaza park and speaks to the urban nature of this neighborhood.

Teen Summer Musical – This year the teens performed a rendition of Cinderella at Benaroya Hall. Each year it is a proud moment for SPR and it speaks to the level of commitment and energy SPR staff put into their work. There is a lot of community pride around this event.

Big Day of Play – This event happened over the weekend and showcases the many programmatic and recreation opportunities the department offers. This event speaks to our commitment to healthy lifestyle options provided to the community.

BAAMFest Event at Rainier Beach Community Center was held this weekend. It is a showcase for local arts and music.

Foundations of Change – Race and Gender Equity event for 1400 employees at Magnuson Park. Dr. Caprice Hollins came and spoke to staff. She was engaging and informative.

Interim Superintendent Williams spoke with the Mayor and she has deep passionate support for parks and recreation and protectionist feelings towards parks and openspace. Community centers will be included in the next cycle of Park District funding.

350 Seattle – This group would like SPR to stop using gas-powered leaf blowers, unfortunately the practicality of this does not pan out. The tech has improved but the battery life is not long enough to be efficient. SPR has 11 no-blow parks.

SPR is moving their Planning and Development Division and Accounting from the RDA to 6th and Wall, formerly the PI building. They will be building it out with the plan that SPR would consolidate staff there. Dexter may become a community center to serve Belltown and South Lake Union.

City Hall Park – looking at options to activate the park; hired project consultant for public spaces to consult on how to best serve this park. SPR limbed up some of the trees so that there is more light. Re-lamped the Olmsted bulbs. It has a different look and feel with food trucks, programming and activation and SPR staff are always there until 5pm.

The commissioners have noticed the change at City Hall Park and think the changes have been great!

Commissioner Lowe thanks Interim Superintendent Williams for doing such a great job highlighting the summer musical and City Hall Park.

Foundations of Change

Presented by Bobby Humes, Human Resources Director, Seattle Parks and Recreation

Human Resources Director, Bobby Humes, reviews the priorities for the Race and Gender Equity conference SPR employees attended earlier in the day.

Priority 1 – Establish a shared Department-wide understanding of awareness of the concept and challenges associated with RSJI\Gender Equity Different levels of awareness.

At the end of the day's training, participants will be able to communicate the goals of the city's race and social justice initiative and the workplace barriers to gender equity along with identify where we are (individually & as a department) on the RSJI Continuum in this work.

Priority 2 – Increase the completion of implicit bias training by 40% or better.

As Bobby walked around, he heard people sharing stories about their experience and he appreciated people having those conversations.

Participants who have not completed the required Implicit Bias training will achieve compliance with the necessary requirements of that training module.

Priority 3 – Establish shared goals related to RSJI/Gender Equity in our workplaces.

Based on their understanding of the city's race and social justice initiative and the challenges associated with institutionalizing gender equity, participants will help develop goals/priorities for the Department around these topics.

Priority 4 – Establish individual goals related to RSJI/Gender Equity in our workplaces, along with real-life examples of how to incorporate these goals into the day to day work. Give people tools to take with them into the workplace.

Participants will establish goals and objectives centered on creating a more responsive culture related to the city's race and social justice initiative and the removal of institutional barriers to gender equity. Participants will engage in real-life scenarios to establish a deeper understanding of how align this with their work.

Priority 5 – Provide opportunity to educate employees in the various tools and resources that are available in our work place and City in regard to RSJI/Gender Equity.

Participants will practice utilizing one or more toolkits to better understand how to implement and make more applicable to their work.

Next steps

Shared language is shared accountability; this will allow people to make changes. SPR wants people to feel safe being themselves.

Interim Superintendent Williams adds most of the employees that were at SPR when he started are gone now. The work is transforming. It is important for the department to change with employees. SPR relies on innovation, creativity and enthusiasm. SPR needs people who enjoy their work. This generation is giving ear to this big voice about what the work place will be.

Seattle Parks and Recreation is the best department in the city. Commissioner Hundley says schools are working on this and he would like the tools. Rachel will distribute.

It is important to have a shared language around implicit bias.

The commissioners ask if all staff attended the training. SPR limited staff at community centers. The event coordinators put out an all-call to city departments for facilitators - trained them with homegrown materials. Other city departments want to see lessons learned. Today was just the foundation for doing the work. Next, to set the structures.

SPR is committed to engaging with employees on these issues.

Commissioner McCaffrey asks how SPR will disseminate the training materials and logistics. SDHR and RSJI Change Teams in the city talk and discuss these ideas.

Partnership Spotlight: Olmsted Legacy Task Force

Presented by Doug Luetjen, Jenifer Rees and Andy Mitton

Doug Luetjen, Chair of the Olmsted Legacy Task Force, Jenifer Rees and Andy Mitton introduce themselves to the Board and provide background information about why the task force was formed and what they are charged with accomplishing.

In the early 20th century, the Board of Park Commissioners published a report that brought the Olmsteds to Seattle.

The Task Force was tasked with researching and helping develop ways to continue the Olmsted legacy. Superintendent Aguirre asked Friends of Seattle's Olmsted Parks to develop a long-range approach to protect and preserve the Olmsted landscape. Olmsted plan was built to serve the entire community and that's what this task force wants to preserve.

They are also examining ways to expand the Olmsted principles to areas of Seattle that were not included as part of the Olmsted plan.

Doug reviews the list of task force members and their expertise.

Jenifer Rees says the task force has spent this first few months gathering information. They are ready to start brainstorming ideas of future recommendations. These are some of the people who presented to them and what was discussed:

- Planning and Development Division that showed them the gap analysis, which looks at proximity and size of parks in neighborhoods.
- Race and Social Justice Briefing which talked about new outreach practices allowing for broader audience to hear about new proposals and to seek input.
- Maintenance staff regarding funding and institutional knowledge about how to care for Olmsted parks.
- SDOT regarding the greenways program, safer access to parks and schools, and “greening” areas in the right-of-way.
- SPU – impacts to Olmsted landscapes
- Volunteer Park Trust and Friends Of Seward Park regarding forest die-off due to climate change and weather patterns.

Members of the task force contacted other cities to talk with them regarding how they maintain their Olmsted parks.

- Louisville - Created Olmsted park conservancy group who are funded in a 4-year cycle.
- Boston – Has a director of Olmsted Parks who serves as a consultant for their parks maintenance.

Andy Mitton – Olmsted Parks study – He was tasked with making a list of 10 parks to spend \$3 million in Park District funding. He looked at Parks around the city (the city ended at North 80th at the time). Historic Resources Plan 2005 was the basis for their decision-making. This funding focuses on maintaining not creating anything new. The list was vetted with SPR staff. Many sites selected were ones that had need without a lot of investments in the past. In some places, sites that had matching funds available to make the money go further.

Andy reviews the park sites considered for the funding. Many of these were not designed by the Olmsteds but a continuation of their work.

Introduction in Next Steps – After interviewing and meeting with SPR staff regarding their priorities, this introduction was empowering for the task force and reinforced their ideas about the importance of this work.

The amount of work that is needed is much greater than the funding available. The task force will have to figure out how to maintain these places to preserve this legacy.

The task force has 2 more meetings to draft a report, after which, they will bring it back to the Board.

Interim Superintendent Williams says this reminds him it would be good to have a future agenda item on climate change and population density and how this impacts parks maintenance and funding issues.

What are the threats facg urban park and rec system? Climate change and density.

Experiential Race and Social Justice Exercise

Facilitated by Shanyanika McElroy, Staff Analyst, Seattle Parks and Recreation

Shanyanika facilitates an exercise with the Board, Interim Superintendent Williams and members of the community that involves creating towers with an uneven amount of resources given to each group. The group with the stuffed animal the highest, wins. The groups can share and barter their assets. In the end and through Shanyanika’s questions, the commissioners discuss their strategies and about how each group approached the challenge differently. The Board enjoy the team building exercise.

Old/New Business

There being no other business, the meeting adjourns at 8:40pm.

APPROVED: _____ DATE _____
William Lowe, Chair
Board of Park Commissioners