

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
MEETING MINUTES

MARCH 14, 2002

Present:

Bruce Bentley, Chair
James Fearn
Susan Golub
Sarah Neilson
Kate Pflaumer
Kathleen Warren

Absent: Yale Lewis

Staff:

Patricia McInturff, Deputy Superintendent
Michele Daly, Park Board Coordinator

Chair Bruce Bentley called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. The agenda consent items were approved as submitted including approval of the March 14 agenda, minutes of February 14 meeting and Board retreat of February 28, 2002, acknowledgment of correspondence and a revocable use permit at 2833 Magnolia Boulevard West for construction access, utility installations/replacements, and to correct existing conditions which exceed allowable use of park property. Sarah Neilson requested her name be added to Seattle Urban Nature Habitat and Kate Pflaumer requested her name be added to Youth Projects items of interest. Patricia McInturff noted that the Board as a whole would be briefed on all items of interest during the year.

Superintendent's Report

Deputy Superintendent Patricia McInturff reported on behalf of Superintendent Ken Bounds who is attending an Urban Parks and Recreation Alliance meeting in Kentucky.

- **Conservation Future Tax** - \$2.4 million of the 2002 tax was recently approved for unincorporated King County without any consultation of citizens committee. Members of the citizens oversight committee have expressed displeasure with the allocation not coming to the oversight committee for review and recommendation. Seattle's fair share is approximately one-third. Park Board members James Fearn and Susan Golub serve on the oversight committee.
- **Reprogramming of Senior Adult Programs** – The Senior Program is being expanded as a result of the Pro Parks Levy. Six Senior Adult and Special Population Specialists, one for each sector of the city, will help provide better senior adult programming. Some of the existing programs may be changed and may cause some citizens to express concern. The Department is also working in conjunction with Senior Services and King County and hopefully can provide

even better service at Seattle Housing complexes through a program entitled Lifetime Fitness.

- **Olympic Sculpture Park** – the Mayor was given a briefing on the park located between Bay and Broad Streets and Western Avenue to the Waterfront. The lead designer, Weiss/Manfredi Architects, was chosen in June 2001. The park will be a great addition to the waterfront neighborhood. Bruce Bentley informed the Board the project would terrace down to the waterfront and go over Elliott and the railroad tracks. Timing is the key issue, as the Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall Project would impact the park site.
- **Pro Parks Levy Oversight Committee** – met on March 12, 2002 and focused on discussion of the Opportunity Fund nominations prior to the site tour slated for March 16. After the site tour the committee will make their preliminary recommendations, schedule a public hearing and then make their final recommendations.
- **Sand Point/Magnuson Park** – Off-Leash Dog Area – Department grounds staff and landscape architects worked closely with leaders of the off-leash area coalition to develop a refined plan for the reconfigured off-leash area. The nine-acre site includes separate parking, new well-drained winding trails, with several open areas, shelters, fencing and gates. The park is nearly complete and will be officially opened soon.
- **Pratt Park New Play Area** – The new play area was dedicated by the Mayor today. The play area is located at 18th & Yesler, next to the Blanche Lavizzo water feature park. Kids from Happy Medium School helped design the park and picked out the features. The kids in attendance had a great time playing in the rain.
- **Mayor's Youth Forum** – Oversubscribed attendance. Sarah Neilson reported the kids asked interesting questions. The moderator did a good job of balancing questions from the young people. The youth were very interested in internships and job opportunities.
- **Budget 2003-2004** – The Department has not received its budget targets yet but knows it is going to be a difficult year. The Department held a budget retreat last week to start making some decisions. The Board will be briefed at a future meeting.

Oral Requests and Communications from the Audience:

Chair Bruce Bentley reminded the audience of the Board's rules on civil discourse. They include no personal attacks, respect for the opposition and respect for others' time. He also reminded those signed up to speak that it is not necessary to repeat a message; decisions are not based on the number of individuals speaking for or against an issue. To

the extent possible, the general public comment portion of the agenda will be reserved for topics that have not had or are not scheduled for a public hearing.

Andrew Kinstler, Vice President of the Board of Directors of Seattle Golf, presented a letter to the Board requesting a time at a future meeting to make a presentation to the Board about the continued operation and development of the City's three regulation length of golf courses. Seattle Golf has been operating the courses for the last seven years. The survey that was completed last summer gave Seattle Golf a 95% satisfaction rating from the people who use the courses. Seattle Golf has reviewed the Parks Department comments on the future of the courses. Seattle Golf has a definite vision as operators of the courses on how their stewardship should continue. The Economics Research Associates did an independent review in 1998 and another one in 2001. They pointed out that the maintenance costs being charged by the city to Seattle Golf are between \$400,000-\$500,000 a year above value received for those payments. Seattle Golf's charter is to run the courses in a manner that is beneficial to the city and to the users. Seattle Golf's private industry model is such that it is their job to try to turn inefficiency into assets.

Mike Little, lives along the fourth fairway of the West Seattle Golf Course, Chair of the North Delridge Neighborhood Council, informed the Board of a drainage issue coming off the fourth fairway into private property. He thinks Seattle Golf does a great job managing the golf course for the golfers but not so sure if the survey involved the immediate community you would get the same response. Clear communication between the neighborhoods surrounding the golf courses, MGS and the Parks Department is an issue. The neighbors have not been made aware of the scope of the project or when the project would begin. Some trees have been removed and some work has been completed but no one in the neighborhood was notified when that work was going to start. Who owns the land and who is responsible for maintaining the right of way between Genesee and Puget Boulevard, along the east side of the golf course. When you call a department you cannot find the right person that is responsible. It is confusing as to who is the driver of the project and who is making the decisions. Clear communication would be very beneficial.

Lizabeth Kelly Lyles, disgruntled neighbor of West Seattle Golf Course, has been battling the drainage issue into their alley for at least five years now and the lack of responsiveness has been amazing. Sometimes responses have been outright rude and other times there is just a lack of response. She was told the project was going to start in October and they were waiting for some dry days. Kelly made eight calls today to different city departments including City Attorney, City Clerk, Department of Construction and Land Use, the Water Department Drainage and Waste, etc. and each one referred her to another stating it was not their problem. It is somebody's problem. The alley is in such bad shape neighbors have reported alignment problems and Kelly has been to the muffler shop twice. Drainage water from the golf course fourth fairway is coming into garages and basements and is affecting six or seven neighbors.

Ron Gibbs, Executive Director of Seattle Golf, responded to the drainage issue. Seattle Golf engaged a contractor to look at the issue, which became more complicated than simply digging a ditch on the course and stopping the water from draining into the alley. As the weather changed the construction window of opportunity was lost. Seattle Golf is planning to fix the problem as soon as the contractor can get the heavy equipment into the area. Mr. Gibbs has spoken to some of the neighbors and apologized that some of the neighbors have not had a response. Seattle Golf talked to their contractor and they are prepared to go as soon as the weather allows. The issue beyond the fence of the golf course is a role that Seattle Golf is not responsible for, Mr. Gibbs stated.

Barbara Graham, West Seattle golf course neighbor, stated once the drainage problem is fixed and if it is deemed the neighbors are responsible for maintaining the alley, not Seattle Transportation, then they will fix the alley. She struggles every year with the noise ordinance and mowers and leaf blower noise at 5 a.m. She suggests there are other areas on the course such as along Camp Long that could be maintained at 5 a.m. and move to the neighbors' area at 7 a.m. The management of the course has not been responsive and she would like that changed.

John Masterjohn, Business Manager, Secretary-Treasurer of Local 1239, represents the people who work on the golf courses. ERA reviewed the golf courses and did say the maintenance costs were high. They compared the maintenance to private clubs instead of going out and comparing other municipalities. John did a survey of other cities and came out fairly close as far as Seattle maintenance costs were concerned. In the meantime, Local 1239 sat down with Seattle Golf and a committee. Nine full time positions were eliminated on the golf courses. Two new titles (Greenskeeper I and II) were put into place at less wages than the Golf Technician positions that were previously in place. The wages went down to \$9.50 and \$13 amounting to a \$200,000 savings. During those meetings, the golf courses did not come up with any way for them to save money. They did not say they would try and get some money from organizations. Normally when you have a private-public partnership, one is out trying to raise some funds to help them maintain the golf courses. The maintenance on the golf courses has stayed steady during the last five years. In 1995 the maintenance costs were about \$2 million and the Seattle Golf expenses were about \$1.9 and now the maintenance is about \$2 million and the Seattle Golf expense has risen to about \$4.3 million. When it is reported that a 93% good rating was received from the golf users that is from the maintenance. If the Board does give Seattle Golf some time on the meeting agenda, Local 1239 would also like some time to present so that everyone can hear both sides of the issue.

Kate Pflaumer noted in the ERA report on page II-9 it states "Of the \$400,000-\$500,000 differential in total annual maintenance expenses, approximately \$200,000 relates to City management personnel and citywide overhead charge. Under a privatized maintenance scenario, the City would likely request reimbursement for their continuing monitoring and overhead functions, while Seattle Golf would be reluctant to acknowledge these as legitimate assessments." Kate asked John Masterjohn if he agreed with that and he agreed. Labor costs have been reduced by \$200,000. It has been suggested that the city overhead costs could be cut down.

Sharon Levine, Queen Anne resident, is concerned with trust and credibility issues with Parks Department officials. She read some anonymous comments from different people regarding the Queen Anne Bowl lighting issue as well as documents stating the Queen Anne community was assured there was no lighting planned for the Queen Anne Bowl. The cap of 1200 hours has been promised. Sports enthusiasts seemed to be favored. She requested somebody come before the community and respond to these issues.

Don Harper, Queen Anne Community Council, distributed a memo from the City Council Central Staff regarding the Joint Athletic Fields Development Program (JAFDP). The memo addresses the concerns that the citizens have regarding the lack of response to the community by the Parks Department.

Frederica Merrell, Jefferson Park Alliance, stated they are excited about the improvements being made to Jefferson Park. There are 35 capital improvement projects planned for the next ten years and that does not include the improvements to the golf facilities, which are also pretty numerous. SeaTran built a pedestrian path on the east side of Beacon Avenue along the entire length of the 18-hole golf course. It is used by golfers and residents. Jefferson Park Alliance does monthly maintenance projects in Jefferson Park and as part of a recent maintenance project at the intersection at Cheasty Boulevard and Beacon at the south end of the golf course, it was noticed that there was drainage coming off the golf course that was damaging the pedestrian path. and basically eroding the path. As part of the Interdepartmental Agreement with SeaTran, Parks will need to fix the damage. There is another path being built along South Spokane Street, north of the 18 hole golf course and at the intersection of 24th and Spokane. There has historically been a drainage problem there. There is a pedestrian path under design around the 9-hole golf course funded by the Pro Parks Levy. There are also drainage issues on the 9 hole courses.

MGS has not been given enough capital money to deal with the golf courses. Jefferson Park is going to be 100 years old in ten years. There is a maple infestation where trees are getting sick. There is a need for a better tree management program. The city needs to look carefully at maybe moving to a different management model. Frederica has been working with Historical Research Associates to do a historic inventory of Jefferson Park and has submitted a landmarks application for the golf courses at Jefferson. She is hoping by landmarking these courses a foundation can be set up for Jefferson Park as a whole. One other idea is to charge a higher user fee for non-residents. 22% of the Jefferson Park golfers come from Mercer Island for instance. She does not support public credit lending.

Bruce Bentley acknowledged Benella Caminiti in the audience and welcomed her to the Board meeting.

Golf Management Alternatives Briefing

Kate Pflaumer inquired if the Board was going to have a public hearing on the golf management alternatives. Fritz Hedges, Director of the Citywide Division stated the Department is not recommending a public hearing but what is proposed by Seattle Golf may lead the Department to

schedule a hearing. What is being recommended is basically sticking to the same arrangements with Seattle Golf and modifying the contract somewhat in line with the findings of the ERA study.

Fritz Hedges reviewed the management arrangements for Interbay Golf Center and the City's regulation length golf complexes at Jackson, Jefferson and West Seattle.

The Family Golf Corporation declared bankruptcy in early 2001 and the Department was successful to purchase their contract. As a consequence, the department gained ownership of the facilities that Family Golf developed. A short-term management contract was negotiated with Premier Golf for operation, maintenance and development, which expires December 31, 2002. James Fearn asked how much net revenue has been realized since Premier Golf took over the operation. Bill Meyer from Premier Golf informed the Board that just over \$1 million has been produced in the ten months of operation. Kate Pflaumer asked who does the maintenance at Interbay. Premier Golf handles the day to day maintenance. If there is a capital maintenance project, the city would have to pay that out of the revenues and the work would probably be contracted.

The Department contracted with Seattle Golf (Municipal Golf of Seattle) for operation and development of the City's three regulation length golf courses in 1995. That 12-½ year contract expires on December 31, 2007. Legislation establishing the non-profit arrangement required a consultant review of the arrangement. ERA reviewed the arrangement in 1998, which resulted in a two year Memorandum of Understanding establishing objectives for both the Department and Seattle Golf. It was agreed at the end of those two years another review by ERA would be completed. The consultant's update has completed and was previously forwarded to the Park Board members.

The Department needs to determine a long-term management arrangement for Interbay. It needs to review ERA's November 2001 findings and determine what changes, if any are desirable in the current management arrangement with Seattle Golf. The Department goals, criteria and options were reviewed as presented in the March 8, 2002 Board briefing document which was also available to the audience. Staff have looked at management options for Interbay Golf Center including management firm, privatization or combining all major golf facilities under a single management contract. In consultation with Seattle Golf, the following options for changes in the current management arrangement for three regulation complexes are defined: Modified Seattle Golf, All Seattle Golf, and Management Firm.

Kate Pflaumer inquired how the criteria is enforced for "environmental responsible approach to all business practices and aggressive outreach, programming and instruction for inner city youth, especially those from lower income households. Fritz Hedges stated the criteria would be included in the Request for Proposals (RFP) and then it would be built into the contract and the Department, as monitors of the contract would have to ensure enforcement. The Department has been successful in working with the contractor in terms of environmental responsibility at the site and in terms of programs. The future of golf at all the courses is dependent on getting people to play golf from all walks of life.

Kathleen Warren asked if specific numbers or goals are outlined to reduce pesticides by certain amount or serve this number of kids. Fritz Hedges stated specific programming goals were in the Family Golf contract. With the new contract the Department will have the opportunity to strengthen both the programming and environmental goals.

Bruce Bentley noted if the privatization option was chosen for Interbay the contractor would have to pay the City up front for the bid price of \$5 million the city paid for the Family Golf contract and would retain facility ownership.

Fritz Hedges noted the golf market has gone “south.” There has been an overbuilt situation created and the city has lost rounds of golf on the three regulation courses. The number of big firms that were available in 1995 are not there anymore. He does not know what kind of reaction the Department would get if they were to go out and ask for millions of dollars of investment from a private firm. The Department is reluctant to sign a long-term contract.

Staff Recommendations

Interbay – recommend a management firm arrangement similar to the current arrangement for a term of five years. Contracting with a reputable firm should be able to achieve the goals for Interbay and meet the general golf criteria. Fritz noted there is a time constraint on Interbay. If the RFP process is the chosen direction it would need to get underway, a contract negotiated and approved by December 31.

For the three regulation complexes – staff recommends the Modified Seattle Golf option with a reviewed contract but no extension on the contract term. The City would be responsible for issuing or backing debt. The revised contract should provide for increased collaboration between Seattle Golf and the Department of Parks and Recreation, require the joint preparation of a five year business plan plus a strategic capital investment plan; and, required at least a \$100,000 per year return to the city. Department employees would continue to maintain the courses under the modified staffing proposal, which achieves a cost reduction of roughly \$200,000 per year.

Kathleen Warren inquired what the statement means under the cons of Modified Seattle Golf, “improved reporting systems and streamlined city monitoring would be required to minimize any bureaucratic impacts.” Fritz noted that language was from the consultant. Some of the reporting was not done as it was called for in terms of timelines. In terms of Seattle Golf’s perspective, some of our reviews took too long. The Department needs to make sure it gets the information it needs to administer the contract.

Kathleen Warren inquired if Seattle Golf has addressed the lack of women on its Board, as previously there was only one woman. Seattle Golf presently has six women out of seventeen Board members.

Susan Golub noted she thinks the Board needs a bigger sense of where it wants to go in the long term. Does it want to do a fix now or decide now how to go long term? James

Fearn stated a public hearing is needed if we are going to change the terms of an existing contract.

Kathleen Warren and Kate Pflaumer would like the usage of water, pesticides and herbicides be addressed. Fritz Hedges would like to come to the Board and discuss the department's pesticide program. Patricia McInturff noted a meeting will be devoted to the environmental stewardship program, which will include Pesticide Free Parks, Pack it in - Pack it out program, recycling, gray water usage and conservation.

The Board will conduct a public hearing on the management of the City's major golf facilities at their March 28 meeting in the Park Board Room at 100 Dexter Avenue North beginning at approximately 7:30 .m. The hearing will be preceded by brief presentations from Seattle Golf, the not for profit corporation that manages the City's three regulation length golf complexes, and John Masterjohn, the labor representative for the City's golf course employees.

Alaskan Way Viaduct Briefing

Rick Ellis, Brook Belman from Washington State Department of Transportation and Kristin Nielsen from Seattle Transportation presented a briefing and power point display of the proposed Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall replacement plans. There is an urgent need to replace or retrofit the 49-year old Alaskan Way Viaduct and the 68-year old seawall because of their age, deteriorated condition and seismic vulnerability.

Soil liquefaction during a seismic event poses a great risk. The seawall not only supports Alaskan Way, but also the fill soil upon which the viaduct is built. If the seawall is damaged in a seismic event and/or soil liquefies, it could lead to permanent damage to the viaduct.

The Viaduct carries 110,000 vehicles each day, one quarter of the north-south traffic through Seattle. It was originally built to carry 65,000 vehicles per day. During last year's earthquake, it was discovered that there is no viable detour route for this traffic.

The Washington State Department of Transportation, City of Seattle and the Federal Highway Administration have joined forces to plan for replacing or retrofitting the viaduct and seawall. The decision will be made with input from a Leadership Group, the public and environmental and permitting agencies. The project team is examining, evaluating, comparing and refining a number of ideas that could be part of the ultimate plan.

The ideas that are currently being tested and development by the project team focus on the north, central and south portions of the corridor. They will continue to be refined.

Potential Plan A

North Stacked cut-and-cover tunnel from Bell Street to Harrison Street
Central Two level aerial structure from Holgate to Bell Street (Pier 46-66)
South Side-by-side aerial structure from Spokane Street to Holgate Street along Utah

Potential Plan B

North Mined tunnel from Lenora Street to Aurora at Broad Street
Central Single-level aerial southbound and cut-and-cover northbound from Holgate to Lenora Street
South At-grade section along the existing alignment from Spokane Street to Holgate

Potential Plan C

North Mined tunnel from Pine Street to Broad Street with a single-lane stacked cut-and-cover tunnel along the waterfront.
Central Stacked cut-and-cover tunnel along the waterfront from King Street to Pine Street
South Stacked aerial structure along the existing alignment from Holgate Street to King Street. Side-by-side aerial structure along the existing alignment from Spokane Street to Holgate Street.

Potential Plan D

North Stacked cut-and-cover tunnel from Pine Street to Aurora, generally along Alaskan Way and Broad Street.
Central Stacked cut-and cover tunnel along the waterfront from Holgate to Pine.
South At-grade section along the existing alignment from Spokane Street to Holgate Street.

The plans would increase access to stadium area, I-90 and I-5; improve freight access between Interbay, shipyards, railroad and I-90; improve connections to and from South Lake Union; improve ferry terminal access and improve midtown connections. The plans also would improve pedestrian and bicycle access along waterfront, improve connections to and from neighborhoods to SR 99 and preserve historic buildings and neighborhoods. The plans would impact the Aquarium, Washington Street Boat Landing, Olympic Sculpture Park, Roy Street Shop and Myrtle Edwards Park. Collaboration by all involved is necessary to bring efficiencies to the project.

Open Houses were held downtown on February 25, Burien on February 26, Ballard on February 27, West Seattle on February 28 and North Seattle on March 5th. The next steps include: continue to develop design plans, identify a preliminary favored design plan this summer, develop comparative cost ranges and continue community outreach. Website for up to date information: www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/viaduct. E-mail interaction: viaduct@wsdot.wa.gov. Hotline 206-269-4421.

Pacific Northwest Aquarium

John Braden, Assistant Aquarium Director, introduced Bob Davidson, recently appointed CEO of the Seattle Aquarium Society (SEAS), and Bob Wicklein of The Seneca Group. SEAS hired the Seneca Group to complete overall development management of the new 160,000 square foot Pacific Northwest Aquarium. A power point briefing was presented. The design team met with the Landmarks Board early in the process to review the basic principles and diagrams. The design team also has met with the Seattle Design Commission, which approved the concept design for this project.

The trapezoidal pier geometry is unique and drives the form and structure of the design. The Pier 59 shed is a man-made artifact, while the Aquarium program represents an abstract natural experience. The design of the Aquarium will operate as a whole, as the continuing curved gesture will generate the inner and outer form of the new construction. The design and building footprint also reflect the optimal views to and from the waterfront. The Aquarium program is contained in the first, second and third floors of the building. The entrance, a small deck that spans the salmon corridor, is at the ground floor and directs people to the primary circulation ring. This circulation ring is seen as a necklace, while the exhibits along the path are considered the jewels of the necklace, as entrances off the major circulation path access all of the exhibits. As the team continues to develop the design, they will address the public access for the perimeter of the Aquarium and the end of the pier. The access to the northern end of the pier will be developed to address the new waterfront park. The Design Commission encouraged the design team to develop the design of the roof as a screen element with the functional needs in mind, protecting the exhibits from external wildlife, and to simplify the roof shape so it won't overwhelm the structure.

The program summary includes the educational mission with an auditorium, three classrooms and a resource center. A salmon information center is included as are visitor amenities (café, gift shop, event catering and support spaces) and administrative staff spaces. Parking issues are being addressed. A recent market analysis indicates an adequate supply of parking.

During the Aquarium construction closure of the existing Aquarium or minimal partial closure for 16 months will be necessary. What to do with animals and staff during that time is being evaluated. Costs are in the \$3 million to \$10 million range with the assumption they will be absorbed by the city.

The Alaskan Way Viaduct preferred alternative is scheduled to be selected this summer. The viaduct/seawall project will have an impact on the Aquarium, including schedule, access, parking, and pedestrian/visitor experience. It is anticipated construction of the viaduct project would begin in 2005-06.

Fundraising needed is estimated at \$185 through private campaign, bonds, city, county state, Port and federal sources.

Park Board Business: None reported

New Business/Old Business: None reported

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

APPROVED: _____ DATE _____
Bruce Bentley, Chair