

**BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
MEETING MINUTES
December 12, 2002**

Present:

Bruce Bentley
James Fearn, Jr.
Susan Golub
O. Yale Lewis, Jr.
Sarah Neilson
Kathleen Warren

Excused:

Kate Pflaumer

Staff:

Patricia McInturff, Deputy Parks Superintendent
Sandy Brooks, Park Board Coordinator

Chair Bruce Bentley called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Kathleen moved that the agenda consent items, minutes of the November 14 meeting, and the acknowledgment of correspondence be approved. Susan seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Superintendent's Report:

Deputy Superintendent Patricia McInturff reported on the following:

United Indians of All Tribes (UIAT): Last night a group from UIAT and a group of citizens met with the Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent until 11:30 pm. Significant progress has been made on a resolution of the proposed UIAT museum near Discovery Park.

Low Income Housing Institute (LIHI) Drops Appeal: LIHI agreed to withdraw its appeal of the Final Environmental Impact Statement. The Audubon Society has also dropped its appeal. Friends of Sand Point/Magnuson Park have asked the Hearing Examiner to delay its appeal from December 19 until January.

Genesee Ballfield Lighting: This field was the first ballfield lighting to go before City Council for approval. Councilmember Peter Steinbrueck proposed that the ballfield lights be turned off at 10:00 pm, rather than 11:00 pm as outlined in the Joint Athletic Field Development Program. City Council did not pass the 10:00 p.m. turnoff proposal.

Kalakala: Parks has had many meetings and discussions with a variety of people concerning the Kalakala, including the Kalakala Foundation. A draft moorage agreement for Sandpoint Magnuson Park was presented to the Kalakala Foundation by Eric Friedli on Wednesday, December 11. They believe they can meet all the requirements by Monday, December 16, when Parks will again meet with them. They have scheduled a tugboat company to move the Kalakala on December 18. They have been told verbally and in writing that it will not be allowed to tie up at Sand Point Magnuson if the conditions set out by Parks and City of Seattle have not been met. The Kalakala Foundation sent out a press release, stating its intent to moor the vessel at Sand Point Magnuson Park.

Christmas Ships: Due to a burn ban that was in effect, bonfires weren't allowed the first couple nights the Ship sailed. The rain has now come, so bonfires are again allowed. West Seattle saw the Christmas Ship on Monday night, December 9.

Holiday Vacations: Ken and Patricia will be taking some vacation over the holidays. For two of those days, Sarah Welch will be Acting Superintendent.

Oral Requests and Communications from the Audience:

Bruce explained that the general public comment portion of the agenda is reserved for topics that have not had or are not scheduled for a public hearing. No one signed up to give general public comment.

Cheasty Boulevard Improvement Plan Discussion/Recommendation:

At its November 14 meeting, the Board held a public hearing on this project. David Goldberg, Parks Project Planner, came before the Board to give a briefing and one person signed up to give public testimony. David came back before the Board tonight to answer questions on the project

At the November 14 meeting, the Board asked David for copies of notes from the various community workshops held. These notes had been forwarded to the Board prior to the December 12 meeting. David had prepared a written response to several of the Board's questions from the November 14 meeting and distributed a copy and also distributed a copy of the Plan.

The Board asked a number of questions about the drainage system and slope stability. They asked if it is feasible to make the improvements to the path, and delay improvements to the drainage system for a year or so, as was suggested in the November 12 testimony. David said that if the work is completed simultaneously that there is less chance of the erosion occurring during the path improvements. It is less expensive to do both portions at the same time than it is to repair erosion, then make drainage improvements. James asked how hard it would be to alter the pathway if the drainage system doesn't work. David said that past experience has shown that crushed rock and other methods have worked well as pathways. The path can be easily fixed since it is

simply crushed rock. The path is placed over or adjacent to other improvements. The Board asked if the drainage system would increase/decrease water drainage onto nearby property. David said there would be less.

David discussed the process used to determine whether there would be public parking on the Boulevard. He and the consultant had proposed locating three pairs of parking spaces (a total of six) at different points along the Boulevard. Resident on the PAT did not want the parking so it was removed from the Draft Plan. During ProView review of the Draft Plan Parks Property Management determined that it is very reasonable to have on-street parking on boulevards and requested that six parking spaces be included. The Board asked why so few citizens attended the public hearing and asked who in the community supports the plan. David listed the various community groups that support the Plan and the community meetings that were held. The Plan has successfully gone through the Seattle Design Commission and Landmarks Board.

The Board asked about the bollard purpose and design. David answered that the bollards are to enhance visual repetition, give protection in pedestrian areas, and to control parking. The Plan shows concrete bollards; however, wooden ones are being considered. An Olmsted style design bollards were considered but the \$800 cost for each is prohibitive. The Board asked if the retaining walls will be attractive? David answered that the Board originally saw the structural design, which wasn't very attractive. The finished product will be decorated masonry and will be landscaped with salal, grasses, and non-invasive plants. Cheasty Boulevard may be the site of a future "ivy out" where volunteers and Parks staff remove all the ivy, which is an invasive plant.

Kathleen was impressed with the homeowner who testified at the November 12 meeting. She praised him for being welcoming and inviting to others to use the Boulevard. She said this is not always the case when projects are happening in communities.

Kathleen moved that the Board approve the Plan, James seconded, the vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Environmental Stewardship Briefing:

Several Parks Department staff members and community participants came before the Board to give a briefing on the Department's environmental stewardship (ES) program:

- Fritz Hedges, Parks Department Strategic Policy Director
- Duane Pentila, Horticulture and Forestry Manager
- Charles Sablan, Environmental Learning Centers Manager
- Leila Wilke, Environmental Stewardship Manager
- Willie Campbell, Discovery Park Naturalist
- Cindi Nomura, Interagency School teacher
- Dr. Don Felder, Interagency School principal
- Brian, Junior, Bailey, and Anthony, Interagency school students and program participants

Prior to the meeting, the Board had been mailed a copy of "Environmental Stewardship in Park Field Operations" describing:

- pesticide reduction
- water conservation including water shortage planning and irrigation water conservation
- forest restoration
- best management practices
- the environmental management system

The Board was also mailed a copy of the Department "Environmental Stewardship Unit's Work Parameters" which includes:

- providing community center audiences environmental stewardship programs and opportunities to actively participate in environmental stewardship projects in our parks, green spaces, and on community center groups, with the primary focus on community center youth
- communicate within Parks Department on progress of environmental stewardship initiative and programs
- administer ES training funds
- special projects assigned by the Superintendent or Division Director
- communicate with the public about Park's Environmental Stewardship Initiative and progress

At tonight's meeting a copy of Mayor Nickels' Environmental Action Agenda Summary was distributed. A list of efforts being taken by the Parks Department in response to the current water shortage was also distributed.

Fritz, Duane, Charles, and Leila presented information about the unit. The ES unit is a new group funded by the Pro Parks Levy and was developed in February 2002. A primary goal is to inspire Parks Department staff, no matter what their job, to become environmentally-responsible employees, whether they work in a park, a community center, or an office. Leila, who is one of three Park Department ES Coordinators, presented a video showing the extensive efforts Park Department staff is taking in their efforts to be environmentally responsible. The video is also used as a training tool for new employees to learn about the ES program. Employee performance reviews will reflect efforts to support the Department's ES program. These efforts include no unnecessary idling of Park Department vehicles and equipment, a comprehensive recycling program, workplace expectations, and ES recognition/awards program for Parks staff. A hearty round of applause was given at the end of the video.

Fritz and Leila had shown the video at the National Parks and Recreation Association conference and found that Seattle is far ahead of most cities in its ES efforts. Parks Department is leading the City in many of Seattle's efforts. Other departments are following Parks' example.

A second, and equally important, goal is to facilitate more ES programming for Seattle's citizens, particularly inner-city diverse youth. The four high school students from Interagency School gave a Powerpoint presentation describing their involvement in the ES program and the positive changes it has brought to their lives. Several of the students said they had poor attendance and were in trouble before becoming involved with the program. Now they are much more involved in their school, their attendance has greatly improved, and they have a much more positive attitude. A second round of hearty applause followed the students' presentation.

Kathleen asked where the Interagency School is located. Dr. Felder answered that there are 20 sites. Susan asked how much Pro Parks contributed to the program and Charles answered \$10,000. Partnerships have been formed with local agencies, non-profits, and businesses to help in efforts to provide programming for community center audiences. Examples of these partnerships include National Park Service, Seattle Audubon, Seattle Library, Seattle Public Utilities, and Lowe's Home Improvement Stores. The Unit recently applied for \$991,000 from the National Science Foundation to fund a three-year Environmental Champions project. This grant would allow hiring and training teens for three summers to be Environmental Champions and lead environmental programming in community center day camps. The Unit will find out in May 2003 if they receive the funding.

Sarah asked if this is a model program for the Interagency School. Dr. Felder said the school wants to expand student participation. The results have a "trickle down" affect. Dr. Felder thanked Willie for his great work with the students. Kathleen said in the past that the environmental movement was sometimes criticized as being aimed mostly at whites this shows that everyone can be an environmentalist. Bruce said that this program is helping put kids back on the right track and that good adults come from good kids.

Kathleen would like to see the Parks Department take a more active stand on legislation on gray water, noxious weeds, and pesticides, etc. She would like to see all parks free of pesticides and encouraged Parks to continue the ES program.

Bruce thanked the group for their presentation.

Zoo Transition Plan Update Briefing:

Mike Waller, Woodland Park Zoo, came before the Board to give an update on the Zoo's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and long-range plan employee transition plan, and the Zoo's annual plan. The Board had been mailed a copy of the draft Employee Transition Plan and the draft Annual Plan of the Zoo's expected activities in 2003 (out for public comment prior to official submittal to the Parks Superintendent in late December.) Both these documents are for information only and do not require Park Board action.

EIS and Long-Range Plan

The Hearing Examiner has approved 90% of the plan. The Examiner is concerned about traffic impacts at 50th and Stone Way. The Zoo's analysis shows that only 3% of the

traffic at that intersection is zoo traffic. A new draft EIS will be out in late winter and, if the EIS isn't challenged, a final version will be completed by early summer.

Employee Transition Plan

The purpose of the Employee Transition Plan is "to outline the terms and conditions for implementing the City's legislative intent to move the Zoo from City management to non-profit management under the Woodland Park Zoological Society (Zoo Society) consistent with section 18.4 of the Zoo Operations and Management Agreement and subsequent Zoo Separation Incentive legislation. The plan will outline the timeframe and terms for transitioning all current City zoo employees to the Zoological Society and ensure that the transition provides for fair and equitable wages and benefits and the opportunity for union representation for those transitioning zoo employees currently represented, if they so choose."

Mike said that a goal is to make working for the Zoo Society comparable to working for the City. He gave comparisons between benefits of both these employers. 80%, or 116, of the staff switched to working for the Zoo Society on December 4. 28 employees didn't switch most will retire within the window during which they could switch over. Zoo Society staff were scheduled to meet with labor representatives on December 13. These representatives are setting up the unions, as required per City Council ordinance. The Plan will be submitted to City Council on December 31, 2002. City Council public hearings will follow.

James asked what is the worst-case scenario? Mike answered that the "divided" employer system (with most staff working for the Zoo Society and a few working for the City of Seattle) would continue up to the full four years. Mike will work with the Zoo until May 1, 2003.

Mike said that employees have been nervous and stressed about the switch. The City made the decision to turn over the management of the zoo to the Zoo Society and he believes the Zoo Society has worked hard to reduce employee stress.

Annual Plan

The purpose of the Annual Plan is "the first in a series of annual plans called for in the Zoo Operations and Management Agreement between the City of Seattle and the Woodland Park Zoological Society. The agreement provides for the Zoo Society to take responsibility for the funding and management of the day-to-day operations of the Woodland Park Zoo that will continue to be owned by the City of Seattle. The purpose of the Annual Plan, due to the Superintendent of Parks in the fourth quarter of each year, is to outline the activities of the current year and to briefly lay out goals and plans for the coming year, including physical development projects, events, and changes in fees."

Mike listed highlights of 2002: the wild dog exhibit opened this summer and the new jaguar exhibit will open soon. There are no new major events scheduled for 2003. The Zoo is continuing its major maintenance projects.

Susan asked what the dollar impact was. Mike answered that the Zoo Society had to raise \$1 million. Susan asked why the City didn't pay this and Patricia and Mike explained that the agreement with the City gives the Zoo Society a set dollar amount per year, which does not increase or decrease. The Zoo took no reductions during the last budget cycle.

Susan is now on the Zoo Board. She said that the Zoo Society is shifting its focus from fundraising to management. Zoo staff will come before the Board in the first quarter of 2003 to give another briefing. The Board thanked Mike.

Draft Gift Acceptance and Donor Recognition Policy Briefing:

Dewey Potter came before the Board to give a briefing update on the Draft Gift Acceptance and Donor Recognition Policy. Dewey gave both a written and verbal briefing. A portion of the written briefing follows:

"This draft reflects the changes asked for last summer, and changes that incorporate the existence of the Seattle Gift Catalogue as a good source of donation ideas. The update to the Gift Catalogue, which is an attachment to a section of the Municipal Code, is before the City Council for consideration. (We updated it this year on behalf of the Seattle Parks Foundation so that they can use it as a fundraising tool.)

The Gift Policy document expresses our appreciation to donors and lays down some guidelines both for the acceptance of gifts \$2,500 or greater in value, and recognition of donors. It has become necessary because of the increasing number of requests for benches and plaques in parks to honor lost loved ones, and because of the desire of many community organizations to be recognized for Neighborhood Matching Fund and other community-motivated projects. It provides guidance for our staff, particularly the landscape architects who are faced daily with ideas for donor recognition objects (DRO).

We welcome and appreciate gifts that are consistent with our mission and policies.

- Gifts become the property of Parks and Recreation.
- We are not obligated to replace a gift if it is stolen or destroyed.
- We strongly discourage gifts that are memorial in nature.
- The Parks and Recreation Operations Committee (PRO) will review each gift proposal for appropriateness and make a recommendation to the Superintendent on whether to accept it (and on referral to the Park Board in some cases), and will keep the Gift Catalog up to date.
- We will handle gifts of art through the Placement of Art on Park Property Policy.

A donor recognition object is an item recognizing a donation usually a plaque, bench, tree, or tile.

- In green areas, DROS should be benches, trees, or plant materials.
- DROs should go (to the extent possible) I "built" environments/hardscapes, and should complement the environments.

- Limit to the extent possible DROs that add to the "gray" and detract from the "green."
- Each DRO will be approved at ProView for consistence with Parks design guidelines.

The policy includes a form for use in accepting gifts and accepting/approving gifts and DROs."

Questions and Answers: The Board asked if public comments are being solicited on this policy and Dewey answered no, as it is an operating policy for the Parks Department. Sarah asked what type of information may be written on the memorial plaques. Dewey answered that the words "In honor of....." may be included, but not a death date. Wording should be chosen that is appropriate for everyone. (Some park visitors have commented that when they visit a park, they do not want to be reminded of tragic events or deaths.) The installation date may be included.

James asked how Parks will decide in which park a new memorial bench could be installed. Dewey said that no more benches may be installed at Greenlake Park. It is one of the most popular parks in Seattle and donors often ask to have a memorial bench installed there. Parks' Landscape Planners track the number of benches in parks and can recommend other parks that still need benches. Sarah asked if endowments may be set up to maintain a donation. Patricia said no, that tracking a number of small maintenance funds attached to items such as individual benches would be an administrative problem. The policy should help staff and hopefully not cause additional problems.

The Board thanked Dewey for the briefing.

Park Board Business:

- **Susan and Kathleen, whose terms expire at the end of December, will continue their terms until new Park Board members are approved.**

Other Business:

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

APPROVED: _____ DATE _____

Bruce Bentley, Chair