

Board of Park Commissioners  
Meeting Minutes  
December 8, 2005

***Board of Park Commissioners:***

Present:

Angela Belbeck  
Joanna Grist  
Terry Holme  
Debbie Jackson  
Kate Pflaumer, Chair  
Amit Ranade

***Seattle Parks and Recreation Staff:***

Ken Bounds, Superintendent  
Sandy Brooks, Coordinator

Commission Chair Kate Pflaumer called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. **Commissioner Holme moved approval of the Acknowledgment of Correspondence, the November 10 minutes and the December 8 agenda. Commissioner Collins seconded. The vote was taken and motion passed.**

**Superintendent's Report**

The Superintendent reported on the following:

ABGC Retreat: The Superintendent and Commissioner Collins attended the annual retreat of the Arboretum and Botanical Garden on Wednesday, December 7. The ABGC is a joint coordination of the Washington Park Arboretum by the City of Seattle, University of Washington, and Arboretum Foundation. The Pro Parks Levy is funding a number of Arboretum Master Plan projects, including a recently-completed project at Duck Bay and the South Entry Way. For more information on the Arboretum Master Plan and the ABGC, please see <http://depts.washington.edu/wpa/>

SMA Awards: Several Seattle Parks staff members were recognized by the Seattle Management Association with awards of excellence at a luncheon this week. **Kathy Sider**, longtime educator with the Seattle Aquarium, won in the "Leadership" category for her creative and groundbreaking approach to education; **Joelle Ligon**, public information specialist with the Planning and Development Division, won in the "Management Support" category for her exceptional skills in informing and involving citizens, staff, and elected officials in dozens of Pro Parks Levy projects; and **Larry Henderson and Necka Kapesi**, integral members of the Vendor Fair Team won an award in the "Race and Social Justice" category for organizing an outstanding vendor fair that connected City purchasing staff with a diverse array of vendors.

New Sea Otter Pup at Seattle Aquarium: Lootas, an eight-year old sea otter at Seattle Aquarium, gave birth to her fourth live pup on Tuesday, December 6. Mother and pup are doing well. For more information and photos, see <http://www.seattleaquarium.org/news/detail.php?newsid=18>

King County Budgets Conservations Future Tax (CFT) Funds to Parks: On November 21, the King County Council adopted its 2006 budget which included \$3.7 million in funding from the Conservations Futures Tax for the following projects: Burke Gilman Trail Ballard Link, \$150,000; Discovery Park-Capehart, \$2.7 million; Duwamish Head Greenbelt/Fairmount Ravine, \$360,000; and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue Urban Center Open Space, \$500,000. Because of increased revenues due to real estate sales the County Executive added an additional \$ 475,000 to the Citizens Committee's recommendation for Discovery Park-Capehart.

Maritime Heritage Task Force Recommendations Announced: The Maritime Heritage Task Force held a press conference at South Lake Union Wharf on Tuesday to announce its recommendations for South Lake Union Park and Armory to be the home for a maritime heritage center, with Metro's North Lake Union site as a heritage shipyard. The organizations designated for "collaborative new leadership" are the Center for Wooden Boats, Museum of History and Industry, Historic Seattle, and the Coastal Heritage Alliance.

Wawona Summit: The long-anticipated three-day summit to review the status of the Wawona is under way this week at the Center for Wooden Boats. Seattle Parks received a copy of the background report prepared for the summit reaffirming the opinion Parks received in June that the ship is likely beyond salvageable condition.

Occidental Square: A petition was filed against the Occidental Square project on November 21 by appellants Bif Brigman and Ell Tracy, requesting that the Superior Court of Washington review and overturn the Hearing Examiner's ruling in the earlier appeal. The initial hearing date for this petition is January 13. Parks has held up award of the construction contract.

Rowing Masters Nationals at Green Lake: U.S. Rowing has announced that the 2006 Masters Nationals has been awarded to Seattle! The event will be held on Green Lake, August 10-13. Parks will host the event in partnership with advisory councils from Green Lake Small Craft Center and Mount Baker Rowing and Sailing Center.

Great Snowy Owl Sighted in Discovery Park: A Snowy Owl has been spotted in the historic district of the park for the first time. The adult owl is two feet tall and weighs four pounds. The public have been coming daily to the park in hopes of spotting the owl.

Cal Anderson Park: A donation of \$2,000 was received from Mid Mountain Construction Company, the contractor for the project there. The funds will be used to provide programs at Cal Anderson Park and will be held by Groundswell off Broadway. Staff will work with Groundswell to develop a program for 2006.

I-5 Colonnade Opening: On Saturday, December 5, this new park featuring paths, open space, art work, and a dog off-leash area had a great opening celebration and access to both Lake Union and Capitol Hill.

Commissioner Holme visited the new park and suggested additional signage be added to more clearly define the off-leash area. A small amount of erosion occurred from the new irrigation system, as the area hasn't had water for nearly 50 years (since the building of the freeway). Repairs will be made to the area. Commissioners Holme and Pflaumer also suggested that gravel be added below the park where there is no sidewalk area.

Plymouth Pillars Park Nearing Completion: Construction is almost completed on this Pro Parks Levy-funded project, previously known as Boren-Pike-Pine Park. The park should open in late December, with a formal opening scheduled for January 14, 2006.

### **Oral Requests and Communication from the Audience**

The Chair explained that 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 three minutes each and will be timed. The Board's usual process is for 15 minutes of testimony to be heard at this time, with additional testimony heard after the regular agenda and just before Board of Park Commissioner's business. Four people signed up to testify.

Joyce Moty: She lives in Mount Baker and is a member of Parks and Open Space Advocates. She is also a new member of the Urban Forest Stewards for Cowen Park and is very interested in the viewpoint vegetation management plans for Seattle's viewpoint parks. Parks has a finite amount of resources to deal with viewpoints and she urged a consistent plan be adopted for all the City's viewpoints, whether located in Queen Anne or Southeast Seattle. She strongly supports removal of invasives in every park and restoration with native plants and shrubs. This work could possibly be done in phases. In regards to views, she believes that the public needs to accept the idea of views with a mix of trees and water, rather than having unobstructed views. And the view must also benefit the urban forest to sustain healthy plants, create good wildlife habitat, and give pleasure to humans.

Michael Oxman: He lives on Greenwood Avenue and is the Vice-president of Plant Amnesty, whose mission is to end the senseless torture and mutilation of trees and shrubs through techniques such as tree topping. He stated that the City's viewpoint policy allows tree topping and suggested this be removed from the policy. He recommended that the City not ignore landscape maintenance at viewpoints and then hurry to do a great deal of work at one site. Instead, he recommended that staff should lobby for a larger City budget and hire additional staff. Then the staff could approach the viewpoint management at a much slower and steady rate. The City's current budget is woefully inadequate to maintain the viewpoints.

John Barber: He is an Urban Forest Steward for both Leschi and Frink Park and is the chairman of Leschi Park's Greenspace Committee. Ms. Moty verbalized a number of points that he also feels strongly about. The 31 or so official Seattle viewpoints belong to all citizens. Leschi has a very positive history of working with Parks and has gone through three vegetation management plans and eight different designs for vegetation areas in neighborhood parks. They have worked closely with Mark Mead during these efforts and had a very positive experience working with him. The process of considering viewpoints must be done on a consistent, citywide manner.

Richard Ellison: He represented "Save Seattle's Trees" and made a number of observations:

- The alternative proposed for Betty Bowen viewpoint management recently brought forth by the neighborhood did not include the Parks Department.
- The biggest issue he sees is that the City of Seattle hasn't educated the public about the importance of removing invasives. If Parks doesn't have the budget for this education, it should partner with other City Departments that have a focus on tree stewardship and also have the budget to educate the public.
- The public doesn't know how easily invasives such as ivy, blackberry, and clematis are to remove. These invasives cannot be expected to hold shallow slope soil in place.
- The City has been tremendously neglectful in removing invasives, causing trees to be weakened by the invasives which in turn weakens the roots and causes slope instability.
- He is a community college environmental sciences instructor and brings his students to the parks for classes. He wants to be able to tell them that the City's policy is to remove invasives.

Oral Communications concluded. Commissioner Holme commented that Ms. Moty and Mr. Barber are both recipients of the Denny Award, given by Seattle Parks to outstanding volunteers.

### **Discussion/Recommendation: Regrade Off-Leash Area**

Charles Sablan, Seattle Parks Operation Division, briefed the Board at its November 8 meeting on the Proposal to Make the Off-leash Area a Permanent Element of Regrade Park.

(<http://www.cityofseattle.net/parks/ParkBoard/minutes/2005/11-10-05.pdf>) The briefing was immediately followed by a public hearing. Tonight the Board is scheduled to discuss the proposal and make a recommendation to the Superintendent.

Mr. Sablan gave a brief review of the proposal and referred to a question asked by the Board at the November 8 meeting. This information was also e-mailed to the Board prior to this meeting. Commissioner Holme had asked whether Animal Control Officers respond to complaints after 7:00 pm and Mr. Sablan reported that Seattle Police Department is responsible for this.

**Commissioner Holme moved to recommend to the Superintendent approval of the staff recommendation to add this site to the network of off-leash areas operated at Seattle Parks and Recreation in partnership with Citizens for Off-leash Areas (COLA). Commissioner Collins seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.**

### **Discussion/Recommendation: Rabbit Capture**

Barb DeCaro, Seattle Parks Resource Conservation Coordinator, briefed the Board at its November 8 meeting on the Proposal to capture, sterilize, and relocate rabbits at Green Lake Park and Lower Woodland Park (<http://www.cityofseattle.net/parks/ParkBoard/minutes/2005/11-10-05.pdf>) The briefing was immediately followed by a public hearing. Tonight the Board is scheduled to discuss the proposal and make a recommendation to the Superintendent.

Ms. DeCaro gave a brief review of the proposal. Language pertaining to the illegal abandonment of animals, as taken from the Seattle Municipal Code, will be included on signs at the parks.

#### ***Board Discussion***

The goal is to raise \$100 per rabbit. Since the November 10 briefing and public hearing, \$1,500 has been donated, with a \$1000 match. (Additional information at [www.woodlandparkrabbits.org](http://www.woodlandparkrabbits.org)) Commissioner Belbeck asked if any veterinarians have offered free services. Ms. DeCaro stated that some vets have offered to do the spaying/neutering “at cost.”

Commissioner Collins stated that he visited the Green Lake site earlier in the day and saw no rabbits. Ms. DeCaro stated that the higher numbers of rabbits are out around 4:30 am. Last week 165 rabbits were counted in the parks.

Commissioner Grist noted that there is an eagle nest at Green Lake and wondered whether the eagles depend on the rabbits as a food source. Ms. DeCaro answered that fish and other wildlife are the eagles’ primary food source.

**Commissioner Collins moved to approve the staff recommendation to capture, sterilize, and subsequently relocate to a sanctuary any rabbit populations damaging Seattle park property. Commissioner Holme seconded. The vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.**

### **Update Briefing: Betty Bowen Vegetation Viewpoint Management Plan**

Mark Mead, Seattle Parks’ Senior Urban Forester, gave an update briefing on the Betty Bowen Viewpoint Vegetation Management Plan (VVMP). The Commissioners heard a briefing on the plan at the January 27, 2005, meeting, <http://www.cityofseattle.net/parks/ParkBoard/minutes/2005/01-27-05.pdf>. At the and at the September 22, 2005, meeting, heard an update briefing, immediately followed by a public hearing <http://www.cityofseattle.net/parks/ParkBoard/minutes/2005/09-22-05.pdf>.

The Board received a written briefing prior to tonight’s meeting.

#### **Requested Board Action**

This is a briefing to the Board regarding the status of the Betty Bowen Viewpoint Management Plan. Parks staff briefed the Board on this issue on September 22, 2005. In October, the project was put on hold because an appeal was filed.

#### **Introduction and Background**

This project is to restore the Betty Bowen Viewpoint at Marshall Park on the southwest corner of Queen Anne hill. It will implement a vegetation management plan for this viewpoint, as outlined in the document “Vegetation Management for Seattle Parks Viewpoints,” created by Parks Urban Forest Restoration Program staff in spring 2004. Site-specific restoration plans are being developed as a precursor to implementation at each individual viewpoint, with concurrent environmental review and public involvement process.

Betty Bowen Viewpoint was identified as a top priority site for restoration among the 25 Parks-managed viewpoints included in the plan. Priorities were based principally on the percentage of designated viewshed obscured, as well as the level of visitation, quality of the original view, and community partnership opportunities. Betty Bowen is the first viewpoint being restored under this multi-site Vegetation Management Plan.

Responding to down slope neighbors' concerns, in late summer 2004 Parks contracted for a geotechnical study of slope stability in relation to proposed changes. Findings from the study were that restoration would not reduce, and could improve, slope stability.

### **Public Involvement**

The first public information meeting took place on December 9, 2004, to provide project background and present three implementation options for comment. Urban Forestry staff made additional presentations in June and July 2004 at two Queen Anne Community Council meetings to introduce and discuss the project.

A second public meeting for the project occurred in April of 2005. The completed plans and environmental review were presented to the public and have been available since then. An onsite visit and review of the project with the Mayor occurred in May of 2005. The Park Board was briefed on the project and held a public hearing on September 22, 2005. There have also been multiple meetings, e-mail exchanges, phone conversations, and two public disclosure requests involving individual and small neighborhood constituencies and Parks staff.

### **Issues**

Environmental Review: Parks' preferred option for the restoration is a plan that will complete the site restoration in three phases over 6-10 years. A detailed project timeline for this project and the Viewpoints VMP adoption has been in place since last fall. Pursuant to requirements of the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), a project-level environmental checklist was prepared and submitted to the City's Department of Planning and Development for review on September 5, 2005. DPD issued a Declaration of Non-Significance. An appeal of the Declaration of Non-Significance was filed by the downhill neighbors of Betty Bowen, the Queen Anne Park Stewards (QAPS). The Appeal is scheduled for a hearing before the Hearing Examiner on December 22, 2005.

Neighborhood Concerns: Public sentiment on the project has been split: uphill neighbors favor the project and are unhappy with the delay in restoring the view, and downhill neighbors are concerned about the impact restoration would have on slope stability. Expression of these sentiments at the September 22 Park Board public hearing led the Board to ask Parks to bring the different geotechnical engineers together to try and resolve perceived differences between the geotechnical analyses. On October 27 Parks convened a meeting with Zipper Zemman (Parks' contracted analyst), Lorrila (citizen contracted analyst), and Parks staff. The outcome of the meeting was agreement between the engineers that the project would not reduce current slope stability and that the planned soil/erosion protection measures were adequate.

Neighborhood Proposal: In an effort to resolve their differences, the downhill neighbors (Queen Anne Parks Stewards (QAPS), and the uphill neighbors, Friends of Marshall Park (FOMP), met to see if they could agree on a compromise restoration plan. Parks was not asked to be part of this process. The meetings between the two neighborhood groups resulted in an agreement which outlines an alternative option to Parks' proposed restoration plan. The agreement would modify Parks' proposal for the removal and trimming of specific trees, and includes the retention of all existing understory vegetation. The agreement, presented to Parks in a letter, offers to rescind the SEPA appeal if Parks agrees to the neighbors' plan.

Parks convened a meeting on December 2, 2005, involving Parks, FOMP, and QAPS to discuss the Agreement. Parks concurs with a majority of the tree removal proposal, as it falls within the basic guidelines of Parks' preferred option, and diverges regarding the removal of three trees. Parks does not concur with the proposal to retain the invasive understory vegetation.

**Hazard Tree:** Parks received a letter on November 21, 2005, from a citizen, Richard Livingston, identifying a large maple at Betty Bowen as hazardous. Mr. Livingston had engaged an arborist to examine the tree. Upon close examination by a Parks arborist, the tree was declared a risk and will be removed in the immediate future. Access to the tree is difficult and will require the use of a crane. Parks' restoration plan had included retention of the tree if possible.

### **Budget**

Money for this project comes from the Cumulative Reserve Fund (CRF) through an ongoing Urban Forest Multiple Viewpoints Restoration project. 2005 funding is \$60,000 to be split between this and other top priority sites, with up to 50% of the total for the Betty Bowen project. Future restoration phases will tap this funding at two-to-three-year intervals. The Urban Forest Plant Establishment program also may contribute to the project during the restoration period (part of \$40,000 or more annual funding). In-house tree crew and resource staff contributions will incur no direct cost. Significant leveraging via private match is anticipated through the Seattle Parks Foundation, as well as donated materials and volunteer labor.

### **Additional info**

Mark Mead, Senior Urban Forester, [Mark.mead@seattle.gov](mailto:Mark.mead@seattle.gov), (206) 684-4113

### ***Verbal Briefing/Board Discussion***

Mr. Mead reviewed the written briefing paper above, which was received earlier in the day by the Board. At the September 22 meeting, the Board requested Parks' staff to work with the community and with the geo-techs. Parks met with the Department's geo-tech, Zipper Zemman, and the citizen-contracted geo-tech, Lorrila. The outcome of the meeting was agreement between the engineers that the project would not reduce current slope stability and that the planned soil/erosion protection measures were adequate. The discussion boiled down to defining the scope of the project. Mr. Mead stated that this is a Seattle Parks viewpoint vegetation management plan with the intent to restore the view while maintaining the current slope stability of a 1.2 factor. It is not a slope stabilization project.

The Chair asked if this means that the slope's stability does not need improving, and that the citizens are treating it like a slope improvement project. Mr. Mead answered that if this were a slope stability project, the goal would be to increase the factor from 1.2 to 1.5. If a project is undertaken at a slope with a factor of 1.0 or less, a slope stability project would have to be done before the project could proceed. The slope at Betty Bowen Viewpoint has a 1.2 factor, which is considered marginally stable. Seattle Parks follows the policy of "do no harm first" for its projects. Some nearby citizens did have the impression that this was a full slope stabilization project even though the Department never billed the project as such. Superintendent Bounds added that, prior to the meeting of the geo-techs, there was community concern that the project might de-stabilize the slope.

Commissioner Pflaumer asked if the Department is doing the right project at the right time. The Superintendent responded that for the viewpoint, the answer is yes. There are many slopes in the city with a slope factor of 1.2. Mr. Mead added that there are many more with a factor of 1.0 or less.

Mr. Mead reviewed the changes made to the project after its most recent meeting with the community and pointed out these on a map of the site. The agreement signed by the two groups requested variances in several tree removal designations, and requested that no understory, including invasives, be removed. The two groups agreed between themselves that if Parks followed their requests, the Determination of Non-Significance (DNS) would be dropped. Parks' policy is to remove invasives during projects.

At this time, the Hearing Examiner is scheduled to hear the appeal on December 22. It may take another month or so to finalize the process. The Board is scheduled to discuss and vote on a recommendation to the Superintendent at a January meeting and will continue taking written testimony until that time.

Commissioner Collins suggested that a letter from the Board of Park Commissioners stating its strong support of the Department's policy on removing invasives would help make it clear to the two citizen groups that portions of the agreement they signed with each other are unacceptable to Seattle Parks and to the Board of Park Commissioners.

**Commissioner Collins moved that the Board write a letter to the citizen groups stating that their compromise for non-removal of invasive species during this project is unacceptable to the Board, and the Board strongly approves the Department's policy. Commissioner Holme seconded. The vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.**

## **Briefing/Recommendation: Renewal of School/Parks Joint Use Operating Agreement**

Patti Petesch, Seattle Parks' Youth and Teens Program Manager, presented a briefing on the renewal of the Seattle Parks and Seattle School District Joint Use Operating Agreement. The Board is asked to make a recommendation to the Superintendent of Seattle Parks on the agreement.

The Board received a written briefing paper prior to the meeting, as follows:

### *Written Briefing*

#### **Requested Board Action**

This is a briefing to provide information to the Board, and we are asking for a recommendation from the Board that the Superintendent sign the renewal of the Joint Use Operating Agreement.

#### **Project Description and Background**

##### **Background**

Seattle Parks and Recreation and Seattle Public Schools have been collaborating on the joint use of facilities and fields since the early 1900s. Since the 1920s, the two agencies have pooled their resources to meet youth and community demands for more developmental and recreational opportunities. More than a third of Seattle's 95 public schools adjoin Parks' land or facilities. The cooperative and planned use of these separately owned facilities and grounds greatly benefits both students and community members.

While the supply has never quite matched the demand, the Seattle School District/Parks partnership has effectively maximized the use of their respective facilities to meet community and student needs beyond what either could do alone. In addition to creating more opportunities for their respective constituent groups, sharing facilities has led to greater efficiencies in cost and operations.

Since 1995, the agreement has been renewed every five years. We are currently negotiating the renewal of the Joint Use Operating Agreement for 2006-2010. It is imperative that the District and Parks continue a unified approach to serving the community's recreation needs and to cooperatively maintain City and District facilities and grounds in order to provide the best possible service to the public and take good care of public assets.

##### **Purpose of the Agreement**

The purpose of the Joint Use Agreement is to:

- Effectively and efficiently manage the use of District and Parks facilities and grounds for the benefit of Seattle's youth and others;
- Encourage joint use of respective facilities and give priority usage after the owner agency's programming/or ongoing community obligations are met;
- Provide facilities and grounds usable for District and Parks programs;
- Establish procedures to encourage cooperative working relationships between District and Parks staff at all levels and to quickly resolve issues;
- Encourage joint and cooperative ventures, including facility maintenance and development; and

- Equitably distribute the time and cost of the use of facilities and grounds

Successful joint use depends on a number of factors, including strong, consistent support for joint use from the School and Parks superintendents; educating and re-educating school principals and community center/pool coordinators regarding the benefits, rules and procedures associated with joint use; fostering effective working relationships between District and Parks staff at all levels; and maintaining a positive attitude toward joint use and going the extra mile to help each other achieve our goals.

### **Joint Use Scheduling Process**

As detailed in the agreement:

- Scheduling of buildings is the responsibility of Parks Youth and Teen Unit staff and the District's Building Rentals staff.
- Scheduling of fields and grounds is the responsibility of the Parks Athletics Office.
- Parks schedules all high school gyms, sports fields, and tennis courts for the District.
- Every spring Parks staff schedule meetings with school principals and provide a master sheet of all uses of the local District and Parks facilities and grounds. Each agency is encouraged to invite all District and Park users to participate in the meeting (e.g., at Miller/Meany this would include community center coordinator, principal, Community Learning Center lead). Final agreement should be reached by March 15 and the local community center coordinator and the principal sign the approved usage form for the upcoming school year.
- Athletic field requests and negotiations occur in April for fall sports and November for spring sports.
- All one-time requests that occur after March 15 are handled by the staff responsible for scheduling and the date is added to the master list for each local site.
- All conflicts are resolved at the building level where possible. Issues that cannot be resolved at the building level are elevated to the Joint Use Operations Committee (a panel of staff from the School District and Parks who implement the agreement in their respective agencies), with final resolution of unresolved problems decided by the Superintendent of Parks and the Superintendent of Schools.
- Permits for the school year are distributed to each Parks facility/school in July and August.

### **Changes in Operations since the Last Agreement**

Since the agreement was last renewed in 2000, both Parks and the District have experienced significant changes that have affected the cost of operations. These include:

- **Budget challenges** for both agencies have resulted in changes to operations that add increased direct service costs to programs:
  - Custodian hours have been reduced at elementary schools, meaning many buildings are not staffed after 6 p.m.
  - Community center hours have been reduced, so on many mornings the centers are closed.
- **Utility, maintenance, and staffing costs** for both agencies have increased:
  - Fees and charges have risen dramatically for community users
  - Utility costs for co-located Parks community centers have risen
  - Direct service staffing costs for both Parks and Schools have increased
- The development of the **Community Learning Centers** in middle schools and **more child care centers** in elementary schools means principals must be aware of the needs of these programs and include the staff of those programs in the annual scheduling process.

### **Issues**

The joint agreement is working very well and no major changes are proposed in the renewal agreement. We will continue working with staff to maintain good relations and communications with the School District. The Joint Use Agreement will be on our Parks and Recreation website, as well as the School District website:

<http://www.seattle.gov/parks>

<http://seattleschools.org>



### **Schedule**

The Joint City Council/School Board Committee will be briefed on the signed agreement January 27.

### **Staff Recommendation**

Staff is asking the Board for a recommendation to the Superintendent that the proposed School/Parks Joint Use Operating Agreement be signed.

### **Additional Information**

Patti Petesch  
684-7086  
[patti.petesch@seattle.gov](mailto:patti.petesch@seattle.gov)

### ***Board Discussion and Recommendation***

Ms. Petesch is the Seattle Parks' liaison with the School District. She reviewed the information in the written briefing and stated that the Joint Use Committee, which consists of four Seattle School District staff and four Seattle Parks staff, meet regularly.

### ***Board Discussion***

The Board's questions were on the following topics:

#### **Fees:**

Commissioner Holme asked if any serious issues have come out of the disparity of fees charged by Parks and the School District. Ms. Petesch answered that there has only been one issue. Baseball prices were very high and rental dropped off drastically. Parks worked with the District's Chief Financial Officer to reduce the fees so the fields could be rented at the same rate as the previous year. This decision was made prior to the start of baseball season in 2005.

#### **Maintenance of Ballfields:**

Commissioner Holme asked whether the synthetic fields are being well maintained. Ms. Petesch answered that the maintenance appears good. The District's choice of synthetic turf hasn't held up as well as that installed by Parks at Genesee Playfield and other parks. School Board member Dick Lilly requested that the District study the materials before any more synthetic installations are made. Another Board member recommended that all the future field installations consist of synthetic material.

Commissioner Holme asked if the District maintains all their fields and Ms. Petesch answered yes, there is no crossover where each agency maintains the others' fields. The District does ask for input from Parks on how to best maintain their fields. Ms. Petesch stated that Parks has also made a recommendation that the District do a yearly survey on how their fields are holding up. The District didn't at first do this, but are doing so now. The District is using a great deal of Parks Department data in this effort.

#### **Scheduling:**

Commissioner Belbeck asked if the Association Recreation Council (ARC) is involved with scheduling the fields. Ms. Petesch answered that they are not; however, ARC falls under the umbrella of Parks in the same way that Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) organizations fall under the District's umbrella. This means that ARC, as a Parks Department entity, can use the District's fields under the joint use agreement.

#### **Resolving issues:**

The Superintendent commented that although there are small scheduling issues each year that must be worked out, it is remarkable at how well the joint field use works. Scheduling staff from both have done a great job of scheduling approximately 140,000 hours at the mutual fields. Ms. Petesch commented that application of the agreement has gotten consistently better over the last five years. She believes that much of the improvement stems from the joint use committee.

Commissioner Holme asked if any issues have had to be resolved by a joint decision of the Parks Superintendent and School District Superintendent. Ms. Petesch answered that has not been necessary during this last five year agreement. Commissioner Holme commented that this is a good reflection of how well the agreement is working.

**Commissioner Holme moved approval of the staff recommendation that the Superintendent sign the proposed School/Parks Joint Use Operating Agreement. Commission Jackson seconded. The vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.**

### **Board of Park Commissioners' Business**

The Superintendent gave a brief update on the budget recently approved by City Council. Included were \$100,000 for skate park planning to be managed by Seattle Parks; \$250,000 to add a restroom to the Lower Woodland skate park site; \$2.1 million for the Olympic Sculpture Park/Alaska Way project; expanded late night program; and 23 positions are to be converted from temporary to permanent status.

Commissioner Holme asked if the budget made allowance for increased utility and fuel costs. The Superintendent answered that one way the City is addressing this is to sponsor a summit on utilities which will look at water, garbage, and heat costs. A goal is to reduce costs by 20% and City Light has been very helpful with this effort.

### **New/Old Business**

Oral Communication: Commissioner referred to testimony heard earlier in the meeting from Joyce Moty and asked if the Department's vegetation policies are clearly defined. The Superintendent answered that a briefing, discussion, and recommendation by the Board is scheduled for the January 26 meeting.

ABGC Retreat/Public Hearing: Commissioner Collins is the Board's representative to the Arboretum & Botanical Garden Committee (ABGC). The Board has scheduled a public hearing on January 12 to hear public testimony on the impacts of the Washington State Department of Transportation's SR520 project. The Board expects a large number of citizens to testify and the hearing will be moved from 100 Dexter to a larger venue, most likely South Lake Union Armory.

Park Board Vacancy: The list of potential candidates to fill outgoing Commissioner Grist's position on the Board has been expanded. It is hoped this position is filled quickly.

Thank You to Commissioner Grist: Commissioner Grist's three-year term expires at the end of 2005 and this was her last Park Board meeting. Superintendent Bounds and the Board thanked her for all her work as a Commissioner and presented her with a certificate of appreciation.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

Kate Pflaumer, Chair  
Board of Park Commissioners

DATE \_\_\_\_\_