



Department of Parks and Recreation

Seattle Board of Park Commissioners
<http://www.seattle.gov/parks/parkboard/>
Meeting Minutes
February 22, 2007

Board of Park Commissioners:

Present:

Terry Holme
Jackie Ramels
Amit Ranade

Seattle Parks and Recreation Staff:

Ken Bounds, Superintendent
B.J. Brooks, Deputy Superintendent
Sandy Brooks, Coordinator

Commissioner Holme called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Commissioner Ramels moved, and Commissioner Ranade seconded, approval of the agenda as amended, minutes as presented, and the Acknowledgment of Correspondence. The vote was taken and motion passed.

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. Two people signed up to testify; a brief summary of their testimony is included.

Pat Barger: She is the Queen Anne Community Center Advisory Council President. She has heard that the City is considering closing senior adult programs at the community centers. She thinks this is uneconomic and discriminatory. These programs help to utilize the community centers during the hours that kids are in school. It is unwise to move these successful and self-sustaining programs.

The Superintendent asked Ms. Barger where she was hearing this information, as it is not coming from Seattle Parks. After a bit more discussion, it was determined that her concerns should be relayed to City Councilmember Tom Rasmussen. A recent editorial from Councilmember Rasmussen on the senior centers is available at http://seattlepi.nwsource.com/opinion/259832_oped17c.html.

Jim Sykes: He is a member of the Friends of Denny Park and gave an update on the successful efforts of this group. He has been a Seattle Parks volunteer since 2001 and has worked with Pamela Kliment, Denny Park project manager, previously. He believes the Denny Park project is very doable, the park has great potential, and he looks forward to this project.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Bounds reported on the following items. For more information on Seattle Parks and Recreation, please visit the web pages at <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/>.

Olympia Visit: The Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent Brooks spent the previous day in Olympia, visiting legislators and lobbying for funding for Seattle parks.

Northeast Queen Anne Greenbelt: BMX enthusiasts have been notified that the unauthorized BMX track they built in the Greenbelt is being dismantled this week. Parks staff is scheduled to meet with them on February 23 to begin discussions on an appropriate and approved location.

Rowing Advisory Council: The Rowing Advisory Council recently donated more than \$40,000 of new equipment to the Green Lake Crew team. Their purchase and donation of two new four-man racing shells will greatly improve the current fleet. For more information on Greenlake Small Craft Center, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/Boats/Grnlake.htm>.

Pro Parks Acquisition near Kubota Garden: Parks recently purchased a .84-acre-property adjacent to Kubota Garden with Pro Parks Levy Funds. Combined with a .53-acre site purchased in May, these acquisitions preserve more than 400 feet along Mapes Creek, which also flows through the garden. For more information on Kubota Gardens, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/parkspaces/kubotagarden.htm>.

King County Awards Grants to Three City Parks: King County has awarded Real Estate and Excise Tax (REET) grants to Dahl Playfield (\$20,000), Haller Lake Community Park (\$75,000), and Ballard Corners Park (\$20,000). Parks staff are working with the County and the parks' "Friends of" organizations to develop a contract for each project.

Open Space Acquisition Completed: Parks has reached agreement for the purchase of a 6,024 sq. ft. property on Lakeview Boulevard East, across from I-5 Colonnade near the East Blaine Street public stairway. Acquisition of this property will improve pedestrian connections, extend wildlife habitat, and enhance the wooded buffer along East Blaine Street public stairway. For more information on I-5 Colonnade park, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/parkspaces/I-5Colonnade.htm>.

Japanese Garden Opens: The annual blessing and opening of the Japanese Garden was held on Sunday, February 19. The celebration featured a youth drum group and a visit from the Japanese consulate and was attended by more than 250 people. The recent heavy winter rains had flooded the parking lot, entered through the gates, and destroyed the pathway and shoreline areas. Crews did a great job in rebuilding these areas in time for the opening. For more information on the Japanese Garden, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/parkspaces/japanesegarden.htm>.

Off-Leash Area: King County Parks has contacted Seattle Parks to determine if it is willing to be part of a development with King County, Coalition for Offleash Areas (COLA), and Starbucks for a 1.1 acre offleash area (OLA) at the Elliot Avenue combined sewer overflow site. King County is currently negotiating with Starbucks and believes the maintenance and operations could be handled by COLA and funded by the land lease.

Langston Hughes and Sonics Perform Black History Month Event: Youth, ages 5-10, filled the Garfield Community Center last week when players from the Seattle Sonics and Storm visited. In honor of Black History Month, the players performed the play “I Dream a World”, along with youth from the Langston Hughes teen program. Stories of struggle and strength from the black experience were brought to life through the voice of local basketball hero Ray Allen.

Magnuson Park Field Permit Status: Commissioner Holme asked for an update on the permits. The Superintendent answered that Parks is still working with the Corp of Engineers and anticipate that the project will go out to bid in two weeks, with a construction goal date of April 1. For more information on Magnuson Park, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/magnuson/default.htm>.

Genesee Park: Commissioner Holme noted that unauthorized motorized aircraft have been flying at Genesee Park the past two Saturdays during the early afternoon. This was previously reported by former Commissioner Jackson. The Superintendent stated that staff have visited the park and the aircraft flyers weren't there at the time of their visits. Commissioner Holme will be given contact staff for the Parks Duty Officer to report further violations he observes. For more information on Genesee Park, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/parkspaces/genesee.htm>.

Superintendent Bound's Retiring: The Superintendent announced his retirement in early December after 30+ years of service to the City of Seattle. This is his final Park Board meeting.

Salute to Superintendent

The three Park Board Commissioners each spoke about Superintendent Bounds and his many contributions to the Department and the City.

Commissioner Ramels: She was previously the Associated Recreation Council president. At that time, ARC was going through a difficult transition and the Superintendent was willing to support and assist the organization. More recently, he has been a trusted and helpful partner as ARC goes through a modernization process. He was, and is, a “giant” to ARC.

She has attended several national urban parks conferences and at the one in New York in 2001, it became clear to her that it took a great deal of courage for Superintendent Bounds to support and advocate for citizen involvement in parks programming. At the national conference in Chicago in May 2006, it was overwhelmingly evident that park leaders from around the nation hold Superintendent Bounds in very high esteem and that the Seattle parks system is universally respected and admired. It was Commissioner Ramels’ impression that the Seattle parks system is perceived as one of the best in the nation.

She believes that his leadership of the Pro Parks Plan Levy has been a brilliant evolution. She pointed out that Superintendent Bounds has been a strong advocate for public involvement, to the extent that Seattle Parks is a model of citizen participation, emulated by other cities. The irony is noted.

The only problem she has found with the Superintendent is that he is too modest to take credit for any of the accomplishments and always gives the credit to his staff. She has been told by staff that when Superintendent Bounds first took on the role of Superintendent that he visited many staff and treated them like equals and part of the team. When he took over this role, there was a tangible increase in morale. She has spoken with many field staff members who praise Superintendent Bounds and claim that as a boss, he has instilled a sense of purpose and dedication in them, and has been an inspirational leader.

She thanked him for his many years of service to Seattle and stated that he has been a bright spot in Seattle Parks’ legacy.

Commissioner Ranade: The Superintendent’s efforts have touched not only Parks staff, but also the many people who enjoy Seattle’s parks every day. This daily enjoyment often gets lost in newspaper accounts about the Department and Superintendent.

When Commissioner Ranade joined the Park Board, he was a user of parks. The Superintendent has been a great mentor to him on how the park system operates. He will miss the Superintendent and thanked him for all he has done for the citizens of Seattle.

Commissioner Holme: He listed Superintendent Bounds’ traits as ones he thinks the national search committee should look for in the next Superintendent. These traits include: dedication to excellence; diplomacy; an unflappable temperament; absorb shocks and come back stronger; great listener; straight talker; institutional memory; give timely and accurate information; always be well prepared; have an in-depth understanding of the budget; objective, upfront; respectful of others opinions; and have a sense of humor.

The private sector hopes for integrity, direct answers, and truth and Superintendent Bounds gives all of these. Commissioner Holme believes that both the staff and majority of the public opinion are very strong in their admiration of and respect for the Superintendent.

The Superintendent commented that he leaves Seattle Parks and the City with lots of great memories and feels good about his accomplishments. However, there is always room for improvement.

Briefing: Denny Park Project

Pamela Kliment, Seattle Parks' Neighborhood Matching Fund project planner, briefed the Board on the Denny Park project. Commissioners received both a written and verbal briefing.

Written Briefing

Requested Board Action

No action requested; this briefing is for informational purposes only.

Project Description and Background

Denny Park is located at the corner of Dexter Avenue and John Street in the North Downtown neighborhood. The park currently consists of the Seattle Parks' administration building and a large open area with many old trees. Denny Park has a beaux-arts neoclassical plan, with a formal symmetrical arrangement including four major diagonal paths radiating from a central paved and landscaped center. There is a green lawn and randomly placed trees and shrubbery.

Revitalizing Denny Park is considered key in the North Downtown Park Plan. An "open plaza with seating for relaxing, informal gatherings and performances" and a "children's play area" were mentioned as potential on-site improvements.

The South Lake Union Area Schools Coalition started thinking about adding a play area to the park in June 2005. In 2006, they asked the City Council for \$70,000 to build the play area. The Council appropriated \$100,000. The accompanying language required the funding to be used exclusively for construction of the play area and instructed the group to use Neighborhood Matching Funds (NMF) for design. Resulting from interest in the play area project, a Friends of Denny Park (FoDP) group formed, comprised of representatives from the Schools Coalition, churches, businesses, nearby low-income housing, and others.

The initial goal was to add a play area. Most people involved with the project early on wanted a play structure without bright colors. Once conversations started about the project, it became obvious that a thorough site analysis was required to locate the play area. The site analysis required taking a look at the whole park (administration building, parking lot, and area west of the driveway excepted). A Project Advisory Team (PAT) was formed to assist the FoDP and guide the process. In addition to regular PAT meetings, the PAT participated in all the public meetings.

The PAT and the community helped prioritize the ideas for the park. The play area was considered very important. It was the impetus for the project. Elements that would improve safety and security, such as vegetation management and lighting are equally important.

The concept plan, developed through the public process, consists of a renovated play area, safety improvements such as vegetation management and lighting, an expanded central area, a history plaza, improved irrigation and planting, restroom renovation, and curb bulbs. There will be site furniture such as benches, picnic tables, trash cans, bike racks, and covered shelters. The primary goal of the play area is to make use of natural features such as the grade, plants, and other non-manufactured play features. It will be wrapped around the large trees in the northeast corner. The center area will be expanded to include three parts: an inner more intimate space for reading and contemplation, an outer space that will be designed to be used for public functions; and a water feature. The history plaza has not yet been defined but there are many ideas, for example a way to show how high the park was before the regrade, stories of the Denny family, and the early native people. "Remember and Renew" is the motto of the FoDP.

Issues

The main topics of discussion during the design process were vegetation management and the location of the play area. The trees were examined for health and beauty and their impact on visibility. If most of the taller shrubs were removed, sightlines would be improved considerably. The trees have been limbed up and pruned recently. Also, the spectacular trees would be able to be seen more easily if the smallish trees growing near them were removed.

The main areas of the park considered for the play area were the north central, west, and northeast locations. Placing a play area in the north central would disturb the formality and historical character of this area. The northeast corner was selected because it is furthest removed from the heavy traffic along Dexter Avenue and Denny Way and has stronger ties to the neighborhood, adjacent churches, and schools, the biggest users of the park. This corner has trees that inspire play opportunities and spacing that accommodates a variety of play features. The grade in this area is consistent and workable and is an integral part to some of the play features that incorporate climbing, sliding, or make believe. The triangle formed by the sidewalks is the appropriate size for a play area and has "boundaries" that make it easier for parents and care-givers to monitor the kids play.

Public Involvement Process

The public involvement process was as follows:

- There were three well attended public meetings in fall 2006. Parks sent out a mailer to 1,650 addresses to announce these meetings.
- There is a large sign at the site. The sign was placed so that people waiting in traffic on Denny Way could read it.
- Three children's workshops were held with the children at the Denny Park Apartments, the Spruce Street School, and the Morningside Academy.
- There was a discussion about the park with sixty students from the Cornish Institute.
- Real Change newspaper gathered comments from vendors as part of their weekly meetings.
- Three "open houses" were held in the park. Parks sent out another mailing for the open houses and the third public meeting. Invitations to these open houses were also distributed by hand on both sides of Denny. This allowed us to reach out to the many low income apartments in the Denny Triangle. Park users and people who responded to mailings could discuss and comment on the plans. The comments we received at the Open Houses differed quite a bit from the comments from the public meetings.
- Neighbors sent emails and called Parks.
- Updates on the project were reported in the South Lake Union-Friends and Neighbors electronic newsletter.
- The group created a web site, www.friendsofdennypark.org and the Parks' project web page is www.seattle.gov/parks/projects/nmf/denny.htm .
- Newspaper articles about the project appeared in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer

Budget

Friends of Denny Park received \$100,000 from the City Council Supplemental budget in 2006. In April 2006, they received \$15,000 from the Neighborhood Matching Fund (NMF) to hire a consultant to prepare a schematic plan, and they have applied for a \$100,000 Large Project Fund NMF award in the 2007 cycle. This funding would be available in September.

Schedule

The schematic design has been completed. The FoDP has a small amount of money and is using this to prepare materials it can use to start raising funds, such as renderings and brochures. Preparation of design development and construction documents will start in the fall when the NMF is awarded (we hope). In the best case scenario, the construction documents for phase one (play area and perhaps lighting) will be prepared and construction funds raised by January 2008 and the project can be bid. If so, construction of phase one should be complete by fall 2008.

Additional Information

Pamela Kliment, Parks Neighborhood Matching Fund Planner, 684-7556

Pamela.Kliment@seattle.gov

Verbal Briefing

Ms. Kliment verbally reviewed information in the written briefing and displayed the schematic design. She pointed out the various elements of the park to Commissioners and described the three different approaches to re-vitalizing the park. The PAT has added an expert on alternative play and a historian so that the playground will fit well with

the nature of this park. The group has recommended removing the large, mangled shrubs to increase visibility into the park and focus attention on the large and stately trees. The group is moving slowly with this recommendation.

Board Questions & Answers

Commissioner Ramels asked clarification that the citizens group requested \$70,000 from City Council and received \$100,000 and Ms. Kliment answered that is correct. Commissioner Ramels asked for further information on how input differed from those who attended the public meetings from those casual users who were interviewed in the park itself. Ms. Kliment answered that a totally different response was received from the casual users. They responded with comments like “I have lunch on this bench” or “I sit in this area.” She found the information from them to be very helpful and plans to do at least one on-site meeting in all her future projects. Commissioner Ramels asked if members of the PAT live near the park. Ms. Kliment answered yes, that there are 12-13 members and all live or work nearby. Commissioner Ramels commented that Denny Park appears to her as more of a city park than a neighborhood park.

The Superintendent commented that there are two main impetuses to revitalize the park: (1) it is used frequently by daycares and schools and they just make do with what is currently in the park; and (2) the area is being re-developed, primarily by Vulcan Enterprises and there will be more children moving to this area. The Deputy Superintendent gave additional context on how this park is part of the Center City and North Downtown Park Plan. It is the oldest city in the park and is used in many different ways.

Commissioner Ranade asked if a skatedot or skatespot was identified as a need during the public meetings. Ms. Kliment answered that it was not identified as a need. Commissioner Ranade asked about the permeable surfaces and whether parking will be impacted. Ms. Kliment described the surfaces and commented that most park users will walk to the park, and won't impact traffic or parking. Commissioner Holme asked about the history of the park and the description as being beaux arts. Ms. Kliment answered that Glen Hall developed the park plan and the design follows that. [Beaux arts means “fine arts” — a style that flourished between 1885 and 1920. It was often used for courthouses and government buildings.] Commissioner Holme asked if there are historical elements in the original master plan that didn't get implemented. Ms. Kliment will review the master plan again to determine this.

Commissioner Holme asked if the playground can be installed and the vegetation removed concurrently. Ms. Kliment answered yes. Commissioner Holme asked if there is potential for a restroom at the park. Ms. Kliment answered that there are restrooms on the exterior of the bottom floor of the administration building. These were permanently closed after a number of incidents of illegal behavior, both inside and outside the restroom. They are in good shape and need cleaning. The restrooms would be managed differently this time. Commissioner Holme suggested that staff monitor the park usage and open the restrooms only during heavier usage.

The Commissioners thanked Ms. Kliment for the briefing.

Briefing: Associated Recreation Council Bi-Yearly Update

Bill Keller, Executive Director of the Associated Recreation Council (ARC), presented a bi-yearly briefing of ARC's projects and activities. Commissioners received both a written and verbal briefing.

Written Briefing

Purpose of Briefing

This is a regular briefing to the Board of Park Commissioners on the current status of the Associated Recreation Council system, projects, and activities.

Background

Advisory Councils (AC) are a vital part of the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation's program delivery system. Parks relies on hundreds of volunteer AC members for advice, assistance, and representation of the many Seattle communities. Currently there are 38 advisory councils operating within the City of Seattle. Approximately 400 advisory council members volunteer their time throughout the system.

Advisory Councils have been part of the citizen involvement process with the Seattle Department of Park and Recreation for over three decades. Original advisory councils were primarily concerned with recommending activities, programs, and classes to be offered in their respective communities. They served as volunteers for recreation events, and reviewed programs and project plans with their Department counterparts. Their financial activities were very limited.

In 1971, Parks expanded the Advisory Council's financial role. They became responsible for handling most of the funds generated by the programs they sponsored. These funds that were collected were then expended back into programs without being part of the City's budgetary process. The responsibilities included sponsoring classes, activities, and programs; hiring staff as instructors, child care workers, sports officials, etc.; and making these decisions in partnership with Parks staff.

In 1976, Seattle City Ordinance 105655 was passed, authorizing the Superintendent to recognize Advisory Councils. Documents formalized these arrangements, establishing the relationship between Parks and Advisory Councils.

The Associated Recreation Council (ARC) was formed in 1976 as a recommendation from the State Auditor. ARC provides a standardized accounting system for handling the ACs' funds that meets both City and State legal requirements. Currently, ARC is comprised of a volunteer board made up of 15 Advisory Councils representatives and at-large members. ARC supports a staff of 16 that includes field supervision, school age program staff, human resources, and an accounting staff that handles financial transactions and record keeping for its member Advisory Councils.

Seattle Parks, the Associated Recreation Council (ARC), and its 38 advisory councils are celebrating the 31st anniversary of our partnership. The partnership has grown from its modest beginnings in 1976 to encompass programs at 26 community centers, 4 environmental learning centers, 3 citywide programs, 1 tennis center, 2 boating facilities, and 2 arts and culture facilities. Fees and charges generated by these programs and funds from special events and capital campaigns flow through ARC – totaling \$10 million a year.

2006 Unaudited Financial Report

The Associated Recreation Council system had an active and successful year in 2006. Total support and revenue produced for the year was \$10,004,890. The system invested \$9,667,750 in Program expenses. \$1,507,550 was fund raised in grants and donations. The system employed 1,100 staff for the year working in over 30 locations throughout the City.

Representation

In 2006 the Associated Recreation Council system represented 38 advisory councils, 17 fiscal sponsorships, and 31 restricted fund accounts. Of the 48 accounts in addition to the advisory council operating accounts we supported the following playground, park, and building projects:

- 4th & Ward Park
- Annie's Playground
- Art in Ravenna Park Project
- Bayview-Kinnear Park
- Beer Sheva Playground
- EC Hughes Playground
- Grand Army of the Republic Cemetery
- Japanese Garden Fountain
- Karen's Playground
- Laurelhurst Community Center Expansion
- Meadowbrook Community Center Annex
- Montlake Community Center Building Fund
- Mt. Baker Building Expansion

- Pinehurst Playground
- Ravenna Eckstein Playground
- Ravenna Playground
- South Portage Bay Park Project
- Ursula Judkins Viewpoint Development
- Van Asselt Community Center Expansion
- Whale Tail Park

In addition we supported the following community projects:

- Cal Anderson Park Alliance
- Borders 4 Parks
- STEP Program (Steps Toward Environmental Partnerships)
- RecTech Community Center Computer Labs
- Heron Habitat Helpers
- Langston Hughes African Conexion Partnership
- Rainier Beach Back to School Bash
- Rainier Beach Project for Community Empowerment
- Puget Sound Alliance for Community Technology

Financial Support

In 2006 the Associated Recreation Council system provided the following financial support to the partnership:

- \$316,983 in Class Participation Fees
- \$98,549 in Child Care scholarships
- \$120,000 support of the Pyramid Project(CLASS Recreation software)
- \$13,400 in support of the Community Learning Centers
- \$40,000 in support of Summer Playground Projects
- \$96,817 in Opportunity Fund grants

Carkeek Park	Homewaters Mapping Project	\$5,000
Delridge	Youth & Seniors Programming	\$7,500
Discovery Park	West Point Archeology Kits	\$8,000
Garfield	Technical & Instructional/Lab	\$5,000
High Point	Guiding Academic Motivation/Teens	\$9,187
Japanese Gardens	Mondays in the Garden	\$6,500
Langston Hughes	African American Masters	\$5,000
Loyal Heights	Kitchen Remodel	\$6,000
Magnuson	Gym Scoreboard	\$4,800
Rainier	Computer Lab Monitor	\$5,000
Ravenna-Eckstein	Teen Program Aide	\$2,500
RecTech	Grant Writing/fundraising	\$7,500
South Park	Teen Emergency Plan/Intro to Learning Storytelling	\$8,000
Van Asselt	Summer Playground	\$2,200
Yesler	Field Trip Program for SPS classes	\$8,630
Carkeek Park	Special Olympics Basketball Tournament	\$4,000
Special Populations		\$2,000

Community Technology Centers

In August of 2005 ARC, on behalf of the RecTech Coalition (Advisory councils representing; Rainier, Rainier Beach, Miller, Garfield, Delridge, South Park, and Southwest Community Centers), submitted a grant request to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in order to provide Community Technology Centers(CTCs) at each of the sites.

A primary purpose of the grant request was to provide academic support to the many youth who use the community centers for recreation. The curriculum was aligned with the Community Learning Centers and the Seattle School District. In March of 2006 we received the notification of the two year grant award of \$377,950. The first year award was \$149,000 with the balance of \$228,950 to be paid in April of 2007.

In addition we received a Communities Connect grant award of \$105,000 for the Community Technology Center at Yesler Community Center — also from Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. As an additional windfall we received \$100,000 from the Microsoft Corporation for software and software upgrades. The installation of hardware and software has occurred and we are operational. The Department of Information Technology provided \$31,000 for technology support as we developed our own in-house technology support staff for the technology centers.

Recently, the Stuart Foundation supplemented the project with a two year grant totaling \$175,000, targeting the Rainier and Rainier Beach Community Center technology labs. In addition, at year end we were awarded \$178,000 for 2007 through the City Council to deliver a Digital Media Skills Program at the South Park and Rainier Beach Community Center technology labs. \$75,000 will be awarded in 2008 for the second year of the Program.

In total the RecTech Coalition has been awarded over \$1,000,000 in support for this important community technology effort.

Modernization

We are involved in a process to update and “modernize our partnership” to better meet the evolving need of our recreation business relationship needs and demands.

In 2003 Seattle Parks’ Superintendent Ken Bounds launched an initiative with the ARC Board and the advisory councils to modernize this partnership. We convened a Steering Committee composed of Department, ARC, and advisory council members that worked together to create a strategic plan for the delivery of recreation services. This has been successfully accomplished with agreement on four primary goals: to increase the number of people served, develop sustainable financial resources, develop infrastructure systems that will allow us to better market and conduct recreation programs, and provide connections to Seattle’s neighborhoods and communities.

Currently, the defining documents are being reviewed by the City Law Department in order to begin the legislative process necessary for the completion of the Modernization effort.

Verbal Briefing

Mr. Keller introduced ARC Chair Anne Martin and its Budget Director William Lowe. He took a few moments to talk about the upcoming retirement of Superintendent Bounds. Mr. Keller has had the opportunity to work through the department and has seen the positive effects of the Superintendents’ good will and ability to weather storms. He feels he has learned a lot from the Superintendent — he will be missed. Mr. Keller looks forward to working with Interim Superintendent B.J. Brooks on continuing challenges.

He has been working with ARC for more than 30 years and it is in the best shape ever now and is modernizing itself. Mr. Keller reviewed the information in the written briefing paper.

Board Questions & Answers

Commissioner Ramels commented that she recalls in past years that ARC receiving grants was just a dream. She is very proud of all the work that Mr. Keller and ARC have accomplished. This has been a fabulous effort. She asked Mr. Keller to explain how ARC would develop sustainable resources. Mr. Keller answered that infrastructure is now in place to be responsive to current and future needs. This is a big leap, as it shows that ARC is now self-sustaining. Commissioner Ramels hopes the programs will expand beyond childcare.

The Superintendent seconded Commissioner Ramels’ praise of Mr. Keller, Ms. Martin, Mr. Lowe, and the Advisory Councils. This organization has had phenomenal success. Seattle Parks does not have funding to provide technical

support, so ARC stepped forward to fulfill the need. Deputy Superintendent commented that it was a tremendous asset to have Mr. Keller at the Chicago NRPA conference. Many other cities want to emulate Seattle and use ARC as their model.

The Commissioners thanked Mr. Keller for the briefing.

Briefing: Associated Recreation Council Memorandum of Agreement — Modernization

Michele Finnegan, Seattle Parks Operation Division Strategic Planner, briefed the Board on the Associated Recreation Council's Memorandum of Agreement for its modernization plans. Commissioners received a written briefing, included in the minutes.

Written Briefing

Requested Board Action

This briefing is for informational purposes only. The intent of the briefing is to inform the Board of the Modernization effort and the next steps in the process.

Project Description and Background

Seattle Parks and Recreation, the Associated Recreation Council (ARC), and its 37 advisory councils celebrated the 30th anniversary of our partnership in 2006. The partnership has grown from its modest beginnings in 1976 to encompass programs at 26 community centers, 4 environmental learning centers, 3 citywide programs, 1 tennis center, 2 boating facilities, and 2 arts and culture facilities. Fees and charges generated by these programs and funds from special events and capital campaigns flow through ARC — totaling nearly \$10 million a year.

In 2003, the Superintendent launched an initiative with the ARC Board and the advisory councils to modernize this partnership. The first step was for our consultant to conduct a survey of staff, the ARC Board, and advisory council members. Only 20% of respondents believed the roles of ARC, the advisory councils, and the Parks Department are clear.

We then jointly convened a Steering Committee composed of 24 department, ARC, and advisory council members that worked to create a strategic plan for the delivery of recreation services. This has been successfully accomplished with agreement on four primary goals: to increase the number of people served, to develop sustainable financial resources, to develop infrastructure systems that will allow us to better market and conduct recreation programs, and to provide connections to Seattle's neighborhoods and communities. We concluded that these goals can best be met by re-structuring the partnership to have ARC act as a voice for the system as a whole. In addition, this Strategic Plan also establishes clear roles and responsibilities. These are outlined in the strategic plan and will be incorporated into our new partnership agreement.

We are currently working with ARC's legal counsel and the City's Law Department to negotiate updated partnership documents. Parks currently has separate agreements with ARC and with each of the 37 advisory councils. To streamline the delivery of recreation services and clarify roles we will be entering into a single agreement with ARC that would encompass all of the advisory councils.

The existing agreements between the department and ARC and between the department and the individual advisory councils are authorized by Ordinance 105655 (passed in 1976). These existing agreements currently state withdrawal of recognition or termination can be appealed to the Board of Park Commissioners for a hearing. While we are anticipating Councils will be prepared to enter in to the new agreements once approved, we wanted to make you aware of this possible role for the Board.

Public Involvement Process

This process has included the system's approximately 300 advisory council members at every major step of the process.

- The entire membership was present as the process took shape with the Superintendent's November 2003 call to action;
- Members participated on the Steering Committee for the Strategic Planning process during 2004-05;
- The entire membership was sent a draft Strategic Plan for comment prior to adoption; and
- The entire membership was present when the Superintendent adopted the final plan in October 2005.

Since that time, the Councils have been paramount in implementing many of the Strategic Plan goals in advance of all the partnership document updates being completed. Last fall, the Associated Recreation Council began directly managing the Child Care Programs. In addition, for the first time in our history each Advisory Council completed a 2007 annual budget that was consolidated into an ARC budget which was reviewed and approved by the Superintendent.

Issues

The remaining issue is to complete the negotiation process on the partnership documents and send them to Council for review and approval. Documents under discussion include:

- Master Services Agreement
- Child Care Programs Addendum
- Capital Improvement/ Restricted Account Approval Protocol
- Advisory Council Charter, Operating Agreement, Bylaws
- Independent Contractor/Personal Services Agreement

Schedule

We anticipate the partnership documents will be ready for Council review and approval during second quarter 2007.

Additional Information

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact Michele Finnegan, Parks Operations Division (684-7157). To learn more about the Associated Recreation Council, you can visit their website at <http://www.cityofseattle.net/parks/arc/>.

Verbal Briefing/Questions & Answers

Ms. Finnegan reviewed the information in the written briefing paper. She commented that it is great to have Commissioner Ramels on the Park Board, with her past presidency of ARC.

Commissioner Holme asked if there has been a long-standing agreement that dissention comes to the Board of Park Commissioners and Ms. Finnegan answered that has been the policy since 1976. Commissioner Holme asked if any advisory councils have been dissolved. Mr. Keller answered that Garfield Community Center had several advisory committees. They joined together to form one. Sometimes the councils die out or they transition to some other type of entity.

Commissioner Ramels asked if there was a meeting where all advisory members were asked to attend and Ms. Finnegan answered yes. Commissioner Ranade wants to see a final draft and staff agreed. Commissioner Holme asked for an explanation of Class software. Ms. Finnegan answered that this is the software used by the public to sign up for classes. It is nicknamed "SPARC" and has been very successful.

Mr. Keller commented that previously ARC had seasonal ebbs and flows of income. The Class system has helped level the income. It also gives a tremendous amount of information on class usage, deposits, and other paperwork. The advisory councils and community center staff have done a good job of adapting to this new system. ARC staff sent out an information toolkit with a CD to advisory councils, who were asked what other information could be added. This has helped strengthen partnerships. The Superintendent stated that this effort has been very impressive.

Commissioner Holme asked if ARC employees are City employees. Ms. Finnegan answered that some staff work for both ARC and the City. A new requirement of the modernization, however, is that a staff person can work for the City at one facility and ARC at another facility. He/she cannot work for both ARC and the City at the same site. This helps keep the lines of supervision clear.

Commissioners Holme and Ramels both support having an ARC member as a Park Board Commissioner. Commissioner Holme thanked Ms. Finnegan and Mr. Keller for the briefing and requested that ARC continue briefing the Board on a regular basis. Ms. Finnegan suggested that they return for a briefing when the Park Board vacancies are filled.

New/Old Business

Determine New Park Board Chair: Four Commissioners resigned at the January 25 meeting and this is the first meeting the Board has held since. The remaining three Commissioners are awaiting City Councils' appointment to two positions and the Mayor's appointment to one position. The Board will continue hearing the Superintendent's report and hearing briefings; however, more serious briefings/public hearings will be postponed.

One of the four Commissioners who resigned was the Chair and tonight elections are being held for the remainder of 2007. In late 2007 or early 2008, officers for the following year will be elected. It is important to have officers and structure in place so that when the new Commissioners join the Board, they can hit the ground running.

Commissioner Holme believes his strength to the Board is in his remaining in a questioning role — and being chair precludes that. **Commissioner Ramels nominated Commissioner Ranade as chair. Commissioner Ranade seconded the motion.** Commissioner Ramels commented that the Board is undergoing a great transition and many things are happening: new Board members will join the group, the Superintendent is retiring, and the Pro Parks Levy is being sun-setted. She believes that Commissioner Ranade, as an attorney and youngest Board member, will ensure that everyone's voice is heard during all these changes. **The vote was taken and the motion carried.** Commissioner Ranade commented that he will look to Commissioners Holme and Ramels for their institutional memory of Seattle Parks and for their stability. He believes it will be helpful to new members to have an orientation from existing members.

Commissioner Ranade moved to nominate Commissioner Ramels as vice-chair and Commissioner Holme seconded. The vote was taken and motion carried. Commissioner Ramels commented that she is honored by this position.

Lake Washington Boulevard: Commissioner Ramels has heard rumors that the big cherry trees along Lake Washington Boulevard are being removed. The Superintendent commented that it is rumor only; the trees are being removed as they die and are not being cut down. A Vegetation Management Plan is has been in the works for the Boulevard and includes discussion on whether to replace those that die with new cherry trees. Some citizens want the trees replaced and other are concerned that their views are blocked by the trees. A Project Advisory Team is being set up, along with a facilitator. Commissioner Holme commented that this is a hot topic in his neighborhood. He believes that the Boulevard needs a lot of work, especially in the greenbelts that have many invasive species.

Park Board Committees: In the past, Park Board members have been asked by the Superintendent to serve as representatives to several committees. Some of these require a Park Board member. Others required a citizen representative and various Board members volunteered to serve. The three committees that require a Park Board member are: (1) the Pro Parks Levy Oversight Committee — Commissioner Holme, and confirmed by City Council; (2) the Parks Naming Committee — requires a Park Board member and is vacant; and (3) the Seattle Art Museum Board of Directors — requires the Park Board chair, now Commissioner Ranade.

Several Commissioners who recently resigned want to remain as citizen representatives on committees: (1) Jack Collins to the Arboretum & Botanical Garden Committee; (2) Kate Pflaumer to the Aquatics Ecology Stakeholders/Restore Our Waters; and (3) Angela Belbeck to the Discovery Park Fund Allocation Committee.

Commissioner Ramels suggested that, in the future, a Commissioner should serve as a representative to the Associated Recreation Council. A list of the committees will be given to each new member as they join the Board.

Status of New Board Members: Commissioners asked for a status on the incoming members. The Mayor has not nominated anyone. City Council's PELL Committee Chair, David Della, anticipates bringing the names of Council's two candidates to the March 7 PELL Committee meeting, then on to full City Council for approval. Once the three new members are in place, a nominating committee from the Board will set up a process to select the Board's member.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m. Commissioners provided cake and refreshments in honor of the Superintendent.

APPROVED: _____
Amit Ranade, Chair
Board of Park Commissioners

DATE _____