



Department of Parks and Recreation

Seattle Board of Park Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
November 13, 2008
Meeting Held at 100 Dexter Avenue North

Web site: <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/parkboard/>
(Includes agendas and minutes from 2001-present)

Also, view Seattle Channel tapes of meetings, June 12, 2008-most current, at
<http://www.seattlechannel.org/videos/watchVideos.asp?program=Parks>

Board of Park Commissioners:

Present:

Neal Adams
John Barber
Terry Holme
Donna Kostka
Jackie Ramels, Vice-Chair

Excused:

Amit Ranade, Chair

Seattle Parks and Recreation Staff:

Tim Gallagher, Superintendent
Christopher Williams, Deputy Superintendent
Sandy Brooks, Park Board Coordinator

Commissioner Ramels called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and reviewed the meeting agenda.

Commissioner Kostka moved, and Commissioner Holme seconded, approval of the agenda and the October 23, 2008, minutes. The motion was approved.

Superintendent's Report

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

Park Levy: The recently-passed \$145 million Seattle Parks and Greenspaces Levy had the highest margin ever of support for a levy in Seattle. Parks staff are now working on a project implementation schedule. The existing Pro Parks Levy and its oversight committee will provide good process models for this new levy. For more information on the new Levy projects, see <http://parksandgreenspaceslevy.ning.com/>.

Youth Violence Program: In its ongoing efforts to combat youth violence, the Department continues to build relationships with youth and has made additional staff changes at some of the high school teen life centers. Superintendent Gallagher referred to a recent shooting near Garfield Community Center where the two young men who were shot, with one fatally, ran for help at the Garfield Teen Life Center. Mayor Nickels and the City Council have earmarked \$9 million for the City's Youth Violence Program. For more information, see <http://www.seattle.gov/mayor/newsdetail.asp?ID=8814&dept=40>.

Magnuson Parks Sportsfields/Wetlands Project: Three restrooms near the new sportsfields and wetland project have been closed for several years, due to vandalism and non-working electrical lift stations. Porta-potties have been provided during this time. Seattle Parks and Seattle City Light has had several discussions to determine which Department would pay for the substantial costs of replacing the electrical components. Deputy Superintendent Williams recently met with Seattle City Light, resulting in a very good solution to this problem. Seattle City Light has agreed to restore electrical power to the restrooms, which will be the first "green" restrooms in Seattle's parks. Both solar and wind power will be used to power the lift stations.

Update on Magnuson Park Building 30 Artists: Seattle Parks continues to work with artists who have been leasing space at Magnuson Park's Building 30. Seattle School District may lease space to them, for as long as five years, at the now-empty Viewlands Elementary School Building. The artists favor this location and want to lease a space where all can work. For more information on Magnuson Park, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/Magnuson/>.

Seward Park Encroachments: Seattle Parks Department Property Management staff mailed letters today to 15 citizens who have encroachments on Seward Park property. The letters direct the citizens to remove the encroachments, which include decks, hot tubs, plantings, etc., within 30 days.

2009 Budget: Seattle Parks Budget Director Carol Everson reported on the Department's 2009-2010 budget at the October 23 Park Board meeting. Since the presentation, there have been new budget projections which the Mayor and City Council are now reviewing. Seattle Parks may see a reduction of add-ons, such as the fourth tree crew. For more information on the 2009 budget, see <http://www.seattle.gov/council/default.htm>.

Jefferson Reservoir: Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) is working to complete their Beacon Hill Reservoir project at Jefferson Park but is dealing with roof membrane leaking that will require extensive remedial action. SPU has also had difficulty securing soils to fill the old north reservoir site. Both of these have implications for Seattle Parks' schedule for the Jefferson Park Pro Parks development project, as the site will not be ready for Parks' construction until some time after this winter. Parks cannot bid the project until SPU completes its work; however, Parks staff hope to advertise for bids after the first of the year and be ready for construction in the spring. <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/proparks/projects/JeffersonPark.htm>.

California Place Park: This West Seattle project received a \$15,000 Neighborhood Matching Fund award for planning purposes. After the Department of Neighborhoods awarded the funds, the community was divided on support for the project. About 100 people attended a meeting last week, with most opposed to any changes at the park. For more information on California Place Park, see http://www.seattle.gov/parks/park_detail.asp?ID=448

Red Barn Ranch: This Seattle Parks property consists of 40+ acres in Auburn and is currently contracted for use by a nearby camp. The property was obtained in the 1960's with Forward Thrust Fund. In recent years, maintenance on the buildings has been deferred and the Department is now looking for other opportunities with this property and has requested the Park Board to hold a public hearing in April. For more information on Red Barn Ranch, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/history/RedBarnRanch.pdf>

Cascade People's Center: Commissioner Ramels asked for an update on this facility. She recalled that when she was a member of the Pro Parks Levy Oversight Committee there was some discussion to make the People's Center a green building. Superintendent Gallagher will check on the status of this and report back to the Board. For more information on the Cascade People's Center, see http://www.cascadepeoplescenter.org/cascade/?page_id=16

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 two 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 testified.

Mark Storey: He noted that there are a number of references in the Department's recently-completed five-year Strategic Action Plan to clothing optional events. He complimented the Department on the Plan and found it interesting reading with references to dogs, pools, swimming areas, and clothing optional opportunities.

Becky Gillespy: She is Team Manager of Club Northwest and testified regarding the West Seattle Stadium Request for Proposals. She sent e-mail testimony to the Park Board earlier in the week, listing six concerns with the RFP. The Club urged the Board of Park Commissioners to not recommend the RFP until the Superintendent has addressed their concerns and questions. Once those are addressed, they requested that no changes be made to the Stadium's schedule before August 2009.

Briefing: Rule Relating to Public Nudity in Seattle's Parks

Commissioner Ramels noted that a large number of people attended the meeting to hear this briefing and the Board agreed to move it to an earlier part of the meeting.

Karen Tsao, Seattle Parks Strategic Adviser, presented a briefing on a new Rule Relating to Public Nudity in Seattle's Parks. Commissioners received a written briefing prior to the meeting, which is included below, as well as tonight's verbal briefing.

Written Briefing

Requested Board Action

The Board will hear a briefing on November 13, 2008 regarding a proposed rule for parks relating to nudity. A public hearing is scheduled for January 8, 2009, and the Board discussion and recommendation are scheduled for January 22, 2009.

Proposed Rule

The proposed rule of conduct would prohibit nudity in any public park or park facility open to the public. Violation of the rule may lead to the withdrawal of permission to remain in the park or park facility for a period of twenty-four hours or exclusion from parks, depending on the circumstances. There would be exceptions for children under the age of five, nursing mothers, and in restrooms, locker rooms and indoor showers.

This rule will support the Superintendent in his function to coordinate uses of park spaces. Nudity affects a potentially large extent of public space and disrupts use of parks by other people. In particular, it will enable the Superintendent to grant, withhold or revoke permits in a manner that consistent with that function. It is based on the power of the Superintendent to make rules regulating the use of parks and the conduct in parks.

Background

Parks staff researched the experience and regulation of other west coast and Puget Sound jurisdictions regarding nudity (exposure) in parks and parks facilities. The range of existing regulations includes:

- making exposure a misdemeanor (Tacoma, Everett, Berkeley, Portland),
- prohibiting exposure (San Francisco, Los Angeles County), and
- requiring a standard of dress at facilities (King County, Vancouver BC).

Seattle appears to be unique in receiving nudist request for use of park facilities. None of the cities contacted appears to have the same level of request for nude activities as does Seattle, possibly due to their having some regulation of nudity in public places. Nudity per se is not illegal under Washington state law (cited in the Appendix). Seattle has no law regulating public nudity.

Public Involvement Process

The Park Board briefing will be the first public airing of the proposed rule. The public hearing in 2009 will occur two months after the proposed rule has been made publicly available. There will be broad outreach prior to the public hearing. We welcome the Board's input on whether Parks should conduct additional public engagement.

Issues

Facility rentals – Nudist/naturist groups have rented City swimming pools for swim nights after the pool is closed to the public. Parks has approved such requests, requiring that Parks life guards work the duty on a voluntary basis and must be over age 21. Parks as the facility owner retains essentially all liability for activities. Therefore it is very important to ensure that any lifeguards are capable of an effective response to emergencies. Some lifeguards who have volunteered to staff the clothing optional event chose not to volunteer again. The proposed Rule will not alter peoples' ability to rent a facility for a private clothing optional event.

Beach use – Through the Strategic Action Plan public process, there were requests for designation of clothing optional beach(es) in Seattle. There are about 30 beaches of any sort in City Parks' ownership, extending approximately a total of three linear miles. Many can be viewed from other areas of the adjacent parks, public roads and nearby residences. For those where a lifeguard is located, users frequently include children under age 14. In isolated areas of parks, a few beaches have become unofficially used as clothing optional, and behavior at them is informally and unofficially managed by nudist/naturist users. The proposed Rule will make it clear that informal clothing optional beaches are prohibited.

Event permits – The two most frequent requests for event permits are related to the beginning and stopover locations for the World Naked Bike Ride and for picnics at Magnuson Park. Recent World Naked Bike Ride events have resulted in complaints from citizens to the Seattle Police Department. These permits have been issued as the Superintendent does not now have a basis in law or regulation for denying an event permit as long as the permittee agrees to abide by applicable laws, rules and regulations, as is currently required by the permit. The proposed Rule will prohibit nude, or clothing optional events even under special permit. The Superintendent will no longer authorize permits for events where it is clear public nudity is planned.

There are no budget impacts.

Schedule

Parks is prepared to advertise in the Daily Journal of Commerce, following the public hearing, as required by Section 3.02 of the Administrative Code, a notice of the Superintendent's intent to sign the rule.

Staff Recommendation

Parks and Recreation will request a Board recommendation at the January 22, 2009 meeting.

Additional Information

Attached are the text of the proposed rule and an appendix of how other jurisdictions address the issue.

Karen Tsao: karen.tsao@seattle.gov

Board Discussion and Recommendation

Ms. Tsao reviewed information in the written briefing and stressed that this is a rule and not a law. The basic reason for the request for the rule is that parks are for everyone, should be welcoming for all, and everyone should be able to visit a park comfortably. She noted that both San Francisco and Berkeley, California, have a law that prohibits nudity in their parks. The Department is requesting the Park Board to hold a public hearing on this at its January 8 meeting, followed by a discussion and recommendation at the January 22 meeting.

Commissioner Adams asked if Seattle is the only West Coast city without a rule on public nudity in its parks. Ms. Tsao responded that she contacted 11 area and comparable size cities and all had a rule. Commissioner Barber noted that Tacoma has a sound principal where its laws cover behavior inside and outside of its parks. Ms. Tsao answered that, unlike Seattle, Tacoma's parks are a separate Metropolitan District. This request is for a park rule and, as such, does not go through City Council to become a law.

Commissioner Ramels asked if Seattle has an indecent exposure law and Ms. Tsao answered that it doesn't. She added that current State law places a value on what is alarming/confronting to the person making a complaint. The complainant must be willing to go to court and testify at a trial if they lodge a complaint about public nudity. Commissioner Ramels asked why the rule is being brought to the Board at this time and Ms. Tsao answered that Seattle Police Department has received several complaints on nudity in the parks.

Commissioner Adams asked if any Seattle beach or part of a beach is designated as clothing optional and whether an area can be so designated. Ms. Tsao answered that Seattle has three miles of beach front and none is designated as clothing optional. The lifeguarded beaches are very public; however, some beach areas are secluded and are used informally as clothing optional.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Adams on whether this rule allows the Superintendent to make the final decision and whether it includes some flexibility, Ms. Tsao responded that the rule could be modified for clothing optional areas and allows the Superintendent some flexibility in how it would be enforced. Commissioner Barber lives near several beach areas and wondered if there had been complaints about nudity at those sites; Ms. Tsao was unsure.

Commissioner Ramels stated that when the City issues permits for an individual or group to use a park, that they should follow all the rules. She suggested that, rather than the Department focusing on nudity that it instead focus on whether particular groups abide by City rules and care for the property. The Department could then award/deny future permits based on whether or not groups with permits follow the rules. The bottom line is whether the park users are good stewards of park property.

Commissioner Barber agreed and moved that the Department should not proceed with a nudity policy now, but the Board would like to monitor the issue and have a report in 6 to 8 months. Commissioner Kostka seconded.

Superintendent Gallagher stated that the Department has issued permits for several indoor clothing optional events without problem, and it hasn't received complaints on nude sunbathing in the parks/beaches. However, the City received many calls and complaints on some recent events that involved nudity. He agreed with the Board's suggestion to review how well permit users protect park property and abide by the rules.

Commissioner Holme added that some events may start at other locations and end up in Seattle's parks. An example was given of naked bike riders who start their event at another location and end it at Gas Works Park. If that is the case, it would be outside the purview of the motion. Deputy Superintendent Williams clarified that Virginia Swanson coordinates all the Citywide Special Permits and reports directly to Superintendent Gallagher. If the permits are not followed, the Superintendent can weigh in and not allow future permits to be issued.

Commissioner Adams stated that he wants to hear more from the public and does not want to assume who is offended by public nudity. He would like to move ahead with the public hearing and utilize the motion as an alternative route to follow. Commissioner Ramels stated that she would like to approve the motion to avoid a public hearing.

Commissioner Barber commented that the Board has not yet heard from the public about this. There are areas where people pay for permits and if the events are offensive to some, parents could steer their families away from the areas. Commissioner Holme added that there are a number of issues to consider and urged that the Department continue to pursue the formation of the rule. There is strong lobbying in the community for a naturist beach. Perhaps the Board could approve the motion and then address a clothing-optional beach as a separate public hearing issue. He wants to be fair and vet the clothing optional beach in a public hearing.

The vote was taken with Commissioners Barber, Holme, and Kostka voting in favor of the motion. Commissioner Adams opposed. Motion carried.

Commissioner Ramels summarized that, for the time being, the January 8 public hearing is cancelled and the Board will not hold a public hearing on a rule on public nudity in Seattle's parks. Parks staff will monitor the permits for the next few months and report back to the Board in 2009. Commissioner Ramels also summarized Commissioner Holme's request that the Department consider the possibility of scheduling a public hearing for a clothing optional beach sometime in the future. She thanked all those who attended tonight's meeting.

Commissioners also thanked Ms. Tsao for the briefing.

Discussion/Recommendation: West Seattle Stadium Request for Proposals (RFP)

At its October 23 meeting, Rebecca Salinas, Seattle Parks Partnership Director, and Charles Ng, Seattle Parks Grants and Contracts Manager, briefed the Board on the Department's Request for Proposals for the West Seattle Stadium. The briefing was immediately followed by a public hearing. To read the minutes from that meeting, including the briefing paper, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/ParkBoard/minutes/2008/10-23-08.pdf>. Tonight the Board is asked to discuss the Request for Proposal and make a recommendation to the Superintendent.

The Board had a number of questions and comments at the public hearing (see below) and Ms. Salinas and staff prepared written answers to the Commissioners and to some of the public testimony comments. These responses were mailed to the Commissioners prior to this meeting. Responses to the questions are shown in *italics*.

Board Questions Prior to the Public Hearing

Commissioner Adams

- Referred to the potential for 5,000 hours of usage. He asked if Parks staff has analyzed whether it is better to invest Parks' money in the stadium or to do this RFP. *Superintendent*

Gallagher responded that the Department will not do this analysis, as it would require more staff be hired to renovate the stadium and program it for the additional hours.

Commissioner Barber

- Asked if outdoor concerts would be allowed? *Ms. Salinas stated that the Stadium is in a zoned residential area. The Stadium is zoned as Single Family (SF) 5000 and the successful Operator will have to work with the City's Department of Planning and Development to stay in compliance with the zoning regulations. Any uses outside of the permitted uses will need to be submitted by the Operator to DPD for review and approval.*
- Asked for examples of other potential uses of the Stadium. *Ms. Salinas answered that it could be used for health fairs, community events, etc. The RFP will open this up and respondents can make these suggestions as part of their proposals. In any event, such proposals will need to be reviewed against zoning requirements and/or proposed to DPR if they are outside of the permitted uses.*
- Asked what assurances the Department can give that events now held there will not become more expensive under an outside partner. *Ms. Salinas answered that a negotiating point of the RFP is a fee scale so that historical and non-profit users of the Stadium will not be penalized. Superintendent Gallagher added that the goal is to have a partner who can fund renovations and schedule the Stadium, but do no harm to the current users. The RFP will also require that the Operator submit a quarterly report showing the types of uses and users of the Stadium.*
- Asked for more specific information on the number of hours the Stadium is now used and its potential hours of use. Commissioner Holme also asked about the 5,000 hours of potential use and noted that at other athletic fields, the maximum number of hours of use is 2,300 hours. *Superintendent Gallagher responded that 5,000 hours is the total daylight hours of possible use for the Stadium.* Commissioner Adams added that if the Stadium is managed by a partner, it could be used for events other than athletics.

Commissioner Holme

- Asked if the contracted fees will be similar to Interbay, which allowed the contractor to charge higher rates. *Superintendent Gallagher asked that the Board keep in mind that what is before them is a Request for Proposals. If the RFP process is successful, the Department will select a winning bid and negotiate a contract. If it isn't successful, then Parks will continue operating the Stadium as it currently does. The RFP will require that the Operator comply with Seattle Park's Fees and Charges policy but proposals for fees different than those can be considered.*
- Asked if the Department's general policy is to keep rates the same throughout the Department; *the Superintendent agreed.*
- Commented that Section G of the RFP (design construction) gives him pause. He urged that the Department ensure its public involvement policy process is followed. *Superintendent Gallagher responded that a successful bidder would hire a private contractor to do the capital improvements. The work would not be a public project and it would be up to the contractor to do any public review process.* Commissioner Ramels agreed with Commissioner Holme and urged that the construction work include a public involvement process. *If funding for these improvements are non-public sources, then it is not a public project; however, the RFP does include a statement that the Operator conduct public review*

process that is consistent with the PIP and required that the Operator to comply with all applicable public works requirements, i.e., prevailing wages etc. Also the design plans for the improvements are submitted to DPR for review and approval.

- Noted that his mom lived in an apartment across the street from the Stadium. The area is referred to in the briefing as “single family”; however, this is also a higher density area, too. Parking is tight in the area and some families use the Stadium parking lot for overflow. He asked whether the Department is discussing charging for parking at the Stadium. *Ms. Salinas answered that the Department is not discussing charging parking fees at the lot and the winning contractor would not be allowed to use the parking lot to charge fees.*

Commissioner Kostka

- Also asked about the scheduling process. *Ms. Salinas responded that the bidders must include scheduling information in their bid and must work with the Department to solve any barriers that might arise due to their scheduling.*

Commissioner Ramels

- This is one of the best written briefings she has received since she has been with the Board of Park Commissioners. She especially liked the discussion of the pros and cons of doing an RFP for the Stadium. She noted that the Stadium is a popular site in the area and is well used and loved.
- Is there interest in taking on this \$4-10 million project? *Superintendent Gallagher answered that there is tremendous interest.*

Citizen Comments at Public Hearing

- Please protect the hammer throw area (several testimonies on this)—*RFP requires honoring historic uses and hammer throws is part of the historic users.*
- Community uses the track and grassy areas for walking/exercise/fitness from 8 am-11 pm
- It's the only suitable area for regional/conference/invitational track meets
- Grass fields need “rest” time to remain suitable for these events (not overschedule)
- If athletes are not affiliated with a school/successful bidder, when would they get to use the facility? Continued access is a big concern. *The RFP requires the operator to manage and schedule uses and if this is an organized event, then they would need to make these requests.*
- If the field is turfed, cannot continue the javelin practice/competitions
- Important that the field not be synthetic
- Concerned that will be priced out of using the Stadium (*we have in the RFP that the Operator provide discount or free use for historic users*)
- Just renovated, why still so non-compliant? *The North Grandstand area has walkways and restrooms that are non-ADA, the sprinkler system is out of code and existing wooden bleachers are worn and deteriorating. The Electrical systems are out of current code as well.*
- Important for Parks to find ways to maintain the stadium while recognizing its importance to the community
- Have had low or free cost since the 1970s
- Many of the current users are middle or low-income
- Wants clarity on who are the historical users referred to in the RFP? *See below*

- What types of events will be held to increase Stadium usage? Soccer, lacrosse, and others sports already held there. There are few places for track users in Seattle. The speakers' organization will have a meet there this spring with 1500 people
- O'Dea High School is favorable to private-public partnership; supports notion in the prospectus but needs lots of clarity; O'dea has no grass areas to play on and goes all over the City to access sports fields; West Seattle Stadium is critical to them for their athletics programs. They are very concerned that they can't see how economics play out — and it all boils down to economics.
- People in West Seattle who use the stadium have no idea this happening – as there are no RFP informational signs posted. Please ensure that people can continue to go there and use the Stadium and not have to pay to park or pay to use the facility. *3 signs have been posted at the site on November 3. We have not typically posted signs about RFP processes on site but will now do so. We have done press releases about this RFP and visited neighborhood district councils.*
- How can a private party make a profit without cutting back free access? Speaker hopes Ms. Salinas and staff really scrutinize this. *If we're using 2400 hours as a benchmark for a fully used stadium, and the Stadium currently has about 500 scheduled uses, then there seems to be realistic room to increase this use and still allow for public access.*

Additional Board Questions and Comments After the Public Hearing

Commissioner Holme

- Historical use – wants more specifics—*see below*
- Hours of use now passed on in RFP? *Respondents will propose hours of use but the RFP contains information about this in a link.*
- What are the rates charged at comparable area facilities? *In our Fees and Charges, both Seattle Park's Interbay and West Seattle Stadium charges the following rates:*

Stadium Rental fees:

The Department charges the following current 207-2008 fees at the Stadium:

<i>Event Type</i>	<i>Fee(per hour)</i>
<i>Admissions/sales</i>	<i>10% of gross</i>
<i>Event fee</i>	<i>\$70</i>
<i>Practice Fee</i>	<i>\$45</i>
<i>Field Event Area Only (includes 1 staff person)</i>	<i>\$35</i>
<i>Lights (charged to adults using lights)</i>	<i>\$15</i>
<i>Staff fee</i>	<i>\$17</i>

- Synthetics – pros and cons on infield
- Hammer head competition: include wording on the safety of this and all activities in the RFP
- Public Involvement Policy: asked that notice be posted as soon as possible at the Stadium, note that they can testify to the Park Board, and have information sheets that the public can take home with them. Signs posted.

Commissioner Adams

- Supports Commissioner Holme's request of wanting more information on who are historic and traditional users. *See below.* He also wants notice to the general, casual users posted at the Stadium and he wants their interests included in the RFP. *Signs posted.*
- Asked Ms. Salinas to summarize the generalized feedback from the RFP process and give to the Park Board.

Commissioner Ramels

- Will have future questions on the finances.

Historic Uses:

- **O'Dea High School**, Private All Boys school – Approx 500 students
Use is for Track, Football and meets (practice & games)
- **Seattle Lutheran High School** – Private coed school – Approx 150 students
Use is for Track, Football and meets (practice & games)
- **Holy Names Academy**, Private Catholic college prep All Girls school – Approx 650 students
Use is for Track and meets (practice & games)
- **Northwest School**, coed Private Middle & High College Prep Day & boarding School
Use is for Track and meets (practice & games)
- **Seattle Academy**, coed Independent Private middle and high school, Approx 560 students
Use is for Track and meets (practice & games)
- **Seattle Preparatory School**, a Private coed Jesuit high school
Use is for Football (practice & games)
- **Seattle School District**, Public City-Wide coed school system
Use is for Track, Football and meets (practice & games)
- **West Seattle High School**, Public Seattle coed High School
Use is for Track, Football and meets (practice & games)
- **Citywide Athletics**, Parks Department Division
Use is for Track, Football and meets (practice & games)
- **Pacific Northwest Track and Field Association**, a group committed to the development of USA Track and Field
Use is for Track and meets (practice & games)
- **Club Northwest**, Club involved in the Pacific Northwest running community, and nationally with USA Track & Field
Use is for Track and meets (practice & games)
- **ACA Relay for life**, American Cancer Society coordinates runs to raise money for research and programs
Relay runs to raise money for research
- **UW – University of Washington College**
Use is for Track and field events (practice & games)
- **Van Asselt CC Youth** – Parks Department Community Center
Use is for Track and field events (practice & games)
- **Southwest Athletic Club** - teaches personal and social responsibility through sports and health-related activities.
Use is for Football (practice and games)
- **Seattle Speed Track Club** – Their goal is to assist young people ages 8-18 with a path way to success both athletically and educationally through the development of their athletic talents.
Use is for Track and field events (practice & games)

Verbal Briefing

Tonight Ms. Salinas reviewed the need for the Request for Proposals for the aging West Seattle Stadium. The Pro Parks Levy provided some funding for repairs; however, the building continues to deteriorate and the Stadium is not ADA accessible. The Department had some funds set aside to address the most pressing issues, but those funds were redirected to repair a trestle on the Burke-Gilman Trail that was severely damaged.

Since the Park Board's October 23 public hearing on the RFP, Parks staff have responded to a number of questions from the Commissioners (see above) and made changes to the RFP, which include:

- requires continued use for historic users
- allows public use for running and casual use
- extends lease terms to more than ten years (previously no longer than 10 years)
- includes offsets for public benefits (scholarships, etc.)
- includes continuation of the javelin and shot put areas
- refers to synthetic turf – have to look at bigger picture, would impact javelin

Board Discussion

In reference to a question from Commissioner Barber on the Capital Improvement Project (CIP) budget, Superintendent Gallagher responded that the CIP identifies and prioritizes park needs which would be addressed when, and if, funding becomes available. Commissioner Barber referred to the recently-approved \$140 million Parks and Greenspace Levy and asked if that would help meet some of the deferred maintenance needs at the Stadium. Superintendent Gallagher responded that the new Levy funding will help with the Department's funding needs; however, there are still large amounts of needs with no designated funding. Commissioner Barber reflected that the Department could consider re-prioritizing its CIP priority list to move West Seattle Stadium higher on the list.

Commissioner Kostka referred to written testimony requesting any changes to the Stadium's scheduling wait until August 2009, so as not to impact spring and summer events. Superintendent Gallagher responded that this would be negotiable in the RFP process. He added that the Department is just looking at concepts to begin a discussion on how best to improve West Seattle Stadium and to keep it viable for public use.

Commissioner Adams requested that, as the Department moves forward with an RFP process, any impacts on the activities be considered before a timeline is determined. Deputy Superintendent Williams stated that the Department will honor historical users as the RFP moves forward. Commissioner Holme stated some of the Department's previous projects have impacted user groups in the prime season and he hopes that will be avoided with this RFP.

Commissioner Holme asked about the amount of time the athletic fields at the Stadium are scheduled and Dennis Cook, Seattle Parks Athletic Field Scheduling Manager, described the scheduling: the grass fields close after football season until early April to allow the grass to recover. Soccer events cannot be scheduled at the same time as track season, even if the fields were turf, rather than grass. There are also a couple of high school meets held at the Stadium.

Commissioner Ramels reminded the Board that it is being asked tonight whether the Department should move ahead with an RFP for the stadium. Superintendent Gallagher added that the Park Board has not previously been brought into the RFP process this early.

Commissioner Holme noted that the Department agreed to post information on the RFP and the public hearing at the Stadium. He referred to testimony that Mr. Ng told a community group that the Stadium would be closed if the maintenance continues to be deferred. Mr. Ng responded that his comment was taken out of context and

that the Stadium is not slated for eminent closure. Commissioner Holme asked what role the Park Board will have if the RFP proceeds and the Superintendent answered that the Board could be involved in reviewing the list of contractors and helping with the selection.

Commissioner Barber asked if there is any site at the Stadium where visitors can stand and watch track and field events. Mr. Cook responded that there isn't; visitors must sit in the stands and currently the stands have no ADA access to the seats. Commissioner Ramels asked if there has been any discussion on naming rights at the Stadium and Ms. Salinas answered that this has not come up in discussions.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Adams on whether the Department could increase fees for using the Stadium as a way to help, Superintendent Gallagher answered that there are three types of groups who use the facility: those with permitted events; those who drop in and use the facility; and private businesses that use the Stadium and charge their members a fee. The Department could increase the fees; however, it would not increase funds enough. Deputy Superintendent Williams added that during much of the year, there are few events scheduled at the Stadium.

Commissioner Barber thinks that the track and field representatives who testified at the public hearing presented a good argument to keep the grass at the Stadium and asked why the Department is ambivalent about this. There is a lot of value in having a grass field area with bleachers nearby. Ms. Salinas responded that the Department must balance the demand for a javelin throw area, which has two-three meets each year and requires a grassy area, with the best way to utilize the Stadium.

Commissioner Ramels again stated that the Department, at this time, is asking for the Board's recommendation to move ahead with the RFP. The Superintendent agreed and added that this is just the beginning of the process and helps to get all the issues out early for discussion. Commissioner Holme asked if Parks moves ahead with the RFP, does it set in motion actions that aren't reversible. The Superintendent and Ms. Salinas both stated that if good proposals don't come forth, the proposal will not proceed.

Commissioner Holme moved that the Board recommends following the staff recommendation to move ahead with the West Seattle Stadium Request for Proposals with the understanding that the Board will be involved in the final outcome of the RFP. Commissioner Adams seconded.

Commissioner Kostka believes that the Department's RFP would be contradictory if the javelin area is not preserved as part of the Stadium's historic use. Ms. Salinas responded that the Department will preserve as much of the historic uses as possible.

Commissioner Ramels stated that the Board should ask many of these questions when responses to the RFP have been received. If the Board rejects the RFP process, it will not have the opportunity to review the possibilities. Commissioner Adams is ready to support the RFP process; however, he wants more information on the Board's role if the RFP moves forward. If the Board is to review the RFPs, then it needs criteria to evaluate the proposals.

Commissioner Barber would support the motion if the track and field community are at the table; however, he does not believe they have been as involved as they should have been in this process. Superintendent Gallagher stated that Parks staff will brief the Mayor on November 14 and then the RFP will go out for bid. Parks staff will update the Park Board at the December 11 meeting. He would like the Board to be involved in the RFP process and will ask one member to sit on an evaluation board. Commissioner Barber asked if the evaluation board will include track and field representatives and Superintendent Gallagher answered that it wouldn't.

The vote was taken with Commissioners Adams, Holme, and Kostka in support. Commissioner Barber opposed. Motion carried.

Commissioners thanked Ms. Salinas for the briefing.

Briefing: Golf Master Plan

Susanne Friedman, Seattle Parks' Planner, briefed the Board on the Golf Master Plan update. Prior to the meeting Commissioners received a written briefing paper and a number of attachments. The briefing paper is included below in these minutes. The Park Board will hold a public hearing on the Master Plan at its February 12 meeting, followed by a discussion and recommendation to the Superintendent at its February 26 meeting.

Written Briefing

Requested Board Action

We are coming to you regarding the Golf Course Master Plan Update and its process. We are anticipating that many of the recommendations to come out of this process may be included in a possible capital bond for funding the improvements.

Tonight's briefing is informational. We will provide background on the project and request early input from the Board on any particular issues or concerns that should be addressed. We will be coming back for a full briefing on the draft plan, a public hearing and recommendation from the Board on January 22, 2009 and February 12, 2009 respectively.

Staff Recommendations

None at this time

Project Description and Background

For the Golf Course Master Plan Update we are working with Makers, an architectural and planning firm as prime consultant; John Steidel, a golf course architecture sub-consultant; and ERA, an economic feasibility sub-consultant. We are looking at all four municipal golf courses with the following scope to guide the plan update:

- **Improvement of public golf opportunities** - Updating the 1991 Master Plan and conducting architectural evaluations of clubhouse improvement options which will produce schematic improvement plans and cost estimates for each course, including clubhouses, driving ranges and support facilities.
- **Environmental Sustainability** - Evaluating the existing clubhouses, maintenance facilities, driving ranges and cart barns with an eye to better economic and environmental sustainability.
- **Fiscal Viability** - Revising the 2005 Business and Strategic Plan for the City of Seattle Municipal Golf Course System prepared by ERA (2005 economic study) to reflect current development costs and prioritizations of projects and funding options/strategies for possible bond measures.

The Master Plan's top six priorities are:

1. Perimeter trails around each golf course
2. Clubhouse renovations
3. Conversion to electric cart barns
4. Tee-to-green cart paths
5. Possible driving range additions and expansions
6. Maintenance facility renovations

Seattle has four golf courses: Interbay Golf Center, Jefferson Park Golf Course, Jackson Park Golf Course and West Seattle Golf Course. The physical facilities are maintained by Seattle Parks and Recreation and golf services (course reservation, restaurant and banquet services and pro shops, etc.) are managed by Premier Golf Centers, LLC. All four golf courses have pro shops and food concessions that provide varying levels of service and vary dramatically in their banquet facilities, ability to accommodate a variety of groups and tournaments, and in driving range facilities. The current revenue from each course is relatively similar.

The golf program has been self-sustaining over the past several years. In 2006 the City Council adopted Golf Financial Policies (Resolution 30926). Those policies call for golf revenues to be used to support operations and maintenance of the courses, transfer 3.5% of gross revenue to the Park fund to support overhead costs (accounting, planning management, etc.), and the remainder to be set aside for golf capital improvements. Those policies indicate a willingness to consider improvements that could be debt financed if revenues would be available to pay off the debt.

There is concern that without continual major maintenance and improvements to the courses their use will stagnate and become a financial challenge. The annual amount of golf capital reserve set aside from the courses annual revenue is not enough to complete some of the major improvements needed to the clubhouses and other facilities. Major improvements are needed to increase and retain the current market share. This process considers the possibility of debt financing the proposed improvements.

In one sense, the project has been ongoing since the 1991 Master Plan which recommended a multitude of improvements that have not been fully implemented. However, the effort has increased urgency because the facilities, particularly the clubhouses, have deteriorated to the extent that they threaten the courses' ability to attract golfers. The 2005 ERA economic study states that major improvements are needed to retain the current market share. At the same time the attractiveness of the courses themselves and their central location present the opportunity to retain and perhaps increase current use.

The principal work item of this project is the architectural analysis of clubhouse improvements which will examine both repair and rebuild options. The 2005 economic study recommended demolition and replacement of the structures. This question will be explored in greater detail in the Master Plan Update. An advantage of clubhouse reconstruction over rehabilitation is that the new buildings can be relocated so that operations are not interrupted (as much) and so that the surrounding areas can be better master planned to improve circulation, and possible parking and facilities (e.g., driving range) expansion. Additionally, if the buildings are reconstructed in a new location, the existing buildings can be used during construction without the loss of ongoing revenue streams.

The golf course grounds are in relatively good shape and do not require major changes, except for gaps in some of the cart paths, completing the perimeter trails, having functioning restroom facilities and some irrigation upgrades. There may be some course layout modifications necessary, resulting from possible clubhouse and other facility relocation recommendations.

Being relatively recently completed, the 2005 economic study will provide a solid platform for the proposed work. New market information and cost figures will be incorporated into the feasibility analysis model and implementation recommendations. However the main purpose of this component of work will be to outline a one lump sum approach to financing the capital costs of improvements with the existing revenue stream, taking into account debt servicing, and proposing a bond package.

Public Involvement Process

The public involvement process includes working directly with the department's Golf Steering Committee, conducting public open houses, and outreach to the general public. The staff and consultant team is working with the Golf Steering Committee to ensure that the interests of the golfing community are met. Because the Committee is composed of advocates for each of the four courses, committee members will provide in-depth course-specific input; at the same time, the Committee will allow members to review and provide input on the emerging proposals as a group, assisting the team in equitably balancing the needs and priorities city wide.

The team will host several open houses, one at each course, to present the draft concepts, options and proposals. It is envisioned that community issues will include safety and security, parking and traffic, appearance of course edges, clubhouse rehabilitation or replacement and joint use of clubhouses. Outreach includes mailers to all zip code routes surrounding each golf course, e-mail notification and distribution through the Department of Neighborhoods Service Centers, District Councils, Parks Community Centers and advisory councils, along with press releases in all the neighborhood publications. The open houses are scheduled for the first week in December, immediately prior to the preparation of draft recommendations. Community members will have the chance to directly provide their comments and preferences at a point in the process that will be most useful to framing the draft plan's direction. Please see the attached project timeline at the end of this paper.

OPEN HOUSES

12/2/08

Interbay Golf Course
6:30-8:00 pm
2501 15th Avenue West

12/4/08

Jefferson Park Golf Course
6:30-8:00 pm
4101 Beacon Ave S

12/3/08

Jackson Park Golf Course
6:30-8:00 pm
1000 NE 135th St

12/6/08

West Seattle Golf Course
10:30-noon
4470 35th Ave SW

Issues

The project is aimed at addressing 6 issues. Below are summarized some background information and the salient aspects of those issues that are common within the Seattle Parks and Recreation golf system.

Perimeter Trails and Public Access - Perimeter trails around the golf courses provide an important amenity for local residents and enhance the courses' importance as public open space. At Jefferson Park and West Seattle, the trails will also help to integrate the courses with adjacent multi-purpose public parklands. Many of the courses already have partial trails around them and this project proposes to complete those trails where possible to increase public access. Existing trails are predominantly crushed rock and the proposed trail improvements will also be crushed rock, or in some places, sidewalks. The trails will be universally accessible except where topography makes this standard infeasible. Pedestrian safety and golf course security will be addressed in this effort.

Club House Renovations - All of the existing clubhouses, except for the one at Interbay, have serious structural, mechanical and electrical deficiencies. Clubhouses at Jackson Park and Jefferson Park are not large enough to meet the requirements of the architectural program (the list of space and functional needs for a typical clubhouse). The West Seattle Golf Course is poorly configured for internal circulation and does not take advantage of the views.

Through research of other facilities nation-wide and discussions with clubhouse managers, the team has developed a prototypical architectural program for Seattle's golf course clubhouses and will use that as a basis for analyzing building rehabilitation and replacement scenarios for each site. These scenarios will also examine site planning issues near the clubhouses such as convenient universal access, relation to the courses themselves, range and putting green, restroom access from the courses, etc. The prototypical clubhouse model allows for a variety of community uses. Non-golfer and community use of the cafes and banquet rooms is considered a positive opportunity. Please see the attachment at the end of this document which outlines a generic clubhouse program.

Tee to Green Cartways and Mid-course Restrooms - Golf carts have become ubiquitous on all courses except for Interbay. Most of the system's cartways are gravel, which is subject to rutting and erosion, especially on slopes. This decreases golfer comfort, increases course maintenance tasks and shortens golf cart life. The master plan will examine the requirements for paving all existing cartways with asphalt pavement. Mid-course restroom conditions will also be examined and improvements recommended where appropriate.

Cart Barns - A Seattle golf course is typically served by 75 golf carts. For efficiency and environmental reasons, Parks and Recreation would like to change from gas powered carts to electric carts, but this will require cart barns with appropriate electrical service. Storage for the carts is problematic at all courses and the team will explore options for more efficient locations. Ideally, cart storage would be under the clubhouse or in a near by but unobtrusive location.

Driving Ranges - Driving ranges are a highly desirable, popular and revenue-generating part of a golf course complex. Improvements to all existing ranges and opportunities for new ranges at Jackson and West Seattle will be explored. Lighting, and ball trespass from driving ranges can impact neighboring areas and a number of improvements may be warranted to reduce potential impacts.

Maintenance Facilities - The condition and efficiency of maintenance facilities vary from course to course. In most cases, maintenance staff members have specific suggestions for improving maintenance shops and storage areas. The team will work with those suggestions to prepare course specific recommendations for maintenance facilities and grounds.

Other – Parking - As a general protocol, the team will not be exploring options that increase parking pavement. The emphasis will be on alternate modes of transportation such as car pooling. However, in some cases, the remote location of a course may necessitate consideration of additional parking spaces. Generally, if there is a "shotgun" tournament in which all contestants start at a tee at the same time, and the driving range is open, 175 to 200 stalls are desirable. (During mid-day both golfers in the morning tournament and the afternoon tournament will be at the course.)

Environmental Sustainability

Identifying sustainable measures is a major component of this Master Plan. The plan will analyze sustainable building options, the use of photovoltaic and solar systems, development of electric cart barns, water reuse and efficiencies from roof runoff and irrigation systems, multi use clubhouses, pedestrian circulation routes and parking alternatives, along with economic sustainability.

The Golf Program and Premier Golf have undertaken substantial environmental improvement activities over the past 5 years including water quality monitoring, tree planting and wildlife habitat enhancement. This, along with green building analysis of the clubhouses and advanced irrigation techniques should largely answer most of the sustainability issues.

Budget

- The current planning effort will cost roughly \$250,000 - \$300,000, funded from the golf capital budget.
- The Master Plan will provide project recommendations for a possible capital bond measure for funding the improvements. The total cost of the full package has not yet been determined.

Schedule

Please see attached sheet.

Additional Information

- Project Web link: <http://seattle.gov/parks/Athletics/golfcrse.htm>
- Susanne K. Friedman, 800 Maynard Ave S, Suite 300, Seattle, WA 98134, 206.684.0902, susanne.friedman@seattle.gov

References:

- City of Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation Municipal Golf Renovation Master Plans, April 1991, prepared by John Steidel, Golf Course Architect
- Business and Strategic Plan, City of Seattle Municipal Golf Course System, July 2005, Economics Research Associates
- Resolution 30926, Golf Financial Policies

Verbal Briefing/Board Discussion

Ms. Friedman introduced Michael Shiosaki, Seattle Parks Deputy Director of Projects and Planning; Andy Soden, Seattle Parks Golf Manager; and consultants from Makers, who are working with Parks staff on the Master Plan, and Bill Schickler Premier Golf president.

Ms. Friedman quickly reviewed information in the written briefing paper and reviewed the timeline and outreach performed to date. Since the written briefing paper was mailed to the Park Board, she has met with the Golf Steering Committee, signs and flyers have been posted at the facilities, flyers have been distributed in eight languages, and she is working with community groups.

There was a short discussion on how the decrease in Business & Occupation Tax revenue will affect the Master Plan. Responding to a question on the Golf Steering Committee, Mr. Soden described the makeup of the committee. Ms. Friedman has scheduled public meetings to gather public comments. Commissioner Ramels urged that Parks send notification beyond the usual golf course users and Ms. Friedman responded that the flyer was mailed to all neighbors around the golf courses. Notice was sent to the Department of Neighborhood's 13 Neighborhood Service Centers, to local newspapers, the 13 District Councils, and the Advisory Councils. In addition, it was mailed to the 30,000 names in Premier Golf's database.

Commissioner Barber commented that the plan is very well put together and he believes it is desirable to maximize the use of the golf courses. He asked if there are other ways to make the courses more efficient. Ms. Friedman answered there are several ways: clubhouse design, pathways, driving ranges, maximized parking for tournaments, and pro shops. Commissioner Holme asked if the perimeter paths are currently being used and Ms. Friedman answered that they aren't full used and the Master Plan team are looking at options to optimize their use.

Commissioners thanked the team for the briefing and look forward to hearing more about the Master Plan.

Briefing: Results of Pilot for Reduced Use of Leaf Blowers, Trimmers, Mowers, and Sweepers

Robb Courtney, Seattle Parks Director of Parks, Cheryl Fraser, Seattle Parks South/Central West Resources Manager, and Royal Alley Barnes, Seattle Parks North/Central East Resources Manager, presented a briefing on the results of the Department's one-year pilot for reduced use of leaf blowers, trimmers, mowers, and sweepers. Commissioners received a written briefing, as well, which is included below.

Written Briefing

Background

In early January 2008, the Superintendent, in response to citizens concerns with noise, dust and emissions, asked staff to reduce the use of backpack blowers at Green Lake Park and Occidental Square. Staff was asked to identify alternative ways to clean these parks, using backpack blowers only when necessary such as in response to storms or especially heavy accumulations of leaves. Responding to the request from the Superintendent and other complaints/concerns about noise and emissions from small equipment, the Parks Division proceeded to implement a pilot program to reduce its frequency of use of gas powered backpack blowers in 25 selected parks and reduced its sweeper use at Green Lake Park.

Implementation and Goals

This pilot program on noise and emission reduction was implemented in 25 parks starting February 2008 through September 2008. These parks were of varying sizes, functionality, and location across the city (see attached list.). The specific goals of the pilot program included:

1. Replace small equipment with quieter equipment and equipment with lower gas emissions as it becomes available on the market for commercial use and that meets EPA and other environmental standards.
2. Decrease frequency of use of sweepers and backpack blowers to reduce noise and related emission pollution.
3. Identify 25 parks system wide for reduced use of backpack blowers.
4. Replace vehicle and other engines with adaptive technology – including propane, bio fuels and electric technology.
5. Support Seattle Public Utilities clean water runoff effort —crews include cleaning parking lots and drains of small debris in compliance with this Initiative.
6. Contact other park jurisdictions to identify solutions they have applied to reducing emission and noise pollution footprints for commercial small equipment.

During the pilot, 23 parks had no complaints from patrons about lack of use of backpack blowers. Instead of blowing leaves, Parks used small motorized vacuum equipment that enabled us to more effectively perform leaf and refuse removal while reducing the impact of dust and emission related to blower use. The two parks that received complaints were Occidental, where a citizen commented the park did not look leaf free because of reduced blowing; and one complaint at Green Lake that debris was on the ground after a wind storm.

In a related effort, Parks has also taken steps to reduce our carbon footprint by using B40 bio-diesel in all diesel-fueled trucks. This fuel is 40 percent organic material from grass, soy or corn, and 60 percent petroleum based. We have also begun to purchase light duty diesel trucks starting with the smaller F250 up to the F550s line. These too will be filled with B40 fuel to reduce our use of pure fossil fuels.

Key Observations

Key issues identified during the pilot reduction period (February – September 2008) in 25 parks for reduced use of sweeper and backpack blowers are below.

1. **Emission and Noise Reducing Options** are currently limited because the industry is new and just beginning to grow. Equipment is not readily available and can be more expensive than traditional equipment.
2. **Citizen Compliments** received by staff regarding decrease of blower noise and sweeper disruption have been heard at several parks.
3. **Citizen Complaints**, noted previously, about tree leaves being left longer in between removal at Occidental Park and some leaf/ other small debris at Green Lake on the ground the but not impacting safety.
4. **Old Habits** are slow to change and some Park workers have been reluctant to clean parks without using power blowers. Training and more communication about the pilot and importance of the project are planned.
5. **New Habits** emerged towards the end of pilot. Now more Park workers are interested in the new more environmentally sound options.
6. **Public Education** is needed for the public and parks staff to better understand the environmental benefits of the new approach.
7. **Challenges** still remain around explaining the limited need for blower use during wet leaf season and for other safety debris removal.
8. **Funding** will be required for purchase of new noise and emission reducing equipment and lower emission vehicles acquisition or replacement.

Next Steps

The department intends to proceed with an expanded program in 2009. Components of the expanded pilot project include:

1. Standardize and improve the efficiencies of small equipment and develop an approved list for lower noise and emission small equipment replacement.
2. Use Park signage to offer information about pilot project to explore different cleaning methods while reducing the environmental impact.
3. Complete Park Resources crew environmental training session on reducing noise and emission pollution footprint. The training will include benefits, options for more environmentally safe equipment and training on use of equipment. Add to Best Management Practices.
4. Establish key outcomes and measures for evaluating 2009 lower noise and emission maintenance practices.
5. Use existing departmental resources to pilot low impact transportation alternatives for Park Resources Crews in Downtown Parks and Magnuson Park.
6. Request future funding for lower noise and emission small equipment as new equipment is needed or current equipment is replaced.

Additional Information

Robb Courtney, Director, Parks Division
robb.courtney@seattle.gov

Board Discussion

Commissioner Ramels commented that she is pleased to have this topic brought to the Board. Mr. Courtney summarized the goals of the program. The Department has received only a couple of complaints on this change and plans to expand it next year, to an eventual facility-wide program. The Superintendent commented that the Department has learned it does not have to blow walkways every single day, as the public does not complain about debris except when large amounts of leaves are falling.

Commissioner Holme stated he was at Lake Washington Boulevard this weekend and observed low-blow vacuum equipment being used to remove leaves. This had a negative impact to park property, as the median area was very wet and the equipment was leaving ruts. He asked if it is possible to clean the area with two backpack blowers. Ms. Fraser answered that the vacuum method is preferred, as it sucks up the leaves, rather than blowing them onto another surface. Mr. Courtney added that the goals of the program are to keep noise down and reduce emissions, which the low blow does.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Ramels on why staff don't hand rake leaves, Parks staff gave Denny Park as an example. There are so many trees and leaves that it took a full crew, with full equipment, an entire day to remove the leaves. Denny Park is only one of 500 or so properties. Commissioner Kostka asked what happens to the leaves once they gathered and Ms. Fraser answered that they are mulched into Clean Green.

Commissioner Barber commented that leaves should be removed from the walking trails; otherwise, the trails will eventually disappear. Ms. Barnes responded that Parks' Natural Resources Unit staff will look at the trails and determine the best way to handle this. Commissioner Holme referred to graveled paths and whether the ridge trail in Seward Park will be blown clean. Ms. Fraser responded that the trail will be cleaned after storms. Commissioner Holme added that he hopes the Department will find a cost-effective method to keep trails clear.

Commissioner Barber noted that electric mowers are used by the City to mow small street ends and asked that Parks keep this in mind for future consideration. Responding to a question from Commissioner Adams on whether new technology is being developed to remove leaves while reducing emissions, Ms. Barnes responded that staff are on the lookout for any new technology, but it isn't yet developed. Commissioner Adams next asked how staff behavior will be modified to embrace new technologies, and Ms. Barnes answered that staff have been very agreeable to using the new techniques during the pilot program.

Commissioner Ramels noted that a goal of Seattle Public Utilities is to remove pollutants before debris goes into the City's water systems and reducing emissions from leaf removal helps with this. Commissioners thanked Parks staff for the briefing.

Old/New Business

Elect 2009 Officers: Commissioners were reminded that the Board's chair and vice-chair will be elected at the December 11 meeting. Staff will contact members for their interest in running for either position.

Denny Awards: The Pro Parks Levy Oversight Committee is the winner of a Denny Award, with the presentation ceremony scheduled for Tuesday, November 25, at the Seattle Aquarium. Two Park Board members, Commissioners Adams and Holme, are currently members of the Committee and Commissioner Ramels previously served on it. The Board and audience members were encouraged to attend the ceremony.

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

APPROVED: _____
Amit Ranade, Chair
Board of Park Commissioners

DATE _____