



Minutes

Joint Board of Park Commissioners/Park District Oversight Committee

Via WebEx

Tuesday, September 29, 2020

6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting is called to order and the Boards introduce themselves.

Commissioner Akita calls for a motion to approve the Agenda and the Board of Park Commissioners January 9, 2020 meeting minutes. Commissioner Farmer moves, Commissioner Herrera seconds and the consent items are approved.

Public Comment

Judy Tangen – Loyal Heights Advisory Council; ARC runs all programming for Seattle Parks and Recreation – for childcare, before and after school care. This pandemic is really impacting ARC, decimating their budget. Is there a plan to ensure that ARC survives?

Gary Epstein – Amy Yee Tennis Center has plans to open that stays within the Governor's regulations. He hopes they reopen soon.

Superintendent's Update

Jesús Aguirre, Superintendent, Seattle Parks and Recreation

- ARC – SPR recognize the need to support the partners; providing some financial support to these partners. Allow'g them to reduce payments to SPR and pay them in the future. Workg on requirements on agrmt to reduce so they can use that for operations.
- Amy Yee – reviewing proposal to reopen; looking at staffing capacity since many employees have been redeployed to social distance ambassadors. Hopefully, SPR will open it very soon.
- PDOC role is to produce Annual Report; David Takami is asking for comments by October 2, 2020.
- SPR is moving the south end testing site to the Atlantic Street boat ramp. Reopening Stan Sayres boat ramp to continue boat launch service on Lake Washington.
- Green Lake Community Center – during renovations and closure; continuing hygiene services in trailers.
- Closed parking lots in the spring and are implementing a plan to reopen parking lots in the large parks. Will close them again if they find crowding reoccurs.
- Partnered with twitter and UrbanWorks to encourage mask wearing.

- SPR is moving into Fall operations; SDA program is shrinking and supporting voter registration and census encouragement.
- Community centers are operating childcare centers at 19 sites; 7 sites are providing supports for teens. Childcare is under-enrolled – may need to consolidate programs if sites are not being used.
- Commissioner Herrera asks if there are other creative uses for the parking lots, instead of opening them for cars? SPR received much feedback about the need for parking lots, but SPR staff are getting creative about creating revenue.
- SPR facilities will host for extreme weather, if needed, but need to keep in mind the other uses.

Budget Discussion

Presented by Jesús Aguirre, Superintendent, Seattle Parks and Recreation

SPR is lucky to have the flexible funding source in the Park District. SPR has done realignments with capital and operating initiatives to reduce the impact of the significant General Fund and Park Fund revenue gaps in 2020 and 2021. SPR recognizes the need to continue operations and mitigate layoffs. SPR has 130 vacancies not being filled and 100+ not working due to being high risk, means people are working hard.

2020 COVID-19 Response

- Focus on Mission Essential Functions
- Reliance on flexible Park District resources

2021 Budget and COVID-19

- Continued limitations on recreation
- Retention of core operating capacity
- Continued financial impacts
- Continued reliance on flexible Park District resources

\$10.5 million revenue loss in Park Fund; \$19.5 million Real Estate Excise Tax loss and \$11.4 million in General Fund loss.

Capital program - 52% REET funding and 30% Park District Funding

Q3 includes changes to rebalance our operating fund (Park Fund). SPR estimated a \$19.2M revenue shortfall this year from COVID, and addressing that gap through a combination of Park Fund savings, CARES funding, additional General Fund, and a realignment of Park Fund with Park District funding.

The remaining shortfall is balanced by a \$6.9M of realignments with the Park District in these operating and capital initiatives.

Commissioner Watts mentions that during crises communities of colors suffer worse. How will SPR make up for the deficit in these communities when the financial situation recovers?

Jesús responds they used an equity lens when deciding where they were going to cut funding. Continuing development of land-banked sites in areas where the needs are greater. Realigning the department to better serve BIPOC communities.

Expect financial impacts to go beyond 2020-2021.

Realignment of Park District funds – shifting \$8.9million to support the Zoo and aquatics.

2021 Park Fund Balancing Assumptions

Centralized Covid Savings Plan – adds flexibility but recognizes the significant reduction.

One-time \$4.1 million Park fund/MPD realignment

Racial Equity

- 2021 Covid-19 Planning – retain resources to respond to vulnerable communities
- Equity and community Centers – offers alternative programming (outdoor programming/activation)
- Equity and pools – mitigate closures
- Equity and capital planning – prioritized diminished resources

Park District Board meetings

October 19, 2020/

- InterLocal Amendments
- Overview of 2021 Proposed budget

November 23, 2020/Budget Hearing

- 2020 revised budget
- Suspension of General Fund floor for 2021
- Adoption of 2021 budget

Athletic fields are open, and teams are being permitted for practices only but only if they are complying with the regulations.

SPR learned lessons from the decisions made during the 2008 recession. SPR laid off many employees and the recreation division still haven't recovered those staff, which is why SPR is trying to keep staff.

Project Briefing: Green Lake Community Center / Evans Pool Redevelopment

David Graves, Strategic Advisor, SPR Planning and Development Division
Justin Cutler, SPR Recreation Division Director

For more information on this project, please visit [here](#).

Identified several places for the new community center around Green Lake. The connections to transit and the neighborhood were the main reasons for keeping it in its current location. Reached out to recreation staff at nearby community centers to ensure broader participation.

There were 4 options the design team created; consisting of graphic renderings, opportunities and challenges, and basic floor plans.

Demographic data was overwhelmingly white homeowners.

The result from the design surveys and feedback from the public is a hybrid, focusing on lining up the trees with the main entrance, with close proximity to the lake and using the existing driveway.

Justin Cutler shares the values first and foremost in their minds:

- Safety with good sightlines for staff. Staff review the layouts of the community center and pool to create staffing efficiencies.
- Accessibility – all gender restroom and lockers facility; if they need to use it as a shelter; it can be separated from the other programmatic operations.
- Flexibility - Working with design team to create space that is flexible enough to accommodate multiple uses.
- Recreation for kids and teens
- Green building – to demonstrate commitment to sustainability.

Timeline:

Working on cost estimate and site design and hope to return to the public in mid-November. Start schematic design in 2021.

Discussion:

Commissioner Herrera thinks it would be a great idea to put housing on top of the community center. David Graves responds the park is zoned as single family. They are considering adding a childcare facility.

Multi-purpose room will be available to community members and there will be smaller rooms also.

Commissioner Watts asks about whether there will be rentable outdoor space at Green Lake. David mentions the significant roof overhang and the intentional design to flow indoors and out. Justin add, SPR is having broader conversations about outdoor covered rentals and expanding the types offered.

How design team is engaging with people with disabilities? SPR staff are working with the Office of Civil Rights to ensure various groups and voices are considered. There will be accessible restrooms with a changing place with a lift. All-gender restrooms and locker rooms.

Upcoming PDOC/Park Board Vacancies

Paula Hoff, Strategic Advisor, Seattle Parks and Recreation

Liza's Get Engaged position is expiring. She has been an incredible addition to the Board. Jessica Vu will start in October as the new Get Engaged member.

Park Board Commissioners Byers, Cook and Lowe's terms are expiring in March 2021. The Board will miss their decades worth of history and knowledge.

PDOC – Currently have District 6, 7 and one Mayoral position. Commissioner Potter's position is expiring in March and Commissioner Vanniasinkam let us know she cannot continue her term, so she has concluded her service on the Board. Commissioner Byers' PDOC position will need to be filled by another Park Board member.

SPR will post board openings in city newsletters and advertise through social media. Target outreach to neighborhood organizations and BIPOC communities. Word-of-mouth through current members. Paula asks for suggestions to fill gaps. SPR will work with City Council members to find district candidates.

Commissioner Watt says a job description of duties and the process will make it easier for people to understand the position and responsibilities. Paula will send these to the Board members to distribute to their community contacts.

Commissioner Akita thanks Eliza. She appreciates how Eliza has brought critical questions/comments to the Board. The Board thanks her for her service and look forward to thanking her in person when able.

Old/New Business

Future meeting schedule – Staff will send the future schedule out via email. Board of Park Commissioners retreat is scheduled for October 22. Retreat planning committee to meet later this week.

PDOC Annual Report emailed to PDOC on Friday. People to provide individual feedback.

There being no other business, the meeting is called to adjourn at 8:30pm.