

## Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation

Seattle Board of Park Commissioners  
Meeting Minutes  
February 21, 2013

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

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<http://www.seattlechannel.org/videos/watchVideos.asp?program=Parks>

### ***Board of Park Commissioners***

#### **Present:**

John Barber  
Megan Heahlke  
Jourdan Keith, Vice-chair  
Diana Kincaid, Chair  
Brice Maryman  
Caitlin McKee  
Yazmin Mehdi  
Barbara Wright

#### **Excused:**

Antoinette Angulo

### ***Seattle Parks and Recreation Staff***

Christopher Williams, Acting Superintendent  
Michele Daly, Acting Park Board Coordinator

This meeting was held at Seattle Park Headquarters, 100 Dexter Avenue North. Chair Diana Kincaid called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm. A quorum was not yet present; approval of the consent items was postponed.

To hear and view the full meeting, see <http://www.seattlechannel.org/videos/video.asp?ID=5591307> (Part 1) and [6365](#) (Part 2).

### **Superintendent's Report**

Acting Superintendent Williams reported on the following:

**Legislation:** At the February 21<sup>st</sup> City Council Parks & Neighborhoods Committee, three pieces of legislation were voted out of committee, forwarded to the Full Council. The Council Committee granted two subterranean easements for Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) utilities in two parking lots (53<sup>rd</sup> Avenue South and 49<sup>th</sup> Avenue South) on Lake Washington Boulevard. The Department worked with Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) for over two years to look at alternative locations for the placement of CSO tanks. They explored over 90 options in southeast Seattle for the placement of these tanks. The use of the parking lots was the most economical option. Preventing sewage overflows into Lake Washington is a basic public health issue. During periods of heavy rain the overflows will be redirected to these two 550 million gallon tanks. The tank water will be pumped to a Metro sewage treatment plant. The transfer of partial jurisdiction allows maintenance, repair and operation of the CSO underground storage tanks, associated underground pipes and electrical lines and limited surface ancillary facilities which meet the requirements of Initiative 42. Initiative 42 is a voter approved initiative that prohibits the use of park land and facilities for purposes other than for park and recreation use.



There are some exemptions for utilities; the installation of these tanks is a conforming use of Initiative 42. Appreciation of working in partnership with SPU was acknowledged.

In order to implement the terms of the settlement agreement between the City of Seattle and Building 11 Investors, LLC, a cash transfer between various city funds was approved by the Council Committee. The City and LLC have agreed to terminate the leasehold interest of the LLC, compensate the LLC for past work on the project, including capital improvements, professional services and permits, compensate LLC for future construction work required for code compliance and subsequent planned operation of Building 11 by Parks and Recreation. Parks will use \$5.85 million from the Rainy Day Fund and \$1.4 million of Parks Fund balance to pay the full settlement of \$7.25 million. The annual net revenue will be used to repay the settlement costs of \$5.85 million over 15 years. Rental income of \$450,000 needs to be generated each year. Our next steps will be looking at prospective tenants. In order to achieve the estimate revenue, commercial tenants may be required. The settlement agreement will be posted on the Parks website. A meeting will be set up with the Magnuson Park Advisory Council to discuss guiding principles. The challenge will be to obtain the right balance of non-park and recreational uses and park and recreation related uses.

**South Lake Union Rezone:** At the last Park Board meeting, Brennon Staley from the Department of Planning and Development, presented the South Lake Union Rezoning plan to the Park Board. The next day, a portion of the rezoning proposal known as Block 59 was put aside by the City Council which is separate from the South Lake Union zoning plan. The proposal would have given Vulcan permission to construct a trio of 24-story (240-foot) buildings across the street from the park if it gave the city a land swap to use for affordable housing and social services.

**Kinnear Park:** Last year the Friends of Kinnear Park received a \$750,000 Opportunity Fund grant through the Parks and Green Spaces Levy. The Friends has a comprehensive plan for the park. The funding was for the creation of an off-leash dog area at the lower end of the park, renovating the tennis courts and trails in the upper part of the park.

A Phase II component includes construction of a north-south trail from roughly the off-leash area down to Galer Street, to connect with the pedestrian bridge to Myrtle Edwards Park. Department staff is concerned with the community's desire to install a trail in a known slide area. The Department is meeting with the Friends of Kinnear Park on Wednesday, February 27, at 3 pm in the Park Board Room. It will be a problem solving discussion to determine if there is an engineering solution, if it is prudent to move forward with the investment and discuss alternatives. Park Board members are welcome to join Parks staff in this community meeting.

Responding to a question from Commissioner McKee as to why the slide concerns were being expressed at this time rather than earlier, Acting Superintendent Williams stated the Friends were concentrating on Phase I and are now ramping up their funding for Phase II. Commissioner Keith noted the Friends have a request in to the Levy Oversight Committee for funding from the Levy Opportunity Fund. The request is for Phase II of their plan and not yet approved. Staff recently brought their concerns about construction in the known slide area to the Superintendent. It would have been desirable to have this discussion a year ago with the community. The Department did not have to approve the Friends comprehensive plan but did know about the proposed trail. Commissioner Maryman noted while there may not be a formal approval process, he has dealt with neighborhood groups around Neighborhood Matching Fund projects and knows those community members feel in absence of a disapproval, it is approved. Acting Superintendent Williams noted sometimes aspirations for these park designs race ahead of where the Department is in terms of an approval process. He further noted there is always a need to adjust the scope of a project to what can be built in a particular space and it is much more of a negotiation than an approval. Commissioner Maryman inquired what might be put in place to mitigate this for other projects in the future. This will be discussed following the community meeting.

A site meeting was held with the Law Department and community members before making a final decision to install the dog off-leash area in the lower part of the park because of ADA access concerns. The Law



Department advised that it is impossible to make every part of the park ADA accessible given that the park is situated on a steep slope. The Department was advised to install signage which directs park users to the closest off-leash areas, such as Magnolia Manor, North Acres and Carkeek Park. The off-leash dog park is now open with a celebration planned for Sunday, February 24 from noon – 3pm.

**Parks Legacy Plan Update:** The Department agrees with the Board on the need for a more robust vision summary in the narrative Parks Legacy Plan document. Marianne Bischell, Mayor Nickels former Media Director, has been hired to assist the Department in writing the Plan's ten-page narrative. The Board wants the document to have a greater focus on values, storytelling, should be aspirational, and focus on key messages like the need to restore what has been cut from the system. The Superintendent noted the Department was directed by the Mayor and Council to provide a data driven plan that addressed gaps in service, that describes what has been lost, and that looked at the costs of services and programs. The plan needs to have a strong link to what we will be asking the public to support in a future funding measure. The funding measure is intended to fund basic operations and maintenance of things we already have, not new things. Marianne will meet with Department staff and the Park Board Strategic Plan Committee to discuss how the narrative should be shaped. The goal is to have a draft by March 15<sup>th</sup>.

The Department has been discussing with the Park Board about the Board taking the lead on public vetting of the draft Legacy Plan in April and May. To this end the Department intends to hire Kenan Block to work with the Board and the Department to organize a communication plan. He would also help facilitate the Board's public meetings. Kenan could work directly with the Park Board's committee and the Board regarding outreach. Kenan can help design the process of how the Board wants to vet the plan with the public; determine how many meetings and what kind of meeting model should be used. Commissioner Wright thought if this was discussed in the subcommittee, other Board members would be welcome to attend. A public meeting announcement will be made to abide by the Open Meetings Act if more than four Park Board members attend.

Commissioner Mehdi feels the vision element requires discussion among the Department's top staff. Acting Superintendent Williams noted that has been done; the Division Directors had a rich discussion about the vision of the Department's future, what does it want to pass on to the public community and the next generation of people who will work here. We are not turning over the writing of the Department's vision to a professional writer; Marianne is being hired to wordsmith the narrative.

Commissioner Mehdi stated that the Park Board's Funding Committee has a recommendation to the full Board which involves communication with Neighborhood District Councils and what the subcommittee recommends ought to dovetail with the public vetting of the draft. She encourages the Board to use the existing city resources to reach out to these community groups and make sure we are linking these discussions, as we do not want to go out multiple times to the same communities asking similar questions. Acting Superintendent Williams agrees and the focus of what we are asking Kenan to do can be narrowed. The Board needs to have the same materials in order to have an elevated discussion when they visit the District Council meetings. The broadest number of people possible need to be reached. Commissioner Wright stated another important thing to discuss with Kenan is what is the goal of the plan. We need to be clear to the public of what we are asking. "Legacy" may not be the best name for the plan. Commissioner Maryman noted the term may be throwing the Board off, as the Board will be presenting a funding package to the public. Acting Superintendent Williams will have a discussion with his team and figure out how we can strike a balance. He challenges the Board to think about an alternative name for the plan. Commissioner Kincaid stated she does not see a problem mixing vision and data in the plan.

The Future Funding Steering Committee will be comprised of 14 citizens – 5 chosen by the Mayor, 5 chosen by the Council, one member each from ARC, Park Foundation and Park Board, plus a chair. A resolution is in the process of being written and it is hoped the legislation can include a list of the steering committee members.





Since our briefing in October, the \$290 million bond measure to replace part of the Elliott Bay Seawall and Parks' Piers 58 (Waterfront Park) and Piers 62-63 was passed by the voters. The seawall is at 60% design and the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the seawall project will be issued in the spring with construction targeted to start in 2014. With the passing of the bond measure, there is now budget to begin design work on the public piers; that work will begin shortly.

The following is a rough schedule of the projects moving forward.

- 2013 Update City land use codes and design regulations for waterfront corridor
- 2013-2014 Implement several "early win" projects and initiatives, including east-west corridor improvements and programming
- 2014-2016 Elliott Bay Seawall Phase 1 Construction (Washington to Virginia Street)
- 2014 Complete formation of Waterfront LID
- 2015-2017 Rebuild Piers 62/63 and/or Union Street Pier/Waterfront Park
- Late 2015-16 Tunnel opening/ Demolish Alaskan Way Viaduct and Begin Waterfront Seattle Core Project construction
- 2018 Completion of Waterfront Seattle Core Project

### **Project Description: Maintenance and Operations**

The Central Waterfront Project is being guided by a 45 member Central Waterfront Committee that is comprised of 4 subcommittees: Design Oversight, Outreach, Stewardship and Finance & Partnerships. The Stewardship subcommittee, chaired by Carol Binder and Bob Davidson, has been tasked to:

- *develop specific recommendations for providing stable, long-term funding for programming, operations and maintenance of the public spaces and public improvements and*
- *outline principles, standards and protocols for use and upkeep of such public assets*

The subcommittee is working with Candace Damon of HR&A Advisors, a member of the Central Waterfront consultant team with extensive experience in developing funding strategies for parks and open space projects. HR&A provided an estimated cost for O&M for Seattle's Central Waterfront. HR&A also developed a framework for how to approach O&M funding for the Central Waterfront, which included four categories of potential sources:

- **Baseline public funding:** The City's fixed contribution, the key to leveraging other sources of funds;
- **New public revenues:** The value the space creates for the surrounding area and the city, monetized as new, dedicated public income streams that mature over time;
- **Earned income:** New revenues generated by programming and retained by the entity governing the space, such as concession, event, and onsite parking revenues;
- **Philanthropy:** Donations from private individuals, foundations, and corporations that support operations.

Applying local and national data from other open space projects, HR&A's preliminary assessment indicated that there is sufficient funding capacity available in the categories above to meet the estimated O&M costs for the Central Waterfront. Having the capacity is the first step; coming to agreement on the appropriate mix will be the policy challenge. HR&A noted that meeting the funding challenge will require a complex combination of several sources, taking into account the fact that funding sources mature at different rates. In the short term, public funding will be critical.

### **Maintenance and Operations Models**

There are a variety of forms that could be used to manage the Central Waterfront:

#### **1. Smaller nonprofits—assistance providers**

These groups help parks departments with education, programming and volunteers. They also advocate for increased funding for park improvements and expansion.

- Often known as "Friends Groups"



- Usually all staff are on a volunteer basis; there might be one paid staff person
- Small budget
- Do not have responsibility for park itself
- Rally a constituency and provide outreach
- Raise funds

## 2. Co-managers

Co-managers are nonprofits that work in partnership with parks departments. In some cases the nonprofit and the parks department jointly share and fund a staff position that oversees planning, design and capital construction, and in some cases management and maintenance. The nonprofit focuses on private fundraising and awareness. The Parks department ensures that the park remains publicly accountable and functions consistent with other city parks.

### Examples:

*The Central Park Conservancy* (New York) was founded in 1980, and to date has invested more than \$450 million into the Park. The Conservancy provides 85% of the Park's \$27 million annual operating budget. In 1998 the City of New York awarded the Central Park Conservancy a management contract that ensured the continuing maintenance, public programming and capital restoration of the Park. Under the agreement, the Conservancy receives an annual fee for services. The fee depends on the Conservancy's expenditures in the Park and on the revenues generated by concessions in the Park.

*Friends of the High Line* (New York City) has a license agreement and a MOU with the City of New York for the management, operations and programming of the park. The Friends of the High Line raises private funds for the park and provides all staffing (except security). The Friends of the High Line has a 21 member board and staff devoted to horticulture and park operations, programming and outreach, administration, planning, design, communications, fundraising and event planning. The City of New York provides security, maintains park structures and accessibility. The City approves all concessions, events and permits within the park. Final decisions are made by the Park Commissioner.

## 3. Sole Managers

Sole managers are nonprofits that manage and maintain parks on their own and function as independent entities with limited involvement with parks departments. The parks' policies are determined by the nonprofit. City staff may sit on the Board of the nonprofit.

### City Workplan for 2013-14

In concert with continued design refinement of the capital elements of the Waterfront Program, in 2013 the City and its consultant team will identify the Program's operations and maintenance needs and lifecycle costs. This picture will be developed throughout 2013 and will include:

- A study defining the specific activities and uses planned for the new public spaces created on the waterfront and their ongoing costs
- Documentation of the O&M standards assumed for each project element as part of the 30% design package, anticipated in early to mid-2014
- A revised look at potential long-term O&M funding options as part of the 2014 budget process

### Additional Information

For more information, you can contact David Graves at [david.graves@seattle.gov](mailto:david.graves@seattle.gov) or Nathan Torgelson at [nathan.torgelson@seattle.gov](mailto:nathan.torgelson@seattle.gov). The project website is [www.waterfrontseattle.org](http://www.waterfrontseattle.org)

## Discussion

Commissioner Maryman asked if the Promenade space would be maintained by Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT). Nathan responded it is in SDOT ownership; how it will be maintained is an open



question at this time. The Parks Department owns Pier 62/63 and Waterfront Park. Almost all the waterfront land is currently in public ownership; the majority of it is SDOT right of way. To the public, the Promenade will feel like a city park.

Commissioner Mehdi noted SDOT has funds to maintain the road. Nathan stated the road will be rebuilt and shift to the east, against the buildings and where the road is today will be primarily green space, pedestrian path and bicycle routes.

Commissioner Keith inquired about the cost per acre for maintaining Westlake Park (\$197,000 per acre per year). Nathan responded the park is heavily used, well programmed and the cost per acre is higher than other downtown parks (\$114,000 per acre on average for core downtown parks) because of the costs of labor for pressure washing, trash pickup, landscaping, pruning, event programming and maintaining the fountain.

Commissioner Maryman is assuming maintenance money would be coming from General Fund revenue. Nathan said maintenance money could be General Fund, could be special O & M levy just for the waterfront, a future parks levy – it is up to the city leaders to decide. Acting Superintendent Williams noted it could be a policy question for the Future Funding Steering Committee – what percentage of funds ought to go to the Central Waterfront.

Commissioner Keith asked how a flagship is defined – Discovery Park, Volunteer Park are not considered flagships? Nathan stated flagship can be defined as a place that is an economic development engine, a civic gathering place, a huge tourist designation – some place that is going to attract 2+million visitors a year. Vancouver's Stanley Park was not studied in the models for comparison Commissioner Keith noted. Nathan stated that is a good suggestion. A lot of that park is greenspace, forested and not actively programmed for use but it does have an Aquarium, teahouse, several restaurants, playgrounds and an outdoor water pool.

Commissioner Kincaid asked how much should be easily available to the public sector - how much free. Nathan replied one of the guiding principles is this is a waterfront for all and a lot of the programming would be free and available to everyone. There is a vision for Pier 48, at the southern end of the waterfront, that would be a festival/concert area which would have a ticket price associated for a bigger scale event where there would be some revenue for the city. Other revenue may be obtained from concession fees; example kayak rentals, bicycle rentals and outdoor café.

Commissioner Maryman inquired if there was any data on Olympic Sculpture Park (OSP). What has that park done to real estate and, how do we start to monetize those conditional real estate impacts and use a local example. Nathan responded that it is not in public ownership but some analysis could be done relative to condo prices and rents of apartments in that area. They have met with the Seattle Art Museum on how they do O & M, programming, security and parking. There are 500,000 – 800,000 visitors to the Park each year. There is a small parking garage underneath the pavilion, which has been pretty much empty. Besides those parking spaces, no additional parking was provided. Those spaces are being leased out now on a monthly basis because they were not being used on a short-term basis.

Commissioner Maryman asked about the issue of endowment. Is it being considered and if that is something that could be built into the capital costs. Nathan indicated the Friends group would come up with a philanthropy strategy in the next two years, which will include capital, operations and maintenance strategy.

Acting Superintendent Williams stated there are three or four policy questions that come to mind. Over 85% of the property is out of the ownership of Seattle Parks and Recreation but the question arises of how to work with a third party. It could be Friends of Waterfront Park in the management of Pier 62/63 and Waterfront Park. What sort of relationship dynamic do we want to have with them? Are we willing to manage waterfront parks differently than we are managing them now? What does that mean for programming and activation? Are there activities we currently do not permit and that we would be willing to permit under this scheme? How should downtown parks relate to parks on the waterfront? It is probably premature to be thinking about



linkages but over time the downtown parks are ripe for some sort of an umbrella or an organized third party entity. What would be the concerns of turning over the parks to a larger organization? What is the timing for doing that? Clearly the Central Waterfront Project is a multi-phased scheme but it is never too early to begin thinking more broadly of our role in relationship to a third party conservancy kind of organization managing not just waterfront park but all the parks downtown.

Commissioner Kincaid noted there is a long-term vision of building a connection from Pioneer Square to Myrtle Edwards Park, across the Thomas Street bridge to the base of Queen Anne Hill. A connection has been discussed regarding Bell Street as well as a connection that goes onto Seattle Center then from Seattle Center to South Lake Union.

Commissioner Barber stated it is a source of great strength to define city parks as to how well they serve their neighborhoods and have a working neighborhood focus. That conflicts with talks about tourism and parking. It seems that design has to work with people who can walk to the park and that suggests looking at population projections for the neighborhood. What is the population that will be served versus the tourist focus? The park needs to serve the nearby residents and working population. Nathan responded that the people working and living downtown can get to the waterfront more easily by east-west connections. When speaking with the Seattle Art Museum representatives, one of the highest Olympic Sculpture Parks users is dog walkers. People who live in Belltown are using and enjoying the green space park while walking their dogs. The parking that Nathan referred to in the plan is not new parking; it is parking found in office buildings that may be available for the public to use. Realistically, a lot of people will walk to the waterfront but there will always be people who will drive downtown with their families to use the waterfront. It is estimated ten million people a year visit Pike Place Market; a lot of them are tourists, as well as locals. We want to create a clear way for those people to get down and enjoy the waterfront. In order for the park to be successful, we need to make sure it is linked for the people who live and work here.

Commissioner Barber noted a project like this is going to create a burst of speculative property acquisition and development. There would be developer's fees, maybe a special REET district or other kind of tax vehicles that could be focused in on that area that could reap a benefit. Nathan stated part of the idea is capturing the density bonus pieces and having that money go to the waterfront. Developers would pay a fee in order to get additional height in downtown office buildings. David noted that Commissioner Barber may be referring to a Local Improvement District (LID). A LID was used to fund the South Lake Union street cars. They are not proposing to upzone any property. LID's are used for funding capital projects.

Commissioner Maryman noted a Center City Transportation Plan is being studied. He does not think the fare box recovery will be 100% so there is going to be an ongoing transportation piece. There will be ongoing O & M needs for the tunnel, which is probably WSDOT's responsibility. We need to be thinking about this in a bit broader sweep; more than the projected \$4.2 annually.

Commissioner Maryman stated he wants the Board to get information ahead of time and not be shell-shocked like the SLU rezone proposal. Parks staff had previously briefed the Park Board on the central waterfront project in 2010, 2011 and 2012 and will be continually updating the Board on the project. Nathan noted ultimately the Park Board will make a recommendation on operations and maintenance funding for the Central Waterfront Park but we are not nearly to that point yet. Acting Superintendent Williams suggested the Board make time for discussions centering first on the park owned property. What is the vision for those, under what conditions are we comfortable having a third party manage those parcels, what sort of guiding principles would go into that discussion such as how do you protect access to the public space, are there covenants we might place on the operation of Pier 62/63 and Waterfront Park? It might look different from some of the other publically owned parcels because they are indeed Park and Recreation properties. He thinks we might want to tee up a list of policy questions that would form a discussion with the Park Board over time. He does not think the Mayor is looking for a recommendation until the end of the year. Nathan also noted the Board has the resource of Commissioner Kincaid who attends the subcommittee meetings.



Commissioner Keith inquired how SDOT and Parks would work together. Is there a Memorandum of Agreement? Acting Superintendent Williams responded that there is an executive steering committee that has representatives from SDOT, DPD and Parks and meets every Wednesday to discuss policy and big picture issues. The committee keeps the Mayor apprised on issues and recommendations. There is cross-departmental coordination occurring. SDOT is in the lead and doing a fine job. Nathan noted there is a total of \$1 million in SDOT's 2013-14 budget that will go to the Seattle Aquarium Society to help them with their design of their future expansion.

Commissioner Keith inquired if we are allowed to have investments. The Department does receive endowment funding from the Seattle Park Foundation. The city has some financial policies that are conservative which describe the level of risk the city is comfortable with for how long you hold an endowment and what rate growth is reasonable to expect. Endowments would be included in the philanthropy strategy.

Commissioner Barber inquired if there was a population projection for downtown that is tied into the project. Nathan stated they have not done any population projections per se but have received information from the city demographer and the Downtown Seattle Association as far as continued growth in South Lake Union and downtown where the majority of the city's residential development is happening.

Commissioner Keith informed the Board of a report of how much revenue is generated statewide from recreation activities that could be a great resource. She will send the report to the Commissioners and the Department staff.

The Commissioners and Acting Superintendent Williams thanked Nathan and David for the briefing and look forward to having a continuing discussion through the year.

### **Old/New Business**

Commissioner Kincaid has been wondering if the Park Board meets often enough as she has the sense they are not getting time for discussion of the information they receive and what they are doing in the various committees. In addition to the issues, there are meaty issues they should discuss on an on-going basis. Would the Commissioners be willing to have two meetings a month, or occasionally have an extra meeting, so the Board can keep up with the work that it is doing.

Commissioner Keith stated the Board used to meet twice a month. She attended a facilitation workshop that she is promoting about how to create action based agendas and outcomes so that it may not be necessary to have more meetings but to have a very different approach to what we want to get out of a meeting. Perhaps one of the things is to shift how we use our time together. The presentations to the Board are wonderful and needed but perhaps the Board does not need the presentations stacked so that there is more room in each meeting. The Board does not necessarily need more meetings but shift what is happening in the current meetings.

Commissioner Mehdi prefers one meeting a month and would gladly commit to an occasional second meeting when necessary. She would like it defined of what the Board is being asked to accomplish. At the same time she found tonight's briefing very useful, she was thinking it is a ways out and it is important to be ahead, but the Board has urgent needs. Additionally, it continues to be unclear to her when the Board jumps in on an issue. The Board has been requested multiple times by the public to comment on something, respond to something, and appear at something. The way we are structured the Board cannot turn on a dime and wonders if the Board should be looking at higher expectations. She is worried that if the Board goes back to two meetings a month the agendas will be filled. They could have four meetings a month and the agendas would be filled. She would much rather be smart and strategic about what are the things the Board is going to focus on. She suggested a non-academic approach. Presenters would send their PowerPoint briefings to each Board member. The Board members would review it and have a discussion at the meeting rather than spending an hour at the meeting with the presentation and 10 minutes on the discussion.



Acting Superintendent Williams stated the Department's thinking about how the Board should evolve is getting the Board out of the neighborhood issues. What are the guiding principles of how the Board should look at issues?

Commissioner Kincaid said her idea is not to fill up the agendas with new stuff but to catch up. She thinks it is very important that the full board know what the committees are doing. When the Board does deal with meaty, substantive issues, there needs to be time for discussion.

Commissioner Keith thinks the idea of receiving the presentation ahead of time is great. She got involved with the Park Board to respond to people who come before the Board who have issues. A balance between both would be good.

Commissioner Maryman agrees with one meeting a month and plugging in an additional meeting as needed. Getting into neighborhood issues is where the Board feels appreciated. Regarding South Lake Union, the Board was not consulted before the legislation was prepared. Commissioner Kincaid stated there is something very satisfying about someone from the public coming before the Board with an issue. They do not know where else to turn and the Board can at least hear them out. Acting Superintendent Williams noted that is a very different agenda structure than what the Department teed up for the Board. One of the things that might be worthwhile is reviewing the agendas the Board had a year ago. An example is the Madison Park fencing issue where 50 people were in the Park Board room several meetings in a row. Those meetings were a twice a month meeting structure where there was a briefing, hearing and recommendation. Taking on those kinds of issues require more time.

Commissioner Keith would like to allocate more time but not have two meetings a month. The expectation from the public is different from the expectation and need from the Department and the perception from the public as to what we do is also different than how we operate sometimes. We have had meetings with the community where the subjects tend to get rather heated. What if the Board structured a community conversation into the meetings every other month? The Board can decide if a letter needs to be prepared or not on an issue. She gave the Levy Oversight Committee meetings as an example as citizens attend those meetings, as they know their voices will be heard.

Commissioner Mehdi loves the blog idea that Commissioner Keith suggested at the last meeting and realizes it may raise all sorts of issues. One member each month could be in charge of writing a blog post and/or just having back and forth commenting with people as a way to give people a connection with the Board and to raise issues.

Commissioner Kincaid asked the Board members to think about the blog suggestion some more and discuss it at the next meeting.

Commissioner McKee noted it seems like there was a general consensus of the Board to have one meeting a month, an extra meeting when necessary, that the Board agrees with the importance of the higher level strategic thinking, and the Board wants to retain the connection with the community needs. We can start those conversations about shrinking the briefings, if possible, by getting the Powerpoint presentations ahead of time so the Board members can do more preparation on their own and use the meeting time for discussion. She feels there is a balance that the Board can strike.

Commissioner Wright informed the Board that she and Commissioner Maryman have been through this at the Arboretum Foundation as to how to get all the work done. One thing they did was to be clear if there was an action item and really limiting the agenda time. If an item scheduled for 20 minutes on the agenda, that is all the time allowed. She suggested maybe working a bit more on written reports would be helpful. If something is important that needs to be talked about and is hard to write about then use that mechanism. They had a discussion which was generally "report backs". She is not very clear many times what the Board is being asked to do.



Acting Superintendent Williams stated that whenever the Department has a meaty issue we are probably going to have 50 people in attendance. We have scheduled ad hoc meetings for public hearings. Those meetings would have a connection with the public because it is an issue they really care about like a viewpoint that is blocking the view from a house because the trees have not been trimmed in years. The question that is important to him is that the Board feels like this is a good use of their time as volunteers and feel enriched. The discussion will be ongoing and if we need to the Department is willing to make changes.

Commissioner McKee suggested anytime the Board has a briefing it be noted if there is a specific action item required, such as the need to write a letter or make a recommendation. Acting Superintendent stated the Department wants the Board educated on the waterfront project so that when we get to the end of the year the Board will have enough briefings to have a discussion and make a recommendation. Commissioner Maryman added that when the Acting Superintendent added his comments at the end of the presentation about the policy questions it crystallized everything and provided a whole new lens on what was presented. Framing the policy questions up front would be very helpful.

Commissioner Wright said maybe the Waterfront Seattle project requires special meetings rather than having the update briefings on the regular meeting agenda.

Commissioner McKee recommended each of the Board committees provide a written summary of their meetings and provide that to the Board members in the packet mailings so they can read it ahead of time and have time for discussion. Commissioner Kincaid did ask for written committee reports for this meeting.

Commissioner Barber stated some things are getting ahead or beyond the Board – one is the City Council got ahead of the Board on the community center funding. Their concept is to establish a performance standard of use – kind of a threshold of the number of people that use the centers and the programs going on at the time. There are other models for community centers such as having a safe house for kids to go to when things are not going well at home. That implies a different number of hours. He does not know if that discussion is happening. There are other things such as filling the Green Seattle Partnership leadership. Volunteer involvement went down in 2011 by 10%. He has not seen the statistics for 2012 but it may have gone down again. What is happening there? Is there something systemic going on? Is there some better way for Parks to encourage more people to get involved. The Board needs to keep on top of partnership and commercialization issues. Commissioner Kincaid stated the Board will have future discussions about how it serves the public.

### **Committee Reports:**

**Parks Strategic Planning Committee:** Commissioner Heahlke handed out the Committee's work plan along with a copy of the vision and mission statement at the last meeting and asked for feedback. She does not believe Susan Golub has received any feedback from the Board members. Please provide comments to Susan prior to the next committee meeting.

Acting Superintendent Williams noted earlier in the meeting when the Board was talking about Marianne Bischell attending a meeting should it be the full Board meeting or have a discussion with Marianne at the Board committee meeting and then bring it back to the large group. The Department is trying to have a preliminary draft by mid-March. The meeting can be held with the Committee with other Board members invited to attend as long as a public notice goes out. The question is how the Board can give feedback to Marianne in order to complete the draft by March 15<sup>th</sup>. The next Park Board meeting is scheduled for March 14<sup>th</sup>. The parks safety discussion slated for that meeting could be postponed until the April 11<sup>th</sup> meeting. Commissioner Wright inquired what the Board is being asked to do about the safety issue. Commissioner Kincaid stated it is definitely something the Board wants to take action on. Commissioner Keith and Commissioner Kincaid noted there are a lot of issues in the parks about safety. March is Women's History Month and they would like safety discussion to remain on the March 14<sup>th</sup> agenda.



Commissioner Mehdi does not have any edits for the Vision and Mission statements. She would be happy to have Marianne attend the Committee meeting and any Board members who would like to be part of that discussion would be welcome to attend instead of adding it to the March 14 agenda. Commissioner Heahlke would like to further discuss the Committee meeting date as it may be moved up from the March 11<sup>th</sup> date. When the meeting is scheduled, the Board and public will be notified. Members of the Committee include Megan, Barbara, Caitlin and Diana. Commissioner Heahlke inquired if Kenan Block will be preparing a plan and handing it off or will he be participating in the neighborhood meetings. Kenan will serve as the facilitator at the public meetings.

Funding Work Group Committee: Commissioner Mehdi has prepared a PowerPoint presentation which she was going to hand out but will email it to the Board members. In light of the Mayor/Council Future Funding Steering Committee, the Board's Funding Work Group thought it made no sense to duplicate efforts. It made more sense for the Work Group to be a conduit to the Neighborhood District Councils. The Work Group will put together a Power Point presentation (Draft 1) that is a way of describing the funding crisis. That will be the beginning of a conversation with the community via the District Councils about the need for a long term funding source and the need for a vision of what we want in the future for the parks. Draft 2 will include data that will be obtained from the Department. It would require the Board members to be willing to go out to the District Council meetings to make these presentations and solicit feedback. This is the beginning of a relationship that hopefully will go well through passage of a long-term funding source and beyond. That is a role that is appropriate for the Board. The Board should think about how does this fit on the heels of the public vetting of the Plan. The Committee is comprised of Yazmin, Diana, Brice and John. Originally the timing was to meet with the District Councils by the time the Steering Committee begins their work. Commissioner McKee asked if that can be used for framing of the discussion of the Plan. The PowerPoint does not provide a framework for facilitating the discussion of the plan but she does feel comfortable that can be accomplished in partnership with Kenan. The District Councils are a resource to the city. They were established over 20 years ago to work on the City's comprehensive planning effort and it was a way to reach communities. Acting Superintendent Williams suggested working with the District Councils to publicize the meetings in order to get the broadest reach. He inquired if the District Council meetings would be in addition to another set of meetings. The Committee wants to be thoughtful of what it can actually accomplish in the next couple of months. Commissioner Mehdi noted going to the District Council meetings would probably be more effective than inviting them to a meeting. Commissioner Wright noted more information would be gathered and useful for the strategic plan. Commissioner Barber noted the District Councils were integral to the neighborhood planning program and centered around business owners as well as the neighborhood groups.

Partnership Committee: The Partnership Committee is comprised of Antoinette, Brice, Diana and Barbara. They have held several meetings and drafted a work program which was previously distributed to the Board members. Basically, the Committee is reviewing existing local and national policies. The Committee is also meeting with three major partners; ARC, Park Foundation and Forterra. The results will be summarized in a non-attributed report and presented to the Board and Park staff. The results may be a wonderful piece for the strategic plan when we talk about what is coming up in the future.

The Partnership Committee met with the Superintendent and YMCA to discuss a potential community center Partnership at Green Lake Park. The YMCA initiated the discussion on the potential for their management of the future Green Lake Community Center. The partnership proposal has several merits but after discussion the Partnership Committee had concerns. There is a need for a Master Plan for Green Lake Park. The YMCA performs background checks on every adult entering a facility. This policy is not in alignment with the park access values of the city. The YMCA operates with membership fees. The issue of providing easy access for everyone was a concern. The YMCA is proposing to contribute 20-25% of the capital costs of a newly constructed community center and it was unclear about maintenance and operations costs. The Partnership Committee does not recommend moving discussions forward with the YMCA regarding the management of a future Green Lake Community Center.



**Commissioner Wright moved at this time it is not in the best interest of the Park Department to move forward with a partnership with the YMCA. Commissioner Maryman seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.**

Associated Recreation Council (ARC): Jourdan and Antoinette share the role of attending ARC meetings. At the annual meeting there was a lot of exciting news reported. There was \$11 million net from fees for services and programs. They have hired a new Development Director. Acting Superintendent Williams noted ARC had a 9% revenue growth over last year. Most of their revenue comes from child-care programs, summer day camp programs, and before and after school programs. Since 2009, ARC has contributed approximately \$5 million to offset budget gaps in the Department. They fund all the Assistant Coordinators in the community centers and further help the department in a variety of different ways. ARC is paying for all the staff at Belltown Community Center and sought donations for many things at that community center. There is a contract this year for ARC to take on broader fund raising and sponsorship for the department.

Discovery Park Mitigation Fund: The Committee meets quarterly and includes an enthusiastic and well-rounded group of volunteers. There was almost \$6 million in mitigation funds received for the placement of the West Point Sewage Treatment Plant in Discovery Park. The Committee has been meeting for a number of years. \$800,000 is left, some of which has been appropriated for work underway in the park. Items that have been addressed include demolishing missile silos, removing old military roads, basic renovation of the light house to keep it secure, purchasing and removing Capehart housing, and finishing off with a bunch of little projects which will complement the habitat restoration.

Seattle Parks Foundation: Commissioner Maryman attends the Park Foundation meetings. The Park Foundation received a percentage of Stimson Bullitt's estate. The Foundation is very thoughtfully considering how to use that money. Initial recommendations will be made to the Foundation in March. The Volunteer Park Conservatory effort was very successful in meeting its goals within three months. The Foundation is considering helping the Friends of Rainier Beach Urban Farm & Wetlands in their fund raising effort around that project. There is a lot of support for the project but no formal action has been taken yet. The Foundation is hiring a Director of Community Partnerships. The Foundation wants parks to play a strong, active role in the Mayor's race so they will be soliciting a questionnaire from all the candidates. An Op-ed is proposed in the form of a letter to the next Mayor making the case for why parks and open space should be at the center of all the other media debates of who shall lead the city.

Magnuson Park Advisory Committee (MPAC): Commissioner Kincaid noted the top priority is the NOAA road and the Committee is willing to help in any way they can to put pressure on this issue. Building 9 has become an issue. It is basically the streetfront of Magnuson Park along Sandpoint Way, owned by the UW. Because of the high cost of renovation for the building, the University said they have to develop it into market-rate housing. The building has been in bad condition for many years and there was great relief the building would finally be renovated. State Representative Frank Chopp objected to having market-rate housing in the park and said the state would take it over to develop workforce housing instead. There is a meeting on February 23rd with the Magnuson Park Advisory Committee members and Frank Chopp, and others from the District. There was a charrette on Hangar 2 in January. The long-term dream of connecting the Burke-Gilman Trail via 65th to the Park is happening.

Levy Oversight Committee: Commissioner Keith reported that the Committee had a site tour of all the sites that were top-rated. There have been two public meetings where the proposals were presented. There will be a future public meeting to hear more comments and getting more updates.

Commissioner Keith moved the meeting be adjourned; Barbara Wright seconded and the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm.

APPROVED: Diana Kincaid  
Diana Kincaid, Chair, Board of Park Commissioners

DATE April 11, 2013