



Minutes

Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners

Via WebEx

Thursday, October 14, 2021

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

Welcome and Introductions

Commissioner Farmer calls the meeting to order at 6:35pm. The Board introduces themselves and practice saying their new Board name “Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners”.

Public Comment

Judy Tangen – Thanks the Board for their service. She attended the first in-person advisory council meeting since the pandemic started. They are very excited to get back and start planning programming.

Shawna Cause – Seattle resident for 40 years with a background in technology. She is a volunteer preschool teacher. She knows people that are interested in starting an outdoor preschool. There was an Request For Proposals for outdoor preschool but wants to know how others can become accredited to become outdoor preschools.

Peter Bradthal – He took the Strategic survey and was disappointed to see there were no questions about trails. He has entered several Find It Fix It requests this year for improvements to the Burke-Gilman Trail and they have not been maintained. It is dangerous.

Tim Motzer – Long-time resident of Lake City. Are the board members going to participate in the October 18 Park District public hearing? Will they voice their support for the Lake City Community Center? Mayor Durkan promised to fund the \$16.5 million to the Lake City Community Center.

Lisa Howard – Exec Director of the Alliance for Pioneer Square; supports budget to maintain safe and clean spaces in parks, funds to support Urban Parks Partnership, site restoration and addressing health and safety of parks. She wants City Hall Park to remain part of Seattle Parks and Recreation.

Superintendent’s Report

Department Updates

- Vaccination Requirements: Effective October 18, all City employees including Seattle Parks

and Recreation staff, must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 to promote public health and safety, reduce the spread of the virus, and protect our workers and community members. On or before the 18th, all employees must provide proof of being fully vaccinated prior to beginning a work shift, or, if they have been provided a permanent or temporary accommodation, they must comply with the accommodation, such as regular COVID-19 testing requirements, masking, distancing, and any other required accommodation.

- Green Lake Path Public Hearing: A reminder that at our next meeting on Oct. 28, the Board will hold a public hearing on a proposed policy change regarding use of the inner loop at Green Lake Park. This policy change would restrict all bicycles, skateboards, roller blades, and other wheeled recreation uses from using the inner loop until further notice. This would not apply to persons with a disability who use wheeled equipment.
- Light Rail Improves Access to Parks: On Oct. 2, three new light rail stations opened: [Northgate Station](#) | [Roosevelt Station](#) | [U District Station](#). These stations will make getting to work, taking a trip downtown, or getting to the airport easier for residents and visitors. They also help expand access to several nearby parks and recreation facilities, several of which are a quick walk or bike ride away from local stations. Check out our Parkways blog linked off our website for ideas on which parks to visit: www.seattle.gov/parks

Recreation Division

- Vaccination Confirmation Follow Up: As mentioned earlier, Oct. 18 is the deadline for City workers to show they are vaccinated. We've been working this month to follow up with those who have not yet submitted their vaccination confirmation forms and assess impacts to operations. We are ready to deploy managers, and other members of our team to backfill if needed to ensure continuity of operations.
- Vaccination Screening: On Oct. 25, King County is requiring indoor venues and recreation facilities to screen entrants for proof of vaccination or negative COVID-19 test. We are working across our department to align our process and standards and working on a communication plan to the public. We have finalized the majority of our guidelines but are still working through procedures with the hygiene shower program and impacts on our Joint Use Agreement with Seattle Public Schools.
- Hygiene Shower Program Refresh: In response to an uptick in violent behavior at our shower sites the Recreation Division is working with our team and labor partners to increase safety for neighbors and staff at community center shower sites. This may include working with a third party, providing security or an intervention specialist, hiring and training specific staff to serve in this capacity.

Parks and Environment Division

- Seattle Forest Week: The department will be participating in the first annual Seattle Forest Week from Nov. 6-13, 2021! Join us for a week-long celebration of Seattle's urban forest. Seattle Forest Week will kick off with Green Seattle Day on Nov. 6, and finish with Seattle Arbor Day on Nov. 13, with opportunities for learning, relaxing, and engaging during the

week in-between. For more information visit SeattleForestWeek.org.

- Rare Corpse Flower: Exciting news from the Volunteer Park Conservatory: the rare corpse flower bloomed on Sept. 22—the plant blooms every 4 to 10 years and the flower lasts about 24 hours. The plant was originally a donation from the University of Washington. And yes, the flower smells like...rotting flesh.
- More flowers: In addition to maintaining and caring for parks, our Parks and Environment staff also work to make park and building entrances attractive and welcoming.

Planning, Development & Maintenance

- Lowman Beach Park Seawall Project: Lowman Beach Park is partially closed after construction started on the seawall project in mid-September. In the next few weeks, the contractor will prepare for the removal of the existing seawall and installation of new seawall. Project completion is expected by late spring 2022. Closure includes beach access, tennis court and trail access. Access to the lawn and playground area remain open for public use. SPR continues to work with the community to explore options to install a racket court at the park because the existing one will be removed as part of the seawall restoration project.
- Westcrest Park Off-Leash Area: This project gets underway this month. In response to community input in 2019, SPR will construct a temporary off-leash area to the north of the existing site in a space that is currently lawn and keep the shy/small dog area open during construction. SPR anticipates the project being completed in spring of 2022.
- Daybreak Star Pond Restoration at Discovery Park: Green Seattle Partnership and SPR Heavy Equipment crew just wrapped up a project at Pond #3 in Discovery Park. The project provides maintenance of the pond by removing excess sediment and weeds and replanting native plants with the help of community volunteers. Restoration of this pond is driven by a Master Plan created by Na'ah Illahee Fund in coordination with United Indians of All Tribes Foundation to support the health of forests and waters at Daybreak Star.
- Magnuson Park Community Center: The project to renovate the existing community center advertised for construction earlier in October with bids opening on Nov. 3. Construction will begin later this year and will continue for an estimated nine months. This project will build out the south wing of Building 47 to allow greater programming capacity for the center and will include an expanded kitchen, multipurpose rooms, and restrooms. It will also make accessibility improvements to the parking, entry and lobby.

Policy, Performance & Property

- Bullitt Estate: SPR is finalizing a transition agreement with the Bullitt family regarding the transfer of its Capitol Hill estate to Seattle Parks and Recreation. When Seattle icon Kay Bullitt passed away on Sunday, Aug. 22, the 1.5-acre estate on Capitol Hill immediately became a public park, as stipulated in the property deed. The property is located at 1125 Harvard Ave. E, several blocks west of Volunteer Park. The agreement provides the family time to manage and transfer family items from the property and

gives SPR planning time to formally take on the property in 2022.

- Briefings on the Zoo Operations Agreement: The Woodland Park Zoological Society will be briefing several City Councilmembers regarding the 20-year Operations and Management Agreement that will be up for a vote at Council Committee on Dec. 7. Issues raised by CM Herbold and Strauss include the desire to have a voice in developing the long-term plan, ensuring the community is aware of the public benefits offered, and affordability for families. CM Juarez has given CMs an Oct. 30th deadline for any proposed amendments.
- Upcoming Legislation: Also at the Dec. 7 Council committee meeting, SPR will present a resolution authorizing the department to submit grant applications to the State of Washington Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) for state funding for Be'er Sheva Phase 2 and the Garfield Super Block projects. This resolution is required as part of the formal RCO grant application process.

Presentation: Proposed Budget

Superintendent Aguirre shares the Mayor's proposed budget for 2022. He shares that this budget is focused on restoring some reductions SPR faced during the pandemic; realigning resources to support commitment to equity and technical issues with inflation; address issues with the bidding climate; and, to ensure safe and welcoming parks for everyone.

The good news is SPR saw an \$11million General Fund increase and realignment with the Interlocal Agreement between the Park District and the City. \$43million in capital funding coming back through REET funding.

SPR is increasing full-time employees by about 20 to help with equity work and supporting staff.

SPR Budget at-a-Glance

General Fund is 40% of budget, 17% revenue from fees, rentals and programs; 16% Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) funding – capital dollars; Park District represents 20%, other funding equals 9%.

Adds, Reductions, & Cost-saving Measures

- GF reduced in 2021 11.4mil; transferred PD funding to cover those losses. SPR did not have to terminate any employees.
- 5.4mil to support equity goals and cover inflation.
- Increasing funding for maintaining parks, site restoration and security.
- Capital budget replenishment through REET and Park Fund.

Bottom line: Aligning financial resources to being an anti-racist organization and promote equity.

City Council expressed a lot of appreciation for SPR staff stepping up and wearing so many hats

during the last few years.

SPR has \$9.5million fund balance in the Park fund by being conservative with expenditures. \$3.5million is allocated to develop land-banked sites. \$1million to replenish acquisition funding. \$5million in reserve for Lake City Community Center.

Superintendent Aguirre mentions he will be briefing the Park District Board (Seattle City Council) on Monday October 18, 2021. The Board will discuss their involvement during Old/New Business.

Recreation Fall Update: Community Centers, Pools, Programs

Recreation Summer Update

- In Summer 2021, we focused on:
 - Continuing to provide essential services to youth and communities
 - Developing COVID-safe ways to recreate (virtual, outdoor, and more)
 - Innovating how we provided programs during a unique time
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Rec’N The Streets

- 3 teams running programs 5 days a week.
- 3 jamborees including Juneteenth.
- Provided programming at 42 locations and served 8,520 people.
- RNTS youth jobs training program provided stipends for 38 kids.

Youth Employment

Continued to innovate our signature event, with COVID safety and equity in mind. In-person attendance of 1,500 and online attendance of 1,600 – more than 70% BIPOC according to participant surveys.

Career Labs (a job readiness program) has wrapped up and 142 of the 175 young people have successfully completed the program. So far 10 young people have reached out to staff with news of landing a job after the program's completion and success stories are still rolling in.

Big Day of Play

Continued to innovate our signature event, with COVID safety and equity in mind. In-person attendance of 1,500 and online attendance of 1,600 – more than 70% BIPOC according to participant surveys.

Aquatics

- Colman and Mounger, our outdoor summer pools, saw a total of 56,000 visits from swimmers – representing 76% of pre-pandemic levels for Colman, and 80% for Mounger.

- Lifeguards at 8 swimming beaches kept watch for 143,000 visitors and provided 75 assists to swimmers, including 28 active rescues of people in distress.
- Operated 11 wading pools for a collective 412 operating days, with more than 21,000 people "actively attending" (= in the water).

Community Centers

- Licensed childcare programs at 17 sites hosted an average of 350 kids per week.
- Activity camps at 4 sites (Jefferson, High Point, Montlake, Loyal Heights) hosted an average of 232 kids per week (total of 1,121 unique kids). Between 20-30% of kids at each camp were 100% supported by scholarships, provided by the Sweetened Beverage Tax.
- 5 community centers provided 3,296 showers to people experiencing homelessness.

Vaccine Mandate – everyone will be required to show proof of vaccination or a negative test. They will not require identification.

Community Centers – Ramp-Up Plan

Facilities: Tiered re-open in September:

- 10 sites at full pre-COVID hours
- 8 sites at moderate hours but full services
- 5 sites open for programs or rentals only with building monitor (*short-term strategy while hiring continues, not long-term plan*)
- 3 sites fully closed (CIP), all with either School Age Care or Rec programs at satellite sites.

Some operational changes to the plan, in light of rising Covid-19 cases:

- Sites will only be open to registered childcare and recreation program participants, pre-registered drop-in, and shower program participants.
- Ramp up of additional services (normal drop-in, rentals, etc) as pandemic evolves through the Fall and into Winter.
- All staff, visitors, and program participants required to wear masks.

Services for Fall/Winter

- Licensed Childcare and Pre-School at 19 sites, continuing our support of this essential service.
- Hygiene Program: Operating at 5 sites, providing mostly homeless participants the opportunity to take a shower.
- Pools operating at Rainer Beach, Medgar Evers, SW, Madison & QA*

Programs: Integrated program planning process across units will generate the following in CCs:

- *Starting in September* – Lifelong, Specialized, Adult + Youth Sports programming
- *Starting in October* – 1-3 fitness programs per site (consolidated budgeting pilot), 1-2 additional programs for youth per site
- *Welcome Back Seattle* – grant programs, funding BIPOC community-based organizations to

provide free, culturally relevant programs.

- Ballard and Meadowbrook Pool open in October, Evans Pool opens in early 2022.

Some operational changes to the plan, in light of rising Covid-19 cases:

- Rentals of CC spaces have been paused for now.
- Drop-in will transition to registration-based programs (for contact tracing purposes).
- Programming for Winter 2022 will "build from fall 2021 by adding a few things" and then use rest of 2022 to build back to pre-pandemic levels.

Current Services

- 2 indoor pools open (Medgar Evers, Rainier Beach) to the public, 1 pool for SPS and other team rentals (Queen Anne)
- 2 outdoor pools open for summer (Colman, Mounger)
- Services include drop-in swim, water exercise, and more.

Ramp-up Plan

- Outdoor pools close Sept 7
- Open Madison and Southwest pools in mid-September, expand services to include lessons in November; continue Queen Anne as rental site for SPS.
- Open 2 remaining pools (Ballard, and Meadowbrook) in October for registered drop-in and swim team rentals, possibly adding lessons in November
- Open Evans in early 2022; open Queen Anne as full-service pool in early 2022.

Old/New Business

Commissioner Farmer reviews the upcoming Board schedule:

- October 18 Park District Board Public Hearing
- October 28, 2021 next meeting
- Public Hearing on Green Lake Path Temporary Use Change
- Retreat Date: November 16 – virtual

Park District Board action: The Board will write a letter to the Park District Board to be submitted no later than Monday, October 18, 2021. They will review the correspondence received from the public and Seattle Park Foundation and ask SPR leadership for their input also.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourns at 8:25pm.