



Minutes|Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners

100 Dexter Ave N/Kenneth R. Bounds Boardroom

Remote accessibility via Zoom

Thursday, June 12, 2025

6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Attendance

Present: Haile-Leul, Flinn, Baum (co-chair), Chisholm Clare, Mays, Diamond, Meng,

Absent:

SPR Staff and Presenters: Williams, Hollingsworth, Scheffer, Behrooz, Hoff, Burtzos

Welcome, Introductions & Land Acknowledgement

Baum calls the meeting to order at 6:30 pm and provides logistical instructions for in-person and remote attendees.

Commissioners and SPR staff introduce themselves.

Baum reads the land acknowledgement.

Baum introduces the consent agenda: meeting minutes from the 5/22/25 BPRC meeting and tonight's meeting agenda. Baum calls for a vote to approve the consent agenda; the vote is unanimous in favor of passage.

Adopted: 5/22/25 BPRC Meeting Minutes

Adopted: 6/12/25 BPRC Meeting Agenda

Spotlight and Meet & Greet: Parks, Public Utilities & Technology Committee Chair

Williams introduced Councilmember Hollingsworth, chair of the Parks, Public Utilities, and Technology Committee.

Hollingsworth thanks SPR staff for the opportunity to speak with the Board members, and shares her priorities and goals for parks and public spaces in Seattle, including youth programming, accessibility, and protecting public open spaces.

Hollingsworth emphasizes the importance of BPRC members as advocates for their districts, and encourages members to communicate with her office on behalf of their community and the parks and open spaces of Seattle.

Baum thanks Hollingsworth and turns the floor over to the Board for questions.

Flinn asks if the Council Parks committee is hearing about the same issues that the BPRC is hearing about, notably Magnuson Park's pickleball project, Discovery Park and the Environmental Learning

Center and programs, and Denny Blaine Park usage and related behavior. Hollingsworth confirms that Council is hearing about these issues and is responding to some elements of these issues.

Haile-Leul asks what element of SPR touches Hollingsworth's soul; Hollingsworth notes that teen late-night programs were this special feature in her life and emphasizes the need for trusted adults in teens' lives.

Chisholm Clare asks for Hollingsworth's reaction to the Park Ranger program and its potential for expansion. Hollingsworth notes that she has received positive feedback to the program. Flinn adds that Ranger deployment and interactions with the public is still very uneven, and SPR is trying to measure outcomes and to report these accurately in the Annual Report. Baum adds that it has been nice to see non-SPD response at Alki.

Meng asks, in the context of limited resources, how to keep popular programs such as ping-pong funded and available. Hollingsworth notes that she has been encouraged by certain volunteer group and private partnership organizations, as well as coordination with parent groups for youth programs.

Mays asks Hollingsworth where she would like to see more improvement in Seattle's parks and recreation space. Hollingsworth notes that she would like to see more of the City employees who maintain and perform upkeep on the physical spaces to be able to live in the neighborhoods that they work in, and to maintain a personal connection to the parks and assets they are caring for.

Haile-Leul asks what unique opportunities the BPRC and SPR may have upcoming. Hollingsworth notes that the Comprehensive Plan is a big opportunity for the City to plan what the next 20 or 30 years of Seattle will look like and invites feedback and suggestion from the BPRC.

Baum emphasizes the need to maximize use of existing SPR assets and notes the synergy between public transit and parks. Hollingsworth concurs and agrees that extant transit does not always best serve parks and open spaces.

Baum thanks Hollingsworth for her time. Hollingsworth thanks the Board for the conversation and invites further dialogue with the Parks, Public Utilities, and Transportation Committee moving forward.

Public Comment

Public testimony is offered on the following topics:

- Planned pickleball court project, especially regarding impacts to athletic field usage, wildlife, and SPR's pickleball court inventory;
- Status of Madrona Park beach play area project;
- Denny Blaine Park acceptable usage concerns.

Superintendent's Report

Christopher Williams, Senior Deputy Superintendent and Chief of Staff, gives the report.

The sun is out and there is a lot of things happening out in the Parks!

Department Update

Hoa Mai Park Resource Fair: On Thursday May 29th, the Park Activation Unit partnered with REACH to host a resource fair featuring seven community resource and health providers offering essential services to those in need. The event also created a space for resource operators to network,

collaborate, and plan future initiatives to better serve the community. Park Rangers were on-site to ensure the event's safety and build stronger connections with providers and attendees.

The Learning, Empowerment, and Development (LEAD) Program at the Garfield Teen Life Center marked a significant milestone on Saturday, May 31, 2025, as it celebrated the graduation of 31 remarkable young leaders. This event highlighted the success of an innovative peer mentorship model that has driven the program forward. Six original LEAD participants who joined the program between the ages of 13 and 17 have now grown into skilled facilitators. This spring, they led training for six new LEAD graduates and 25 youth enrolled in the Pre-Employment Training program.

This youth-led approach has produced exceptional outcomes, including a 100% program completion rate. To date, the program has awarded 38 food handler certifications and supported 43 Pre-Employment Training graduates. Impressively, 10 of these youth have secured employment thanks to partnerships Garfield Teen Life Center has built with cruise lines, AutoZone, and a local nursing home.

Juneteenth Closure for SPR (June 19th):

I wanted to give you a heads-up that many Seattle Parks and Recreation facilities will be closed Thursday, June 19 in observance of Juneteenth. The facilities and services that will be closed include:

- All recreation programs
- Community centers and teen centers
- Environmental learning centers
- Indoor swimming pools
- Green Lake Small Craft Center
- Mount Baker Rowing and Sailing Center
- Amy Yee Tennis Center

These facilities are OPEN on regular schedules:

- Parks
- Outdoor swimming pools (Colman and Mounger)
- Seattle Japanese Garden and Volunteer Park Conservatory
- Pre-Season Beaches (Madrona Beach and West Green Lake Beach)
- Boat ramps
- Spray parks
- Interbay, Jackson Park, Bill Wright, and West Seattle golf course

Upcoming Events

Big Day of Play Returns on Saturday, August 16th from 12:00 - 5:00 pm! Big Day of Play is a day where neighbors, communities, and families come together to learn, play, build relationships, access resources, and be active--all while having fun and celebrating our shared humanity. Presented by Seattle Parks and Recreation's Get Moving Initiative, in partnership with King County Metro, Big Day of Play offers a full day of FREE exciting activities for all ages and abilities, at two locations: Rainier Playfield and Mt. Baker Rowing & Sailing Center. Big Day of Play is not just an event; it's a celebration of diversity, community, and connection!

We're thrilled to bring our partners, local delicious food vendors, and community back together again for this annual event and look forward to seeing you there!

Parks & Recreational Services: Recreation

2025 Summer Camps: SPR offers hundreds of day camps throughout Seattle each summer. As a commitment to equitable recreation access, we release our camps later in the season to help ensure we don't leave kids behind. We have a variety of activity camps throughout the City. More information and registration can be found on our website. Many of our camps are run by our amazing partners.

2025 Downtown Parks Summer Activation Events Schedule: Summer in Seattle just got brighter! Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) has announced an exciting lineup of FREE events and activities that will energize downtown and neighborhood parks from June through September. Whether you're a movie enthusiast, a music lover, or someone who enjoys getting active outdoors, there's something for everyone this season. The Park Activation schedule can be found on our website and social media channels.

Free Beach Swim Lessons: Swim lessons are offered for free at all lifeguarded beaches for ages 6-16. Signups will be accepted via email between Monday 6/2 and Friday 6/20. After that, you can sign up in person at the beach anytime during our regular operating hours. Midday and evening sessions are listed in the link. Please limit to one session per child. We are happy to take drop-ins if we have space.

See the [Beach Swim Lessons schedule](#) and learn more.

You can find all of these, and other Seattle Parks summer opportunities, on our website!

Amy Yee Family Foundation Free Tennis Clinics will take place every Saturday in June at 9am. On June 7th (the first free clinic of the summer) all the living children of Amy Yee attended. This is an annual event occurring every Saturday in June since mid-1990's. Hundreds of kids participate in grassroots, volunteer led tennis clinics honoring Amy's legacy within the Seattle Tennis community.

Parks & Recreational Services: Parks and Environment / Facilities

Peak Season in Parks: The Parks and Environment Division has intensified operations for peak season, with maintenance staff working seven-day shifts from 5:00 AM to 11:00 PM daily to meet operational needs. Scheduled athletics, picnics, and major events will see a surge, increasing from 488 to 800 between June 6 and June 11. The peak growing season has also heightened demands for mowing and landscaping, while over 110 restrooms are being cleaned daily to maintain hygiene standards. Additionally, 18 wading pools are set to open on June 21. District crews are providing aquatics support through beautification efforts, pressure washing, and collaboration with aquatics programs to ensure everything is ready.

Supporting Healthy Trees in Parks: Staff started installing water bags on young trees for upcoming watering routes. Tree establishment requires two seasons of supplemental water for proper survival. This team also mulched 62 trees this week.

Landscape Crew Renovating Sign Beds: The Landscape Crew is renovating a series of sign beds as part of their program of small capital improvement projects across the city.

Parks and Capital Development: Project Updates

Soundview Playfield Groundbreaking: On Wednesday, May 28 the Planning and Capital Development unit held a groundbreaking event for the Soundview Playfield Renovation project in the Crown Hill neighborhood. It was a fun event with a performance by the Whitman Middle School drumline, equipment demos from Terra Dynamics and an interactive learning session with Terra Dynamics and SCJ Design staff. This is a unique project that activates the City's Community Workforce Agreement, creating meaningful learning and career exposure opportunities for local youth. Site mobilization began in May 2025, and project completion is anticipated in Fall 2025.

Off-Leash Area Eagle Scout Project: On May 31st, local Scout Gryffin Rust of West Seattle's Troop 284 successfully completed his Eagle Scout project, bringing exciting new features to the popular off-leash area near Green Lake. Gryffin, a resident of West Seattle and a candidate for Eagle Scout proposed working with a group of other Scouts to construct and install two canine agility structures at a Seattle Parks' Off-Leash Area, worked with SPR staff and the Citizens of Off-Leash Areas in Seattle (COLA) to research and plan the location and types of structures to be installed. This project was a requirement of Rust receiving Eagle Scout certification, as he had to plan, design, organize and lead a group of volunteer peers, and construct and install the structures. Rust also applied for and received a Department of Neighborhoods Small Sparks Grant to help with the purchase of materials and supplies. The agility structures are located at the Woodland Park Off-Leash Area.

Park Project Updates: Off-Leash Areas

Off Leash Area Projects: The Seattle Park District provides \$3,103,000 for the planning, design, and construction of two OLAs, one at Othello Playground and one at West Seattle Stadium. These add to 3 other planned OLA's at Smith Cove, Georgetown Flume, and South Park Community Center. Please visit the project pages, for these two sites, to view the materials and learn about the preferred schematic designs. These locations were identified in the Off-Leash Area Expansion Study, are funded for development and now underway. The online survey closes on June 23rd.

Williams pauses for questions from Board members.

Diamond asks for additional details regarding the Juneteenth event at Seward Park, and regarding SPR's participation in the Pride events. Williams provides additional information for the Pride parade; Burtzos clarifies that the Juneteenth celebration is sponsored by other City departments.

Chisholm Clare asks if the Board will have an opportunity to hear from the Magnuson Park pickleball project manager. Williams notes that the Board will hear from the relevant staff later at tonight's meeting.

Chisholm Clare asks if a previous discussion regarding a proposed OLA at Ravenna Park had progressed beyond the discussion phase. Williams clarifies that Ravenna Park was one of several sites considered for OLA development in Cycle 2 of the Park District but was not one of the final selected sites.

Baum notes that the resource fair at Hoa Mai Park appears to have been successful and encourages the department to expand this type of activation. Baum asks if the LEAD program is unique to Garfield TLC or if there are similar programs elsewhere. Williams clarifies that this program is part of the Seattle Mentors initiative and is tailored to the individual teens that participate. Williams shares that SPR is looking for creative ways to support youth in broadly similar circumstances that may otherwise not have this type of support. Mays notes some similarities to Microsoft's teen internship programs.

Magnuson Park Master Plan

Andy Sheffer, Deputy Superintendent of Planning and Capital Development, introduces the presentation. Sheffer notes the departmental goals of increasing capacity for pickleball and designating dedicated courts for both pickleball and tennis. Another criterion for court siting is not paving extant green space.

Morteza Behrooz, Senior Capital Projects Coordinator, delivers the presentation.

The Magnuson location was selected as a result of a citywide selection process between 2021-2023. This process included partnerships with tennis and pickleball groups and a citywide study, which was presented to the BPRC in August 2022. At that time, the BPRC recommended that SPR proceed with concept development at Magnuson Park and Georgetown Playfield.

The selected project site is at the parking lot located north of NE 65th Street known as Parking Lot E-5. The Magnuson Park Master Plan will have to be amended to change site selection from Diamond playfield to Pickleball. There is an opportunity to increase utilization of existing Diamond playfields on Sandpoint Way.

Behrooz briefly walks through the proposed scope, schedule, and budget of the Magnuson pickleball project, as well as examples of community engagement conducted in the Magnuson Park neighborhood. The current budget allocation of \$2.6M anticipates the construction of 8-10 courts with lighting by the end of 2026. A \$1M community donation has been made to the Seattle Metro Pickleball Association and secured with the Seattle Parks Foundation for pickleball at Magnuson Park. This location is determined as the most suitable from a capacity and cost perspective, utilizing existing stable hard surface and improving surface runoff.

Baum asks if the \$1M donation is included in the allocation. Behrooz clarifies that \$2.6M is currently allocated and the donation is on top of that.

Behrooz notes that the Magnuson project site requires no excavation.

Behrooz explains what the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) is and how it affects this project. The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) rules require the analysis of “reasonable” alternatives with lower environmental cost. “A lead agency may decide that there are no reasonable alternatives to a proposal and that the no action alternative, and the proposed action would be the only alternatives examined in the EIS.” Analyzing only one action alternative is not recommended.

In 2002, SPR prepared a SEPA EIS for the Sand Point Magnuson Park Drainage, Wetland/Habitat Complex, and Sports Fields/Courts Project. Due to a citizens group appeal, SPR was required to prepare a Supplemental EIS (SEIS) in 2003, on the sole issue of the impacts of sports field noise on wildlife. After the 2003 SEIS was issued, an Addendum to the Final EIS (FEIS) was published, also in 2003, which modified selected design and operational characteristics.

The 2025 Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) will supplement the 2002 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), the SEIS issued in 2003, and the Addendum issued in 2003. The 2025 SEIS will be the second SEIS to be prepared. The 2002 EIS and 2003 SEIS and Addendum contain detailed analyses of the No Action Alternative and Alternative 1 (Master Plan). The 2025 SEIS will compare and analyze the impacts of the No Action Alternative and other Action Alternatives including an Off-site Alternative. An Off-site Alternative on the west side of Arena Sports in the north

end of Magnuson Park is being explored, for a maximum approximate number of 13 courts. The east parking lot is at capacity during peak use times.

Meanwhile, SPR will release its City-wide Strategy for Outdoor Racquet Sports for public input later this year. The strategy seeks to provide a global solution for racquet sport court management, maintenance, and distribution; to establish minimum court distribution objectives and establish an achievable, meaningful, and equitable level of service for both racquet sports; and to provide opportunities to expand capital investment through public-private partnerships for both sports, and to develop a capital improvement plan for the next three MPD funding cycles.

Chisholm Clare asks for clarification regarding the proposed project location. Sheffer clarifies, and notes that future funding might enable future field development.

Flinn asks what the impact to parking capacity will be. Behrooz notes that impact to parking is not a required feature of the SEIS; however, the proposed design leaves approximately half of the E5 parking area intact, and there is room for additional overflow parking nearby if needed.

Baum asks what the next steps are for the SEIS, both for the BPRC and overall. Williams notes that SPR will likely seek a vote of approval from the BPRC at some point, likely in fall 2025, pertaining to the necessary amendment to the Magnuson Park Master Plan. Behrooz adds that as soon as the SEIS is published, there will be a 30-day public comment period and a public meeting. Behrooz notes that the best way to engage is for people to advocate for what they believe is right.

Flinn asks for SPR's perspective on the Magnuson wetlands, and why the department believes the proposed location is preferred given the proximity to the wetlands. Sheffer notes that SPR is very passionate about and committed to the Magnuson wetlands. The principal of the Master Plan is to engage active and passive recreation, and SPR feels that this additional active recreation supports the intended plan; the purpose of the SEIS is to support that claim. Sheffer notes that noise is a main factor, and SPR is working to mitigate this, although the financial resources do not currently exist for mitigation. Sheffer also notes that the current use (parking) is more pollution generating than the proposed use.

Baum asks if the SEIS section on noise pertains to community impact exclusively, or to wildlife, as well. Sheffer clarifies that there is a section on impact to wildlife. Baum suggests that it might be helpful for this section to be as robust as possible, even if not required by law.

Chisholm Clare asks if the proposed plan will leave sufficient parking in the south part of the park. Sheffer notes that in addition to the remaining parking at E5, the additional activation may help activate the underutilized parking areas near the beach and boat launch, where there have been some safety issues.

Baum asks if the private donation is a pledge or actual money, and whether the donation is available for use in the first phase. Sheffer clarifies that it is actual money and is available immediately.

Chisholm Clare asks if there is any plan to increase field capacity; Sheffer shows location where additional Diamond field improvement could occur.

Old & New Business

Baum clarifies that the next BPRC meeting will take place on July 10.

Baum encourages BPRC members to share connections and experiences across their communities to give recognition. Mays commends SPR grounds crews for returning supplies to him that were left after a recent football practice.

Baum adjourns the meeting at 8:25 PM.