



Minutes | Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners

Miller Community Center | 330 19th Ave E, Seattle, WA 98112

Remote accessibility via Zoom

Thursday, August 13, 2026

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

Attendance

Present: Baum (co-chair), Flinn, Diamond, Chisholm Clare, Stonecipher, Meng, Lerer, Werner, Williams, Kahn, Rasch, Bakker

Absent: Nakamura (co-chair), Haile-Leul, Zhang

SPR Staff and Presenters: Finnegan, Sheffer, Hellier, Linn, Hoff, Clyde, Shuldiner (SPS), Best (SPS)

Welcome, Introductions & Land Acknowledgement

Baum calls the meeting to order at 6:00 pm and provides logistical instructions for in-person and remote attendees.

Commissioners and SPR staff introduce themselves.

Baum reads the land acknowledgement.

Baum formally closes the public hearing, including remote public comments, on the proposed SPS Lincoln High School athletic field project at Lower Woodland Park.

Baum introduces the consent agenda for unanimous consent: tonight's meeting agenda, and meeting minutes from the 7/9/26 BPRC meeting. Without objection, the consent agenda is adopted.

Adopted: 7/9/26 BPRC Meeting Minutes; 8/13/26 BPRC Meeting Agenda

Public Comment

The BPRC heard public testimony on the following topics:

- Matthews Beach Park parking lot safety;
- Lake Washington Boulevard access gate installation;
- Lincoln High School field access.

Finnegan briefly responds to commenters.

Superintendent's Report

Michele Finnegan, Interim Superintendent of Parks and Recreation, delivers the report.

Finnegan provides preview of briefings tentatively scheduled for upcoming BPRC meetings.

Washington Park Arboretum Waterfront Trail: We are excited to announce we have permits in hand and are moving forward with the construction of Phase 1 (Foster Island) work on the Waterfront Trail. The project will enhance and preserve the trail and waterfront access.

Although we do not currently have enough funding to renovate the entire trail, we plan to construct improvements in phases as the budget allows. Phase two will focus on improvements to the Marsh Island section of the trails.

I also wanted to reference the new Botanic Garden formed earlier this year through the unification of the Arboretum Foundation and the University of Washington Botanic Gardens. Seattle Botanic Gardens builds on a 90-year partnership to strengthen the connection between the Washington Park Arboretum, Seattle Japanese Garden, and Center for Urban Horticulture. We're hoping to have Christina Owens, the new CEO, to join us as a Partner Spotlight to tell you more about this interesting and innovative collaboration before the end of the year.

Seattle Japanese Garden: Since July 28, the Garden is partially open during construction for visitors wishing to enjoy part of the Garden or track our progress. While we're very excited to improve the Garden with a new wall and accessible pathway. We understand that closures are inconvenient and construction can be disruptive. Visitors looking for a quiet, contemplative Japanese Garden experience may find refuge in the southern portions of the Garden – although there will still be potential construction noise.

Japanese Garden Maintenance staff received a big thank you for making the most of the garden's temporary closure during the Ishigaki Wall and Accessible Pathway Project.

In addition to supporting the Capital Project, the team completed several deferred maintenance projects, including rebuilding the dobashi (earthen bridge) to improve visitor safety. Special recognition was given to Robby Borromeo and the carpenters for incorporating a tree that had fallen within the Garden into the bridge's new bull rail!

Hiawatha Playfield Area Construction

Construction on the project recently began and is expected to continue through the end of 2027. The project will remove the play area from the north end of the park and provide a new play area just south of the wading pool. The project will provide new play equipment, park amenities and landscaping and include features that will provide improved visibility and access for all. The old play area site will be restored for nature play. The existing play area near the tennis court will still be available during construction and there will be no impact to the wading pool.

Fall Recreation Registration Opens:

Registration for Seattle Parks and Recreation's [Fall 2026 programs](#) opened Tuesday, August 11, at noon. The new fall brochures feature a variety of in-person, drop-in, and virtual activities for youth, adults, families, and adults aged 50 and older. The Fall Brochures can be found on our Parkways Blog at parkways.seattle.gov

Queen Anne Pool will remain closed until fall 2027 due to a significant underground leak requiring major repair. A permanent fix will be completed as part of the Citywide Pool Renovation Project. To offset the closure, SPR has been expanding access across multiple facilities.

- Expansion efforts will continue for fall 2026 with expanded hours and programming at Ballard, Evans, and Medgar Evers Pools.
- Ballard will add Saturday afternoon swim times
- Evans and Medgar Evers pools, which are typically closed on Sundays, will add Sunday operations and early morning lap swim
- Swim lesson capacity will also increase significantly across these three sites, adding more than 650 additional spots per week. With added weekday and weekend lesson options, total swim lesson capacity will exceed what Queen Anne Pool provided in 2025.

Denny Awards 2026: The **Denny Awards** are an annual celebration hosted by **Seattle Parks and Recreation** to recognize extraordinary volunteer service that keeps the city's parks and recreation programs thriving. For over 25 years, the event has honored the dedication and creativity of community members who contribute time, energy, and passion to improving Seattle's green spaces and programs.

Opportunities to Engage

Freeway Park 50th Birthday Celebration: On August 22nd, The Freeway Park Association and Seattle Parks and Recreation invite the public to gather and celebrate the Park's 50th Anniversary with live music, public art, architectural tours, free food & drink and future-focused conversations honoring one of Seattle's most significant spaces.

Dr. Jose Rizal Jazz Festival: Seattle Parks and Recreation invites the community to learn about future improvements for Dr. Jose Rizal Park on Beacon Hill. Please join us at the [Dr. Jose Rizal Jazz Festival](#) hosted by the Rizal Bridge and Preservation Society on **Sunday, August 16 from 1 to 6 pm** at the park, to review the community informed schematic design. The goal of the project is to create a safe, welcoming neighborhood park that serves as a destination viewpoint for the south end and honors the many cultures of the North Beacon Hill Community. The project currently includes a play area replacement and expansion, enhanced seating to enjoy the view, improved accessibility and enhancement to the area where the shelter was removed in early 2026. We are seeking additional community input for possible additions if additional funding is secured.

Big Day of Play: Free citywide event on August 15, noon–5 pm at Rainier Playfield and Mt. Baker Rowing & Sailing Center.

Teen Summer Musical 2026: Peter Pan: Ready to Rise

- McCaw Hall (Seattle Center)
- Performances August 28-30

Finnegan pauses for questions from the Board.

Stonecipher asks for updates on the search for a permanent SPR Superintendent. Finnegan clarifies the process from her understanding and adds that Council approval would likely occur in Q1 of 2027.

Stonecipher asks about procedures or mitigation in light of the increased fire danger statewide. Finnegan notes that the beach fire program has been modified to comply with the ongoing burn ban and provides additional logistical details.

Meng asks if SPR plans to fund and repair the remaining portions of the Arboretum's waterfront trail in a later phase. Finnegan clarifies that funding does not currently exist but that grant applications are underway.

Lincoln HS/Lower Woodland Park Field Proposal: Presentation & Possible Vote

Andy Sheffer, Deputy Superintendent, Planning and Capital Development branch, delivers the presentation.

Sheffer outlines the components of the proposal SPR is asking BPRC members to discuss and vote to approve, including roles and responsibilities for the sports field environmental impact statement (EIS), community engagement, and timeline. Sheffer notes that the recommendation includes multiple community briefings and a minimum of 5-7 stakeholder meetings. The proposed timeline for the EIS is 1.5-2 years.

The SPR staff proposal is twofold:

1. To support the initiation of an EIS process of the new playfield; and
2. To execute the design and construction of the track renovation and development of field events around Field #7.

If approved, proposal #1 would be followed by the Superintendent's authorization or denial to SPS to commence (or not) with the EIS process, including siting options, complete tree inventories, and robust engagement to ensure regulatory compliance and project viability.

If approved, proposal #2 would proceed with the Superintendent's authorization or denial to SPS to continue forward through SPR's Design Review (ProView), permitting, and construction.

The long-term outcome sought is to deliver sustainable, functional assets that serve both students and the community for generations.

Sheffer describes the EIS process, providing details about the scoping, analysis, and mitigation phases.

Sheffer introduces the draft timeline for the sports field project, noting that many factors can impact the timeline at this point. If the BPRC approves this proposal and if SPR Superintendent authorizes SPS to commence the EIS process, the next significant milestone will be the presentation of the Draft EIS (currently projected in or around Q3 2027).

Sheffer briefly recaps the community need, SPR's proposal, and partnership with SPS.

Sheffer pauses for questions from the Board.

Baum asks what the timing would be for scoping the EIS and related public outreach if this proposal is approved. Sheffer notes that the responsibility would fall to SPS to execute the plan but anticipates the first public hearing to occur in late fall of 2026.

Lerer asks if the BPRC will have an opportunity to review the project in the future. Finnegan notes that tonight's vote is a recommendation to her as Interim Superintendent and could include recommendations such as requests for future review.

Werner thanks SPR staff and members of the public for their comments. Werner asks SPS staff how the school district got to this point in the first place, and how Lincoln HS reopened without an athletic field. Richard Best, SPS Capital Projects Director, discusses history of Lincoln HS reopening and use of Lower Woodland Park fields. Best notes that previous SPR leadership requested SPS to explore ways to mitigate greater-than-expected impact to field use, leading to current situation.

Werner observes that Memorial Stadium is listed as alternate location on project page, and notes that proposed construction of Lower Woodland site will take longer than Memorial Stadium renovation. Is there a reason why the stadium is not being considered? Best clarifies that Memorial Stadium is now obligated for other citywide uses and is not available for exclusive Lincoln HS use.

Werner asks for insight into SPS's public process. Best provides a brief overview of the process.

Werner asks Sheffer how SPR synthesizes the public comment and feedback that has been received on this issue, or if that is up to BPRC members. Sheffer clarifies that SPR staff have logged all comments and he has personally reviewed many of the comments. Sheffer categorizes feedback into broad categories of design and preservation, both of which he feels are best answered through the EIS process.

Werner asks for additional clarity regarding the use of the extant gravel parking area and potential siting of additional parking infrastructure, as this topic has not been much discussed. Sheffer outlines current use of gravel lot as zoo overflow parking, construction staging, and other uses.

Werner asks for additional detail about tree impacts. Sheffer notes that the EIS will investigate and report on tree impact, adding that field orientation and grading will have significant impact on trees.

Werner asks about operating costs, noting that the discussion to this point has focused primarily on capital costs. Best acknowledges that SPS and SPR will need to work out an operating costs agreement. Baum and Sheffer clarify scope of maintenance and timeline.

Kahn asks about dispute resolution between SPS and SPR, noting that the consultant is hired by SPS but SPR is the landowner. Sheffer notes that the subcontracted consultants will retain independence regardless of hiring agency, and points to recent example of SPR pivoting a project due to unexpected EIS results.

Kahn asks what the role of BPRC will be during EIS scoping process. Baum notes that BPRC members can comment as members of public and as representatives of BPRC. Finnegan notes BPRC quorum rules, and reiterates earlier comments about including guidance in any proposal voted on tonight.

Stonecipher asks for clarification that tonight's proposals will effectively break the project into two separate halves, one focused on the track and field construction and one for the athletic field EIS. Sheffer confirms. Stonecipher notes that there were very few comments regarding the track and field proposal, which Sheffer echoes.

Stonecipher asks about inclusion of alternate site consideration in the EIS (specifically referencing Option A); Sheffer clarifies that alternate site consideration is a key element of the EIS process and that final selection of alternate sites will occur during the EIS scoping process.

Flinn asks whether the proposed field would be used for home nighttime games; this was not Flinn's understanding based on previous presentations. Best clarifies that the field would be used for home games excluding varsity boy's football games, which require a larger spectator area than this facility could accommodate. Best estimates a maximum spectator load of about 200 visitors for this type of event. Flinn emphasizes the potential parking challenge posed by this type of event.

Chisholm Clare asks if, were Option A to be identified as preferable during the EIS process, a full EIS would then have to take place with that site as the focus. Sheffer responds that the EIS is meant to determine what the preferred site would be, which is why the alternate sites are included in the EIS. Chisholm Clare asks for clarification regarding why Option A was not selected as the preferred location; Best notes considerations that led to site preference, including plans for a full-sized field, desire not to take existing field offline during construction, and some safety and security concerns.

Williams asks for clarification regarding decision-making process will occur should EIS determine that some impacts are in conflict with one another (examples include school route safety and direct environmental impact). Sheffer clarifies that consultant will share these criteria in first public hearing, after researching project background. Baum asks Sheffer to illustrate using previous projects, if possible. Sheffer notes that mitigation pursuant to EIS findings often takes the form of design alterations.

Williams asks whether there is any opportunity to shorten the EIS timeline. Sheffer responds that the timeline is dependent on the iterative process; the more iterative the process, the longer it will take.

Rasch asks how public comments already received will be incorporated into the EIS scoping process or will be otherwise communicated to the consultant. Sheffer notes that SPS has a running log of comments that will

become part of the background material submitted to the consultant. Baum echoes Rasch's concerns and pushes Sheffer for clarity on delivery of comments to consultant, noting that community members have already invested significant effort in the process. Sheffer adds that these concerns can be clarified as part of recommendation to the Superintendent.

Baum asks if any commissioner would like to make a motion regarding the SPR staff proposal(s).

Kahn makes a motion to recommend that the Interim Superintendent of Seattle Parks and Recreation approve the staff proposal to begin design and construction for track renovation and field event installation at Lower Woodland Park as presented.

Kahn makes a motion to recommend that the Interim Superintendent of Seattle Parks and Recreation approve the staff proposal to advance the Lower Woodland Park athletic field project at the 50th & Aurora location to the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process, with the following provisions:

1. The Board of Parks of Recreation Commissioners (BPRC) shall be engaged with a report at the Draft EIS stage; and
2. All public comments received by the BPRC on this topic shall be included in the background materials sent to the consultant performing the EIS

Werner seconds the motion regarding the track and field proposal. Baum calls for a vote. The vote is unanimous in favor. The motion carries.

Adopted: The BPRC recommends that the Interim Superintendent of Seattle Parks and Recreation approve the staff proposal to begin design and construction for track renovation and field event installation at Lower Woodland Park as presented.

Baum restates the motion regarding the athletic field proposal.

Lerer proposes an amendment to the motion, requesting updates on the EIS process no less than quarterly beginning in Q1 2027. Baum clarifies if this could be folded into SPR's regular capital projects updates; Lerer agrees.

Werner seconds the motion.

Werner expresses concern that this situation is a result of a lack of long-term planning on the part of both SPS and SPR, pursuant to the reopening of Lincoln HS without dedicated athletic facilities. Werner expresses further concern about outsourcing decision-making to a third-party consultant, while noting that he does not wish to hold up the process at this point, and calls on both City organizations to show foresight and set the direction moving forward.

Baum also expresses some reservations around the conveyance of nuance as the process moves forward, and urges SPS and SPR to consider a wide range of options in order to adequately demonstrate concern for the full range of community concerns expressed during the outreach process.

Baum calls for a vote on the motion. The vote is 11 in favor, 1 opposed, with none abstaining. The motion carries as amended.

Adopted: The BPRC recommends that the Interim Superintendent of Seattle Parks and Recreation approve the staff proposal to advance the Lower Woodland Park athletic field project at the 50th & Aurora location to the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process, with the following provisions:

- 1. The Board of Parks of Recreation Commissioners (BPRC) shall be engaged with a report at the Draft EIS stage; and**
- 2. SPR shall provide quarterly updates on the EIS process as part of the regular capital project presentations to the BPRC; and**
- 3. All public comments received by the BPRC on this topic shall be included in the background materials sent to the consultant performing the EIS**

Baum thanks SPR and SPS staff for the presentations and members of the public for their engagement.

‘Find it, Fix it’ and SPR’s Asset Management System

Interim Superintendent Finnegan introduces Mike Linn, SPR Management System Analyst Supervisor, to deliver the presentation. Finnegan notes that integration of SPR’s Asset Management Work Order (AMWO) system and the City’s Find It Fix It system is a work in progress and the department is aware of that, but Linn and team have made great progress and SPR is excited to present the work as it moves forward.

SPR Strategic Advisor Justin Hellier leads the presentation.

History and Definitions

- Find It Fix It (FIFI): An app where Seattleites can report issues; one of several portals to do so
- Customer Service Request (CSR): A request for action to be taken
- Asset Management Work Order (AMWO): SPR’s system for assigning and tracking work on our assets; also tracks labor for 400+ employees, and for capital planning
- Dispatch: The SPR team that receives request from staff, FIFI, emails, and phone calls, and assigns them to the correct team/system
 - ❖ 2013: FIFI launch
 - ❖ 2016: AMWO launch
 - ❖ 2021: Restructuring of SPR Dispatch
 - ❖ 2023: Integration of FIFI and AMWO

A work order is essentially a request for a team to do something to an asset. There are several kinds of work orders:

- “Demand” work orders – something broke and needs fixing
- Preventative maintenance, or “PM” work orders – pre-planned activity to keep assets in operation
- Capital Improvement Project “CIP” work orders – pre-planned activity to rebuild or update an asset

Hellier provides example of public service request workflow sent through FIFI. WOs may be rerouted to the appropriate department or put in the service queue for the appropriate service team for prioritization. Some WOs are assigned for performance on a specific crew route; others may be assigned for specific crew dispatch.

Linn demonstrates online AMWO portal from Dispatch perspective and demonstrates how SPR receives work order requests through the system. Hellier shows how this data appears to staff, using 2025 data, and explains the overall breakdown of requests by shop/team.

Hellier notes the time and offers to return at another time to continue discussion to cover restroom maintenance reporting. Baum concurs and turns the floor over for questions from commissioners.

Stonecipher asks how SPR tracks open work orders. Hellier notes that several types of order are tracked as part of ongoing key performance indicators (KPIs), including graffiti abatement and vandalism repair. Linn notes the different ways orders might be tracked depending on what team is responding (i.e., grounds crews

may track orders as part of routine rounds, so the order may be closed following the round, rather than at the conclusion of that specific work). Hellier and Linn discuss a few specific examples in which this could lead to some confusion, but emphasize that the process is designed to align with the ongoing work of the crews. Hellier notes that skilled trades (carpentry, plumbing, etc.) do track work order completion by task.

Stonecipher asks for more detail about how AMWO is used for public safety tracking. Finnegan clarifies that the Unified Care Team (UCT) has its own multi-departmental tracking and prioritization system, which is beyond the scope of the presentation tonight. Stonecipher notes that this process can feel to the public like departments are passing responsibility around, which leads to frustration with the City. Finnegan acknowledges.

Lerer notes that a previous slide showed that some amount of work orders were not responded to within 30 days, and asks if SPR circles back to the requestor in these instances to provide updates. Hellier clarifies that there is not currently a system to provide this type of feedback; often, delays occur due to the extent of damage, complexity of issue, or waiting for parts to arrive.

Lerer notes that the reported 12,000 submitted requests per year equates to almost 40 per day, and asks if there is any suggestion of automating some of that data entry to ease staff burden. Linn notes that there probably is a way to automate some of this process, but there are some limitations to the software itself and doing so might have impacts to the human teams involved, as well.

Baum thanks SPR for the presentations.

Old & New Business

Baum notes that the meeting is already past the scheduled adjournment time.

Finnegan adds that renovations in the Dexter Boardroom are ongoing and a location for the September 10 meeting will be announced as soon as that information is available.

There being no other business to discuss, Baum adjourns the meeting at 8:12 PM.