

CITY OF SEATTLE  
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
OPERATING PROCEDURES  
Revision Adopted November 8, 2012

**I. Definitions**

- A. The Board of Park Commissioners, herein referred to as the “Board”, is established under City of Seattle Charter, Article XI, Section 2, and Ordinance 96453 of February 19, 1968 (Seattle Municipal Code, Chapter 3.26) and as amended by Ordinance 122332 of January 18, 2007, Ordinance 117377 of December 19, 2011, and Ordinance 117404 of February 21, 2012.
- B. Seattle Parks and Recreation shall herein be referred to as the “Parks”.

**II. Membership**

- A. The Board consists of nine members. Eight members are appointed for three-year staggered terms, which run from April 1 to March 31; the ninth member, the Get Engaged position, is appointed for a one-year term from September 1 to August 31. The Mayoral and City Council appointments may serve two three-year terms; the Get Engaged position may serve two one-year terms and then apply for one of the regular three-year terms.
- B. Appointments are made in the following manner:
  - 1. Four positions are nominated by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council (positions 1, 3, 5 and 7);
  - 2. Four positions are appointed by the City Council (positions 2, 4, 6 and 8); and
  - 3. The ninth position is appointed through the Get Engaged program for a one year, renewable term.
- C. If a position is vacated with more than 18 months remaining in the term, the person appointed to fill the position will complete the term, based on the original end date of the term. This will be considered their first term.
- D. If a position is vacated with less than 18 months remaining in the term, the person filling the position will complete the term, based on the original end date of the term. This will not be considered a first term. Vacated positions will be filled by the appointing authority specified above.
- E. The Board elects the Chair and Vice-chair annually, with the term of office beginning April 1 and ending March 31.
  - 1. Nominations are solicited by staff, with staff contacting all Board members to determine their interest in serving as Chair or Vice-chair. Staff bring forward the names to the Board for a vote, preferably at the March meeting. Voting will be by paper ballot, distributed and collected by staff.
  - 2. The terms for each officer are one year, with the possibility of re-election.
  - 3. If at the conclusion of their second one-year term, either the Chair or Vice-chair desire to run for the same position that they hold, they must take one year off.

### **III. Meetings**

- A. The Board shall generally meet once a month. Meetings may be cancelled due to inclement weather and other just causes.
- B. All Board meetings, formal or informal, involving a quorum or more, will be open to the public and subject to review by the whole Board, in accordance with the Washington State Open Public Meeting Act (RCW42.30).
- C. Civil discourse is expected from all at Board meetings and the Chair has the authority to recess or adjourn a meeting should conditions occur which prohibit reasonable discussions.

### **IV. Attendance**

- A. If a member is unable to attend a scheduled Board meeting, he or she should advise the Coordinator at least one full day ahead.
- B. Members who miss three or more regular meetings in a row without good cause should consider resigning from the Board, and the Chair should discuss with them their ability to meet Board commitments.

### **V. Responsibilities**

- A. The Board shall act in an advisory capacity to the Mayor, City Council, Department of Parks and Recreation, and other City departments in respect to park and recreation matters and shall have the following specific responsibilities as defined in Section 3.26.030 of the Seattle Municipal Code (SMC):
  - 1. To consult with and make recommendations to the Superintendent of Parks and Recreation and other City departments and officials with regard to the development and amendment from time to time of the City's parks and recreation comprehensive plan and capital improvement program;
  - 2. To consult with and make recommendations to the Superintendent of Parks and Recreation regarding policies for the planning, development and implementation of policy concerning the City's recreation program;
  - 3. To consult and make recommendations to the Superintendent regarding policies for the planning, development and use of all of the City's park and recreation facilities;
  - 4. To consult with the Superintendent on matters pertaining to the proposed annual budget of Parks during the period of its preparation and from time to time thereafter;
  - 5. To hold public meetings from time to time in various parts of the City for the purpose of reviewing park and recreation programs and objectives with citizen groups and the community at large. A major objective of the Board shall be to develop public interest in the activities of the Park and Recreation Department and to solicit, to the fullest extent, participation of community groups, the general public, and public and private agencies;

6. To meet from time to time with local, regional and national park and recreation agencies and, when possible, attend park and recreation meetings and seminars in order to keep informed of new trends in policy, programs and park facilities' development.
- B. In accordance with SMC 3.26.030 and their stated willingness to serve the public, Board members will be as active as able in recreation and park matters with other groups. The Superintendent, Mayor and/or City Council may appoint Board members to groups such as citizen advisory councils, liaison committees, foundations, and special committees or task forces.
- C. By self-nomination or by nomination from the floor, both subject to Board confirmation, a Board member will be a member of the Park Naming Committee and other committees as required by ordinance.

## **VI. Operations**

- A. The Board shall adopt rules and administrative procedures consistent with the City Charter and applicable ordinances.
- B. The Board, and any standing or special committees it creates, shall be organized and operated under the Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised. The Chair will appoint members of any standing or special committee subject to confirmation by the Board.
- C. A quorum shall be as follows:
  1. A quorum of the 9-member Board shall be 5 or more members provided, however, that in the event of Board vacancies the quorum shall be altered.
  2. If there are one or two vacant seats (7-8 members) the quorum shall be four or more members; and
  3. If there are three or four vacant seats (5-6 members) the quorum shall be three or more members.
- D. The Board shall review and be as cognizant as possible of previous policies and resolutions and actions of the Board and the Department. Such procedural choices as are allowed under Roberts Rules shall be determined by a quorum of the Board.
- E. Per the SMC Section 3.26.040, the Superintendent will provide administrative support staff and services. Regular and special meetings and public hearings will be recorded and such recordings will be available to Board members and to other persons. The Superintendent will attend all scheduled Board meetings or be sure a representative of the Department is there. The Superintendent will ensure that minutes are taken at the meetings either directly or from the recordings and transcribed and distributed to all Board members within 3-7 days before the following meeting. Recordings are to be retained for one year from date of a meeting, unless otherwise directed by the Board.
- F. At least seven days prior to scheduled Board meetings, the Executive Committee will set the agenda with the Superintendent. If a Board member has or knows of an item for the agenda, the Chair should be notified as soon as possible. The Superintendent will send out to each Board member the latest agenda for the subject meeting. Reports, recommendations, and supplementary information will be sent out in advance with the

agenda whenever possible, otherwise they will be provided prior to the start of the meeting. It is preferred that written details accompany all presentations.

- G. A copy of the Board minutes and resolutions shall be kept by the Superintendent at the Department headquarters for ten years, posted to the Department's web page, and the signed copy sent to the City Archivist for permanent retention.
- H. Depending on the complexity of the issue and whether matters of public safety are involved, Board officers and staff will determine the number of meetings devoted to each agenda item. The Board's review will include a staff briefing and may include a public hearing and Board recommendation.
- I. The Board Chair generally does not vote on matters that come before the Board. The Chair may vote in the affirmative to cause a motion to prevail. If there is one more in the affirmative than in the negative, the chair can create a tie by voting in the negative to cause the motion to fail. Similarly, if a two-thirds vote is required, he or she may vote either to cause, or to block attainment of the necessary two thirds.

## **VII. Ethics**

- A. Members of the Board shall comply with Seattle's Code of Ethics (SMC Section 4.16.070). A member of the Board experiencing a conflict of interest shall abstain from voting on the matter and keep out of any deliberation on the matter. The member shall not discuss the matter in question privately with any other members. The reason for abstaining from voting, for good and sufficient reason, shall be announced to the Board for the record.
- B. Whenever a vote is taken on a matter after a public hearing has been held, no member shall be entitled to vote on the issue unless the member has heard all of the oral testimony and read all of the written testimony. Provided, however, that a member not present at a hearing at which oral testimony was presented may listen to or watch the official recording of the hearing and, after so advising the presiding officer, may participate in the vote.
- C. Subject to limitations that may be requested by the head of the office involved, Board members will consider that they have free access to the Mayor and his/her staff, the City Council, the Superintendent and his/her staff, other government offices, the news media, and the public. However, when Board members are acting in their capacity as such, either directly or indirectly, they will endeavor to keep the whole Board advised of the matters of discussion.

## **VIII. Public Testimony**

- A. Persons speaking before the Board will sign in on the public testimony sheets and identify themselves for the record as to name, address, and organization, if appropriate. This information becomes a part of the public record.
- B. The Board shall hear from the public at the regularly scheduled Thursday meeting during the Oral Requests and Communication from the Audience on items that have not had or are not scheduled for a public hearing. Individuals will be allowed two minutes to speak. A maximum of 10 minutes testimony will be heard at the beginning of the meeting; additional

non-public hearing testimony will be heard after regular agenda items have concluded and just before "Park Board Business".

C. The following rules shall be observed during a Public Hearing:

1. An initial presentation of background information from Department staff or Park Board staff may be allowed 20 minutes unless otherwise authorized by the Chair of the meeting. This briefing is to be followed by a public hearing and the Board's discussion and recommendation to the Superintendent.
2. During the public hearing, individuals will be allowed up to two minutes each to speak.
3. Speakers shall be advised that testimony is being recorded.

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