

Department of Parks and Recreation

Seattle Board of Park Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
July 23, 2009

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

Also, view Seattle Channel tapes of meetings, June 12, 2008-most current, at
<http://www.seattlechannel.org/videos/watchVideos.asp?program=Parks>

Board of Park Commissioners:

Present:

Neal Adams, Vice-chair
John Barber
Terry Holme
Jourdan Keith
Diana Kincaid
Donna Kostka
Jackie Ramels, Chair

Seattle Parks and Recreation Staff:

Tim Gallagher, Superintendent
Christopher Williams, Deputy Superintendent
Sandy Brooks, Coordinator

This meeting was held at Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center and was preceded by a tour of Rainier Vista Boys and Girls Club. Commissioners also met with members of "Alive and Free Program" and "Making a Difference (MAD)."

Commissioner Ramels called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and reviewed the meeting agenda topics. **Commissioner Holme moved approval of the agenda as presented, the July 9 minutes, and the record of correspondence received by the Board since its July 9 meeting. Commissioner Kincaid seconded the motion. The vote was taken, with all in favor. Motion carried.**

At the last Park Board meeting, Commissioner Ramels noted that the Board's newest member, Jourdan Keith, is a former Seattle poet laureate. She asked Commissioner Keith to share a haiku at each of the Board's meetings and Commissioner Keith shared the first one at this meeting.

Commissioner Ramels also requested to clarify, and state for the record, the outcome of the Board's discussion and vote on use of synthetic turf, held at the July 9 meeting. Three components of the policy were voted on as separate issues. Two of the motions on those components had a tie vote, resulting in failure of the motion. The third died from lack of a second. Commissioner Ramels did not state the outcome of the vote on these at the July 9 meeting.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Gallagher reported on several park items. For more information on Seattle Parks and Recreation, visit the web pages at <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/>.

Dahl Playground Update: Commissioner Kostka attended a recent community meeting regarding the skatepark at Dahl Playground, and the community was upset with a change in the design. The Department held a second community meeting to present a new design and will do some additional minor tweaks to the design, with construction to begin in the near future.

Commissioner Kostka asked if the revised location suits the park neighbors. Superintendent Gallagher responded that it is nearer the basketball court and configured into a tighter space away from the wading pool and nearby homes. General consensus was reached on the new design, with a couple park neighbors not in agreement.

Aquarium Management Update: Negotiations continue between Seattle Parks and the Seattle Aquarium Society (SEAS) to enable SEAS to take over management of the Aquarium. Aquarium staff are now members of the City's retirement system and Parks staff are working with both the Department of Labor and the Internal Revenue Service to determine if they may legally remain in the system. Superintendent Gallagher and SEAS members will meet with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) next week to discuss this. An area of concern is how to pay for maintenance and capital projects, as both donations to the Aquarium and Real Estate Excise Taxes, which helps fund Aquarium projects, are down due to the current economy.

Bell Street Green Street: City Council has approved the funding for this project. A community festival was held two weeks ago to celebrate the project, with a good turnout. This project will transform four blocks of Bell Street from First to Fifth Avenues into a "park boulevard" with improved landscaping, better lighting, and more open space. The project converts one traffic lane and reconfigures parking to create a park-like corridor through the heart of Belltown. Other communities are now requesting that streets in their area also be "greened."

Ways to Gain New Open Space: Superintendent Gallagher has asked Parks staff to compute the amount of park acreage gained from lidded areas, such as the I-90 lid and Freeway Park. Parks is also looking at how many more acres are gained as open space when park roads are closed.

Joint Use Agreement with Seattle School District(SSD): Deputy Superintendent Williams is working on the agreement for how SSD and Parks share schools and parks when their property is adjoining. Both the Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent will meet with top school officials in the near future.

South Park Update: Superintendent Gallagher commented that this area of the city has had a very difficult week, with two women brutally attacked in their home, located very near South Park Community Center. One of the women died in the street in front of her home. A vigil was held in their honor at the community center.

He added that the Department is expanding the Late Night program at the community center. This will begin in mid-August and last for 12 weeks.

Magnuson: Construction plans are slowly moving ahead at Buildings 11 and 27, with the deed restriction at Building 27 going before City Council in the near future for consideration.

Commissioner Kincaid asked about the status of artists who rent space at Magnuson. The Superintendent responded that the City's Department of Finance has determined that Building 30 will not have repairs this year and the artists are still at Building 11. They will move to Building 2 when construction begins at Building 11. Parks staff evaluated moving the artists to the now-vacant Viewlands Elementary School building; however, only six of the artists were interested in re-locating to that site.

Commissioner Kincaid asked if the Department will protect the cliff swallows that nest at Building 27. The Superintendent responded that Parks will follow all regulations.

Historic Designation Application for Magnuson Park: The application to designate Magnuson Park as a national historic site will be submitted on August 14. There are some benefits to this designation and some drawbacks, too, as tearing down a building is much more difficult in a historic area.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Holme on the large and unfunded financial liability of these buildings, Superintendent Gallagher responded that cost estimates are \$28 million to bring Building 2 to code, \$9 million to bring Building 9 to code, and \$500-750,000 to repair Building 18. Tearing down Building 18 is estimated to cost \$400,000.

Trust for Public Land Study: Seattle Parks is working with the Trust for Public Land on a study to determine the economic, health, and social values of parks, their role in crime reduction, etc. The study will begin in October and the Department will partner on this effort with Seattle Parks Foundation.

Staff Schedules/Fuel Use Update: Earlier this year, Grounds Maintenance staff's work shifts were extended to weekend coverage. Staff have had a positive response to the change.

The Department's goal to reduce fuel consumption is 10% by the end of the year and it appears very likely that this goal will be met, partially due to the no idling policy and other changes.

Lower Woodland Playfield Groundbreaking: This event was held on Monday. The Superintendent reported that the replacement of older lights at field #7 will reduce the energy requirements by 40-45%. And the conversion of two fields from sand/grass to synthetic will save one million gallons of water each year. Each of the fields used ½ million gallons of water annually.

Levy Projects Underway: The Department is only ten months into the new Parks and Greenspaces Levy and already has several of the larger projects under way.

Blue Angels: The Superintendent is one of the three lucky people whose application to fly with the Blue Angels during their visit to Seattle for SeaFair was accepted this year. His flight is on Monday, July 27, and leaves from Boeing Field.

Jefferson Park Reservoir: Responding to a question from Commissioner Holme whether the recent leaks that Seattle Public Utilities discovered will delay the project at this site, the Superintendent answered that it will not delay Park's portion of the project.

Arboretum Drive Closure: Commissioner Holme asked if an agreement has been finalized with the Arboretum Foundation on the permanent closure of Arboretum Drive. The Superintendent reported that the closure is going well and staff will send a copy of the new signage that is posted at the entrances.

Formal Complaint Line: Commissioner Barber asked if Seattle Parks has a formal complaint line. Deputy Superintendent Williams responded that there is a "How's My Driving" number on all of the Department's vehicles. [Note: the Department's main phone line is 206-684-4075.]

Oral Requests and Communication from the Audience

The Chair explained that this portion of the agenda is reserved for topics that have not had, or are not scheduled for, a public hearing. Speakers are limited to two minutes each and will be timed, and are asked to stand at the podium to speak. The Board's usual process is for 10 minutes of testimony to be heard at this time, with additional testimony heard after the regular agenda and just before Board of Park Commissioner's business. No one testified.

Briefing: Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center Operations

Earlier this year, Commissioners requested additional information on the Citizen's Task Force recommendations for the operation of this facility. Royal Alley-Barnes, manager of the Performing Arts Center, briefed the Board on its operations. Commissioners received a written briefing several days prior to this meeting and also toured the facility just before tonight's meeting. The written briefing is included below.

Written Briefing

Requested Board Action

The purpose of this briefing is to present the Department of Parks and Recreation's response to the 2008 Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center Citizen Task Force recommendations. No Board action is being requested.

Project Background

Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center (LHPAC) is housed in what was formerly the Jewish Synagogue of Chevra Bikur Cholim, a landmark building completed in 1915. LHPAC was established in the building in 1969 as a creative cultural arts center under the Model Cities, Urban Renewal program. Created to provide a cultural institution in Seattle's Central Area, LHPAC has been at the core of experimental, cutting edge, traditional, and emerging art forms for more than 30 years. LHPAC became a program of Seattle Parks and Recreation in 1972. For youth, LHPAC provides a place where the performing arts are a key to developing knowledge and life-long skills that will serve them in the world at large while creating cultural understanding and pride. The summer youth musical is a transformational experience for the many young people involved and a delight for Seattle audiences.

The mission of the Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center is:

Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center celebrates, nurtures, presents and preserves African American performing arts and cultural legacies.

Beyond the mission, LHPAC offers an opportunity for all citizens of Seattle, from diverse backgrounds, to experience and engage in the performing arts. Recent offerings include a partnership with the Seattle Youth Employment Program that provides valuable work experience and training in cultural leadership, creative writing, dance, theater, and theater production; a production of "Callejon," an original bilingual musical based on Afro-Peruvian dances and rhythms; and "Hip Hop: Back to its Roots," an in-depth look at violence in our community, its root causes and opportunities for prevention. The center has a rich history of international theater performances, most recently by the Russian Community Theater Group, led by Pavel Sergeev; Sub Rosa, performed by Cherrone Wong; and Khamelion Theater, led by Igor Musiyenko.

The primary space in the building is the theater space, which has fixed seats with a capacity of 285 individuals. Within the lower part of the building is a large activity hall which can accommodate almost 300 individuals.

The Superintendent of Parks and Recreation convened the 11-member Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center (LHPAC) Citizen Task Force in June 2008 "to consider how to best sustain LHPAC as a vital asset to the greater Seattle area community." The decision to form the Task Force originated from an independent review of LHPAC focusing on organizational goals, purpose and vision. Creating a task force was the recommended method to increase community involvement, bring in arts experts and to develop a series of recommendations that could be used as a road map by Parks and LHPAC staffs.

The Task Force was comprised of individuals with expertise in the performing arts, community development, funding and management and with strong representation by the African American community. Three key objectives were identified:

1. Make the highest and best use of City of Seattle resources related to LHPAC;

2. Preserve long term sustainability of the physical facility for Seattle and LHPAC; and
3. Create long term program and mission sustainability for LHPAC.

The Task Force charge was to recommend changes to the existing business and management model for LHPAC. Toward that end, the Task Force reviewed current programs, services and business practices at comparable organizations in the region. It explored how the current approach at LHPAC might have an impact on Parks' ability to sustain quality programming to a diverse community. And, it identified key challenges or inherent conflicts in six categories, including 1) programming; 2) facility; 3) staffing; 4) support/funding/resources; 5) audience; and 6) governance.

That information, along with a Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis served as the basis for the Task Force's recommendations. The Task Force presented its report and recommendations to the Superintendent in December 2008.

LHPAC Task Force Recommendations

The Task Force made 14 recommendations split into five sections. The following is a complete list of the recommendations separated into those recommendations with which the Superintendent concurred; those with which the Superintendent generally concurred, but clarification was needed; and those with which the Superintendent did not concur. (Please see Attachment A for the list of recommendations in the original order.)

A. Task Force Recommendations Approved by the Superintendent:

Section 1 - Implementation

1. Create an "Implementation Working Group" to direct the process of implementation and to insure the participation of relevant stakeholders.
2. Adjust the Parks and Recreation Department responsibilities and requirements of LHPAC leadership staff to permit adequate time to undertake the implementation steps outlined in the recommendations.

Section 2 – Facility

1. The facility should be a performing arts center.
2. Parks and Recreation should retain responsibility for the physical facility.

Section 3 – Program

5. LHPAC focuses on the performing arts mission and vision as presented to the Task Force.
6. LHPAC should provide a range of mission-related performing arts programs suitable to adult, youth and family participants.
7. LHPAC will select and manage partners or other presenters for programs in the building.

B. Task Force Recommendations Approved by the Superintendent with Clarification:

Section 5 – Funding and Staffing

10. Develop and implement a staffing plan, job titles and position descriptions to reflect and align with performing arts mission and function as soon as possible.
11. The City of Seattle should strive to provide a dedicated, ongoing source of operating support for LHPAC. City support should include funding of some staff positions at LHPAC. While City funding might be variable over time, a baseline level of ongoing operating support from the City should assure that this unique Seattle asset is sustained.

CLARIFICATION: Parks and Recreation management staff provides for operational organization. This includes staffing, work plans and functional alignments of assigned staff responsibilities to support the mission. The Parks 2009-2010 operating budget for LHPAC includes no decrease from the adopted 2007-2008 budget. As in previous years, LHPAC's financial growth capacity continues to be in its earned revenue generation through fee-based programs, rentals, grants, sponsors and gifts.

C. Task Force Recommendations Not Approved by the Superintendent:

Section 2 -- Facility

3. LHPAC should provide the building management for the facility, serving as liaison to Parks and Recreation regarding physical facility issues. LHPAC should be the sole and primary tenant of the facility, with discretion to have additional tenants in the building, if such tenancy supports the mission and vision of LHPAC.
4. A formal agreement should be created defining the boundaries of facility responsibility between Parks and Recreation or the City of Seattle and LHPAC

REASON FOR NOT APPROVING: Responsibility for the facility maintenance and management is already in place as part of Parks' work program. Parks has the history, expertise and policy basis for this management responsibility. Parks management will make certain the responsibility of LHPAC volunteers and Parks' staff is clear.

Section 4 - Governance

8. LHPAC should be governed by an independent entity, non-profit or similar, with a LHPAC Board of Directors (or similar) providing full governance responsibility.
9. LHPAC should establish a new Langston Hughes Performing Arts fund or foundation to be managed by the Board of LHPAC to enhance sustainable fundraising.

REASON FOR NOT APPROVING: While establishing a Foundation may be an important goal which we support, this Task Force report does not include any of the legal, economic or operational analyses needed to determine final LHPAC governance structure or timeline. The LHPAC Implementation Work Group – which we have recommended -- can be charged with developing detailed analyses, recommendations, plans and timelines concerning governance options.

LHPAC will continue as a unit in Seattle Parks and Recreation. Parks provides basic financial, facility maintenance, staffing and other operational support. Parks supports development of the organizational capacity of the LHPAC toward a potential future goal of such a governance model. The relationship between LHPAC and the Associated Recreation Council (ARC) has been strained due to financial and management issues; however, ARC currently has a valuable role to play as a financial agent, supporter of artistic talent and provision of financial and accounting services to help LHPAC strengthen its financial acumen. Parks' management will work closely with LHPAC staff to strengthen understanding and use of ARC and Parks resources.

Section 5 – Funding and Staffing

12. The Department of Parks and Recreation may fund specific LHPAC programs via a direct contract for services with LHPAC.

REASON FOR NOT APPROVING: No contract is needed for Parks and LHPAC programs. Clear expectations on shared programming can be done with a one page Memorandum of Agreement.

Implementation Status

The Implementation Working Group contacts are underway. To date only four persons have responded to the invitation letter sent by the Parks Superintendent. Staff are resetting the first meeting date to late August or mid-September to give invitees more time to work around their summer obligations and to identify other potential members. The approved Task Force recommendations about facility, cooperation with the Associated Recreation Council and Parks and staff continuous improvements have been implemented. A status report is going to the Allen Foundation on the specific Task Force recommendations that have been implemented to date.

Public Involvement Process

The LHPAC Citizen Task Force Meetings were focused on examining internal staffing, operating, program and governance issues. They were not public meetings. The Citizen Task Force Report Recommendations and the Superintendent's approved final recommendations are public documents.

Issues

Citizen Concerns/Opposition. There are no citizen concerns or opposition to the Task Force Report Recommendations that we are aware of.

Budget

The Paul G. Allen Family Foundation provided a 2006 Capacity Building Grant for the Task Force Project. To date \$16,000 of the \$20,000 grant has been expended. Staff will work with the Foundation to use the remainder of the funds to support the Citizen Implementation Work Group and to jump start the process for a LHPAC Board Development process.

Schedule

| Activity | Implementation |
|---|--------------------------|
| Completion of Citizen Task Force Recommendations | 12/5/08 |
| Identification of Implementation Work Group | March /09 |
| Superintendent approved Task Force recommendations/response | March /09 |
| Superintendent approval Implementation Work Group Invitees | March /09 |
| Task Force Implementation Work Group – Citizen Report Follow-up | July /09 – Dec '10 |
| LHPAC Seismic Specifications/construction contract award* | December 2009 |
| Closure LHPAC for Seismic Upgrade | 2010 |
| Relocation LHPAC staff and programs | 2010 |
| Reopen LHPAC | 2011 |
| Develop Methodology and Letters of Qualifications for LHPAC Board Members | 2 nd Qtr 2011 |

*The 2008 Parks and Green Spaces Levy provides funding for seismic and electrical upgrades. Information about the project can be found at: http://www.seattle.gov/parks/projects/langston_hughes/.

Additional Information Royal Alley-Barnes, Executive Director LHPAC
Royal.alley-barnes@seattle.gov
206-423-5937

Verbal Briefing/Discussion

Ms. Barnes introduced Jackie Moscou, Artistic Director at the Center. She next showed a Powerpoint presentation and reviewed much of the information in the written briefing paper. In addition, she described a number of the events held at the facility, which have included:

Gala events, including: (1) Illuminating Langston; (2) African American Film Festival; (3) Callejon; and (4) Summer Musical (2009's event will be "Bobos"). She also listed other events, including DASS Dance group, Beyond One Language, Latino film festival, UW World Music Series, America for Arts, and distributed flyers for several events. This fall the Center will present "Obama on My Mind" which had its debut in London earlier this year.

Commissioners thanked Ms. Barnes for the tour and for the briefing.

Briefing: Youth Violence Prevention Initiative (YVPI)

Royal Alley-Barnes, Parks Lead for the YVPI, and Jeron Gates, Senior Coordinator for both the Garfield Campus and YVPI, briefed the Board on the City and Department's efforts on the Initiative. Prior to this meeting, Commissioners received a written briefing and visited with three of the City's partners: Rainier Vista Boys and Girls Club, Alive and Free Program, and Making a Difference (MAD).

Written Briefing

Requested Board Action

The purpose of this briefing is to present Parks and Recreation's role in the Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative. No Board action is being requested.

Project Description and Background

Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative

The Seattle Youth Violence Prevention Initiative (YVPI), proposed last fall by Mayor Nickels and approved by the City Council as part of the 2009/2010 budget, sets new directions by identifying and helping children who are at vulnerable points in their lives. City-wide, the YVPI includes more than \$7 million to establish programs and services to prevent youth violence. It will focus on about 800 children a year who are at highest risk of perpetuating violence or becoming victims. More detailed information about the initiative is available at <http://www.seattle.gov/mayor/issues/youthInitiative/>.

Specifically, the initiative will:

- Assist youth with repeat offenses re-enter society from state detention programs;
- Provide alternatives for youth who are arrested for crimes, but released because they don't meet the admission criteria for county detention;
- Help middle-school truants and students at risk of suspension stay in school and succeed; and
- Prevent victims of violence and their friends and relatives from continuing the cycle of violence through retaliation.

Initiative efforts are coordinated through three neighborhood networks in southeast, southwest and central Seattle, where indicators of future violent behaviors, such as discipline rates in schools, are the highest. These youth-focused networks will coordinate services around each child, tailoring programs to each young person's needs.

The initiative includes approximately \$3.5 million in re-directed programs and about \$5.5 million in new spending over the next two years. With a goal of cutting in half the number of incidents of youth violence within its first full year of operation, the initiative will include strict measures of accountability at two levels – whether neighborhoods and schools are safer, and whether individual lives are transformed as measured by results, such as school performance and recidivism.

The goals of the Initiative are:

- A 50% reduction in court referrals for juvenile crimes against persons committed by youth residing in the Central Area, Southeast Area, and Southwest Area Networks, and

- A 50% reduction in the number of suspensions/expulsions due to violence-related incidents at Denny, Aki Kurose, Madrona K-8, Madison, Mercer, and Washington Middle Schools.

Parks and Recreation YVPI Youth Centers

The City of Seattle and Seattle Parks and Recreation embraces community capacity building and the notion of “Beloved Communities”. The onset of current youth violence is contrary to keeping our youth safe and supporting their futures. Seattle Parks and Recreation will use existing Parks’ facilities and YVPI funds to establish three Youth Centers within the neighborhood network areas identified in the initiative. These Youth Centers will be located at Garfield Teen Life Center (Central Network), Rainier Community Center (SE Network), and Southwest Teen Life Center (SW Network). After these facilities close each day for their regular programming they will “morph” into YVPI Youth Centers. The Youth Center strategies are focused on the following outcomes:

- Youth-developed programs focused on meeting needs identified by youth within the four priority populations;
- Grassroots collaborative partnerships with community organizations already serving priority youth populations;
- Relevant youth programs encouraging positive civic engagements by youth placed at risk for violence;
- Appropriately sensitive racial, ethnic, and cultural awareness mentoring components;
- Selective collecting and sharing of data with service providers;
- On-site office and meeting space for outreach workers and case managers who engage directly with youth; and
- Aggressive planning to address transportation challenges to help community partners access extended hours programs.

These facilities will provide safe zones for youth and will be systemic attractions that will include recreational programs, pro-social skills development and access to evidence-based agency programs.

Further, our YVPI programs will conduct outreach to community-based organizations that already are performing the violence prevention work with the Initiatives’ priority population.

Seattle Parks and Recreation youth violence prevention staff will actively work with neighborhood network providers to look at new and innovative approaches to outreach to the priority population to align programs and services to meet the needs. Our approach will focus on establishing relationships with Émigré Leaders and Service providers to engage youth and families in the recreation programs and many services provided throughout the initiative. Through collaborative efforts we will work to actively increase staff awareness on positive youth development and best practices on customer service when interacting with the initiatives priority population.

Implementation Status

The process to hire three new YVPI Program Coordinators is underway, with the new staff expected to be on board by late July when the three Youth Centers are scheduled to open. The process to develop agreements with community based organizations to support Youth Center programming is ongoing, with 5 drafted and 10 in negotiation. The YVPI Memorandum of Agreement with the City’s Office for Education requires Parks to complete 10 community-based organization agreements by year end 2009. Three new Americorps positions will also be hired to support Youth Centers by September 2009.

Strategic Action Plan

The YVPI is a key component of Goal 2, Strategic Initiatives D and E of Parks and Recreation’s Strategic Action Plan:

Goal 2: Provide Recreation and Learning Opportunities

D.1: Partner with other City departments and organizations to create a citywide strategy that supports youth and teen development including (i) creating and implementing a prevention, maintenance, and intervention program for youth, (ii) working with city and parks staff to standardize those programs, (iii) working with partner agencies to offer their service at Teen centers and late night programs, and (iv) creating programs that build self esteem and other developmental assets needed for youth to make positive choices.

E.2: Integrate health, environmental stewardship and creativity into programming by collaborating with Seattle Public Schools to provide integrated programs and facilities that support academic and personal achievement for youth and teens.

Public Involvement Process

The Youth Violence Prevention Initiative has held many meetings with community organizations, faith based organizations and youth that helped aid in the implementation of the initiative. There will continue to be ongoing meetings to evaluate its appropriateness and effectiveness once the initial roll out is complete.

Issues

There are no specific Youth Center related issues at this time.

Budget

The Youth Violence Prevention Initiative in 2009 has allocated \$157,000 for 3 Youth Violence Prevention Coordinators. These position will staff the Youth Centers' extended program hours and develop programs in coordination with community based organizations and Network leads. There is also approximately \$93,000 for recreational programs and services.

Additional Information

Royal Alley-Barnes
Executive Director LHPAC
Parks Lead YVPI
Royal.alley-barnes@seattle.gov
206-423-5937

Jeron A. Gates, Youth Violence Prevention Coordinator
Jeron.gates@seattle.gov
206-255-4051

Verbal Briefing/Board Discussion

Ms. Barnes introduced Jeron Gates, who reviewed information in the written briefing and gave additional information. Commissioners had a number of questions on the program.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Ramels on whether the Department has a target number of named youth it hopes to reach, Mr. Gates responded there is a goal of 850 named youth. Names will come from school emphasis offices, outreach workers, YVPI coordinators, case managers, and probation officers. Commissioner Ramels next asked if the program will be available to youth who are not named by the above groups. Mr. Gates answered that the goal is to do so. Capacity is limited at this time; however, the City is working to expand the capacity.

Commissioner Keith asked if other community-based organizations are involved and for the timeframe of the program. Mr. Gates responded that staff are doing outreach to community-based organizations and the Mayor's youth council. This is a two-year initiative. The official launch is in August, but some services are

already up and running. The youth centers will be open the second week in August. Commissioner Keith next asked how staff will measure the success of the program. Mr. Gates answered that success will be measured by reducing violent crimes, increasing youth involvement, and building community capacity.

Commissioner Barber asked whether gangs are resistant to this initiative, as some of the area is claimed as "gang turf." Mr. Gates responded that Seattle Police Department, and not Parks, will deal with this issue. Ms. Barnes added this is a complicated question.

Commissioner Holme voiced concern for Parks facility staff when kids run to the centers for safety from shootings [http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2008528713_webshooting16m.html]. He asked what type of safety training Parks staff at these facilities receive. Mr. Gates commended the Garfield Community Center staff, as they had youth run to their facility for protection during a December shooting. Facility staff are trained in lock down protocol. Seattle Police gang unit give training and the Tacoma mall shooting has been used as a learning tool to help respond to emergencies. Staff are scheduled for additional training Monday-Wednesday, July 27-29. Ms. Barnes added that when the Teen Life Centers convert at night to youth centers, Seattle Police Department will assign staff to the facilities for the late night activities. Kids are asking the City to provide safe places and the community centers are some of the safe places. However, the community must also be involved in this effort. In addition, information on how to dial for help at 9-1-1 is posted in 11 languages at the Centers.

Commissioner Holme asked if there is in-house training and Ms. Barnes responded that there is both in-house training and outside trainers are brought in, too.

Commissioner Kostka asked how youth will respond/communicate with Parks staff. Ms. Barnes answered that staff are using ways that youth currently use to communicate, including Twitter, Facebook, e-mail, text messages, and by phone.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Kincaid whether religious organizations have been contacted for their involvement, Ms. Barnes responded yes, and added that their support is critical to this effort. Mr. Gates referred to "Faith, Fathers, and Families" as one example.

Commissioner Holme noted that this program targets one of three sections of the city. He asked if incidents increase in other parts of the city whether the program will be broadened. Mr. Gates responded that there are no plans for the program to expand to North Seattle at this time. Deputy Superintendent Williams added that this initiative was developed on incident patterns and behaviors. During the first three-four months of 2009, six youth were killed by gun violence in Southeast Seattle. He noted that cities all over the country are trying to deal with this increase in youth violence.

Under this new approach, a number of other City departments are involved and working closely together. Previously, Seattle Police dealt with most of the gang violence. He believes that the YVPI is on the right track and will be adjusted as it is implemented.

Ms. Barnes stated that she and Mr. Gates will come back to the Board with an update briefing on how the program is progressing. They will bring some of the youth to talk to the Commissioners on how the program is helping. Commissioners thanked Mr. Gates and Ms. Barnes for the tour and for the briefing and look forward to hearing the results of this program.

Old/New Business

Committee Reports: Commissioner Adams represents the Board on the Associated Recreation Council (ARC). He reported that ARC is looking at ways to better market their services. They currently don't have a good market plan, especially at community centers that don't have a lot of programming. This is a timely issue.

Board Operations: Commissioner Ramels noted that at the last Board meeting, the Board briefly discussed how it can best serve Seattle Parks and what does the Parks Department want from the Board. How can the Board be most effective? Since then, she and Vice-Chair Adams have scheduled a meeting with the Superintendent to discuss some of the Board's operations.

She noted that Commissioners Jourdan and Keith suggested that the Board's agenda include Old/New Business early in the meeting, rather than at the end as it currently does. The Board also mentioned having a mid-year retreat to focus on Board operations.

Commissioner Adams asked what the Board would gain by moving Old/New Business to the beginning of the agenda. Commissioner Ramels responded that Commissioners Keith and Kincaid believe that the Board is tired by the time Old/New Business is discussed and there is a lack of time to really discuss the topics.

Commissioner Holme responded that he has strong reservations to making this change. The extra time on tonight's agenda for Old/New Business is a luxury. Old/New Business is the Board's internal work and the briefings and public hearings are public business. He believes that the agenda should be scheduled so that Parks staff can present information to the Board, answer questions, and be allowed to leave. Commissioner Ramels suggested trying the suggestion at the August 13 meeting, as it has fewer agenda topics than usual. Commissioner Holme suggested that, instead of having the Board's business at the beginning of the meeting, that staff schedule a very light agenda once each quarter and allow extra time for Old/New Business at its regular place on the agenda. Some of the public are there to give testimony and may want to leave after doing so. Commissioner Keith responded that much of the Board's Old/New Business is in response to the testimony. She believes that having the Board's Old/New Business after Oral Testimony would be beneficial to the public. Commissioner Kincaid added that it would be very interesting to try the change and see if works.

Commissioner Adams agreed with Commissioner Holme and added that, even if Commissioners are tired by the time they get to Old/New Business, they must keep in mind that all the agenda is important. It doesn't have to be near the beginning of the meeting to be useful. He prefers to keep the order of the agenda as it is currently structured. He would, however, like to have a conversation on better management of the number of topics that are scheduled so the Board has adequate time for its discussions.

Deputy Superintendent Williams noted that it could be helpful for the public to hear the Board's discussion on their Oral Communications. Parks will work with the Chair and Vice-chair to re-structure the agendas so there is more discussion time.

Commissioner Barber moved that the agenda for one meeting only (August 13) be a trial with Old/New Business to immediately follow Oral Communications. Commissioner Jourdan seconded. The vote was taken with Commissioners Barber, Holme, Keith, Kincaid, and Kostka voting in favor. Commissioner Adams opposed. Motion carried.

There being no other new business, the meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

APPROVED: _____
Jackie Ramels, Chair
Board of Park Commissioners

DATE _____