

Board of Park Commissioners  
Meeting Minutes  
May 26, 2005

***Board of Park Commissioners:***

Present: Kate Pflaumer, Chair  
Angela Belbeck  
Terry Holme

Excused: Jack Collins  
Debbie Jackson  
Amit Ranade

Temporary  
Leave: Joanna Grist

***Seattle Parks and Recreation Staff:***

Ken Bounds, Superintendent  
Mariella Cacadac, Acting Coordinator

Commission Vice-chair Terry Holme called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. A brief discussion was held on whether a quorum was present. As a quorum was not present, the May 12 minutes will be approved at the June 9 meeting.

**Superintendent's Report**

Superintendent Bounds reported on the following:

Green Lake Looking Good: The water clarity is outstanding. Secchi (transparency) depth is nearly 20 feet this spring!

Pro Parks Oversight Committee Opportunity Fund Recommendations: At its May 23 meeting, the Pro Parks Levy Oversight Committee voted on its recommendations for the Levy's Opportunity Fund. In 2002 the Committee recommended first round allocations of \$6 million from the \$10 million fund. For the second round, the Committee received 36 applications requesting \$13 million. The Committee's review included two public open houses, a public hearing, and a tour of all of the proposed project sites. Recommended projects include funding for a new park in the 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue neighborhood and development funding for several parks acquired with first round allocations.

Canada Goose Management: The first of three regional counts was last week. While not a true census, it is an indicator of the goose population. With most sites reporting, the total number of geese counted was 355 compared to 333 for the same date in 2004. Gosling population is up 9% with 104 compared to 95 at this time last year. Our efforts with PAWS and the Humane Society to encourage relocation away from recreation areas continue.

International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD): The Aquarium's IMBD celebration on May 14 drew more than 3,000 visitors who went bird watching in the bird exhibits, made crafts, sampled shade-grown coffee, and learned about bird migration and history. Visitors also enjoyed two raptor presentations with raptors from the Sarvey Wildlife Center.

City Hall Park Improvements: Parks staff attended the final meeting of the Downtown Emergency Service Center Advisory Committee to ensure coordination with that group's recommendations for mitigating the impacts of the

Emergency Service Center in the Morrison Hotel. The committee is generally recommending that Parks improve Prefontaine Plaza and City Hall Park. King County is reviewing a preliminary draft scope of work to help define the County's role in identifying and implementing physical and programmatic improvements to the park.

Mounger Pool Open for Business: Summer is officially here now that Mounger Pool is operating seven days a week. While off to a slow start due to the weather, early swim lesson enrollment is higher than that of past years and in partnership with Seattle Public Schools, 150 children from Blaine Elementary are currently participating in swim lessons as part of their physical education program. This partnership is keeping the pool busy during a lower use periods and helping children gain swimming skills while having a fun experience.

Parks Takes Lead on LEEDs: In partnership with the University of Washington graduate student (and former City Assistant Prosecuting Attorney) Trish Byers, Parks is finalizing design standards for crime deterrence measures. These design standards reconcile crime deterrence with ecological goals and include specific strategies for common park facilities such as parking lots, play areas, and comfort stations.

The After School Activities Program (ASAP): The ASAP Showcase drew 260 youth who displayed the skills and talents learned during the course of the school year before a packed house. The 17 after-school program sites produced an impressive line of talents that included playing marimbas, video production, scrap booking, cartooning, step teaming, break dancing, cultural dance, and jazz band jiving. These enrichment activities are designed to align with the academic school day and to enhance family involvement. It was a great balance of hard work, teamwork, and lots of fun.

6000 Trout Delivered to Green Lake: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife authorized the addition of 6,000 donated fish to Green Lake. They come from Trout Lodge, a nonprofit that cooperates with Fish and Wildlife. The trout are brood stock from Soap Lake, one to two pounds, and they're already drawing fishers to Green Lake!

Park Uniforms for Pro Parks Enhanced Maintenance Crews: Pro Parks maintenance crews who work the late shift in Parks throughout the City will begin wearing a Park uniform this week. Previously, only the Downtown Park crews have worn uniforms. The main reason for this change is to aid the public in identifying Park staff for enhanced customer service purposes and to add a feeling of respect and safety for Park employees working second shift maintenance.

Environmental Stewardship Initiative: The annual Seattle Prep School "Ivy Out" volunteer event was held at Interlaken Park on May 25. Between 350 and 400 students participate in this annual event to removing ivy from natural areas.

Seattle Works Projects in Southeast Seattle: Over 60 volunteers from Amazon.com and a local church joined Parks staff last Saturday at Genesee Park to pull weeds, dig tree wells, and spread mulch. In addition to this successful event, other volunteer teams removed invasive plants at Beer Sheva Park and pulled weeds at the Children's Garden located in Mt. Baker Park.

Pacific Northwest Youth Rowing Championships: Last weekend, 256 teens representing Seattle Parks and Recreation competed in the annual regional youth championship rowing regatta on Vancouver Lake in Vancouver, Washington. Despite the poor weather, five crews from Green Lake Small Craft Center and Mount Baker Rowing and Sailing Center earned the opportunity to compete in the National Youth Championships to be held in Cincinnati on June 11 and 12.

Step up and Speak Out: This May 18 event, held at Langston Hughes, was a memorable day. Over 100 students and educators, along with several community representatives and collaborators, spent an entire day participating in interactive workshops that addressed the many issues youth face about violence. Topics included suicide prevention, domestic violence, the power of words, images of women in the media, and violence in our schools and neighborhoods. The day ended with several performances by youth and community artists which received a standing ovation.

Beach Fires: Parks' efforts will focus on Golden Gardens by adopting a rule to regulate fuel to use. Staff will define the legal fuel types to be used. Once the rule is in place, staff will have some authority to inform people not to bring certain

items for burning. Vehicle access at Golden Gardens will also be limited. Staff will stop visitors at the park entrance and give them information about beach fires. This will be done five days a week. The fire rings will be removed from Golden Garden Park June 7-14 for a clean up and to signal a change.

Adam Cole, of the Environmental Stewardship Program, noted that a key staff person at Alki Beach Park, Ted Baker, has transferred to Northwest District and will be working at Golden Gardens. He managed successful beach fire compliance at Alki and hopes to have the same success at Golden Gardens. Regarding the dissemination of information about beach fire rules, all information will be in the Park brochure. Also, there will be two open houses, one at Golden Gardens and the other at Alki Beach Park so the public can come and ask questions about management efforts. A report will be coming out in November and a copy will be sent to the Board of Park Commissioners. In addition, two weeks ago a news release was issued, and one week ago posters were placed at Golden Gardens and Alki and in nearby community centers. Parks is enlisting help from the Police and Fire Departments to get the word out. In response to a Commissioner question, Mr. Cole stated that removal of the fire rings at Golden Gardens is temporary.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Longfellow Creek Legacy Trail: Longfellow Creek Legacy Trail will be dedicated on Saturday, June 4, at 10:00 a.m.

Carkeek Park Trail: Carkeek Park Trail will be dedicated on Saturday, June 4, at 12:30 p.m.

Arboretum: A celebration to honor Dr. John Wott is scheduled for Saturday, June 4, at 2:00 p.m.

## **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 three minutes each and will be timed. The Board's usual process is for 15 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 signed up to testify.

## **Briefing: Pro Parks Levy Projects**

### **Overview**

Michael Shiosaki, Pro Parks Levy Development Projects Manager, and Donald Harris, Pro Parks Levy Property Management & Acquisition Services Manager, briefed the Board on the Pro Parks Levy. Prior to the meeting the Board received a copy of the "Pro Parks Report to Citizens 2005 Annual Newsletter", a list of Development Project Completions through 2004, 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Status Report of Named Development Projects, Pro Parks Acquisition Project Completions through 2004, and 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Status of Acquisition Projects.

Mr. Shiosaki provided a brief overview of the acquisition and development portions of the Pro Parks Levy which amount to about 70% of the overall Levy. In November 2000 voters approved the Pro Park Levy which allocated \$198.2 million for Park improvements citywide. This included funding for acquisition, development, programming, Zoo, and enhanced maintenance. Within the Levy, \$102.8 million was allotted for development projects. There are 95 named development projects which include trail projects, many neighborhood parks improvements, Department of Transportation Trails and Parks trails, and major park development like South Lake Union and Jefferson Park. In addition to that there is \$26 million for acquisition, which is made up into two sub categories, \$16 million for neighborhood parks, and \$10 million for green spaces acquisition. Last in the acquisition in the development portion is \$10 million in the Opportunity Fund that was set aside for projects throughout the city that were not identified when the Levy was put together. Superintendent Ken Bounds mentioned the second round of the Opportunity Fund that was just completed by the Pro Parks Levy Oversight Committee. The Committee recommended 17 additional development projects and four areas for acquisition.

Mr. Shiosaki stated that the Department has completed 43 of 95 named projects. In addition, 39 are in planning, design, or construction, which means that 82 projects are underway or completed. In addition to that Parks will start four additional projects this year which will leave only nine to start in 2006 and 2007.

Parks has acquired nine of the eighteen neighborhood park sites and twelve acres of green space. In the first round of the Opportunity Fun, six of the seven development projects have been completed and five of the twelve acquisitions are done.

### **Development Project Highlights**

A couple of the largest projects of the levy are in project design or in planning and design:

Montlake Community Center and Laurelhurst Community Center will be undergoing improvement and expansion — these are Pro Parks community center projects, not part of the Community Center Levy. These projects will both go out for bid later this year or early next year for construction in 2006. Both will add about 4,000 to 5,000 square feet to the existing buildings.

Ballard Common Park, the site of the former Ballard skate bowl, is under way. Demolition started about two weeks ago. A new bowl will be added to this site. The development will go out for bid in early June and construction will start in July, with completion scheduled for the end of the year.

Magnuson Park Sports Meadow is being renovated with new irrigated natural turf and will include four soccer fields. There is no lighting in this area. The project is under construction and will be completed in July. It will then sit for a year to allow the turf to get established and is scheduled to open in July 2006.

Cal Anderson Park is on Capitol Hill just east of Seattle Central Community College. It is a new park being developed on top of the old Lincoln Reservoir. This has turned out to be a spectacular project adding a lot of useful, public green space. Park opening is scheduled for the middle to the end of September.

Northgate Community Center/Library/Park, east of the Northgate Mall, is now under construction and scheduled to open in March 2006.

Loyal Heights Playfield, south of the Loyal Heights Community Center, will be coming to the Park Board in July for a public hearing and recommendation. The playfield will change from natural turf to synthetic turf field. Additional public and project advisory team meetings are planned.

Magnolia Elementary, directly east of the old elementary school, is soon to be made into a new neighborhood park which will include a sport field. It has a spectacular view of downtown Seattle, Mt. Rainier, and Elliott Bay. There is some debate over the issue of sports field use vs. neighborhood park use within the community.

Uptown Park is a new park on the corner of Queen Anne Avenue and Roy Street in the Lower Queen Anne neighborhood. Right now it is a vacant site. The neighborhood is committed to raising additional funds for the project.

### ***Board Questions & Answers: Development Projects***

Commissioner Belbeck asked when construction would start at Loyal Heights Playfield. Mr. Shiosaki responded that it is slated for construction next year. Responding to another question from Commissioner Belbeck, Mr. Shiosaki described the view from the street at the new Northgate park as a flat pad that can be seen from the street, although the park itself has a fairly steep slope.

Commissioner Pflaumer asked what are the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) trails funded by the Levy. Mr. Shiosaki described the Chief Sealth Trail — which is in the south part of the City; the Beacon Hill Trail — which is under construction now with Sound Transit fill helping with trail construction; and the extension of the Burke Gilman Trail — where it ends at the Ballard Locks and goes to the end of Golden Gardens Park, and is also under construction. In addition, there is another section of the Burke Gilman Trail under construction, on the south side of Fremont westward toward Fisherman's Terminal.

A Commissioner questioned why these are Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) trails and not Seattle Parks trails. Mr. Shiosaki and Mr. Harris responded that what distinguished the SDOT trails is that they are located on street right-of-ways, in contrast to a Parks trail such as was constructed through the Longfellow Creek Drainage and connects to Parks' land. Parks tends to share the trails. For example, at the Burke Gilman Trail, Parks has responsibility for the landscape and SDOT has responsibility for the paved areas. Superintendent Bounds added that funding for the Chief Sealth Trail was partially from the Levy and also came from funds leveraged by SDOT, including fill from Sound Transit.

Commissioner Holme described the history of the old Colman School parking lot project which was part of the I-90 staging area during the construction for the freeway and then became a named Pro Parks project. There was some construction on the site but it has been dormant for awhile. He was unable to attend a recent meeting regarding this site and questioned what is happening there. Mr. Shiosaki stated that the recent meeting was to review the latest plan for the park, which is to have 35 permanent parking stalls, and to provide a green berm to connect to Sam Smith Park. The parking lot will be shared with Parks and the Urban League Project located next door. An additional entry will be added to the park in the future, but primarily the current project is improvement of the parking lot and better connection with Sam Smith Park. Commissioner Holme requested the updated plans for Colman at the next meeting.

Commissioner Holme would like the Board to be furnished with information about updated and completed projects, and a report on the amount of money that was leveraged. Mr. Harris responded that the leveraged numbers in acquisition will be in the range of \$31 million.

Mr. Harris further described the leveraging of Levy funds. The \$31 million leveraged is the total number for acquisition, and breaks down into four categories: Open Space, Neighborhood Parks, Green Spaces, and the Opportunity Fund. Staff expect the second round of the Opportunity Fund will generate another \$18 million from State, federal, and other City matching funds. There will be a graph in the annual report that outlines the leveraged funds. The Levy Annual Report will not be issued until the Oversight Committee approves it. Superintendent Bounds noted that there are two reports coming out. One is the annual report required by the Levy ordinance and the other is a mid-term summary report of all that has been accomplished. Mr. Harris noted that the donation for South Lake Union has not yet been received and has not been counted as part of the current leveraging. Staff expect to receive the money later this year.

A question was asked of Mr. Shiosaki about whether the Department has a standard for when porous concrete can be used in projects. Mr. Shiosaki responded that decisions are made on a case-by-case basis. There are lots of variables in making the decision, including the soil condition, whether additional water detention is required, and cost — as porous concrete costs significantly more than non-porous. In addition, not all contractors have the installation capabilities.

### **Acquisition Highlights**

Mr. Harris provided information about the acquisition program of the Levy. Since the information that was provided in writing to the Commissioners at the last meeting, the Department has acquired three more properties adjacent to the substation at the Nantes Sister City Park which substantially added to this park. Parks recently dedicated the Whittier site substation and is trying to acquire a house next door with the assistance of the Cascade Land Conservancy. In addition, Parks has acquired property in the Delridge Greenbelt and the Duwamish Head Greenbelt behind Salty's in West Seattle.

Some of the challenges Parks is facing with additional acquisition of open space are properties in the urban neighborhoods. In the Capitol Hill area the Levy identified two sites for acquisition, one on the east side of the Hill and one on the west. On the east side, Parks staff members have been working with Group Health Cooperative but have not yet had success at acquiring a parking lot that staff had expected the institution to declare as surplus. On the west side of the Hill the Levy included acquisition of a City Light substation. Parks concluded this was not a good site, in part because it is located about a block away from the Thomas Mini Park. Parks identified a better site, directly behind the

parking lot of the Starbucks located on Olive Way. Parks went through the community process to change sites, but when staff went back to the property owner he had changed his mind and was no longer interested in selling.

There is a similar situation on First Hill where the site identified in the Neighborhood Plan is a small 4,000 square foot property at Cherry and Terry. Parks is making an offer to the Philippine Counsel, which owns this property but are not optimistic, as there is also competition for the property with the Catholic Church.

The challenge with named properties that Parks has not been able to purchase is when to decide to reallocate the funds. Superintendent Bounds cited an additional constraint in Parks' attempt to purchase property. While the Levy funds are not constrained and can be used in condemnation, leveraged funds are generally limited and cannot be used in condemnation. If Parks had enough funding with just the Levy and did not need to leverage funding for these sites, condemnation could be used.

An additional acquisition challenge is with the Opportunity Fund projects. In three urban villages, the Denny Triangle, University District, and Pioneer Square/International District, no specific projects were included in the Levy. The first round of the Opportunity Fund allocated \$1 million for each of these neighborhoods without specific sites identified. Parks was able to double this money with funding from King County's Conservation Futures Tax, and now has \$6 million. The problem is that staff still have not been able to identify sites. Staff members have been working on targeted first priorities in each of these neighborhoods and have fallback properties if attainment of priority sites is unsuccessful. By the end of this year Parks will make a decision, to be certain that by the end of the Levy all the money is spent. Also, the Oversight Committee in the second round of the Opportunity Fund allocated \$500,000 for a park in First Hill, which is another rapidly-growing urban village with a lack of park space (described by citizens as "Squire Park without the park.") Parks faces the same challenge to identify and purchase a site here.

Superintendent Bounds noted the many successes of the Levy programs and complimented staff on their hard work. The Board thanked Mr. Shiosaki and Mr. Harris for the briefing.

## **Update Briefing: Association Recreation Council Operations**

Bill Keller, Association Recreation Council Director, came before the Board to give an update briefing on the Council's operations. The Board received both a written and verbal briefing.

### *Written Briefing*

#### **Purpose of Briefing**

This is a regular briefing of the Board of Park Commissioners on the current status of the Associated Recreation Council system, projects and activities. No action is requested.

#### **Background**

Advisory Councils are a vital part of the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation's program delivery system. Parks relies on hundreds of volunteer Advisory Council members for advice, assistance, and representation of the many Seattle communities. Currently there are 37 advisory councils operating within the Park system, primarily at community centers and pools. A typical example is the Queen Anne Community Center Advisory Council, providing programs and operating out of the community center.

Advisory Councils have been part of the citizen involvement process with Seattle Parks for many years. Original advisory councils were primarily concerned with recommending activities, programs, and classes to be offered in their respective communities. They served as volunteers for recreation events and reviewed programs and project plans with their Department counterparts. Their financial activities were very limited.

In 1971, Parks expanded the advisory council's financial role and the Councils became responsible for handling most of the funds generated by the programs it sponsored. Funds collected by the Councils were put back into programs without being part of the City's budgetary process. The responsibilities included sponsoring classes, activities and programs; hiring staff as instructors, child care workers, sports officials, etc. and making these decisions in partnership with Parks

staff.

In 1976, Seattle City Ordinance 105655 was passed, authorizing the DPR Superintendent to formally recognize Advisory Councils. This ordinance allowed Parks to more directly support the Advisory Council's work by providing space at Parks' facilities and made Parks services and supplies available to the Councils' programs.

The Associated Recreation Council (ARC) was formed in 1976 as a recommendation from the State Auditor. ARC serves as an umbrella organization for the advisory council system and provides a standardized accounting system for handling the Council's funds that meets both City and State legal requirements. ARC is comprised of a volunteer board made up of Council representatives and at-large members. ARC supports an office staff that handles financial transactions and record keeping for its member Councils.

**Snapshot for Year-end 2004:** (see audited financial report)

The Associated Recreation Council system had an active and successful year in 2004. The complete audited financial report is available upon request. Total revenue produced for the year was \$9,750,946. The system invested \$9,215,223 in Program expenses. \$1,151,877 was raised in grants and donations. The system employed 1,367 staff working in over 30 locations throughout the City.

**Representation:** (see attached list)

In 2004 the Associated Recreation Council system represented 37 advisory councils, 18 fiscal sponsorships, and 30 restricted fund accounts. From the 48 accounts that are not tied to an advisory council, ARC supported the following playground, park and building projects:

- Annie's Playground
- 4<sup>th</sup> & Ward Park
- Grand Army of the Republic Cemetery
- EC Hughes Playground
- Whale Tail Park
- Beer Sheva Playground
- Karen's Playground
- Montlake Community Center Building Fund
- Meadowbrook Community Center Annex
- Pinehurst Playground
- Ravenna Eckstein Playground
- Japanese Garden Fountain
- Mt. Baker Building Expansion
- Ravenna Playground
- Bayview-Kinear Park
- Sand Point Tennis Center

In addition, ARC supported the following community projects:

- Step Program (Steps Toward Environmental Partnerships)
- RecTech Community Center Computer Labs
- Heron Habitat Helpers
- Rainier Beach Back to School Bash
- Puget Sound Alliance for Community Technology

**Financial support: (see 2004 audited financial report)**

In 2004 the Associated Recreation Council system provided the following financial support to the partnership:

- \$280,132 in Class Participation Fees

- \$78,594 in Child Care scholarships
- \$52,700 in Opportunity Fund grants
  - Discovery Park \$4,000
  - South Park \$10,000
  - Rainier Beach \$5,000
  - Magnolia \$8,500
  - Jefferson \$10,000
  - Rainier \$10,000
  - Bitter Lake \$5,200

This year, ARC has committed to \$382,224 in Partnership support. The Opportunity Fund Grants will be awarded in the fall:

- \$195,000 in support of the Pyramid Project (\$75,000 in 05; \$120,000 in 06)
- \$49,760 + 15% contingency for the Summer Playground Program
- \$130,000 set aside in the Child Care Fund for Summer Day Camp and Before & After School Scholarships to be determined by application.

**Modernization**

Currently, ARC is involved in a partnership process to update and modernize its partnership to better meet the evolving needs of the community. A steering committee has been created to make recommendations to the Superintendent regarding the Associated Recreation Council system of governance, finance, personnel, and the relationship structure. The next scheduled meeting of the Steering Committee is May 25.

To date the Steering Committee has discussed the mission, vision, and values of the system and started a discussion about partnership roles and responsibilities. Due to the complex interaction of the partnership there is much to discuss.

**Additional Information**

Bill Keller is the Executive Director of the Associated Recreational Council, 684-7083.

**Associated Recreation Council**

**May-05**

**SPORTS**

**SPORTS UMPIRES**

**SPORTS YOUTH**

**SPORTS AFTER SCHOOL**

**JEFFERSON**

**JEFFERSON STE PROGRAM**

**CAMP LONG**

**SOUTHWEST**

**SW EC HUGHES PLAYGROUND**

**LANGSTON HUGHES**

**LH RESTRICTED FUNDS**

**MILLER**

**GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC**

**GARFIELD**

**GARFIELD POOL**

**GARFIELD TEEN LIFE CENTER**

**ALKI**

**ALKI WHALE TAIL**

**SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

**RAINIER BEACH**

**BEER SHEVA PLAYGROUND**

**RAINIER**

**RAINIER PROJECT COMPUTE**

**SEWARD PARK NATURE CENTER**

**TREC**

**BALLARD**

**BALLARD POOL**

**BALLARD LOWER WOODLAND**

**LOYAL HEIGHTS**

**MAGNOLIA**

**KARENS PLAYGROUND**

**QUEEN ANNE**

**QUEEN ANNE POOL**

**FRIENDS OF 4TH & WARD PARK**

**Q. A. SENIORS**

**HIAWATHA**

**SENIOR ADULTS**

**MEADOWBROOK**

**MEADOWBROOK POOL**

**MEADOWBROOK-TEEN**

**MEADOWBROOK-LATE NIGHT**

**MEADOWBROOK-ANNEX IMPROVEMENTS**

**FRIENDS OF ANNIE PLAYGROUND**

**MEADOWBROOK TRANSPORTATION**

**PROJECT**

**VAN ASSELT**

**VAN ASSELT TEEN**

**HIGH POINT**

**DISCOVERY PARK**

**DELRIDGE**

**CARKEEK**

**LAURELHURST**

**SOUTH PARK**

**SOUTH PARK SPYEDHP**

**SOUTH PARK CAREER CTR**

**RTC**

**BITTER LAKE**

**BITTER LAKE POOL**

**PINEHURST PLAYGROUND**

**GREEN LAKE**

**RAVENNA-ECKSTEIN**

**RAV-ECK PLAYGROUND**

**JAPANESE GARDENS**

**JAPANESE GARDENS RESTRICTED**

**JAPANESE GARDENS FOUNTAIN**

**TENNIS**

**AMY YEE TENNIS**

**TENNIS-USTA-RESTRICTED**

**CANOE**

**ROWING**

**ROWING FOUNDATION**

**GREEN LAKE CREW CONTRACT**

**MT BAKER BOATING**

**MONTLAKE  
MONTLAKE BUILDING  
ROGER PETER MEMORIAL  
YESLER  
YESLER INSPIRING YOUTH GRANT  
YESLER MICROSOFT GRANT**

**MT BAKER COLEMAN POOL  
MT BAKER WEDDING ATTENDANTS  
MT BAKER BUILDING EXPANSION  
MT BAKER CONTRACT**

**MAGNUSON ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**MAGNUSON-EDDIE BAUER**

**ARC  
ARC OPPORTUNITY FUND  
ARC CHILD CARE FUND  
HERON HABITAT HELPERS  
RAVENNA PLAYGROUND (RAVENE)  
R B BACK TO SCHOOL BASH  
HERON HABITAT ENDOWMENT  
FRIENDS OF BAYVIEW KINNEAR  
PUGET SOUND ALLIANCE  
SHAMBALA FUND  
SAND POINT TENNIS CENTER  
INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT/CHINATOWN  
LANGSTON HUGHES OPPORTUNITY  
RAINIER RESTRICTED PROJECT COMPUTE  
RAINIER BEACH RESTRICTED LATE NIGHT  
DISCOVER PARK RESTRICTED DISCO KITS  
MAGNOLIA RESTRICTED COMPUTER  
CENTER  
BITTER LAKE RESTRICTED LEADERS  
SOUTH PARK RESTRICTED ACADEMICS  
JEFFERSON RESTRICTED CCAP**

### *Verbal Briefing/Board Questions & Answers*

Mr. Keller noted that the written briefing included a thumbnail history and an update of 2004. ARC has just completed a recent audit of 2004 and had another really successful year. The Advisory Council is continuing to do what it is designed to do — provide activities in Parks facilities across the city. Despite the budget cutbacks, ARC is still doing quite well, averaging about \$10 million in revenue in 2004. Of that, \$1.2 million is from grants and donations. ARC is doing a better job getting grants and donations.

In addition, for the last two years ARC has been operating as a fiscal sponsor for “Friends of” groups and project groups across the city. Each is given a goal rate for fund raising. Over the last ten months several projects — Pinehurst Playfield, 4<sup>th</sup> & Ward on Queen Anne, and Annie’s Playground — have been completed. Mr. Keller stated that ARC is kind of in the playground business right now, which is healthy and seems to be working. Most of the projects cost from \$275,000 to \$500,000 each. It takes “Friends of” groups anywhere from 18 months to sometimes up to four years to complete a project.

ARC had almost 1,400 employees last year and about half of program revenue is child care. The Department is the license fee holder of the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) and provides the underpinning to make child care work. It is a real challenge to keep in compliance with DSHS requirements and requires regular due diligence. ARC has a Joint Use Agreement with the Seattle School District through which it provides child care at schools. Some of the sites are at schools, which next year will drop down to four school sites. About \$5 million of the \$10 million revenue is child care.

ARC’s future plans include enriching and supporting more programs, utilizing more of the building space and more joint use opportunities, and expanding. Over the last five years, ARC has almost doubled in size. If this growth continues, ARC will continue to enrich and support Parks.

In order to do this, ARC must modernize its partnership with Parks. The current agreement has been in place for over 30 years and needs to be updated. ARC needs to be more responsive to employment rules and the way money moves between partners.

An example of the new direction ARC is taking is the summer playground projects. The ARC Board has agreed to pick up six of the playgrounds projects that otherwise would not be operating, at a cost of about \$50,000 plus some contingency money for extra training time and equipment. ARC is also contributing to the Pyramid Project, which is the Class Updated Registration System, as it really benefits the partnership. Over the next few years, ARC will contribute about \$195,000.

Modernization is ARC’s biggest project right now. Modernization will explore and affect all the work that ARC does every day — the programs, classes, and activities — and will change the way ARC and Parks work together. It will actually change how ARC and the Advisory Council System presents itself to the Department, the City, and the customers served by ARC. ARC has created a steering committee made up of eight Park Department employees, eight ARC Board members, and eight Advisory Council members. The committee meets regularly and focuses on government, personnel, and finance issues. Mr. Keller referred to a poster which shows the mission, vision, and values developed by the steering committee and stated that this parallels ARC’s goals to serve more of the community, from pre-school children to seniors.

Commissioner Pflaumer asked whether childcare is for children in school or the pre-school aged children. Mr. Keller responded that the DSHS licensing component is for the ages of five to eleven. ARC also offers programs for pre-school children, but these are drop-in recreation programs, not a full day program.

Commissioner Pflaumer followed up with a question as to whether the five-to-eleven year-old child care program is staffed by Park employees or Advisory Council staff. Superintendent Bounds responded that these staff are Advisory Council staff. He also noted that the ARC model is unique and amazing, both because of the additional \$10 million in services and the 1,400 staff in the system, including day camps and before- and after-school programs. The challenge is

modernization and trying to look to the future. Trying to take the system out to 37 advisory councils plus all the other relationships will be a challenge. The goal is to figure out a way that the ARC Board has more of a policy-making role with the Department as opposed to ARC's current role, which has primarily been as a fiduciary entity. Parks would like ARC to become more of a leadership organization. The question is where do we go next with this relationship. The relationship, roles, and responsibilities must be clear.

Commissioner Holme asked for more information regarding the Pyramid Project. Mr. Keller responded that the Pyramid Project is an automated computerized registration system. Some of the sites have had manual cash handling systems with a receipt, and some sites have a cash register system. In addition, some Parks facilities have Recware sites, which is a registration system that was invested in about a decade ago and is now failing. The Pyramid Class system will not only automate registration, but will also keep an account history of the customer. It gives enrollment information and building utilization, which is a very important part of the partnership. The system can assess a community center and determine if space is available to allow for additional programming.

With the old system, customers would be required to write two checks, one to the City and one to the Advisory Council, which could be confusing to the customer. With Pyramid, all the checks are written to the City and processed by the City. The City then writes a check to the Advisory Council every three days. At some point, internet registration will be available. There are many positive elements of the Pyramid Project.

Commissioner Pflaumer asked if Mr. Keller was also referring to school use. Superintendent Bounds noted that Parks has a Joint Use Agreement with the School District and that it is usually the Advisory Council programs and staff using the schools more than Park staff. He noted the Pyramid Project will also give choices. Citizens will not have to call each community center to learn about classes, but will be able to go on line to see where classes are being offered. Hopefully the time will come when online registration is available. Mr. Keller noted that with the Pyramid project, for the first time ARC can market what it does and target certain segments of the community and attract them to the community centers. ARC conducted surveys in a couple of the community centers (Ravenna-Eckstein and Rainier) and found people were very interested in more adult programming for sports, fitness, art, and culture. This was a wake-up call because much of the programming had been focused on kids.

Commissioner Holme asked if Pyramid is a third party provider that is paid for its services. Superintendent Bounds replied that it is the name of the Class system, a licensed piece of software that is being customized for Parks and is used by other cities. When the system is up and running, Parks may connect with other jurisdictions. In response to a question, it was noted that if a person comes into a community center to register, they will still come to the counter. Pyramid has been installed in 11 sites, starting with the larger facilities.

The Board thanked Mr. Keller for the briefing.

## **Update Briefing: Race and Social Justice Initiative**

Christopher Williams, Operations Division Director, came before the Board to give an update briefing on the City's Race and Social Justice Initiative. The Commissioners received both a written and verbal briefing, with both included in these minutes.

### ***Written Briefing***

#### **Requested Board Action**

The purpose of this document is to brief the Board of Park Commissioners on the status of the Department's Race and Social Justice Initiative. The upcoming presentation is intended as a briefing, no action will be requested.

#### **Background**

Beginning last fall, Seattle Parks and Recreation implemented Mayor Nickels' Race and Social Justice (RSJ) Initiative to ensure that its services, programs, facilities, employment, and contracting are inclusive and accessible to the city's diverse communities.

The RSJ initiative enhances the work the Department does every day to build community and create positive connections. Our mission statement is to “*work with all citizens to be good stewards of the environment, and to provide safe and welcoming opportunities to play, learn, contemplate and build community.*” Parks programs and projects have a tremendous impact on children and families by providing access at 25 community centers, 10 pools, and more than 400 parks located in every city neighborhood.

Through the RSJ initiative, Parks seeks to reach people who have been traditionally underserved, including people of color, youth, seniors, people with disabilities, people with low incomes, and non-English speakers and people for whom English is a second language. Another goal is to improve relations and understanding among 900 staff of various backgrounds.

### **Accomplishments to Date**

Since kicking off the initiative last year, Parks:

- Formed a Race and Social Justice Leadership Team (change team), a group of employees who advise Parks leadership on inclusion and accessibility;
- Hired a diversity consultant to conduct focus groups to gauge current perceptions and attitudes among Parks employees; the consultant also guided the leadership team development and conducted training mentioned below;
- Trained 50 managers, directors, and supervisors in “cultural competency” (skills, knowledge and tools to work effectively with a diverse workforce and community);
- Organized a vendor fair for women and minority-owned businesses;
- Included RSJ elements into 2005 work plans and RSJ criteria in performance evaluations;
- Developed a five-year strategic plan to examine existing practices and recommend improvements in a wide range of policies and operations;
- Expanded culturally diverse recreation programming and outreach;
- Continued an exemplary record of hiring of staff that mirrors the city’s demographics; and
- Created a web site, newsletter, fact sheet, and other communication tools.

### **Conclusion**

Seattle Parks and Recreation’s RSJ initiative demonstrates that, by working together with focus and commitment, we can significantly improve inclusiveness and access to our services and programs, and among our diverse staff.

### ***Verbal Briefing/Board Questions & Answers***

Mr. Williams introduced himself and presented the Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) briefing. He is one of the Department’s co-sponsors of the Race and Social Justice Initiative, along with Darwyn Anderson, Director of Parks Human Resources. Also assisting in the briefing was Brenda Kramer, Strategic Advisor of the Enterprise Division and a meeting facilitator.

The RSJI is related to the Mayor’s four priorities of: (1) transportation, getting the City moving; (2) public safety, which the Mayor describes as keeping our community and neighborhood safe; (3) economic development or job creation; and (4) building strong families. Parks has a key role in the last priority and the RSJI is a core value for the Department.

The Race and Social Justice Initiative is a Citywide effort to transform the way the City delivers services and programs and provides opportunities for racial and ethnic communities. Since 1970 Seattle has changed a lot and will experience more change. A few examples: the Asian communities have grown 25% in the last 30 years; the Latino population will double in the next 10 years; East African population has increased 500% in the past 10 years; and Black Americans make up about 8.5% of the ethnic community. The total diversity is about 16.5%.

The ethnic community faces special challenges when it comes to accessing government. Mayor Nickels has raised the question on how to create potential and better opportunities, so that those diverse communities have better access to services and programs. The challenge is to end discrimination and to reduce the disparity in our community — to have opportunity for all citizens so that 16.5% of the population is not marginalized.

In the long term this initiative is about economic development, raising the standard of living, and participation of the most disadvantaged and most vulnerable members of our community, and, for example, reducing the disparity in education. The Seattle Times had an article about a year ago that stated three out of five ninth graders did not graduate from high school. What is the impact of this?

The Parks Department has a long history of facilitating ethnic and cultural growth. Multi-culturalism has been a large part of what the Department does. The Department has a responsibility to provide programs and services that are relevant to the diverse community it serves. In order to improve it must assess its employee experiences around race, cultural diversity, and ethnicity — making sure that Parks has a high critical awareness within its own community. The assessment is taking place now. Parks is also working on creating an organization free of institutionalized racism. The challenge is to keep the spirit of this initiative alive after the elected officials leave office and to include this in the way Parks does business. Parks is also looking to transform its business practices by aligning personnel policy and contract practices in a way that will do more business with women and minority in business. An example is the Tru Grain Chem Lawn as a contractor for service at Sam Smith Park. Parks recently renegotiated this \$200,000 annual contract to two minority businesses.

Parks has 22 employees on the RSJI team who come together on a bi-monthly basis to talk about the challenges they have to live up to, the spirit of this mission, and working on creating programs that are responsive to diversity in serving the community.

People often ask what the difference is between this initiative and diversity training. RSJI focuses on diversity as an asset while diversity training focuses on fixing people rather than fixing the system. How does this differ from affirmative action? Affirmative action is a jump start on change and unfair situations. The goal of this initiative is to transform the way the City conducts business. Outcomes that Parks is looking for relate to hiring and promoting and increasing business with minority firms. The Department wants to ensure access and outreach to diverse communities and make sure policies are not a barrier to participation.

Brenda Kramer stated that the Superintendent put together the leadership team with 20 employees that she facilitates. She then described her role. There are representative from each of Parks' divisions and from different job categories including maintenance and managers. There are a huge variety of folks of visible and invisible aspects of diversity on the team. It is a challenging group to facilitate because the topic is challenging. Most have been brought up to ignore the issue of race and not talk about it. Now this committee is charged to talk, and are having the difficult conversations. Members need to trust each other in order to openly share feelings and thoughts. The goal is to reach long-term results. The team will infuse the RSJI into the internal culture of the Department and make program changes that are intentional and responsive to the increasing customer base.

The leadership team meets twice a month and reports to the Superintendent's executive team on a quarterly basis. Members have developed a five-year strategic plan to guide the work. The leadership team's responsibility is to provide oversight for the work plan and ask questions, prod people, question things, and come up with ideas to make sure the work plan stays alive in the Department. There are some strategic areas of focus that the executive team and the leadership team agreed on. Five sub-committees have been organized around the focus areas: leadership and communication; recruitment and hiring; assessment; sustainability and accountability; education and training; and community partnerships and programs.

Internally the Department hired a consultant, Executive Diversity Services, which conducted focus group discussions with employees in order to establish a baseline to learn the Department's strengths and challenges. As a result, the consultant this year trained 55 Department managers in cultural competency. The goal is to extend the training to all front line supervisors this year.

Also, every Department has a leadership team and those teams get together as an inter-departmental team to learn what other Departments are doing. Parks' leadership team feels honored because the Mayor highlighted its efforts as a leader in the City. The Mayor will attend the July meeting to recognize the Parks leadership team.

Following are examples Ms. Kramer gave of concrete, programmatic changes related to Race and Social Justice.

Childrens' Hospital, King Health Department and the Drowning Prevention Coalition took a look at the statistics on drownings compared to population data. They learned that the number of drownings involving Vietnamese teens, particularly males, was proportionately higher than expected. They took a look at the Vietnamese community to learn why this was happening. In some Vietnamese cultures water is not viewed as recreation. In fact, in most parts of Viet Nam most of the water is very shallow — you can walk across the river. There also is a cultural belief that if a person drowns, a ghost is pulling the person down. Water is feared and it is also expensive to learn to swim. In response, Parks staff are working to develop some solutions. Possibilities are: providing scholarships through the Pro Parks learn-to-swim program for third and fourth graders, printing brochures in different languages to make them more accessible, and expanding programming and marketing to target a broader audience. Staff will go out into the community to educate people on the importance of learning how to swim.

The Department's Park Legacy Curriculum is another example. It is a multi-cultural approach to Environmental Education begun as a pilot program over spring break at the Volunteer Park Conservatory. The curriculum includes four different blocks to choose from: African, Meso- American (Spanish languages), Asian, and European. Elementary school children were asked to select what they were interested in and they selected African. The big elephant ear leaf was the focus of their study. The program is special because it includes ethnically diverse material and culturally sensitive teaching and methods. The program was so popular during spring break that it will be included in the summer day camp program.

The Environmental Stewardship Unit, funded by the Pro Parks Levy, evaluated the number of group programs offered through the schools by Parks' Environmental Learning Centers. It was learned that Parks currently provides over 40% of its school programs to what the consultant called higher upper middle income majority white schools, and only 10% to low income minority schools. The manager of the Environmental Learning Center decided he wanted to achieve a better balance and has now asked staff to shift their time so that they are working one-third, one-third, and one-third with community centers, schools, and on-site audiences. Carkeek Park Environmental Learning Center has taken this to heart and are using an ARC Opportunity Grant and seeking private funds to serve low-income school children by offering free programs and free bus transportation. The Environmental Learning Centers are a bit off the beaten path and are more difficult to get to with public transportation. Other Environmental Learning Centers are considering adopting this strategy to try and get more kids involved. In addition, Seattle Public Utility is providing free bus transportation to community centers for a salmon program.

Rainier Community Center has a partnership with the Refugee Womens Alliance. Parks provides rental space at 10% of market value and in return the Alliance provides free training to immigrant women who are new to American culture. Many of the women have experienced hard times so it is difficult for them to adjust to American schools and values. The Alliance offers these immigrant women workshops in English as a second or third language, tutoring, and help with being a good parent and completing job applications.

Garfield Community Center offers senior Vietnamese a nutritious lunch and fitness program after lunch, with entertainment every Friday, and operates a food bank and gives food to the elders.

Commissioner Holme asked how long it takes for staff to go through the Cultural Competency training. Ms. Kramer responded that it is a two-day session for managers. A one-day session for supervisors has been proposed. Commissioner Holme asked what kind of English language requirement a person needs to be hired. Mr. Williams responded that Parks has gone as far as hiring an interpreter to assist people with the hiring process. Superintendent Bounds described an effort that began about five years ago in the Southeast district, where Peggy Pullen, then a crew chief, started a partnership with Central Community College. Employees having difficulty reading MSDS Forms and

instruction on fertilizers, etc., were sent through this program. Parks developed a curriculum with a grant for the instructor for three to four years. The employees were allowed 1 to 1-1/2 hours of work time to go to the college for language instruction. Some of them also used a matching amount of their personal time to attend the class. It was an amazing program. Commissioner Holme asked how much of an investment the Department provides. The Superintendent responded that the only cost was work time for the employees to attend. The instructors were paid through a grant. Commissioner Holme asked whether Parks hires outside interpreters. Mr. Williams noted that interpreters from the City Personnel language bank are used.

Commissioner Pflaumer raised the issue of cultural values and the difficulty for women in many cultures. Mr. Williams described a discussion between the Seattle Housing Authority and Seattle Parks Department regarding what can be done regarding this issue. The partnership is initiating workshops on domestic violence.

Commissioner Belbeck asked about the challenges Parks has in hiring people who can't speak English and how much English candidates need to be hired. Can the Department hire someone who speaks English fluently over someone who doesn't? The Superintendent responded that this is a huge challenge. Parks takes into consideration a person's background and whether language is a barrier to getting the work done. Language can be identified as a desired qualification and not as a required qualification. There are a lot of things that are required that are probably less important in some situations than language. It is also an advantage to have employees who speak different languages. Commissioner Pflaumer noted that in community centers the children often end up being the interpreters for their parents. She also asked if there was opposition on this initiative and Initiative 200. Ms. Kramer noted that there are people on the committee who opposed it and wanted off the committee. A lot of time has been spent letting them know their voice is important. The Superintendent stated that we are all working together to deliver services to a diverse population within the Department and in the community. The team is not here to change people on the job but to understand the population and the differences we have.

The Board thanked Mr. Williams and Ms. Kramer for the briefing.

**Board of Park Commissioners' Business**

None

**New/Old Business**

- ❖ Commissioner Holme raised an issue about the Arboretum as to whether the south end area could be moved up on the priority list and asked if it is possible to put in a controlled intersection there. The Superintendent noted that the Master Plan shows the grid and this area has not made it on the priority list.
- ❖ Commissioner Holme raised the Lower Woodland Skateboard Park siting question and asked for the issue to be brought back to the Board. The Board and Superintendent discussed the process and agreed to invite staff to return to the Commissioners and present information about the Lower Woodland siting process and the pros and cons of the sites being considered in the skateboarding community.
- ❖ Superintendent Bounds noted that the Department has contacted the Port of Seattle regarding cleaning up a beach on the Central Waterfront.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
Kate Pflaumer, Chair

DATE \_\_\_\_\_