

Seattle Board of Park Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
July 13, 2017

Web site: <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/parkboard/>
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Board of Park Commissioners

Present:

Andréa Akita
Tom Byers, Chair
Dennis Cook
Marlon Herrera
Evan Hundley
William Lowe, Vice Chair
Kelly McCaffrey

Excused:

Marty Bluewater
Barbara Wright

Seattle Parks and Recreation Staff

Jesús Aguirre, Superintendent
Rachel Acosta, Park Board Coordinator

The meeting is held at 100 Dexter Avenue North. Commissioner Byers calls the meeting to order at 6:30pm. Commissioner Byers calls for approval of the Consent Items: the July 13 agenda and June 22 meeting minutes; Commissioner Hundley moves, Commissioner Cook seconds and the Consent Items are approved unanimously.

Oral Requests and Communication from the Audience

Tim Motzer - Invitation to join Lake City Neighborhood Alliance on August 30.

2017 Parks and Open Space Plan recommendations – He feels the minimum size allowed for a park is too small for urban villages with more density. Community center line item for renovations should be reevaluated. Major maintenance has more money. Asks the Board to consider a public hearing process – how Real Estate Excise Tax is spent – the 8 identified community centers have no funding in the current spending plan.

Margy Bresslour – Colman Park Vista Restoration Project and the proposed opposition to this project: SPR is saying the project is cutting down 200+ trees, instead of messaging it in terms of renovating a forest and making it healthy. SPR has concerns about Environmentally Critical Areas and tree policies – exemptions are tailor made for this project. Parks could easily partner to restore Olmsted park and a tremendous asset.

Jeannie O'Brien – She is a lifelong resident of Seward Park. The marina contract specifies the city is giving up 43% of their general fund money for this. SPR was using this money in the past for other aspects of their operations instead of reinvesting it in the moorages. SPR will relinquish the moorages and let private company set the rates; and only see 3% return.

Marty Oppenheimer – Seward Park resident – competitive moorage rates; concerned with move towards privatization; giving away revenue. He does not think it is a good approach. Should be managed by a non-profit instead.

Superintendent's Report

Marty Bluewater has let the department know he would be resigning his post with the commission. He's been a great member of the Board.

Colman Park – Deputy Superintendent Williams agrees with Margy about the language and how they talk about the partnership and the project. They want to think of it in terms of a restoration project.

Moorages - \$400,000 went to SPR and was not reinvested but spent on essential operations; SPR services do not compete with moorage operations. Rates will be set by the business but within the parameters set forth by the department. Entering into an agreement will protect the moorages and enables the lessee to reinvest their funds into the business. When an outside group is putting in a significant capital investment, the longer term lease allows the lessee to amortize their finances over a longer period. This creates a self-sustaining operating model.

In terms of the rate, SPR staff will review rates all around Lake Washington; and account for growth using Consumer Price Index.

Seattle Tilth – renamed the Tilth Alliance; partnership with SPR and promoting summer gardening and cooking classes in parks throughout the city.

Mercy Housing – Public meeting held to talk about the workforce housing being developed in Building 9 at Magnuson Park. Neighborhood residents were worried about the impacts on parking.

Lake Union Park – The bridge at Lake Union Park came out of cambor because the soils were condensing the bridge. Over time there was more settling than anticipated in the

soil. The contractors will excavate the dense soils and replace with geotech foam. They hope to have it completed by January 2018. Good engineering backs up the fix. Started the work on Monday.

Pickleball – SPR is entering a pilot program that will allow an expansion of sites; to use under-utilized tennis courts; signage to ensure people know when participants can play. SPR staff will work on the criteria to determine which courts. How big is the pilot? Restriping for multi-use? Include Timeframe of pilot. Details on pilot to Park Board.

Environmental Learning Centers – 1st half of 2017 have supported 59 volunteers to provide over 1000 hours of programming.

Park Board Executive committee attended the SPR expanded Executive Team Meeting – SPR leadership could get to know the Park Board Executive Committee. It was great to see that common values drive their participation.

Park District Budget follow-up on Tim’s public testimony – argued for potential net values for increased assessed value to receive more funds. City is collecting property taxes based on \$47million commitment; part of the Interlocal Agreement specified how much the residents would be taxed. The city is going to keep its word.

Commissioner Byers says the voters’ guide set a rate per \$1000 assessed value; collected based on \$47million, not assessed value. It would be interesting to see the language. Commissioner Wright does not remember that language in the Interlocal.

Deputy Superintendent Williams will ask Ben Noble to come and talk about the Park District funding with a diagram that shows receipts under the 2 scenarios.

Get something in writing that shows the Interlocal Agreement and how the budget decision is made.

Briefing and Discussion: Solar Microgrid Pilot Project

Presented by Joelle Hammerstad, Seattle Parks and Recreation, and Uzma Siddiqi and Ben Roshwald, Seattle City Light

This pilot project would install a solar microgrid at a community center where the energy could be stored in a large battery. A Solar microgrid is a small-scale power grid and can operate by itself. Energy is stored in a large battery – the size of a shipping container.

Budget - This is a partnership between Seattle City Light, SPR and Washington State Department of Commerce

Schedule –

- August 2016: Seattle wins a \$1.5 million grant from the Department of Commerce (DOC)
- June 2017: DOC and SCL sign final contract to install microgrid
- July 2017: site selection consultant hired to evaluate sites
- August 2017: Seattle Parks & Recreation and SCL sign a siting memorandum of agreement
- Fall 2017: public process starts during site selection
- 2018: construction

Memorandum of Understanding between Seattle City Light and Seattle Parks and Recreation next month; reviewing sites to determine the best location.

Public process in the fall and start construction in 2018.

SCL will hire a contractor. SPR budget will cover site selection and oversight of construction and design - Proview review at 30, 60 and 90% design.

SCL will provide training and handle installation and maintenance.

SPR and SCL will host emergency drills.

Net metering benefits – utility will buy back power generated up to 100kw. This revenue will return to SPR.

Seattle is a part of “100 resilient cities” – which is the capacity of individuals, communities, institutions, businesses and systems within a city to survive, adapt, and grow no matter what kinds of chronic stresses and acute shocks they experience. Any major disaster in the Seattle area will disproportionately impact low income communities.

Dovetails with Healthy, Healthy, Strong; solar is a clean renewable energy; supports most vulnerable communities; supports environmental action agenda.

Benefits – There is a cash benefit and it will reduce the electric bills for the selected site. There is also a public education opportunity especially important since clean energy is our future.

Top 7 potential sites: All the top sites are Emergency Operation Centers

Miller - Miller Community Center is in #1 position

Strengths:

- No diesel generator
- Large site for locating battery

- 7% below the poverty line
 - Co-located with Meany Middle School
- Weaknesses:
- Level 3 Emergency Shelter

Van Asselt –

Strengths:

- No diesel generator
- 21% below the poverty level
- Co-located with important community assets:
 - Van Asselt Elementary
 - SPD South Precinct
 - New Holly Neighborhood Campus

Weaknesses:

- Level 3 Emergency Shelter
- Battery siting would be challenging

Yesler –

Strengths:

- No diesel generator
- 16% below the poverty line
- Co-located with an important community asset:
 - Yesler Neighborhood Campus

Weaknesses:

- Level 3 Emergency Shelter
- Battery siting would be challenging

Delridge – This site would add capacity because it already has a diesel generator.

Strengths:

- 16% below the poverty line
- Level 2 Emergency Shelter
- Space flexibility for battery siting

Weaknesses:

- Already has a diesel generator
- Not co-located with any other publicly owned community asset.

Rainier –

Strengths:

- 22% below the poverty line
- Level 2 Emergency Shelter
- Space flexibility for battery siting

Weaknesses:

- Already has a diesel generator
- Not co-located with any other publicly owned community asset.

Southwest Teen Life Center and Pool –

Strengths:

- 17% below the poverty line
- Level 1 Emergency Shelter
- Co-located with two schools for additional sheltering

Weaknesses:

- Already has a diesel generator
- Not much space to site a battery nearby

Rainier Beach Community Center – This is last on the list.

Strengths:

- 22% below the poverty line
- Level 1 Emergency Shelter
- Co-located with several important community assets:
 - South Shore K-8
 - Rainier Beach HS
 - Somali Community Services
 - Rainier Beach Medical/Dental Clinic

Weaknesses:

- Already has a diesel generator
- Extremely little space to add a battery.

Discussion

How flexible does the site need to be for the emergency management in terms of square footage. Level 1 is the first to be used. What are the differences between level 1 and level 3?

It is useful if the location possesses an industrial-sized kitchen/large ballfields for setting up tents and shower facility. Adjacency to a swimming pool is also useful.

SPR and SCL are looking at a suite of criteria; geographically isolated areas are not considered.

Hiring a site selection consultant to figure out the practical elements of a solar microgrid location, like how good is the roof? Joelle and SCL are happy to return to the Board once a consultant has been hired to get their feedback on the criteria. Building condition should be a criterion.

SPR had structural engineers review the buildings first to ensure they could withstand the weight of solar panels.

SPR and Office of Emergency Management has been doing a great job of putting generators in place.

Yesler is working on gray water retention, which is a bonus for that location.

Commissioner Hundley suggests putting 2 containers – 1 for supplies and 1 for the battery.

Jefferson Park Picnic Shelter – battery is located by the skate spot at Jefferson.

Ravenna Eckstein is installing solar panels sponsored by the Advisory Council but it does not have a battery so it connects to the existing grid.

Could the school district be eligible for this project? Maybe in the future, this is a learning opportunity for Seattle City Light. As more groups are interested, SCL could be a strong partner to support that.

How committed is SCL to solar? Ben is the Director of a new Division for Innovation and Technology; the City has a goal to be carbon neutral by 2050.

More solar = more benefit; is there potential to extend the microgrid further than where the array is located? It depends on how much energy is needed.

It is important to design new construction with the intent to have solar; reduce the load (consumption of energy through efficiencies) first.

SCL would be encouraged to do more if the pilot shows there is value.

The Board appreciates the cooperation between SPR and SCL.

Discussion: Board Work Plan and Goals

Presented by Christopher Williams, Seattle Parks and Recreation

Deputy Superintendent Williams and SPR staff created a list that shows how the Board's work plan priorities align with the department - the areas where there is commonality. The Board participation was left intentionally blank so the Board could provide input on how they would like to be engaged with the existing work and programs.

Deputy Superintendent Williams reviews the list of work plan items.

General Themes

General themes that apply to all three topics:

- The commission members want to change the way they engage with the public by getting out into the neighborhoods and reaching out to populations they aren't hearing from. They want to encourage SPR employees to do the same.
- They share the goal of "Parks For All", and are in favor of changing past practices when necessary to make parks and recreation practices more inclusive and relevant to the changing population.
- They support efforts to align more closely with their partners and other public agencies such as schools and public health agencies.
- They are determined to defend the Park District, plan wisely for the next round of expenditures, and explore ways to get the most benefit from the resources currently available.
- Through Parks activities, events, and shared spaces, they see the potential for increased understanding, acceptance, and appreciation between Seattle residents, and believe supporting complimentary park goals increases resilience, safety and unity in communities.

Board engagement with the public: The Board will be engaged with the Recreation Master Plan through public engagement and providing input for the scope of the work.

SPR will partner with the UW School of Public Affairs to continue outreach and engagement best practices. SPR has done a survey on public opinion and will use this to inform their movement on recreation planning.

The Board requests training on the RSJI toolkit to enable them to use it as a filter to assist the department in making policy decisions.

SPR is using Get Moving and Recreation For All grants to create opportunities for community relevant recreation opportunities.

Collaborating with the school district on various ways to partner – Joint Use Agreement has been renegotiated and they are continuing conversations on other opportunities.

Enterprise Partnerships in Community (EPIC) – A new division created to leverage and expand partnerships that complements the work of the department.

SPR staff will forward opportunities for the Board to participate in department activities throughout the city.

Healthy People

- We share the goal of making our parks and recreation programs more accessible, affordable and relevant to the needs of all cultures, ages and abilities.

Community Center Strategic Plan – SPR staff will return to the Board with pilot performance metrics for the centers that offered free drop-in.

- We want to be informed and engaged in the following issues:
 - Capital improvements at the community centers and pools
 - Performed a walkthrough and scope regarding maintenance necessities and they will provide ongoing briefings to the Board. They are willing to set up tour opportunities for before/after. Work to stabilize 6 of the centers has already started.

Park District sandwich board sign with a logo on it; in front of every project funded by the Park District.

- Measures to expand access to sports fields
 - Working with King County to see what opportunities are available; using their fields may create more adverse impacts if SPR takes on the use of King County fields. Explore opportunities with private schools and existing fields.
- Changes in fee structures and scholarship programs to make recreation more affordable
 - Changes in fee structures and scholarship programs – new approaches including using utility discounts to give people scholarships. Eliminate drop-in fees at more community centers. Get Moving/Rec For All introduction to the Board.
- Partnerships with the schools, public health agencies and other partners that promote active living.
 - Joint Use Agreement with Seattle Public Schools
 - Coordinated efforts with OPCD, SPU, SDOT, OSE, DON to develop city-wide, coordinated, ambitious vision for open space.
 - Several partnerships with UW to provide expertise, including Associated Recreation Council analysis, health assessments for growth management.

Healthy Environment

- The commission members will strongly support the parks department in efforts to become a recognized leader in environmental protection and the fight against climate change.

Healthy Environment Action Agenda – developing an action plan that highlights all the great work that is already happening and have the public/SPR staff help the department become leaders in environmental work.

Demonstrating to public what's possible and becoming an enviro. Leader

- We want to be informed and engaged in the following issues:
 - Acquisition and stewardship of natural areas
 - View pruning
 - Park and Open Space Plan
 - Measures to advance environmental justice
 - More discussion about the work of the Conservation Corps
 - Partnerships to enhance environmental education and participation
 - Implementing a Park Inspection Program – track improvements and result in an annual report
 - Waste reduction/resource conservation
 - Evaluating fleet conversion/lighting conversion
 - SPR recently reached \$1 million in utility rebates from conservation efforts.
 - Clean power generation/use
 - Solar microgrids/EV charging stations – demonstrating to the public what is possible.

Strong Communities

- We share the view that the park system must grow and innovate to meet the challenges posed by a rapidly growing population and increasing densities
 - Civic scale project to combine city departments to complete an openspace vision.
- We want to be informed and engaged in the following issues:
 - The development of strategies to create more parks and public spaces
 - Conservation Futures Tax match up to \$3million funding; next opportunity to set the budget for the Park District – take the full \$3million.
 - Partnerships with the Seattle Parks Foundation and other groups to support the creation, improvement and programming of public spaces, especially in underserved communities
 - Creatively program and use existing spaces to maximize space.
 - EPIC – conveners of partnership groups to create programming opportunities
 - Methods to make our parks and recreation facilities fulfill their historic role as the “common ground” for breaking down barriers among diverse communities
 - Recreation Master Plan and Park Inspection plan and Surveys.
 - Create multi-cultural advisory board - stemming from the shooting at Magnuson and recognizing SPR has a role to acknowledge what happened. Possible Evans School work product.

- Strategies to ensure parks and recreation facilities are indispensable elements in future city planning and community development
 - Coordinated efforts with OPCD, SPU, SDOT, OSE, DON to develop city-wide, coordinated, ambitious vision for open space.

Refine the list to be specific about agendas and what input SPR wants from the Board.

Partnerships is pervasive throughout these categories. What can the Board do? The SPR Alliance can be utilized. Language about what SPR is doing and includes public agencies but does not include nonprofits and businesses.

Brainstorming with EPIC? The commissioners feel their needs to be an opportunity for the Park Board to meet with the ARC Board. They are a major partner.

Commissioner McCaffrey wants to make sure the Work Plan has actions.

Grant funding – column for matching grants/funding to show what is in the pipeline. Good to know what types of grants are available and what they are applying for.

Commissioner Hundley volunteers to work with private schools to figure out athletic fields.

ARC has a multi-cultural advisory group that has a budget for work in 2018.

Deputy Superintendent Williams feels the Board and SPR should scope out together a project for the Evans School to improve public benefits. Evan volunteers to help with a scope of work for the Evans School.

Does the work plan document reflect the Board's desire to help in creating the best SPR. Does the document reflect the essence of what the Board would like to do?

What will the Board be called on to do? How to be effective as a body? Skills the Board brings to the table?

SPR to provide specific opportunities for actionable engagement to the Board.

The Board and SPR to discuss and identify specific action items on each of the items at a future meeting.

Old/New Business

Discussion and Vote: 2017 Parks and Open Space Letter

The Board receive a draft letter in support of the 2017 Parks and Open Space Plan. If approved for signature by the Board, it will appear in the final version of the 2017 Parks and Open Space Plan and given to the City Council as support for the adoption of the resolution.

Commissioner Wright makes a motion to sign the letter as written. Commissioner Lowe seconds; the letter is approved unanimously, as written.

The Park Board discuss attending the City Council Parks Committee meeting to offer their support through public testimony.

Discussion and Possible Vote: Moorages Letter

The Commissioners feel the spirit of the letter has good intent. However, they feel the letter is absent specific language regarding the limitation on rates and rate increases; but does state it will be set with authority of the Superintendent. The Board expresses concerns over the ambiguity in rate fluctuations.

The Board understands the sustainability of moorages is enhanced through this partnership.

SPR has responded to all the City Council's questions.

Marina Management will be making a \$16-\$18 million investment. There needs to be a system for adjusting moorage rates; rates have not yet been established. The Board is concerned about putting their name on an endorsement without their specific concerns being addressed, especially around rates and rate increases.

Deputy Superintendent Williams says the department is viewing the City Council process as a learning opportunity to make the contract better. SPR staff have been working incredibly hard. The Board does not feel comfortable signing a letter when they do not have the information and have so many questions. They feel it could reduce their credibility with public officials. Deputy Superintendent understands and there will be different opportunities for the Board and he respects where their coming from on that.

Commissioner Cook empathizes with the department because fees are always an issue for SPR and they could change in a minute.

SPR asked the lessee to do affordability research; the City Council shares the Board's concern that the city would not have control over fees.

The Board conducts a straw vote and agree not to send the moorages letter.

Commissioner Lowe offers point of information – by not signing the letter in support of the moorages, this does not impact SPR movement forward. Wait and see if questions are answered at Council. The Board supports the process moving forward with Marina Management.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourns at 8:55pm.

APPROVED: _____ DATE _____
Tom Byers, Chair
Board of Park Commissioners