



Minutes

Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners

Via WebEx

Thursday, January 27, 2022

6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Welcome and Introductions

Kelly calls the meeting to order at 6:35pm. The Board members and SPR staff introduce themselves.

Public Comment

Jorge Garcia – Transform Ickwa Blvd to permanent biking/walking waterfront park. He understands the trade-offs from living here for many years but this is a great

Tim Motzer – change to interlocal agrmt to modify the taxation rates for the park district.

Superintendent's Report and Response to public comment

Department Updates:

- Mayor, Mayor Bruce Harrell, and his administration. With the departure earlier this month of Superintendent Jesús Aguirre, Mayor Harrell has asked Christopher to step in as the Acting Superintendent until an interim or permanent director is named. Parks and Recreation services are a priority for our new Mayor. He and his team are working hard to find a permanent Superintendent.
- Michele Finnegan to serve as the Acting Deputy Superintendent during this period.
- At the Mayor's Office, I will be reporting to Adiam Emery, the Mayor's new Chief Equity Officer, who was formerly a division director and an engineer at SDOT.
- Parks chair at the City Council, Councilmember Andrew Lewis, who will lead the Public Assets and Homelessness Committee. Committee members include Councilmembers Mosqueda, Morales, Herbold and Juarez, and the committee will meet on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month.
- Top 5 Priorities
- In support of our focus on basic parks and recreation services, I have outlined the Top Five priorities for our department over the next 90 days:
 - Park District Financial Strategy: Staff will be working with the new Mayor, the Board of Park and Recreation Commissioners and the City Council to determine funding

- priorities for the next 6-year cycle)of Park District spending.
- Increasing Employee Hiring: Many of the basic maintenance and program operations goals are dependent on simply hiring more employees, SPR will prioritize hiring to be ready for peak season.
- Continuing to Manage Impacts from COVID: SPR continues to be vigilant and safe as they work to focus on fully restoring the park system and recreation services.
- Budget Process: During this period, SPR will work on the 2023-2024 biennial budget process.
- Enhanced Encampment Team: In the 2022 budget SPR added seven new positions to focus on encampment work. Standing up this expanded encampment team is a critical priority.
- SPR is committed to making progress in these areas through a lens of inclusion, decision-making that prioritizes equity, and with an overarching focus on delivering basic park and recreation services and programs.

Clean City Accomplishments

- Related to our basic services, I wanted to acknowledge and applaud the incredible work of the City's Clean Cities teams, including many staff from SPR. A few amazing data points for the past year:
- 2021 Year-End SPR Clean City Data:
- Trash collected: 4,456,232 lbs
- Needles collected: 116,406
- Number of Locations serviced: 2,362

Weather Response: Since we last met in December, Seattle residents have lived through a whole lotta severe weather: snow, wind, rain. You name it. That has kept our staff busy as you can see in these photos:

- Clearing snow outside community centers
- Removing tree branches that blew down on the Burke-Gilman Trail
- Dealing with a mud slide at Lincoln Park

My thanks to the great work of our crews during the holidays and these busy bad weather months!

Carol Baker Retires: SPR recognizes and congratulates one of their outstanding and long-serving crew members, Southwest Crew Chief Carol Baker, who retired from the department after 40 years of service.

Planning Development and Maintenance

- Marra-Desimone Park renovations complete: The renovation project at Marra-Desimone Park in the South Park neighborhood is substantially complete and the park is open. SPR developed the plan through extensive community engagement. The renovated park includes accessible pathways and walking loops, a central open green area, benches, picnic

tables, drainage improvements, paved parking lot with ADA parking, new irrigation system with solar powered control system, and 80+ trees and grass plantings.

- Lakeridge Play Area: The new play area is open! It features slides, swings, climbing opportunities, and play structures. Also open is the multi-sports court (futsal/basketball) and pickleball/badminton courts. Fencing will remain around the playfield to allow for the new grass to establish. SPR anticipates opening the playfield and the comfort station in summer 2022.
- Skatepark planned for Rainier Beach: SPR is partnering with [CHAMPS](#) Resource and Service Center and [Parents for Skateparks](#) on the design for a new [Rainier Beach Skate Park](#) at Rainier Beach Playfield. The first public meeting was held on Jan. 19 with future design meeting set for April and July. For the last four years, CHAMPS has been hosting events to discuss a new skateboard park that would attract youth and provide a safe gathering place.
- Pickleball and Tennis Survey: Seattle Parks and Recreation is seeking input from tennis and pickleball players on how we can best support the growth of pickleball. Everyone is encouraged to participate in a [short survey](#), whether you play pickleball or not, your thoughts are invaluable as we plan for the future of this sport in Seattle.
- Third Shift Maintenance Crew: The Planning, Development and Maintenance Division has restarted the Park District funded Night Shift Enhanced Maintenance program effective Jan. 4th. This team is focused on planned and preventative maintenance work in community centers, Teen Life Centers and Environmental Learning Centers. Work focuses on paint, carpentry, electrical and plumbing. All work is conducted during off hours at night so programming is not interrupted and vital community services like child care are not impacted.

Finance & Administration

Seeking Proposals for Concessions: We are seeking proposals for seasonal partners to operate food service, recreational activities, and group fitness concessions at various park locations throughout Seattle. Proposals are due by March 4, 2022. Please visit <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/seasonalconcessions>

In response to public comment:

Interim Superintendent Williams says that SPR made a commitment to the voters to maintain a certain taxing level but there have been many challenges and the economy has not improved.

Commissioner Herrera asks Interim Superintendent Williams if Mayor Harrell remembers the details of the Park District from his City Council days. Remind people of the budget promises that were made in the InterLocal Agreement. Commissioner Watts adds that BPRC wanted to craft a letter to the new Mayor about funding.

Briefing: 2022 Park District Grants

Presented by: Lakema Bell and Kathleen Gantz

Justin Cutler, Recreation Director, encourages the board members to share these grant opportunities in the community and to let them know about the changes to the grant program.

- Arts in Parks - Funds projects that celebrate diversity, build community, and enhance the visibility of neighborhoods and communities. Projects must take place outside in an eligible City of Seattle Park.
- Get Moving -Funds culturally relevant physical activities for communities where health disparities are prevalent.
- Recreation for All - Funds new, innovative, and/or culturally relevant recreation opportunities. Programs and events must take place in a City of Seattle Recreation Facility or Park.
- Seattle Park District Grants 2020 - Grants were reduced due to financial impacts of Covid-19. Covid highlighted inequities and disparities in health and other historical inequities.
- They created the Covid community healing grants to support communities most impacted by COVID
- Discretionary fund went toward food services
- Lakema reads all of the grants that were awarded for those calling on the phone and not able to see the screen.
- Welcome Back Seattle 2021- Allowed community partners to provide virtual programming.
- Covid Community Healing Grant
 - Need resources and capacity building
 - Long term projects not just 1 grant cycle
 - Participatory based evaluations
 - Youth and adults to have conversations
- Marketing focus – ethnic media, past recipients and applicants, and word of mouth

Application lives on gosmart.org but migrating onto a new system.

What constraints have you seen on what you can fund or promote?

Lakema responds:

- The Community Engagement Ambassadors have been pivotal with linguistic response and assisting with grant writing. It's hard to serve so many with so little.
- Grant resources – Finding and applying for grants; policy barriers like matching funds. SPR staff got creative in funding so that the awardees could get some dollars to start their business before the programming starts. SPR works hard with accounting to ensure they pay them immediately. Staff work diligently to help the grantees jump through the hoops and do the bureaucracy.
- We teach them to collect data and so they can use that to apply for future grants whether through SPR or other organizations.

SPR Climate Resiliency

Presented by: Todd Burley, Michael Yadrick, and Oliver Bazinet

For more information, please see the published report [here](#).

In collaboration with staff from other city departments.

Everyone is feeling the consequences of climate change and it is expected to get worse.

- Increasing temperature and rising sea levels. Puget Sound is expected to rise 1-5 feet; leading to flooding and erosion of shoreline and degradation of habitat.
- Temperature shifts – impacts people and plants
- Precipitation – extreme weather and droughts.
- Reduced air quality – due to drought caused forest fires.
- Impacts to our mental health – climate-related anxiety is real.
- Impacts don't hit all people to the same degree. Borne most by poor and vulnerable, immigrants and POC.
- Those areas that have extreme heat are connected to lack of tree canopy
- Citywide high-level impacts and within SPR land and community

The report shows how SPR will be effected by climate change and mitigation strategies.

Vulnerabilities are ranked by:

- Exposure
- Sensitivity
- Capacity to adapt given different rankings

And talks about expanding climate resiliency actions for community members and facilities.

- Artificial turf upgrades from tire to cork for infill
- Improve community center for community resiliency;
- water cisterns microgrid during disasters;
- update building standards to incorporate resiliency strategies;
- facility assessments are starting soon.

Climate Resiliency Actions for Infrastructure

- Trails program makes headway although heavy winter storms make this challenging.
- Tree inspections will continue.
- Green Stormwater infrastructure – deals with climate change impacts and increases habitat.
- Started removing seawalls in our system.

Climate Resiliency Actions for Shorelines –

- SPR manages 11 miles of salt water;
- GSP has restored steep slopes but many more to do;

- Coastal assessments to identify greatest vulnerabilities;
- Improve designs to latest science.

Climate Resiliency actions for Plants/animals

- standardize mulching; focus on lengthening water time for new plants;
- continue to improve irrigation;
- reuse water;
- standardize mulching;
- climate resilient species in an updated plant list.

Public webinar on February 8, 2022.

Recommendations from this report inform:

- Strategic Plan implementation
- Budget appropriations
- Annual work plans

Discussion

Carbon assessment tool for embodied carbon; allows designers/project managers think about the carbon cost for concrete and reduce the amount they use or use it wisely.

Commissioner Farmer was happy to see trees in the infrastructure, as well as, plants and animal categories because of the many co-benefits.

How is SPR prioritizing what they want to get resources for? Todd replies this is to be used as a resource and a tool to inform decision-making. There is a lot of conversations happening and there is not as much of a struggle to get people to buy-in.

City signed onto C-40 Urban Nature Declaration.

SPR works with other city departments to do projects concurrently with other infrastructure projects to create efficiencies.

There are great loans for solar, has SPR looked into that? No, but Oliver says he will.

Stormwater to store and use for irrigation for dry months by partnering with SPU

In response to Commissioner Watt's concerns about green displacement; Todd offers the example of Georgetown where they are coordinating the efforts to plant more trees, and maintain affordability for the people that live there.

Old/New Business

Review operating procedures before February 10 meeting.

There being no other business, Commissioner McCaffrey adjourns at 8:50pm.