

Seattle Board of Park Commissioners  
Meeting Minutes  
January 26, 2017

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:

Andréa Akita  
Dennis Cook  
Marlon Herrera  
Evan Hundley  
William Lowe  
Kelly McCaffrey  
Barbara Wright, Vice Chair

Excused:

Tom Byers, Chair  
Marty Bluewater

**Seattle Parks and Recreation Staff**

Christopher Williams, Deputy Superintendent  
Rachel Acosta, Park Board Coordinator

The meeting is held at 100 Dexter Avenue North. Commissioner Lowe calls the meeting to order at 6:30pm. He reviews the Agenda and the Commissioners introduce themselves. He calls for approval of the Consent Items: January 26 Agenda, January 12 minutes, and the Acknowledgment of Correspondence. Commissioner Wright moves, Commissioner Hundley seconds and the Consent Items are approved unanimously.

**Oral Requests and Communication from the Audience**

Gary Gaffner - defers his time to Phil Vogelsang.

Phil Vogelsang - Discovery Park Advisory Council and Friends of Discovery Park - Fort Lawton Center of the Arts was proposed at a Discovery Park Advisory Council meeting. It's proposal would make use of vacant buildings in Discovery Park. He does not support historic district development at Discovery Park.

Rob Efrid - Seattle University, Anthropology professor. He has done research on children's environmental education in China. He works in the International District and Yesler Terrace - committed to bring access to nature for kids. He also serves as a Discovery Park Advisory Council member. He feels it is important to ensure Seattle citizens have equitable access to large open spaces. He is here to defend the integrity of Discovery Park open space for all citizens of this city.

Mike Ruby – lives in Wallingford. He works hard to promote parks and park levies; newcomers see a blank canvas when they come to a new park which can lead to conflicts. Discovery Park is often people's favorite park. Connecting to nature and relaxing at the park are main reasons people love it. The buildings that remain in the park remind people when we won 2 great wars to push back dark forces across the oceans.

### **Superintendent's Report**

Jesús is at a National Recreation and Parks Association conference and will be back next week.

Discovery Park – This department and the community share a long history of treating Discovery Park like a sacred place. Deputy Superintendent Williams is not sure about concert idea, but he will look into it.

Magnuson Park Building 2 update: The Request for Proposal (RFP) respondents were rejected because the total project cost was high and the Department felt the respondents had an overreliance on fundraising. The respondents are going through an appeal process. The department plans to announce the results in a week or so.

Seattle Asian Art Museum expansion: Jesús sent them a letter requesting they pause their work forward to analyze key questions, such as: how expansion supports Museum mission, how dependent it is on the expansion? The department will assess I-42 more deeply. The Seattle Art Museum gave a written response and Superintendent Aguirre will update us after he has a chance to review it.

Reimplementation of CLASS software system – The department is starting an RFP process for a new vendor/performance management system to replace CLASS, which is used in the community centers. This would allow SPR staff to be more accountable because it tracks information and data.

SPR launched an RFP for food/fitness/activities/concession in parks. This will help the department gauge community interest.

The event scheduling office is working on 2 American Disabilities Act (ADA) projects at Golden Gardens and Alki Bathhouses and ADA improvements to other picnic shelters.

City Center Activation Team – Center City Activation team: We continue to work with the Center City Activation team on safety issues at City Hall Park and Prefontaine Square. We assisted in clearing an encampment at City Hall Park which consisted of 17 tents and we removed three tons of trash. After the tents were removed, our Tree Crew pruned trees to improve lighting in the area. Our Rangers are patrolling Prefontaine four times a day to help decrease negative behavior.

Conservation Corps – The Conservation Corps have been busy with projects all over the city.

Field Scheduling - The Field Scheduling Unit has worked diligently with the Seattle Public School District to transfer all rental staffing responsibilities for district stadiums. The transfer of duties has allowed our SPR staff to focus on additional work, while continuing to provide exceptional customer service for our many user groups.

People Counters – The Mayor’s Performance Dashboard tracks a few measures for each department, and for us one of them is People Counter visits. In 2016, we had a goal of 3,600,000 visits – and thanks to the hard work of your staff and programs, we beat that goal by receiving **3,784,864** visits in 2016.

## **Presentation: Citywide Equitable Outreach and Engagement**

*Presented by Kathy Nyland, Department of Neighborhoods*

### **Presentation**

Resolution 27709 created the Department of Neighborhoods; core components were about growth management.

Key objectives:

- Creating partnerships between the City and neighborhoods
- Coordinating city departments responses
- Fostering cooperation and collaboration
- Facilitate communication - do more together

DON created an engagement structure through district councils, formed around police stations and community centers.

What has changed: Technology - how we communicate. There are different tools.

What hasn’t changed: The way DON operates has not changed. DON can do more to reach more people.

Mayor Murray emphasizes the importance of meaningful public engagement. Public involvement, outreach, and engagement needed to be better.

Office of Planning and Community Development - works in partnership with DON on community engagement in regards to planning and leveraging opportunities.

Executive Order 2016-06 asks city departments to apply an equitable lens on community engagement in order to communicate better with all people.

### Key Principles

- Improve and expand inclusive outreach and engagement
  - Outreach – manage expectations
- Create well designed public involvement plans - people speak/hear differently; customize plans to the audience.
- Build community capacity for meaningful participation. Going to communities but also using technology to reach people when it is convenient for them.

Successfully engaging community in any process increases public support and better outcomes. Doing things with and for communities. Go where people are: soccer games, community meetings, popups - hold events with multiple departments, which eliminates exhausting public processes.

Certain communities do not attend community meetings for various reasons. DON, partnering with community based organizations, to go to English as a Second Language classes to talk about big issues and initiatives. They found 60-70% had never interacted with the city before. New program - Youth Choice Program, teaching youth to have a voice.

2017 continued community conversations; DON is establishing best practices for outreach and engagement.

Build in a feedback loop - responding to the feedback when they return to the same group.

Department of Neighborhood strategies:

- DON has grown 20% in 1.5 years
- Community liaison program - partners with representatives in 63 different languages; when there's a need to communicate with different demographics there is a link.
- Outreach and engagement is included in all policy discussions with all departments.
- Held 8 events - signed people up for Orca lift and utility discounts.
- Embracing technology - working with Seattle Information Technology to create an online outreach plan; creating more access.
- Updating job descriptions to meet community needs.
- 

Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement guide is being updated: working with communities to create tools for translations; manual to hold city departments accountable.

SPR participates in the livability summits which are conversation and relationship based.

There are 38 neighborhood plans; 100's of neighborhoods. DON has 12 dedicated neighborhood staff. DON splits them into 4 sectors - and a dedicated point person for corralling and shepherding information.

Orca lift - working closely with Seattle Department of Transportation and other organizations to sign people up for orca lift. Matching community wants and needs and making it engaging and fun.

When one is homeless; they need to tend to their basic needs. In order to engage with homeless community, DON held a gathering at a laundromat to reduce barriers and allow those people to exercise a basic need. Barriers exist to participate; how to provide opportunities for people to participate and make it fun.  
DON is working to broaden access points.

**Presentation: Aquatic Weeds Management Plan**

*Presented by Kathy Whitman and Barbara DeCaro, Seattle Parks and Recreation*

1:29:59

Beaches along Lake Washington struggle with noxious weeds - Eurasian aquatic milfoil and non-native lilies. SPR struggles to find an approach that would be efficient and cost-effective.

Kathy, Aquatics Manager, and staff are working to obtain a permit for integrated weed management for all fresh water park land - chemical treatment for non-native fragrant white water lilies and milfoil. These noxious weeds pose both environmental and public safety issues.

SPR will focus the herbicide locations at the 7 lifeguarded swimming beaches, small craft facilities and moorages.

They will continue to use mechanical harvester, which collects about 90% weed; however, during this process there are portions that drift off and plant themselves elsewhere.

The department uses divers to pull the plants out by the roots, but this method is not effective long-term and is very labor intensive

Kathy and Barb DeCaro, environmental analyst for Seattle Parks and Recreation, are advising the department to add chemicals to the toolbox.

Following the Department of Ecologies recommendations as their preferred methods; these chemicals target these plants in particular. There are no fish issues and minor restrictions towards people. SPR will close the beaches for 24 hours after application but best practices through DOE suggest only closing the beaches for 12 hours. Many communities and municipalities living along Lake Washington use this and other noxious weed herbicides for years.

SPR uses the liquid form for purple loosestrife; the milfoil herbicide is granular.

The leaves of the lilies are sprayed and the contractors are very careful.

The dense plants are impacting recreation and safety.

Seward Park beach has both lilies and milfoil and there is more swimmers itch because the habitat is perfect for snails.

The lilies are encroaching and pose a danger because the stems are long and can trap people.

SPR wants people to choose to swim at beaches.

Lilies are getting very dense at the moorages. They can cause damage to boats if they get caught in the motor.

Stagnant water produced with dense areas of milfoil and invasive lilies cause:  
mosquito breeding zones  
dense toxic zones for wildlife  
ph increases as the temperature of the water increases, making it uninhabitable.

If SPR doesn't take action, the lilies and milfoil will expand.

DOE has a 60-day permit process. SPR staff will submit on February 1 with the intention to implement in late spring when buds begin to form.

Milfoil - spraying will range depending on growth. SPR feels this is an appropriate balanced approach to take.

This will increase enjoyment and improve public safety and provide a benefit to the environment, says Barb DeCaro, Senior Environmental Analyst.

Peggy Tosdahl, Moorages Manager, will be working on outreach for the moorage operations.

Kathy and Barb introduce Ben Peterson who is an Aquatic Weed Specialist with King County Noxious Weed Program.

Barb worked with Save the Union Bay on their noxious weeds plan - went through public outreach – that community was pleased and shocked at how the milfoil dissipated.

Barb explains how these weeds create inhospitable conditions for the shoreline ecology. The plants prevent wind mixing with the water creating mosquito habitat and decreases oxygen which changes the environmental conditions necessary for fish and aquatic species. These shoreline areas are on the fry migration route. Each year SPR will monitor and adapt the process.

SPR working on Frequently Asked Questions so everyone will have the same information and become a part of the education process.

Outreach: Plan to do outreach at public meetings and follow the notification requirement to send to addresses within 1/4 mile of locations. There will be notification on site. SPR staff hope to do this prior to opening most of the beaches for summer. Property owners within 1/4 miles will be notified during the application process and during treatment.

Cost: The \$56,000 covers everything but staff time. There will be a savings because the other methods are so labor intensive, and this cost will decrease over time because the problem will decrease.

Green Lake is not on this list, but there is no cost to add it.

The alum treatment at Green Lake is taking nutrients that milfoil needs to grow which is why it is not an issue anymore.

SPR receives many complaints from park users about the milfoil and lilies.

Cyanobacteria is one of the most serious issues at Green Lake. It poses real health hazards, which is why the alum is used.

People fish on Lake Washington - posting signs in other languages.

For the milfoil: The granular product becomes tacky and sticks to the plant and releases the herbicide. There is no evidence that it hurts fish or people who consume fish.

The product for the lilies is absorbed immediately.

The tolerances are too small 2.25 parts per billion.

At the rate of application, there should be no impact to amphibians or other shoreline wildlife.

### **Old/New Business**

None.

Commissioner Lowe asks for a motion to adjourn; Commissioner Hundley moves and Commissioner Cook seconds.

**There being no other business, the meeting adjourns at 7:58 pm.**

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

Tom Byers, Chair  
Board of Park Commissioners