

Parks Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting information

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

5:00-7:00pm

Portland Building Room 216 and Zoom Virtual Meeting

Board members present:

Dr. C.N.E. Corbin, David Staczek, Jonathan Beckhart, Adrienne Feldstein, Matt Shipkey, Sabrina Wilson, Adam Lewis, Bonnie Gee Yosick, Suenn Ho, Patti Miles, Crys O'Grady, Erin Zollenkopf, Jessica Green (ex-officio)

Board Members absent:

Casey Mills, Ali Berman

City staff present:

Adena Long (Bureau Director), Todd Lofgren (Bureau Deputy Director), Joey Furuto (Chief Coordinator), Jessica Pernsteiner (Assets & Development Coordinator), Maximo Behrens (Recreation Division Manager), Tonya Booker (Land Stewardship Division Manager), Melody Brooks (Interim Equity & Inclusion Manager), Lauren McGuire (Assets & Development Division Manager), Jenn Cairo (City Forester and Urban Forester Division Manager), Claudio Campuzano (Manager of Finance, Property, and Technology), Kellie Torres (Chief of Staff, Commissioner Dan Ryan), Dawn Uchiyama (Director of Bureau of Environmental Services), Shannah Anderson (Bureau of Environmental Services), Laura Lehman (Senior Environmental Planner), Michelle Rodriguez (Chief of Staff, Commissioner Mingus Mapps), Ken Finney (Environmental Manager, BES), Ken Bartocci (Finance Manager, BES), Amy Archer-Masters (Portland Utility Board Analyst, City Budget Office), Farshad Allahdadi (Business Services Group Manager, BES), Matt Krueger (Environmental Specialist, BES), Jennifer Devlin (Environmental Manager, BES), Sarah Santner (Portland Water Bureau), Steve Hansen (Manager III, BES)

Others present:

Matthew Schick (Community Member), Chris Caldwell (Catalysis LLC), Jenny O'Connor (Community Member), Megan Van de Mark (Urban Forestry Commission), Bruce Nelson (Urban Forestry Commission), Robin Castro (Portland Utility Board), Chris Richard (Portland Utility Board), Bob Sallinger (Portland Utility Board), Karen Williams (Portland Utility Board), JR Lilly (Urban Forestry Commission), Roberta Jortner (Urban Forestry Commission), Derily Bechthold (Urban Forestry Commission), Justin Misner (Urban Forestry Commission), Ivory Iheanacho (Urban Forestry Commission), Alexis Rife (Portland Utility Board), Roslyn Gray (Portland Utility Board), Heather Day-Melgar (Portland Utility Board), Julia DeGraw (Portland Utility Board), Joseph Spada (Portland Utility Board), Joanne Johnson (Portland Utility Board), Babs Vanelli (Community Member), Bob Bonner (Friends of Terwilliger), Damion (Community Member), Carol Cushman (Community Member), Marianne Fitzgerald (Community Member), Marita Ingalsbe (Friends of Gabriel Park)



Meeting called to order at 5:00pm with roll call following.

Agenda Items

Public Comment

Matthew Schick returned for public comment in response to previous discussion about his initial comments.

General Announcements

Approve November Minutes

Suenn Ho commented that there was a typo on page 3, about Darcelle XV Plaza having a fence. Sabrina Wilson commented that she was left off the list of names present in the last Board meeting. Elana Pirtle-Guiney moved to approve the minutes, Bonnie Gee Yosick seconded. All members voted in approval and the motion was carried.

Director's Report

On December 13, City Council unanimously approved the **2022-23 Parks Levy Annual Report and the Parks Levy Oversight Committee Annual Report**. You can watch the presentation and read the report online. Links can be found in the monthly report under the Sustainable Future heading. In the coming months, the report will be presented to key internal and external stakeholders including the Urban Forestry Commission, Recreation Supervisors and Managers, at the PP&R Leadership Team meeting, and more. And in alignment with our commitment to language access, the Executive Summary and Parks Levy Oversight Committee Annual Report will be translated and available in Spanish, Chinese, Russian, and Vietnamese and available online once translations have been completed.

Last month, Commissioner Rubio and BPS [announced](#) that an unanticipated additional \$540 million dollars in PCEF revenue is expected over the next 5 years and how these new resources will be used. The funds will provide some immediate budget relief and future protection for the City's General Fund and are being used to support the goals of the Clean Energy Fund. In the first round of awards announced, UF's Arborist Trainee program is being funded.

The announcement also referenced a second and upcoming set of uses for these funds. These are being developed now as part of the budget development process for the new fiscal year which begins July 1, 2024. They include \$100 million for tree protection and maintenance for 5 years, which will enable the City to maintain street trees, which is a significant change from the current policy wherein maintenance has been the responsibility of the adjacent property owner. Most, if not nearly all, US cities of Portland's size or larger maintain City-owned tree assets like street trees.

Portland's long-standing policy is a known burden on property owners especially those experiencing low income, a barrier to tree care and planting especially in low canopy neighborhoods and has helped perpetuate the inequitable distribution of the urban forest in Portland.

These new funds have positive implications for equity in tree distribution and urban forest service to communities, for more-equitable public policy, for public health and for responding to the climate crisis.



The [PCEF Committee next meets on January 25, 2024](#) and is expected to vote on this and other related proposals, which would then go to City Council for a vote likely sometime in February.

Adrienne Feldstein asked about whether infrastructure and capital allowed to use the excess PCEF funds. Director Long replied that the bureau submitted a list of proposals for items that fit that bill, for example, the retrofits for Mt. Scott Community Center, which is currently under construction. It includes things like HVAC repairs which is part of climate resilience. Other proposals are also being considered.

Crys O'Grady (Board Member) asked if the Board could receive the analysis on Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland Wave 3. Director Long said that it will initially go to the Community Engagement Working Group, but the full Board will hear about it in February or March.

Dr. Corbin noted that last month, the Board voted to send the emergency shelter letter to Multnomah County. The Office of Government Relations recommended giving Multnomah County the opportunity to present at a Board Meeting. Director Long said that the Board is welcome to send the emergency shelter letter or an edited version, after the presentation.

Working Group Reports (Q&A only)

Community Engagement

CEWG received an opportunity to complete a Portland Monuments Project Public survey.

Board Affairs

There was no Board Affairs meeting held in December.

Financial Sustainability/Budget Advisory Committee (BAC)

There will be both the January and February BAC meetings occurring by the next Board meeting in February.

Land Use & Infrastructure

There were no questions.

Portland Parks Foundation Report

Jessica Green (Ex-Officio Board Member) sent over a report to Board members on key dates for Friends and Allies programming. This includes the Spring Summit which will highlight volunteerism and emerging leaders. There is also an opening for a Development Manager (in Fundraising) at PPF, as well as a need to establish having a PP&R Board member serve as an ex-officio member on the PPF Board. This role is unique in that the ex-officio member will have voting power on the Board.

Jonathan Beckhart (Board Member) asked about an update on hiring for the Director role. Jessica replied that she will be stepping in permanently as Executive Director for PPF, with the Board voting her in.



Natural Resources Service Delivery Update

Members of the Urban Forestry Commission as well as the Portland Utility Board attended the meeting to receive an update on the direction and process of the ongoing Natural Resource Service Delivery Assessment, as presented by Director Long, Director Dawn Uchiyama from Bureau of Environmental Services, and Chris Caldwell of Catalysis.

The meeting agenda included a review of the work to-date, sharing of the draft work plan deliverables as well as a timeline for next steps in the process, including future touchpoints with the advisory bodies.

There are seven primary deliverables:

1. Refine scope of Natural Resources Service Delivery Resolutions
2. Employee and community engagement and equity components
3. Organizational Proposal
4. Budget proposal
5. Policy, Rules, and HR updates
6. Draft/Update Agreements
7. Change Management/Communications

Bonnie Gee Yosick (Board Member) asked how the metrics were determined during the preliminary “Blue Sky” brainstorming. Director Uchiyama replied that they still needed refinement and there was intention to have multiple bureaus weigh in and give feedback.

Bruce Nelson (UFC) asked for clarification on the relation between Natural Resource Service Delivery and the service areas as outlined by City Council since the bureaus are not necessarily in the same service areas. He also asked about how staff were to be consolidated for this work. Director Uchiyama commented that the term “service areas” were a loose term for the description of city functions. This allows bureaus to bundle different categories of services accordingly. Director Long replied that staff were the next group of stakeholders that would be updated on this work. There are a number of different areas that need to be reviewed before

Robin Castro (PUB Chair) noted that the presentation had already started by the time that PUB members joined the meeting. Directors Long and Uchiyama gave a quick summary in order to catch them up to the current meeting.

Chris Richard (PUB) asked if the funds from BES were cleared by legal counsel to be used for NRSD. There have been historical lawsuits where City Council instructed BES to use funds a certain way and as a result have lost in a lawsuit because it was used outside of the bureau’s purview. Director Uchiyama replied that they consulted with the City Attorneys to determine if the ordinance was legally binding. They confirmed that the City Resolutions were binding and to proceed, but the specifics of the services provided and finances used were still under review.

Bob Sallinger (PUB) commented that there is a serious trust issue on how CR 37635 was communicated and passed. He urged that the bureaus look at the whole situation holistically. He reemphasized on the legal funding and how that will be used.

JR Lilly (UFC) asked if there were other community engagement happening with this plan and their equity lens. Director Long answered that currently the community engagement surrounding the workplan are staff, bureau partners, advisory bodies, and City Council. The stage of implementing the plan will include more stakeholders, but there is nothing concrete now.



Director Uchiyama commented that the equity tools in BES and Water are actually influenced by Parks.

Karen Williams (PUB) asked about the opportunities for the advisory bodies to engage to participate in testimony in the upcoming work session. Director Long replied that the current work sessions are not public hearings. Michelle Rodriguez (Chief of Staff for Commissioner Mapps) added that there can be invited testimony for the work sessions.

Adrienne Feldstein (Board Member and UFC) asked about whether Blue Sky brainstorming was in draft phase, as there seemed to be some missing elements. Director Uchiyama confirmed that it was in draft form. Each goal was created for all bureaus to contribute to.

Dr. Corbin asked there be glossary created on some of the terminology used in NRSD.

Megan Van de Mark (UFC) reemphasized the importance of the holistic approach on elevating green infrastructure while also following the City Resolutions. Director Long replied that the purpose of the workplan was to continue to do both. Director Uchiyama added that the workplan will include other bureaus so it will have a broader scope.

Jenny O'Connor (Community Member) commented that there should be more community engagement and outreach.

Sabrina Wilson (Board Member) asked about the timeline for all three advisory bodies and how much engagement is expected with all of the groups. Director Long responded that February 1 is the work session and that the workplan is expected to be submitted to the Chief Administrative Officer in April. Also, that even with the finalized workplan, there is still the phase of implementation which can change many things. Todd also added that the Mayor released the dates of many different work sessions which will provide many opportunities for public testimony.

Dr. Corbin (Board Chair) asked staff if there was a possibility to have representatives for each group in order to stay in continued contact over the next few months since the Board only meets once a month.

Public Comment/Other Business

Bonnie Gee Yosick (Board Member) asked PP&R staff to follow up with community member (Matthew Schick) regarding drone usage. Director Long replied that she is expecting a briefing with staff on drone policy. She hoped to be able to update the community member as well as the Board. To clarify, this would not be a review on what is City policy, it would be review on bureau practice.

Dr. Corbin (Board Chair) clarified that Board Working Groups are not public and do not make quorum. These working groups are meant to have discussions on what is to be brought in front of the full Board.

Patti Miles (Board Member) asked about an update on Grant Park Bowl. Todd Lofgren replied that PP&R gave a temporary permit of entry to Portland Public Schools to pay for the restoration of the turf field. Negotiations are close to being finished. PPS will be making all future maintenance, repairs, and improvements. The public was very interested in ensuring the upper bowl to be available to the public. There are also other non-PPS groups and organizations that are part of the discussions.



Matt Shipkey (Board Member) asked about the potential Slabtown Park and any updates. Todd reported that the bureau is still negotiating with the property owner, and they remain optimistic.

Suenn Ho (Board Member) asked about parcels of land acquired in the St. Johns Landing area and how these are incorporated into the budget. Lauren McGuire (Assets and Development Manager) answered that it was acquired because of a rare native oak species that was in the acquisition, which is adjacent to natural areas already under PP&R's care. This oak habitat is under protected, held other rare plant communities, and is accessible via the greenway. On top of that, it was at risk for development, and given it's need for protection, PP&R took this opportunity. Suenn asked if these funds for acquisition affect the funds for the deferred maintenance log. Lauren replied that acquisition funds are from System Development Charges, which is allocated for expansion of PP&R facilities. That being said, there is a budget considered for maintenance of these properties.

Meeting Adjourned

Dr. Corbin (Board Chair) adjourned this meeting at 6:59pm.

