

Parks Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting information

Tuesday, August 13, 2024

5-7pm

Portland Building Room 216 and Zoom Virtual Meeting

Board members present:

Dr. C.N.E. Corbin, David Staczek, Jonathan Beckhart, Matt Shipkey, Ali Berman, Suenn Ho, Patti Miles, Casey Mills, Sabrina Wilson, Jessica Green (ex-officio), Adam Lewis, Sameer Kanal, Bill Van Bang, Allison Snopek

Board Members absent:

Adrienne Feldstein, Crys O'Grady, Erin Zollenkopf

City staff present:

Adena Long (Bureau Director), Todd Lofgren (Deputy Director), Michelle Tran (Executive Assistant), Joey Furuto (Chief Coordinator), Maximo Behrens (Recreation Division Manager), Tonya Booker (Land Stewardship Division Manager), Leah Espinoza (Assets & Development Analyst), Brett Horner (Parks and Trails Planning Manager), Carine Arendes (City Parks Planner)

Others present:

Chris Voss (Multnomah County), Richard Higgins (Multnomah County), Stacy Borke (Multnomah County), Steve Drahota, Megan Neill

Meeting called to order at 5:01pm with roll call following.

Agenda Items

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

General Announcements

Corbin welcome the new board members Bill Bang, Sameer Kanal, and Allison Snopek.

Approve June Minutes

Casey Mills (Board Member) moved to approve June minutes, and Matt Shipkey (Board Member) seconded. All voted in approval and the motion passed. Adam Lewis (Board Member), Bill Bang (Board Member), Allison Snopek (Board Member), and Sameer Kanal (Board Member) abstained from voting due to absence and new voting members respectively.

Director's Report

While Parks Board has been on hiatus - PP&R has been in full swing! A few more weeks of summer programming, camps and YCC are wrapping up. The team has plans to share



highlights and stats related to that work, including youth workforce data, at the October Board Meeting

Heritage Tree #1 was damaged heavily during January storms which required total removal of the tree. There were multiple ideas that were vetted to try and save the tree, but the dangerous condition required a removal.

With the unseasonably warm weather comes what is inevitable - our aged and inadequate infrastructure is further strained and fails. We experienced AC, fountain, and pool failures throughout the system, some that subsist even now.

Montavilla Pool was out of service for several weeks at the beginning of the season and Pier Pool will not reopen this summer.

Aquatics maintenance mechanics have been working diligently with contractors on all issues and will continue to do so as we wrap up the season and we've discussed starting prep earlier in the summer in 2025, so potential issues can be identified and addressed earlier.

Fortunately, the Aquatics program was able to reassign, relocate and refund (if requested) staff and lessons from the affected pools.

Friends of Pier Pool are convening this evening at the same time as the board meeting. Our Aquatics team is attending to share the timeline of repairs and steps taken to get the pool back in operation.

PP&R hosted several park celebrations over the summer: Darcelle XV Plaza groundbreaking event was held on July 20, Farragut Park's newly renovated playground, basketball court and other amenity improvements were celebrated by community, and we partnered with PPF on a Community Play Day at Raymond Park.

Director Long forwarded to the board upcoming open houses hosted by PGE to discuss the Harborton Reliability Project and there will be an update from senior Environmental Planner, Laura Lehman via email.

Suenn Ho (Board Member) commented that the neighbors were displeased about the noise stemming from programming in the parks. She asked if it made sense to rotate to different parks for the East Portland Summer Arts Festival. Director Long replied that it is likely that PP&R will be finding a new location for large scale events in the future, especially because there was no water during the event, and they had to pay more than expected to bring in water. Maximo also commented that the events are often partnered with different neighborhood and community groups, so there are many areas that request their local parks participate. There are also reviews and ongoing data collection on new and return sites on logistics around noise and staging. Sabrina Wilson (Board Member) commented that often times with increasing activation in East Portland, there is natural pushback due to being accustomed to being left alone.

Casey asked about the transfer of Street Trees from Bureau of Environmental Services (BES) to Urban Forestry and how that was going. Director Long answered that it was the tree planting program and so only contracts were transferred. BES will still be planting trees in their natural areas along with the watershed program. They still need to work with UF on getting permits for tree planting.



Patti Miles (Board Member) made a comment about her personal experience with her recreational step group and a noise complaint. She also did not have a positive experience with the park ranger that came by. Todd Lofgren replied that he and Claudio Campuzano will follow up.

Suenn has asked about possible solutions surrounding Lan Su Chinese Garden and their chain link fence in response to vandalism. Director Long answered that the neighborhood has been challenged with a lot of issues in that area. Currently, the agreement is that Lan Su is responsible for maintaining the facility, but Land Stewardship Division Manager Tonya Booker is also on the board and is working extensively with them on the problem.

Claudio Campuzano gave a budget update on citywide budget process. With the transition to the new form government, the next fiscal year is expected to be at least as difficult as this past year. Budget Advisory Committees where the PP&R Board is typically a participant will no longer occur for the next fiscal year. At the moment, the Financial Sustainability working group will continue to meet as usual.

Todd gave an update on polling on the Operating budget, with Arts funding also involved. This included polling on removing the arts tax and what voters think.

Casey asked about the most recent Portland Clean Energy Fund (PCEF) application round in May. Todd replied that it was delayed due to the sheer number of applications.

Working Group Reports (Q&A only)

Board Affairs

There were no questions.

Land Use & Infrastructure

There were no questions.

Financial Sustainability

There were no questions.

Community Engagement

There were no questions.

Recreation, Nature, and Programming

There were no questions.

Parks Levy Oversight Committee

There were no questions.

Portland Parks Foundation Report

The Water Bureau has sent a recommendation for the contractor for the Elk Fountain, so things are moving forward.

PPF is putting together pieces for the Fall Summit occurring on November 13. It is a free opportunity and there will be a keynote and several workshops, including Board Member Erin



Zollenkopf on financial literacy. The Fall small grant cycle will begin soon. They are also reviewing small grants committee members and often Board Members are invited to participate. There is a stipend included. Allison commented that she would be interested.

Programs Manager Jason Brown is working on the upcoming candidates' forums and seeing which areas would be able to host the forum.

Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge Q&A

Matt shared that Land Use and Infrastructure working group were available to provide feedback on the various designs of the Burnside and its impacts.

Steve Drahota of HDR mentioned that there were over 20,000 pieces of feedback received on the designs process. The consulting group and the County are pleased with the response so far and there should be a recommendation that will come out this coming week.

Patti asked if there would be a more dynamic expression of the bridge. This seems like it could be an opportunity for the kind of design for this. Steve responded that there was a lot of feedback for this. One aspect that was crucial was that there still needed to be a view of the historical district possible. The current options just show the crude form and feedback on structural form, and the next phase should have some more continuity and "fun" designs in the future.

Ali Berman (Vice Chair) asked if there were favorite "arch" types. Steve replied that the basket handle was very popular which would take the arches and join them together.

Dr. Corbin asked if the team would consider adding vegetation or possible green space, especially with the heat island effects. Steve added that the next design phase will consider that design of human experience. At this point, they are still at a high level, but there are site opportunities for replanting near the Waterfront Park.

David Staczek (Board Member) asked if there was any more narrowing on connecting the eastside with elevators or stairs. Megan Neill of HDR replied that there has been a lot of discussion with the City on connecting the Eastbank Esplanade – they had asked about a possible ramp and elevators, but there were concerns about elevators in this particular location. They are still discussing solutions for mobility devices.

Multnomah County and Weather Events

Chris Voss, along with Stacy Borke and Richard Higgins, gave a presentation on Multnomah County's severe weather shelters program.

Dr. Corbin asked the County who decides what areas are used first and what criteria is used first. Stacy Borke commented that the team in the last year has tried to move PP&R CC's lower on the priority list, due to the impact that the shelter use on community. On the days of demobilization and setup, those are often days that the centers would otherwise be closed due to emergency.

Sabrina asked about the characteristics of a shelter. Also, is there tracking of who's being served and are there gaps identified on who is not being served? Finally, what are other initiatives created to fill that gap. Chris noted they often use the term Disaster Resource Center



(DRC) – a safe location where anybody can go. They do not screen participants (e.g. ask if they are experiencing homelessness), they hope to provide a safe space for anyone that needs it. There will be food and water, and staff specified for medical and mental support.

Adam Lewis (Board Member) asked if the community views DRCs as differently to a shelter? Are the cooling centers selected have any correlation to 911/emergency calls? Chris replied that the most recent location was chosen due to the fact that the surrounding area had the most fatalities. During the January storm, they found that many folks who were in hospitals did not have a place to go.

Suenn asked what has Metro been able to add as a partner. Chris answered that some of the biggest events have tapped into the Convention Center and Expo Center as support.

Casey asked about the list of the main factors and what is considered. Is one of the factors the type of primary service that the facility provides outside of shelter use? Also, is the list of facilities expanding? Chris answered that yes, it is expanding, it just takes some time to process the viable lists. Currently, the previous purpose of the center is not considered a dealbreaker to the list of facilities.

Dr. Corbin asked if there's a potential for a hybrid model for places such as Charles Jordan CC? Chris said that kind of work is more in the hands of PP&R. He also noted that the last time CJCC was used, the County brought a 10-ton air conditioner in order to maintain the temperature at the center.

Suenn asked about whether PP&R is compensated for the services and whether the County pays for amenities that get damaged. Chris replied that there is no "rent" paid for these services, but there have been instances of damage that the County paid for.

Public Comment/Other Business

There was no public comment.

Meeting Adjourned

Corbin adjourned this meeting at 6:59pm.

