



Tuesday, December 14, 2021

9:00 - 11:00 am

Zoom Virtual Meeting

Members Present

Bonnie Gee Yosick, Nova Newcomer, C.N.E. Corbin, Adrienne Feldstein, Erin Zollenkopf, Ali Berman, Casey Mills, Randy Gragg, Paddy Tillett, Elana Pirtle-Guiney, Mike Elliott, Sabrina Wilson, David Staczek, Paul Agrimis, Lorena Nascimento

Members Absent

Alejandro Orizola, Juan Piantino

City Staff Present

Adena Long, Todd Lofgren, Kenya Williams, Vicente Harrison, Tonya Booker, Mona Schwartz, Lauren McGuire, Claudio Campuzano, Margaret Evans, Sarah Huggins, Maximo Behrens, Brian Landoe, Tim Collier, Serin Bussell

Call to Order/Public Comment

Board Chair Bonnie Gee Yosick called the meeting to order at 9:00am

Bonnie reviewed the agenda and asked members for any feedback. One revision to the agenda, due to a schedule conflict Randy's report will be moved up prior to the working group report.

Approve November Minutes

The minutes were unanimously approved.

Director's Report

Director Long welcomed Serin Bussell. Serin has joined as a Coordinator II. An announcement was sent out to the board to share the type of work she will be doing. Serin will firstly be working on recruitment to hire an executive assistant to support the meetings starting next month or the following. Serin will join the next agenda setting meeting with Director Long, Bonnie, and Casey.

Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland has four work teams working on the project's main deliverables:

- **Listening and Learning Team:** Wave one of community listening and learning has been synthesized and will be shared with the Mission, Vision, Values, and Racial Equity Statement Team in early December. Appreciation for the board's participation was expressed.

- **The Decision Support Tool pilot** was completed as part of PP&R's Fall BMP process. That pilot project was a huge step forward, and we will continue improving the process and use a refined version of the Decision Support Tool during the upcoming budgeting process for the FY22-23 Requested Budget.
- **The Decision Support Tool** will prioritize reviewing budget proposals' demographic service area. The data will be assessed using demographic information related to race, youth, and households earning low incomes. As with the first version of the tool, proposers will also describe how their proposals relate to each of the seven steps of the PP&R Racial Equity Lens and Empowerment Tool.
- The **Mission, Vision, Values, and Racial Equity Statement Team** has kicked off its work. This team will use community listening to guide the drafting of new Mission, Vision, Values, and Racial Equity Statements in January. These drafts will be included for community input in our wave two Community Listening and Learning. Special thanks to folks who are participating in that team as well.
- These drafts of the **Mission, Vision, Values, and Racial Equity Statements** will also inform work to create strong outcomes for PP&R, which the bureau currently does not have. Outcomes will ground the work of the final deliverable, the bureau's Actions & Results Framework.
- The internal prep team for **Actions & Results** has drafted a framework and tested it using information from some of the bureau's existing guiding plans. The team is working with Divisions to make sure we have a performance measure for each levy commitment and capture existing measures that relate to racial equity. This work will be done in time for the FY 22-23 Requested Budget in late January 2022.
- Community members are also being recruited to serve on this team and will begin work in the new year to review existing metrics and gaps and help prioritize our work.
- When the bureau has draft outcomes in the spring, we will spend time in 2022 documenting the bureau's work in the Actions and Results Framework, identifying gaps, and prioritizing work to fill those gaps.

Questions:

1. How is the Parks Board going to be included in the Mission, Vision, Values, and Racial Equity (MVVR)Statement's work? I understand that Community members will be included but how will the Parks board participate?

Response: It was shared that Casey Mills served on the Decision Support Tool team, Erin Zollenkopf is on the MVVR team and Adrienne Feldstein is serving on the Actions and Results team. The board will also be part of the second wave to review draft statements.

2. Since I am new, am wondering if the Decision Support Tool has specifically been shared with the board?

Response: It has been shared with the board but staff can provide another briefing at a future meeting. It can be onboarding and grounding as part of the Actions and Results work. Since the Decision Support Tool will be used in this round of the budget we can schedule as an agenda item in the future and return with updates and progress.

Director's report continued:

- Last Monday, several staff from the Bureau, together with Commissioner Rubio and her staff met with representatives from the Friends of Columbia Park, Portsmouth Neighborhood Association, and Columbia Pool Community Task Force to provide background and an update on **Columbia Pool** and to discuss a future **North Portland Aquatics Center**.
- Staff shared the most recent conditions findings report and presented options for a new Aquatic Center in North Portland, including test fits at the current location in Columbia Park, the Columbia Park Annex and Charles Jordan Community Center
- The key takeaway is that the community advocates would like to see the City both fix Columbia Pool **AND** build a new aquatic center, a tall order given the many citywide priorities the City Council is contending with, as well as the competing priorities and service and equity gaps in our system. Commissioner Rubio has expressed her desire that however the Bureau chooses to move forward her priority remains that we choose a project that will serve North Portlanders for many years to come.
- We also shared that the Parks Commissioner Rubio advocated for and received \$1.5M in the Fall BMP to help North Portland swimmers access public pools during a multi-year service interruption.
- Along with updating the broader North Portland community this winter to share the status of Columbia Pool and a future North Portland Aquatic Center, our Community Engagement team will begin working with neighbors to understand how they would like us to utilize those access resources. We will keep the Board abreast of when that outreach will occur to attend or outreach to contacts for participation.

Question:

Will there be an opportunity or interest in having someone from the Parks Board involved in the conversation for support around ideas on the additional funds?

Response: Yes, we are open to other ideas and the board can reach out to Tim Collier to provide input on how to utilize those resources. We have received input on options for utilizing funds which include: Providing transportation to other indoor Portland pools that we manage, select engagements with youth in N Columbia area and Rosa Parks school. We are open to new ideas and as earlier stated there are plans for a meeting with the North Portland community to hear other ideas.

Return to Work updates

- While a few staff have resumed in-person office-type work on a limited basis since July, on December 6 the City, through the Chief Administrative Officer, announced a phased transition to require in-person work for office workers beginning in late January. Most employees who currently work remotely will be asked to report to worksites the equivalent of one full workday per week.
- One of the deciding factors to move forward with the re-entry is because about 94 percent of the City employees subject to the City's COVID-19 vaccination policy are fully vaccinated; the remainder received exceptions and must comply with additional safety measures under an accommodation.
- All hybrid employees will report to their assigned facility for a minimum of one full, regular workday per week effective January 31.
- The Director will have the authority to require more in-person work to support business needs or to approve a reasonable and limited number of exceptions to the in-person requirements.
- The Customer Service Center will re-open with a limited, by appointment, in-person option.
- Finally, in-person meetings of City Council, boards, commissions, and advisory committees may resume with appropriate safety and security measures, including remote options for volunteers and community members. PP&R will work with the Parks Board to determine the best format. This is part of a larger conversation since we have heard from folks that the remote options have been helpful.

Questions:

Are there concerns for return to work with Omicron? Many organizations are putting off return to work now due to the variant. Considering this information, how is safety for staff being factored in?

Response: There is a citywide taskforce that weighs all these factors and meets with all the Bureau Directors to get a sense of where we are in terms of our Bureaus and then it goes to City Council for discussion. It is not a Bureau decision but rather a city-wide decision. For our Bureau we are staggering the one day a week return, and the 94% vaccine rate is exceptional for any business in Oregon. The City is also beginning to roll out booster shots to employees. If the Oregon Health Authority, the CDC, state, and city decide we need to be even more cautious moving forward, we will be ready to pivot. We will continue to evaluate and do what we can to protect staff.

Follow up question: I imagine there are Parks staff who are already working and have been working in the office or field. Do you have teams going in together for team collaboration?

Response: PP&R leadership is currently polling Division Managers and asking their staff to come up with a work plan on their one day a week work schedule. We'd rather have work units together at the same time to collaborate and brainstorm, which is why the staggering and planning is important. It's also important that staff come in to communicate with one another rather than attend zoom meetings in the office. We have been following similar safety precautions and protocols with staff who have been working all along in the field and doing in person work.

City Council Items

- On January 5, the Bureau will present the **Year 6 Parks Replacement Bond Report** to Council.
- The purpose of the report is to summarize and share the status, achievements, and challenges of the **\$68M 2014 Parks General Obligation Bond Program** implementation and an overview of the Program's public outreach and transparency efforts.
- PP&R continues to make significant progress on delivery of the Parks Bond projects - some highlights - of the 52 Bond projects, 49 are complete and the remaining three are underway. In the sixth year of the Bond Program, three projects were completed and open to the public.
- The Program ended the fiscal year with total spending at \$53.6 million over the life of the Bond. Since July 2015, Bond projects have awarded 39% of the value of professional design service work and construction work to State-certified disadvantaged, minority-owned, women-owned, emerging small businesses, and/or service-disabled veteran business enterprises, exceeding the City's 20% utilization goal.
- On January 12, we will request that Council authorize a competitive solicitation and contracting with the lowest responsible bidder for construction of the **Columbia Children's Arboretum Improvement Project** for an estimated cost of \$2,250,000.
- Columbia Children's Arboretum is a 28-acre hybrid park nature park located in the East Columbia Neighborhood and currently includes a non-ADA accessible linear woodchip and gravel path from one end to the other, pedestrian bridges crossing over waterways, a small gravel parking area, picnic tables, portable restrooms, and a bench.
- Improvements will include an ADA-accessible linear 10'-wide path from one end of the park to the other, bus drop-off and turnaround, ADA parking, bike parking, planting and temporary irrigation, and site amenities such as ADA-accessible portable restrooms in enclosures, drinking fountain, benches, picnic areas, trash receptacles, and nature exploration spots.

Question: Around Severe Weather Hubs: What constitutes severe weather and how will you manage with the new variant threat?

Response: For severe weather, it is normally declared by the Mayor in the city of Portland. If there is not a city emergency but almost severe, then normally PBEM (Portland Bureau of Emergency Management) will take the lead and do the announcement work directly with the Bureaus to activate warming shelters.

We have been operating shelters throughout COVID in one form or another. We have figured out the protocols of indoor masking and safety of physical distancing and taking the necessary precautions.

Follow up question: How do community members find out about these locations?

Response:

That is a city-wide effort. When the county and city declare an emergency, they will be run through county and city websites. We post on our website, and Tim posts on social media and local media is also used. We have partnerships with outreach workers in the county and there is also all the work of providing transportation options of those living outside to get to the shelters, so it's a city-wide county-wide effort.

Question: For the Columbia Children's Arboretum contract, might it not be wiser for future projects of this sort to pre-qualify the contractors rather than award to the lowest responsible bidder?

Response: We have been trying to do that for years and are working on alternatives. We have been able to do some of the larger projects with construction manager/general contracting as opposed to low bid. That way we can do some prequalification's and screen the contractors more thoroughly. But that also has its own issues because we are then beholden to the contractor for their price. It's a state law that is driving the low bid contract not a city policy and anytime we have to do alternate contracting we have to get special approval from Council. We can discuss further at the Land Use Subcommittee meeting.

Rose City Park Project update

Randy Gragg reported that they have been working on an agreement to install a new play structure at Rose City Park. The board approved at the last meeting and now moving forward. It is the first capital project that they have done since Barbara Walker Crossing. The hope is to create a replicable model for future play equipment projects. The \$260,000 cost will be shared with PP&R. Thanks to Adena, her team and commissioners.

Working Group Reports

Community Engagement: Erin Zollenkopf reported

- The group had a wide-ranging discussion around public comment strategies. Strategies around receiving more public comment and getting board visibility so people in the community know about the board and about this option to engage with Parks. This discussion will continue in the next meeting.
- Will be looking at the draft of new public comment procedure that the Board Affairs work group is putting together.
- Discussed access barriers that people might face and how to elevate issues quickly. Photovoice was introduced as an option; information was placed in the chat: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Photovoice>
- We learned that Kenya's team is getting a new position that will be dedicated towards policy.

Financial Sustainability: Mike Elliot reported

- The group received updates on Asset Management and Sustainable Future from Chis Silkie and Sarah Huggins
- Chris reported that there are three Levy related investments that are going to help with asset assessment and management going forward. These are the new work order systems and new environmental technician and GIS technician position.
- One development is that City Council recently adopted a policy on asset management which sets the bar for all the Bureaus across the city. Some of the high-level goals:
 - a. Consistent outcomes across all Bureaus
 - b. Development of a mechanism for continuous improvement
 - c. Equity is centered in all decisions and that Asset Management is to address inequities in the system
- Chris explained that there is not currently a major city in the US that is doing asset management holistically in this way and this policy presents the city of Portland with an opportunity to take a leadership role in this area.
Sarah provided a summary of the Sustainable Future workplan. A key component is to develop a long-term funding model which would address the \$500 million deferred maintenance back log.
- Early modeling was provided that was put together with the City Debt Manager that would use a sequenced bond issuance to buy down the deferred maintenance level over 20 years and bring Parks to a level of sustainability at a relatively level Levy rate.
- Pay Dirt Monthly Newsletter reported that the Fall BMP has been approved. If you have not had a chance to review the newsletter, it has a 2–3-page breakdown on how the Levy funds are being used and tells a good story.

- 2022/23 Requested Budget is due to the City Budget Office on January 26.

With all the new investments coming out of the Fall BMP the budget focus this year will be primarily on stabilizing the Bureau and implementing investments and decisions that have been made.

- *Key considerations:*
 - a.) Identifying the right level of resources to support reducing cost as a barrier to public facing programs.
 - b.) Determining which efforts were funded with one-time resources in the past year that should be targeted for request for renewal funding.
 - c.) Assessing the Bureau capacity and making incremental new additions as necessary only after looking at potential synergies and opportunities to scale up existing resources.
- Historically Parks has relied on new general fund allocations to fund daily operations and maintenance (O&M) and new assets as they come into service. The passage of the Levy has given council an additional option to fund these new O&M responsibilities to reduce pressure on the general fund.
- The concern that comes out of this approach is that it only makes sense if council is committed to working with the community and Parks toward looking at a successor resource, otherwise there will be a greater funding challenge at the end of the Levy.
- To address this concern, Parks and the City Budget Office submitted a joint memo to Council recommending that Levy funds be used to fund O&M expenses for new parks if and only if the Council is committed to identifying post Levy successor resources.

Land Use/Infrastructure: Paddy Tillet reported

- Items that came up at the meeting:
 - a.) The proposed relocation of the Elk sculpture that was located on Main street near Lowndale Square Park. The Bureau of Transportation together with The Bureau of Planning and Sustainability have come up with a plan to relocate to the South Park Blocks. There was concern that there had not been any public input or input from Parks. It is a complex issue and pre-emptive action without consultation is worrying to the group.
 - b.) Brief introduction to the resiliency report. We will be hearing more on the report.
 - c.) Discussed the Level of Service report which is in draft final stage. One of the issues that was raised was having a criterion of each type of facility being within a certain distance of people's home is understandable but necessary to keep in mind density which plays a large role. The report is making some steps in responding to addressing density but still more work to be done.
 - d.) Deferred maintenance suggestion was to use this Level of Service study to help budget need to allocate deferred maintenance to the asset groups to where it belongs.
 - e.) Natural areas- There was a question as to whether natural areas belong with these metrics since most of the natural areas have been acquired without capital cost creation by the city. Our suggestion is that it be removed and dealt with differently.

Additional comments: Lauren McGuire added the following:

- Director Long is in communication with other Directors regarding the Elk Sculpture and is involved in the discussion.
- Regarding Level of Service and deferred maintenance, Brett Horner (not Chris Silke) is working on mapping major areas of maintenance needs so that when we are working on prioritization each year for SDC funding we can focus funds appropriately.
- Natural areas – another report will be provided to the working group at the next meeting for further discussion.

Question was raised as to the possibility of providing either notes, minutes, or bullet points of group reports prior to the meeting to better follow along and engage.

Response: Minutes are not currently required but is a good item for the Board Affairs Working group to discuss and address and others in the chat agree with providing notes or minutes in advance.

Board Affairs: Casey Mills reported

There was no meeting held in November due to the Thanksgiving Holiday, but the group is working on the following:

- Update Board Public Comment Procedure
- Update Board Mission
- Process for Board or Board Members to comment on programs and policies
- Most effective use of Board Members in helping PP&R and PP&R staff.
- Improving relationships among the Board Members and between the Board and PP&R Leadership and Staff (outings, co-volunteer events, swag)
- Absentee policy and enforcement.

Small Group Discussions Break-Out Rooms

Items for Discussion

1. Time and Date of meetings moving forward
2. How can the board best support PP&R Leadership and Staff?

Break-out room 1 report

Meeting Times

- Switch off day and evening
- Evenings tend to better for the community
- Workday is more convenient for some board members and Parks staff
- If going in person, we should understand the full-time commitment (with travel)
- Does the current level of staff members need to attend each Board meeting?

- What are the goals of selecting a new time? Community engagement? More accessible?
- While inviting more community in - note the intended outcomes
- What is the benefit to the community for coming to Board meetings? What do they gain?

How can Board members support staff?

- Participate in hiring processes by being on interview panels
- Advocate and bring perspectives for staff safety

Break-out room 2 report

Meeting Times

- Moving the Board meeting to 9 seems to have improved overall attendance.
- In setting our meeting time we want to consider Staff/Board/Public needs. A rotating schedule could be effective with a 9-11 meeting at the Portland Building or City Hall and a 4-6/5-7 meeting in community centers or other PP&R facilities around the city.
- We wonder about what contributes to the low public participation in Board meetings. It is hard to say whether lack of awareness or lack of interest are the core reasons, or a combination.
- Perhaps an improved website presence could develop more interest in the Board meetings. We should also consider language barriers and how non-traditional work hours contribute to low attendance.

Being Most Helpful to Staff

- The Land Use and Infrastructure Working Group meetings were cited as particularly helpful to staff to bounce ideas off Board members and to get constructive feedback.
- The revolving agenda that staff and Board members contribute to provides a solid structure for productive meetings.
- The reconfigured Community Engagement and new Board Affairs Working Groups are coming on strong.
- One staff person noted that the PP&R Leadership Team doesn't fully understand the experience and connections of Board members. Sharing Board Bios more widely among the PP&R Leadership Team could be helpful to staff as well as inviting more PP&R staff to the yearly Board Retreat. These could help to become more intentional about making connections between the Board and staff.

Break-out room 3 report

Meeting Times

- Obtain a list of the most accessible park facilities (PubTrans/ADA inclusive/Translation/Childcare/Parking/Geographically spread out
- If alternating still structured so communities know how to plan accordingly

- Provide childcare, translation, or other tools on location if members of the public request things like that, and it might make attendance easier?

Being Most Helpful to Staff

- Staff and leadership would like a sense of the individual board member's capacity and areas of interest. This could be legal expertise in fleshing-out options for different issues and particular projects
- Board could aid in media watch (ears and eyes out) on Portland Park issues
- Advice and input are highly valued (example: decision support tool project)
- Conferring regular meetings with knowledge and information exchange
- Plug and play areas of need that is appropriate for Board members can fill to support staff
- Attend and speak at Council Meetings in support of park issues

Notes/Additional Suggestions:

- Charging the community engagement group with gathering data on current levels of community participation in board meetings and setting some goals for improvement. If there was a way to survey prior participants on how to reduce barriers that would be great.
- I like the idea of having specific 2-3 times a year in a community center an effort where we try to get community input.

Break-out room 4 report

Meeting Times

- Access for the public should be top priority
- Everyone here can access this time and we don't have a way to hear from people who can't
- Zoom may make accessibility (at least of place) less of a concern in the long run (Tim added that zoom will be a part of all future Parks meetings)
- Consensus that rotation of time is not ideal, and if it happens, we all need a schedule well in advance.
- Rotation of time could be confusing for the public, and if we move in that direction needs to involve clear, easily accessible, communication about meeting times.
- Staff are slammed and after-hours meetings might lead to managers sending fewer staff to meetings and instead prioritizing written reports.
- The time of the meeting seemed generally less important than consistency to folks in the room.
- Location doesn't have to be at a park's facility - it could be at a partner group location, a community room in an affordable housing community, at a community center hosted by a community we hope to partner with more.
- Location could tie into the content of the meeting - at a park we're getting a report on, or where we think there will be more public comment.
- Rotating location at parks could help the Board get a feel for different types of facilities and could draw community into facilities.

How can the Board help staff?

- Main goal: how can we add value without creating more work? What role is most important to staff for the Board to take?
- Staff will inherently have communities they can't reach, conversations folks won't have with staff, and bureaucratic speak they don't realize they use. Board can help be ears and eyes in community, and "translate" from acronyms and insider language to accessible language.
- Board can help staff maintain focus - there is so much growth right now that the Board can help remind staff what the focus needs to be (flip side: with all the Board interests we could inadvertently do the opposite...)
- For Parks to grow we'll need to build on current bonds. Board can generate support in the community for that work so that it can be successful.
- Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland, needs continued Board input to ensure it stays focused, equitable, and successful.

Bonnie thanked everyone and asked members to send any questions or meeting agenda items to her by email. The meeting was adjourned at 11:00am.