

Parks Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting information

January 14, 2024

5-7pm

Portland Building Room 216 and Zoom Virtual Meeting

Board members present:

Dr. C.N.E. Corbin, Ali Berman, Suenn Ho, Patti Miles, Casey Mills, Allison Snopek, David Staczek, Adrienne Feldstein, Bill Van Bang, Crys O'Grady, Jessica Green (ex-officio)

Board members absent:

Sabrina Wilson, Matt Shipkey, Erin Zollenkopf

City staff present:

Adena Long (Bureau Director), Todd Lofgren (VCSS Deputy Director), Joey Furuto (Chief Coordinator), Michelle Tran (Executive Assistant), Maximo Behrens (Recreation Division Manager), Tonya Booker (Land Stewardship Division Manager), Lauren McGuire (Assets and Development Division Manager), Jenn Cairo (City Forester and Urban Forestry Division Manager), Claudio Campuzano (VCSS Finance, Property and Technology Manager), Sonia Schmanski (Deputy City Administrator, Vibrant Communities), Kellie Torres (Chief of Staff for DCA Schmanski)

Others present:

Megan Steffek, Sonja Grove

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

Agenda Items

Public Comment

Megan Steffek gave public comment on behalf of "Turf Powell Park." There is a bond that was put forth for Portland Public Schools, which is heartening, but there was no mention of turfing, Powell Park, or Cleveland High School. She was glad to hear that DCA Schmanski and Director Long will be meeting with PPS this week.

General Announcements

Dr. C.N.E. Corbin (Board Chair) let everyone know to send any feedback about the Board Annual Report draft by January 20.

Approve December Meeting Minutes

Adrienne Feldstein (Board Member) moved to approve, Crys O'Grady (Board Member) seconded. All voted in approval, and the motion passed.



Parks Levy Update

DCA Schmanski introduced the presentation about the process of briefing the Council districts on the Parks Levy referral that may be scheduled as early as February. If the referral does not get approved in February for the May ballot, then there is an opportunity to bring the referral to Council in July for a November ballot. Sarah Huggins gave the presentation on next steps.

Casey Mills (Board Member) mentioned that the catch was that there was nothing about maintenance. He'd like to find out more about addressing funds for the backlog. DCA Schmanski said that the recommendation from the City Administrator was to create a bonding referral strategy. There is also a possibility of a citywide funding strategy that would be bigger than bond.

Ali Berman (Vice Chair) asked about the doubling of the rate with services staying the same. What is the history of rate increases over time? Has there been such a jump before? Sarah Huggins answered that the Portland Children's Levy for example, has kept the rate the same, but it resulted in less grants being handed out to partners. Todd added that the Portland Public Schools levy rate is at \$2.00, and with the proposed Parks Levy rate at \$1.60, they're still lower.

Dr. Corbin asked about what a levy does and doesn't do, for those who may not know what levies are. Sarah answered that they are funds for operating costs and have a time-limit of five years. Todd answered that the levy itself would cover programming, materials, and people costs. Casey asked about the assets that the levy would be delivering programming to since one could not assume that the assets will stay the same throughout the five years. Sarah replied that they have worked with the Assets and Development team on the facilities that were closest to failing. This information has been shared with Mayor Wilson. There is also a GIS map of assets and their conditions.

Ali asked if the Parks levy referral will harm the bond's chances. Director Long answered that often the levy and bond together on a ballot is seen less favorably rather than presented on separate ballots.

Dr. Corbin proposed putting together an ad hoc committee to get a letter written for the potential February 19 Council session. Casey Mills, Crys O'Grady, Jessica Green, and Corbin have volunteered to part of the committee. Corbin moved for creating ad hoc committee with Jessica Green to write a letter and provide testimony for the upcoming Council session. Crys seconded. All voted in approval and the motion passed.

Director's Report

On Wednesday evening, Parks Levy Report and Parks Levy Oversight Committee Reports will present to Council. On Thursday at 9:30am, there is the Vibrant Communities Service Area Onboarding Work Session with Council. The onboarding tour that was originally scheduled for this week, has been rescheduled for March 21. There is not a run of show for the tour yet, as the Council requested that the tour duration be shortened substantively.

Last week PP&R submitted a 2040 Metro Planning and Development Grant application requesting \$750,000 for the redevelopment of Tom McCall Waterfront Park Bowl. The scope includes the development of an RFQ for a Creative Director to facilitate a national design competition. The project is in partnership with the Human Access Project (Willie Levenson) and the Portland Waterfront Pavilion (Peter Johnson).



Excited to share that the bureau has just completed re-certification of the City's parks system as Salmon-Safe. PP&R was the first parks system to be certified Salmon-Safe in 2004, and over the course of the past twenty years the bureau has demonstrated its commitment to ecological stewardship and served as a regional and national example of environmental restoration in municipal park system management. Salmon-Safe's standards are based on a system-wide approach that relies on a comprehensive evaluation of overall management policies and planning related to habitat and water quality protection.

PP&R is thrilled to share that Portland Parks Preschool has recently been allocated 154 Preschool for All slots at nine community centers for the 2025-26 school year. The program will partner with Multnomah County to give 3 and 4 year olds access to free, inclusive, culturally responsive preschool experiences.

PP&R's application for Tree City USA was approved and now are officially recognized as a Tree City USA for the 48th consecutive year. The team has also applied to be a Tree Cities of the World. Tree Cities of the World is an international effort to recognize cities and towns committed to ensuring that their urban forests and trees are properly maintained, sustainably managed, and duly celebrated.

The City is currently in negotiations with three bargaining units, including: City of Portland Professional Workers (CPPW), the District Council of Trade Unions (DCTU) and American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). Given that there is the possibility of a strike, the City is in progress of making preparations to continue to provide critical City services.

Dr. Corbin asked about planned summer events. How are we communicating with community members about reduced permitting costs for community-based events? Is there support for partners about finances? Todd replied that the customer service center is equipped to help partners for events that are non-profit, free to community members. Corbin asked if there could be a report on tracking partners with these events.

Suenn Ho (Board Member) asked about the briefing of Administrative Rules. Is there a plan of graphics and signage to implement these rules? Victor Sanders has been assigned to work on this project of sign inventory, which is a large, complex project.

Working Group Reports (Q&A only)

Board Affairs

Casey reported that they will be starting the Nominating Committee early, so if there are those that want to join, please let Casey and/or Corbin know.

Land Use & Infrastructure

There was no meeting. They will be reconvening in January due to the holidays.

Financial Sustainability

Casey reported that the WG is focused on the Levy since it supports more than a third of Operating Costs.



Community Engagement

Suenn Ho mentioned the meeting's highlights on how the board can help with onboarding for the Mayor and new City Council members, including whether there can be board representation. She also mentioned the urgency of the PGE Harborton letter.

Portland Parks Foundation Report

PPF is currently raising money for Raymond Park. George Park has a project advisory team and February 27 has a community engagement event planned for the neighborhood. Portland Heights' funding will be done at the end of the calendar year.

Project schedule is pending for the Elk Fountain statue.

Friends and Allies initiatives continue and the Parks Champion Award nominations open tomorrow! The Joey Pope Leadership Award will open in February.

Public Comment/Other Business

There was no public comment.

Ali thanked Suenn for attending the public testimony on January 29 on behalf of the Board.

Meeting Adjourned

Corbin adjourned the meeting at 6:58pm.

