

Tuesday, March 8, 2022

9:00 - 11:00 am

Zoom Virtual Meeting

Members Present

Bonnie Gee Yosick, Erin Zollenkopf, Casey Mills, Dr. C. N. E. Corbin, Sabrina Wilson, Mike Elliott, Ali Berman, Alejandro Orizola, Casey Mills, Paddy Tillett, Nova Newcomer, David Staczek, Randy Gragg

Members Absent

Paul Agrimis, Adrianne Feldstein, Elana Pirtle-Guiney

City Staff Present

Lauren McGuire, Todd Lofgren, Kenya Williams, Tim Collier, Maximo Behrens, Sarah Huggins, Tim Collier, Tonya Booker, Margaret Evans, Jeff Ramsey, Jenn Cairo, Serin Bussell, Michelle Tran

Call to Order/Social Time

Bonnie starts with icebreaker. Meeting starts at 9:15am.

Announcements:

Randy reports that Steeplejack Brewery is hosting their first event since 2019 on March 15 with Catherine McNewer and Carl Abbott speaking on Olmstead. The event will also be on Zoom as their first hybrid event. On March 28, Dr. Corbin makes a return visit to the Olmstead series along with Vivek Shandas. They'll be talking about getting beyond recreation at Parks, specifically around social justice and climate change. Still planning for an indigenous-based event in April, but nothing confirmed.

Bonnie gives an update that Representative Travis Nelson has helped pass \$15 million for North Portland Aquatic Center, a big win.

Sabrina announces that the Rosewood Community Initiative will be moving and moving toward ownership. Will be continuing Parks programs in outer East Portland as a long-time partner.

Approve February Minutes

Paddy moves to approve minutes, Erin seconds, with a third from Alejandro. All vote in approval.

Director's Report

[Todd reporting in Director's stead] Great news about the \$15mil passing for the Aquatic Center. Commissioner Rubio has pledged \$11.7mil, so \$23mil is still needed. There were over 1000 cosigns in support of build, including orgs like Nike and Portland Public Schools.



Four items for City Council are coming up this month: 1) Bid for management of our golf courses, which is the first time we've put out all four courses together. 2) Cleaning up team grant programming to receive additional funding from the pandemic. 3) City-wide Tree Canopy Report about the waning of the urban forest. 4) Agreement with Halprin Landscape conservancy that will provide maintenance for fountains in parks.

COVID updates: Cases have slowed in the last two weeks with 28 intakes and 6 positive cases. This Saturday is the end of the mask mandate. The lift means unless in special bureau circumstances, all are able to make their own decision on wearing masks. Unvaccinated employees are still required to wear masks. Oregon has lifted vax requirement for state workers, but the city has not decided.

HPPH/MVV updates: We are drafting new statements and outcome statements with DEI team. The Action and Results team has launched, and they will help prioritize work. We will be working through early Fall on A&R. Decision Support Tool team: will help with budget team. Meeting later this year to make any adjustments accordingly.

All Employee Gathering: The objective is to review the past year and share direction for upcoming year. We will review HPPH, Sustainable Future, Parks Levy, and current budget. This is for all staff, including seasonal employees. It will also be recorded for people who are unable to attend.

The Mayor has issued emergency declaration related to the coordination of homelessness services. This declaration is for all bureaus and will mostly affect park rangers and their services such as referrals, shelter beds, and working with other agencies. Mike Myers will be overseeing.

Many have heard about the shooting that occurred at Normandale Park. Four people were shot, one fatally. Since then, there has been a gathering and memorial with people staying overnight. The building has been spray painted and covered with memorial items. The group has now left the park, and we're working with the community on how to respectfully clean up the area without conflict.

There was also the Dawson Park shooting which occurred last Tuesday, adjacent to the park. It's the 20th homicide in Portland this year, which has already surpassed last year's count.

Nova asks: Who is leading the capital effort for North Portland Aquatic Center? What are the strategies for closing that gap?

From Todd – We have not identified funding for the gap at the moment, but we do have an expected goal. This effort is related to our Sustainable Future program, where we find resources on how to fund gaps in different areas.

Nova says that as a North Portland resident, there could be potentially resources she can provide. She doesn't think enough residents in the neighborhood know enough for them to help out and share their voices. When she sent out the petition, she had a small window of time, but received a lot of positive responses and people were surprised. The awareness may not raise money, but it would help to have residents feel mobilized.

From Todd – Rep Nelson will be at Columbia Park and there will be a Town Hall coordinated in April, so this meeting may be an appropriate forum for community engagement. Bonnie clarifies that Rep Nelson was extremely efficient about turnaround – so it was a surprise that everything was put together so quickly.

Ali says mask mandates are lifting and people are returning, but the immunocompromised are still quite concerned and media like NPR are asking about what we can do to make offices safe for people who are vulnerable.

Regarding debris cleanup work that started in Forest Park, Ali saw that PPR was working with BES to try to get it before nesting season. She says that owls and hummingbirds were already nesting. How long will the work be going? Can this be done in the fall so that we're not disturbing birds and other wildlife that are breeding? Todd replies he will follow up with that topic.

Casey asks re: the golf bid – is there a deadline for when bids have to be submitted? Serin says: Ordinance right now is just to ask permission to do the solicitation, so there is no current deadline for bids.

Working Group Reports

Community Engagement

There are some renaming items that will be later in the agenda. Erin says they also received an update on NPAC, working on a proposal to engage the community and remove barriers to participation.

From the Nominating committee – application for two open board seats will be posted in early April. Please think about people in your network who would add value to the board. Would like to do an assessment to identify gaps on what kind of skills we need on the board. For example, with Katie Holland having left, we don't have someone strongly connected with Native American communities.

Financial Sustainability

Mike reports that Parks is tracking well to budget, actually doing better than expected. Highlights from the report include both golf and PIR funds almost at record breaking, and a general improvement on recovering from pandemic. There are several budget working sessions this month with the City Council. After these work sessions, the Mayor will release his proposed budget in late April or early May with adoption of the proposal to happen in June.

Land Use/Infrastructure

Following destruction of the water trough base for the statue, PBOT has been investigating replacement with a smaller base that would permit safe passage of buses on the south side, and addition of a bike lane on the north side of the Elk. The Design Commission will review proposed new base design following retro-active processing of a demolition permit for the former base. Fire damaged remains of the old base were removed as they constituted a traffic hazard.

ODOT has updated its design to provide a continuous cover of the freeway where partial covers were previously proposed. The new design will enable restoration of the pre-freeway surface street pattern with development on the cover providing continuity of active street frontages. Previously shown orphaned open space has been eliminated as Parks Board representatives requested.

PP & R has applied to Metro for Federal funding through Metro in a competitive program to make improvements on three of nine planned trail sections. A portion of Metro's Nature Fund is also sought. Improvements to the trails would be made at Marine Drive, and on two sections between Kelley Point and Cathedral Park. Funding decisions are expected in October 2022.

A non-profit group proposes commuter ferry service between Vancouver and Oregon City, with a pilot phase operating between Cathedral Park and River Place. Use of the boat ramp at Cathedral Park raised concerns about conflicts with other users and use of Park parking as a park and ride lot. Funding is being sought through PBOT with the intention of beginning service in 2023.

BES owns land near Berrydale Park which, it is suggested by working group members, could fulfill a need for a culturally appropriate new park in a park-deficient area. Future follow-up on this opportunity was requested.

Bonnie makes a correction: Berrydale Park reference is much further north than BES site, which is closer to Powell.

Board Affairs

Casey reports having ongoing email conversations with Serin and Michelle about the possibility of in-person meetings. The Board matrix should be revised as there was too much overlap and new categories need to be added, specifically surrounding demographics and expertise. We're hoping to finish this process soon, and to apply it to the board application process. We're also looking at ex-officio members to join the board and are welcome to suggestions for the board on how reports are formatted.

Parks Local Option Levy Report

Bonnie says that the written report was submitted by Paul, who couldn't join us today.

Some highlights: Todd provided context including reviewing two scoring elements of the Decision Support Tool: the service area map and the Racial Equity Lens and Empowerment Tool. Claudio then gave an update of PP&R's five-year forecast for the Parks Levy including the \$166M allocated in the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 (FY22) Fall Budget Monitoring Process (BMP) and Supplemental Budget – as well as \$12M portion of the Parks Levy that PP&R is proposing to allocate as part of the FY23 process. Claire reviewed the 15 new proposals (per the Levy) submitted in the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Requested Budget related to the Parks Levy: Claire also gave an overview of how Parks Levy funding was budgeted between the Parks Levy 15 commitments in Fiscal Year 2021-2022 and Fiscal Year

2022-2023. In Fiscal Year 2022, two of the commitments did not have any budgeted Parks Levy funds but will have funding to support the commitment. A community oversight committee will be appointed to review levy expenditures and to report annually to City Council. The Measure also directs the Bureau to provide for a performance audit to ensure that services funded by the levy are consistent with voter intent. Claudio also reported \$6.5 million dollars was used to help with cost as a barrier. There are 2 pilot programs currently – the Pay What You Can and Access Pass Discount to help increase participation in recreation programs. Registrants can pick the level of funding they can provide. The Access Pass Discount for Community Centers is similar, with folks determining costs through different income levels.

Erin notes that there were other barriers besides costs for registrants. Parents weren't able to access when trying to apply right at the minute it opened, and/or were immediately waitlisted. She understands that it likely has to do with labor shortage, but it's an issue if people are unable to access programming in the first place. Employers are needing to think outside the box and not use old hiring tactics from the past.

From Margaret: Last year was challenging for recruiting and it continues to be. We've made adjustments to recruitment announcements, language, and simplified the process. We recently hired a new Talent Acquisition Specialist and are working extensively with other recruiters. We're also looking at new venues and ways for outreach, such as virtual and in-person career fairs. We're also working with PPS, especially David Douglas School District to work with high school students looking for employment, including "how to apply" workshops. We also have community partners to help determine what is the best outreach. We're also looking to obtain some high school interns that could create a high school recruitment team. We're trying to be creative, but it is challenging.

Maximo says that as part of levy alignment, they are hiring for an analyst position that will be working with the citywide recreation team specifically around hiring. Both the PWYC and Access Pass are pilot programs and there are some pinch points. We will use them through the summer and then assess performance and opportunities afterwards.

Corbin asks, what is the process for community engagement and what are the assessments for pilot programs and documentation?

Maximo answers that currently there is no documentation requirement, it's self opt-in. The Access Pass Discount is a voluntary offer determined by income level. We do not require proof or verification. Our outreach system has about 390 total community partners that have prioritized communities that we want to work with, and we are planning to hold information sessions.

Corbin asks if during engagement and outreach, there are people to help fill out these forms and apply for these programs. Maximo says there are community partners that help with applying and staff partners are available to help with assistance.

Sabrina says that as a community partner, early registration was pretty painless and staff was very helpful. The website has a lot of information and it can be overwhelming. Partner programming is there to have us be onsite to help apply.

From Todd – The Recreation and Community Engagement team are going out to people who haven't been customers in the past and conducting surveys on the preferences on PWYC and Access Pass discount.

Process Improvement Project

Bonnie – update for MOU on 11 Natural area sites. BES and Parks are working together to develop policies on how they're being managed.

Portland Parks Foundation Report

Randy gives a summary of several different grants. There is the US Bank Parks Champion award – given out to 2 volunteers each year that were outstanding in providing help for Park related programming. Anyone can nominate for this award. Award recipients get a \$1500 grant that they can use for an organization of their choice, so long that they are related to Parks and Recreation. The deadline is March 31.

There are some small \$2k grants that provide financial assistance for projects to connect low-income populations, communities of color, and other historically marginalized groups.

There is also the Joey Pope Award for Parks Leadership, which is a \$10k grant for those who demonstrate exceptional leadership in parks spaces. The deadline is March 31.

Tree Canopy Report

Presented by Jenn and Jeff – Jeff is a botanic specialist in Science Outreach and Planting group that focuses on community science. This is an update of the city's street tree inventory which helps the Tree Canopy Report.



Tree Canopy for
Parks Board 3.22.pdf

Questions and Discussion:

Ali: I saw that you were hoping to make changes to the tree code – does that include heavy industrial lands since those are exempt and close to the Willamette, various habitats, and low-income and communities of color?

Jenn: Yes, the entire plan is to review the code for all areas of potential substantive amendment. The present project is currently focused on minor amendments, which does not include that. According to Title 11, many areas zoned as industrial were exempt from tree regulation, but that changed with properties owned by the city.

Randy: Is there any way of figuring in the new trees that have been required with new development to show what canopy they will provide in the future?

Jeff: This report is just focused on current tree canopy coverage. We do have data of required new trees being planted – this is more about the program evaluation of how Title 11 is performing. There are also a lot of areas that are exempt from tree preservation requirements, for example for lots that are under 5k sq ft. This is more about our preservation of trees that currently exist and holding our canopy steady.

Randy: I'm curious if there are any models out there in other cities that we could follow that would be about looking at new kinds of spaces for trees. With our housing crisis and the need to create affordable housing in areas like East Portland, I'm wondering if there's any models that look beyond private land.

Jenn: We are always looking at other cities when looking at code amendments.

Todd: To comment on the Streets 2035 work, there's policy decisions to be made about how close we're putting trees by infrastructure.

Randy: We have miles of unpaved streets in East Portland and PBOT wasn't planning on repaving many of them. Are places like that an opportunity to increase canopy in East Portland that is not antithetical to the idea of cutting trees down to house more people?

Jenn: When new development happens, there are great examples in the cities of areas that added more housing while still retaining trees.

Dr. Corbin: When planting trees, do you make considerations on what types of trees are planted, specifically ones that are not heavy pollinators in areas that have heavy pollution?

Jenn: We do look at species selection. We're trying to maximize benefits of tree services and how they will survive in their environment. We also look for climate resilient species as well as diversity of species. To be honest, we haven't looked at potential allergens. We do have lists that we update when we've found them to be a problem with maintenance, but not specifically pollen.

Jeff: It's about balance since female trees have fruit and male trees can release pollen into the air.

Corbin: When planting trees, are you also considering bioswales and other greenery.

Jenn: Yes, though when it comes to plants and its benefits, trees are the ones that do the most compared to grasses, shrubs, etc. When it comes to bioswales, that is part of BES, because their intent is to mitigate stormwater. They plant trees in bioswales and that is where they coordinate with us. There are a lot of progressive street planting techniques that are about more soil quality that would be under concrete or hardscapes. Those have been brought forward in Streets 2035 as a technique to try.

Alejandro: What's the particular role of the city and Parks in achieving the target coverage considering the budget and capacity?

Jeff: As far as Parks land, we do what we can to identify spaces on Parks property for tree potential. For example, East Holladay Park has 90 new trees in areas that were previously just grass. The levy funding has given us the ability to make those assessments.

Todd: Sustainable Future program is looking at tree maintenance and we are also pursuing federal stimulus funding. We are continuing to look for funding, especially capital funding.

Jenn: One of the critical areas to complete our goals lies in having enough staff that have the capacity to look for funding and execute.

Casey adjourned the meeting at 11:03.