

Parks Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting information

Tuesday, March 12, 2024

5:00-7:00pm

Portland Building Room 216 and Zoom Virtual Meeting

Board members present:

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

Board Members absent:

Adrienne Feldstein

City staff present:

Adena Long (Bureau Director), Michelle Tran (Executive Assistant), Maximo Behrens (Recreation Division Manager), Tonya Booker (Land Stewardship Division Manager), Melody Brooks (Equity & Inclusion Manager), Lauren McGuire (Assets & Development Division Manager), Claudio Campuzano (Manager of Finance, Property, and Technology), Sarah Huggins (Sustainable Future Program Manager), Jenn Cairo (City Forester, Urban Forestry Division Manager), Kellie Torres (Chief of Staff, Commissioner Dan Ryan)

Others present:

JR Lilly, Linda Robinson

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

Agenda Items

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

General Announcements

Elana Pirtle-Guiney (Vice Chair) announced that the April meeting will be her last and she will be resigning from the Board. There will be a search for a new Vice Chair.

Approve February Minutes

Elana moved to approve the minutes; Suenn Ho (Board Member) seconded. All voted in approval, with Casey Mills (Board Member) abstaining due to absence, and the motion passed.

Director's Report

Since January, the Natural Resource Service Delivery (NRSD) core team has taken the feedback we received from staff, advisory board members, and Council and incorporated it into a revised draft workplan and task list, which was emailed on March 7. The revisions clarify the scope of the workplan. They also add more detail about each task, including who is responsible



for tasks and expected timelines. A more detailed draft task list has also been developed to accompany the workplan.

As stated, the team hoped to hold a workshop that would include the Advisory Body representatives, Subject Matter Experts, Project Managers and Consultants **prior** to today's full board meeting, but scheduling did not allow that to happen. Director Long also included the most recent draft NRSD Workplan and Task List that together with the feedback received thus far, has been further refined from the previous version that was shared a few months ago.

Just prior to today's board meeting, there was a workshop planning meeting with the Advisory Body representatives, including Dr. Corbin and Ali Berman. They joined their advisory body peers from the Portland Utility Board and the Urban Forestry Commission whose input will help inform the agenda for the March 22 workshop, the final workplan and task list, and who has been invited to participate in future work related to implementation.

All bureaus involved in private property development and associated public works regulation and permitting are required to move the people, positions and resources who do this work to SPA - the **Single Permitting Authority** - effective July 1, 2024. This applies to Urban Forestry (UF), Portland Water Bureau, Portland Bureau of Transportation, and Bureau of Environmental Services (BES). Bureau of Development Services (BDS) and SPA are largely the same entity at present, so these resources in effect will move to BDS.

UF identified four Development Tree Inspector positions and two additional staff, to move to SPA, as well as one vacancy. UF has also identified and slated an additional approximately \$700,000 in development permit fee revenue to move to SPA. In addition, the bureau has committed to assisting SPA with initial hiring and training of SPA tree-related staff and SPA's implementation of urban forest infrastructure protection and management.

Identification and development of changes to City Code to move certain City Forester and City Engineer responsibilities and authority to SPA are in progress. Plans and a process to rename "Single Permitting Authority" have also recently been announced.

Dr. C.N.E. Corbin (Board Chair) thanked Patti Miles (Board Member) and Erin Zollenkopf (Board Member) for attending the Mt Scott Community Center groundbreaking.

Casey Mills (Board Member) asked about how recovery from the storm damage has been going. Director Long replied that the Multnomah Arts Center still does not have running water. Lauren McGuire (Assets and Development Division Manager) confirmed that there needed to be a full installation of a new water system, costing about \$875,000. There is also a lot of damage to bathrooms, including winterized ones.

Suenn asked about lessons learned for the storm. Director Long replied that she has discussed proactively documenting existing conditions to infrastructure in order to improve chances of receiving FEMA reimbursement, if deemed eligible. There were definitely lessons learned on communications and response – new leadership in different bureaus lead to a few complications that did eventually resolve. Suenn then asked about Fee Waivers – will this be something that will be permanently implemented? Director Long answered that the bureau would like to avoid setting that kind of precedent, as future weather-related events are unpredictable, and some property owners may take advantage of the waiver in inappropriate ways.



Elana asked about restroom access in parks. Are the portable bathrooms going to be staying in the parks longer since there is no current access to the parks' bathrooms? Director Long said that there has not been a decision quite yet. Tonya Booker (Land Stewardship Division Manager) added that the portables are not a viable option long-term, they generally get destroyed very quickly.

Patti Miles (Board Member) asked about trees and assessments on their conditions to explain why so many trees fell. Jenn Cairo (City Forester) said there were 770 emergency tree service requests, and they have all been addressed. The rain followed by the deep freeze and high wind that affected the saturated soil and elasticity of the wood. Some fallen trees had also been over-trimmed at the bottom which resulted in falls.

Sabrina Wilson (Board Member) wanted to know more about the Job Shadow program after reading about it in the monthly report. Director Long said she would follow up in email.

Suenn asked about Delta Park Field 1 (with the baseball diamond) and the damage from a truck running through the field. Could there be boulders or reinforcements to prevent further damage? Director Long replied that grass has been sowed and there are actually boulders strategically placed to prevent unwanted access. Dr. Corbin asked if there was programming or education in public schools on how to appreciate and take care of parks. Director Long said that Land Stewardship and Park Ranger programs had great youth programs, but there have not been programs in Portland Public School per se.

Elana asked for an update on Schools to Pools. Maximo reported that they have been hugely successful in participation and there was a lot of appreciation from PPS staff. Aquatics staff have all enjoyed the opportunity for further engagement. Director Long said it was an opt-in program and anticipates getting more schools to join.

Dr. Corbin asked for data what retention looks like for summer hiring. She also asked for a more detailed breakdown of racial categories going forward.

Working Group Reports (Q&A only)

Board Affairs

There were no questions or comments.

Land Use & Infrastructure

There were no questions or comments.

Financial Sustainability

There were no questions or comments.

Community Engagement

There were no question or comments.

Programming Working Group

There were no questions or comments.

Parks Levy Oversight Committee

There were no questions or comments.



Portland Parks Foundation Report

The Emerging Leadership Award application period is open as well as the Small Grant Cycle. Jessica Green also reminded everyone that the Spring Friends and Allies Summit is happening May 16 at Laurelhurst Club, and registration is open. They will be celebrating volunteers and the award nominees.

Elk Fountain is on budget and on track, there is some delay with sourcing the stones.

Earlier this month in the legislative session, PPF, in partnership with Kidz Outside and Commissioner Ryan, managed to get additional funding for George Park with the help of Representative Travis Nelson.

Friends of Gateway Green

Linda Robinson has been a steward for Portland parks for 40 years and has served on two terms on the Board. She shared a presentation on the Gateway Green Park Use and Access Pilot Study conducted as a member of the Friends of Gateway Green (FOGG).

Gateway Green's research was conducted in collaboration with PSU's first-year Master of Urban and Regional Planning (MURP) students as part of their Qualitative Planning Methods 1 course in the Fall term of 2022 led by Dr. C.N.E. Corbin and Quantitative Planning Methods 2 course led by Dr. Jennifer Dill in Winter term of 2023. The executive summary report was written by Dr. Dill and Corbin in the Spring of 2023. A small grant was awarded to FOGG through the Portland Parks Foundation, which allowed for gift cards to be offered as an incentive to participate in the survey via a raffle with gift cards provided to all those who participated in focus groups.

There was a desire to survey who was and was not regular coming to Gateway Green in the contiguous neighborhoods. Most concerns were safety related not just in the park but also access to the park. Other concerns included complex signage requirements and the length of time it took for permits to hold events at the park. The survey recommended improving the multi-use path (under ODOT's purview) and the bike trails to improve access. It also recommended more emergency signage in order to have emergency responders to easily access parks. There were also suggestions for providing bikes on loan or rent due high-immigrant and low-income populations. There was also an ask for more shade and shelter from the rain and sun as it's very limited.

There is currently a Trimet project ongoing to expand the tracks of the Red Line. Ross Swanson, project manager, advocated for maintaining and improving access to parks during the expansion.

Linda also commented that there was a desire to connect Rocky Butte to Gateway Green. The Butte is owned mostly by ODOT, but there is a lot of potential.

Elana Pirtle-Guiney (Vice Chair) asked about whether there was more interest in Gateway Green as a bike park or as a park with other purposes. Linda replied most residents only saw GG as a bike park. Corbin also added that since it's a destination park it's hard to stumble upon.

Sabrina Wilson (Board Member) asked if Linda was connected with BikeWorks by Pair. They have grown in community interest. Linda replied that there was some connection, though it is



also 40 blocks away. There is also trouble with the parking situation at the Gateway Park and Ride. Initially, parkgoers were allowed to park their cars there, but with turnover, Trimet has been issuing warning tickets. Thankfully there is a connection with Kroger, and so an agreement was made with the nearby Fred Meyer to let parkgoers park on the West side. Similarly, with turnover, there are staff who aren't aware of the agreement made.

Public Comment/Other Business

There was no public comment.

Sabrina Wilson (Board Member) asked for clarity about the Charter as there were some conversations about Advisory Bodies. There will be open houses and engagement opportunities where they will share how Council and subcommittees will be formed, which Michelle Tran will forward to the Board.

Corbin reminded members to send any questions about the Anti Displacement and Action Plan presentation from the February meeting to her so she can consolidate them and send to Tom Armstrong at Planning and Sustainability (BPS).

Meeting Adjourned

Dr. Corbin (Board Chair) adjourned this meeting at 6:49pm.

