

## Parks Board Meeting Minutes

### Meeting information

Tuesday, October 10, 2023

5:00-7:00pm

Multnomah Arts Center and Zoom Virtual Meeting

### Board members present:

Dr. C.N.E. Corbin (Board Co-Chair), Elana Pirtle-Guiney (Board Co-Chair), Suenn Ho, Bonnie Gee Yosick, Ali Berman, Casey Mills, Erin Zollenkopf, Matt Shipkey, Jonathan Beckhart, Adrienne Feldstein, Sabrina Wilson, Crys O'Grady, Jessica Green (ex-officio)

### Board Members absent:

David Staczek, Adam Lewis, Patti Miles

### City staff present:

Adena Long (Bureau Director), Todd Lofgren (Bureau Deputy Director), Michelle Tran (Executive Assistant), Maximo Behrens (Recreation Division Manager), Tonya Booker (Land Stewardship Division Manager), Melody Brooks (Interim Equity & Inclusion Manager), Lauren McGuire (Assets & Development Division Manager), Jess Pernsteiner (Assets & Development Coordinator), Robin Johnson Craig (Capital Project Manager), Sarah Huggins (Sustainable Future Program Manager), Marty Stockton (Senior City Planner), Ken Rumbaugh (Senior Community Engagement Coordinator), Jenn Cairo (City Forester and Urban Forester Division Manager), Margaret Evans (Workforce Development Manager)

### Others present:

Matthew Schick (Community Member)

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

## Agenda Items

### Public Comment

Matthew Schick returned for public comment, asking that PP&R implement a policy that any permits issued to film companies prohibit drones from flying outside of parks property.

Todd notified Matt Schick that Prosper Portland now requires 3-days of advanced notification of the filming.

### General Announcements

Elana Pirtle Guiney (Vice Chair) brought up the process of having the working groups discuss their principles and values to provide a fuller discussion on what they envision during the city transition.



## Approve August Minutes

Matt Shipkey (Board Member) wanted to clarify that “shifting away from OCCL oversight would practically entail as they appear for a light touch.” Casey Mills (Board Member) moved to approve minutes, and Bonnie Gee Yosick (Board Member) seconded. All voted in approval, and the motion passed.

## Director’s Report

Director Long thanked Elana and Dr. Corbin (Board Chair) for drafting and the entire board for the quick turnaround of the letter related to Portland Parks & Recreation's place in the proposed City organization chart. Since then, the City Council twice rescheduled the work session that we thought was about city organization and held one on October 13th that ended up being about funding and planning transitional office space while City Hall goes under construction to prepare for the incoming Mayor, City Administrator and Council.

There are two work sessions that have been scheduled for Friday the 20th and Monday the 23rd. The agenda or topics have not been advertised or otherwise shared at this point.

Sabrina Wilson (Board Member) asked about what control the current City Council over decision making. Director Long answered that in the context of the session it makes sense that the work needs to be decided now. However, since there are going to be twelve Councilmembers, some of the space needs to be agreed upon by future Council. Todd also added that what is decided now can be changed by future Council.

In the September meeting, PP&R shared an update on the state of the capital maintenance backlog. A funding ballot measure remains one of the most viable near-term options to begin addressing those critical capital maintenance backlog items. PP&R is contracting with the same polling firm used in 2020 (FM3) for pushing the Parks Levy, then planning on developing the polling questions with input from other Council offices this October, conducting the poll in November, and sharing results in December. At this time, the bureau is planning to test voter support for both a May and November 2024 ballot, and the poll may include some voter opinion questions for city infrastructure beyond Park infrastructure as well. Depending on Commissioner’s direction upon reviewing the poll results, this could be a step towards a ballot initiative moving forward in 2024.

Portland Public Schools (PPS) and PP&R staff continue to have discussions to meet the Grant High School, neighborhood and broader communities interested in restoring Grant Field. PPS has expressed interest in making additional improvements, such as seating and lights, which will require a Conditional Use review and further community engagement. PPS and PP&R are cognizant of the need to ensure public access to the facility while at the same time meeting the Grant High School athletics needs. Director Long and Todd Lofgren will be joining Commissioner Ryan, PPS Board Chair Gary Hollands, and PPS staff at a meeting with neighborhood and Grant High School athletics stakeholders in the next week. Both the Bureau and PPS remain dedicated to restoring the synthetic field as soon as possible.

Bonnie asked regarding Grant bowl – has there been any discussion on approaching equity more holistically for other sports, particularly use of the pools? Todd replied that they are different assets in negotiations. Director Long shared that they will be doing a pre-learning swim program for second grade amongst 12 schools. PP&R will be providing instruction and pool



time, but still at the negotiation stage. Bonnie commented PPS was the only district in the state that did not have a swim season for the 2020-2021 academic year.

Sabrina asked about Council adopting unified permitting and wanted to know more. Director Long responded that over the past two years, there has been a permit improvement task force sponsored by Commissioners Mapps and Ryan and now Commissioner Rubio. It involved dozens of staff and bureau leadership as well as external stakeholders mostly in the development community. There was a lot of work finding conflicts that slowed down permit times. There's been conversation on consolidating development permits in one place and there is an information work plan that is on how this will move forward. The City organization chart draft has not identified where this permit group could go, but that may be clarified in the next upcoming work session.

Sabrina asked about the process behind land acquisition. Lauren replied that historically, there's been SDCs used to fund the acquisitions.

## Working Group Reports (Q&A only)

### *Board Affairs*

There were no questions.

### *Land Use & Infrastructure*

The Urban Forestry Commission (UFC) had written a letter that was presented at the last Board Meeting, requesting signed support from the Parks Board. The letter objected to some of the proposed changes in tree code from the Housing Production Advisory Council (HPAC), including not requiring private land development to adhere to certain tree regulations. The letter would be sent to all Council members.

Matt commented that Governor Kotek rejected the initial suggestions. Jenn replied that it's still a moving item. The UFC decided to continue to write the letter in spite of the decision. Ali Berman (Board Member) commented that the HPAC proposal doesn't include just trees, but also floodplains, wetlands, and other natural resources. Jenn replied that if the Parks Board is supportive, that they sign on this letter and perhaps write another one addressing the other concerns. Dr. Corbin said that this is an option that should be considered.

Casey Mills (Board Member) asked about the strategy on why the letter would be going to City Council, rather than straight to the State's office. Director Long responded that the bureaus typically do not communicate directly to the state, they communicate through the Office of Governmental Relations (OGR). The Board and its members can absolutely express their opinions to other bodies. Melody Brooks (Equity and Inclusion Manager) said that though the board does have the right to go to the governor's office, it would be politically prudent to make sure the bureau and ultimately the City are on the same page and that also the office of governmental relations would be aware.

Dr. Corbin commented that the board could sign onto the letter and write another one. Casey said his concerns is that the letters should address the entity that is making the rules.

Erin Zollenkopf (Board Member) expressed her support of writing directly to the state rather than City Council and joining forces with the UFC.



Casey moved that the board authorize the chair and vice chair (and whoever they wished to help them) to draft a letter to the Housing Production Advisory Council with a copy to City Council making points similar to those made in the Urban Forestry Commission letter with the addition of any other topics germane to the board's work that they feel necessary to include with consultation from the Office of Government Relations. Crys O'Grady (Board Member) seconded. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

Matt moved that the PP&R Board sign onto the Urban Forestry Commission letter as is. Crys seconded. There was discussion on both the rigid language of the language as well as the usefulness of both writing a letter and signing onto UFC's letter. This could affect optics. 7 voted in support of the motion, and 4 voted against. The motion was passed.

#### *Financial Sustainability*

There were no questions.

#### *Community Engagement*

There were no questions.

### Capital Project Selection Process

Lauren McGuire (Assets & Development Division Manager) shared details on the process of capital project selection, including equity prioritization and funding. This process has changed this year due to having less SDC funding than expected.

Suenn Ho (Board Member) commented there is a lot of time and money spent on vandalism and asked how this was prevented. Lauren replied that many different teams within the bureau try to help deter vandalism including Rangers, Land Stewardship, and maintenance. This is an issue that will keep recurring. Todd added that PP&R also works with city contracts.

Dr. Corbin asked that there be a breakdown within the "people of color" category. It's hard to see who exactly is being served based on the data presented. She also asked that vandalism not be associated with just the unhoused as the obvious culprit.

Sabrina asked how significant the vandalism was. Todd replied that since Portland is not a condensed city, it's very difficult for rangers and other teams to keep track of a lot of it happening in parks.

### Portland Parks Foundation Report

Jessica Green introduced herself as interim Executive Director for Portland Parks Foundation. PPF is in the phase of new recruitment for the next Executive Director.

The Friends and Allies Summit is upcoming October 12 with over 80 organizations participating. Crys O'Grady is part of the steering committee for the Summit programming. There is also a small grants program partially funded by PP&R that is accepting applications for \$2,000 grants. They are general operating support grants and can be flexible.

PPF is working on the design phase of the Thompson elk statue with the Water Bureau. There have also been negotiations on the next playgrounds to fund.



## North Portland Aquatic Center Update

Robin Johnson Craig (Capital Project Manager) shared an update regarding NPAC. They are currently at Phase II and determining the programming. This includes determining the lap pool sizes, which will affect the variability of the lap lanes and programs that they are able to provide. Regardless of the choice, the size of the pools will be the largest in the area.

Ken Rumbaugh (Senior Community Engagement Coordinator) shared the thoughts of the Tongan community on the loss of the rugby field. The loss of that space was the largest concern since Northgate has been chosen as the NPAC candidate and there are no rugby fields in PP&R's lists of assets. A large majority of members from the Tongan community have expressed support for the NPAC, as it is a significant asset to the North Portland community. PP&R is in talks with them on an alternate site for rugby.

Suenn commented that PP&R should strive for the 50-meter pool – other logistics may be messy, but it is worth the effort.

Bonnie commented that if they choose the 50-meter pool, that the parking needed will significantly affect the surrounding neighborhoods of North Portland. That should be holistically considered in how the Center is built.

Casey asked that a presentation on the funding gap for further discussion be done.

Elana asked if there have been future plans of expanding smaller pools to make up for lane capacity or is the NPAC the one shot for making up that capacity. Robin identified four future total facilities that could be used for pools.

Dr. Corbin asked for future discussion on which options make up for the operating costs and impact to neighboring communities in the fastest amount of time. She then asked the board to give feedback and questions on NPAC by end of day Wednesday, October 18 to relay to the Commissioner.

## Public Comment

There was no public comment.

## Meeting Adjourned

Corbin adjourned this meeting at 7:09pm.

