



Parks Levy Oversight Committee (PLOC)

Year 2 Meeting #4 | April 24, 2023 | 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM

Agenda

5:30 PM	Welcome and Ice Breaker	All
5:40 PM	Housekeeping	Claire Flynn
5:45 PM	Early Registration and Access Pass Update	Craig Ward, Durelle Singleton
6:10 PM	Community Partnership Program	Megan Dirks, Alescia Blakely
6:35 PM	BREAK	
6:40 PM	Urban Forestry Goals	Jenn Cairo
7:10 PM	FY23 Q1-Q3 Financials	Claudio Campuzano
7:20 PM	Upcoming Annual Report Process	Claire Flynn

Attachments Shared with PLOC

- Urban Forestry November 2022 PLOC Presentation Slides

Attending

Oversight Committee Members –

- Alescia Blakely
- Maria Velez
- Silas Sanderson
- *Not in attendance, meeting materials shared:*
 - *Judy BlueHorse Skelton*
 - *Paul Agrimis*

PP&R Staff –

- Todd Lofgren | Deputy Director
- Jenn Cairo | City Forester & Urban Forestry Manager
- Sarah Huggins | Sustainable Future Program Manager
- Claudio Campuzano | Finance, Property, and Technology Manager
- Durelle Singleton | Recreation Strategies & Initiatives Manager
- Craig Ward | Recreation Support Systems Analyst
- Megan Dirks | Partnership & Development Coordinator
- Malcolm Hoover | Community Relations Senior Community Outreach Coordinator II
- Claire Flynn | Levy Coordinator

Members of the Public –

- None

Administration

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 Commissioner Dan Ryan
 Director Adena Long



Sustaining a healthy park and recreation system to make Portland a great place to live, work, and play.

Malcolm Hoover, Senior Community Outreach Coordinator and meeting facilitator, gave an overview of the meeting's agenda and lead the group through an icebreaker.

Housekeeping

Claire Flynn, Levy Coordinator, presented housekeeping and administrative items to the PLOC.

- Claire shared that Paul Agrimis, Judy BlueHorse Skelton, and Maria Velez will be departing the PLOC at the end of their initial two-year terms, in June 2023. Alescia Blakely and Silas Sanderson renewed membership for additional two-years. Per the PLOC bylaws and charter, members may reapply to serve any number of terms not to exceed four years of total consecutive service.
- The application for new PLOC members closed on April 19 and applications are being reviewed. New members will be onboarded starting in July and the first full committee meeting with the new members will likely be in September.
- Items related to the September PLOC meeting, such as scheduling and a new list of presentation topics, will be completed via email and with the new PLOC members.

Early Registration and Access Pass Update

Durelle Singleton, Recreation Strategies & Initiatives Manager, introduced the Access Pass and Early Registration updates, efforts that are occurring simultaneously with preparation for Summer 2023 and ongoing Recreation equity initiatives. The Access Pass and Early Registration initiatives are working to reduce barriers to participation. In a 2017 survey, 20% of Portlanders said that cost was a barrier to participating. That barrier was even larger for Portlanders of color (25%) and people living in East Portland (28%).

Craig Ward, Recreation Support Systems Analyst, gave a brief overview of the pilot initiatives (Pay What You Can, Access Discount) that resulted in the creation of the Access Pass in Fall 2022. The Access Pass is an annual pass for ongoing discounts of 25%, 50%, 75%, or 90% off. No proof of income is required and the pass can reduce the price of admission, classes and other registered activities, preschool and afterschool programs, and personal training. Craig shared an update of Access Pass usage to date, since Fall 2022:

- As of April 24, PP&R had just under 13,000 Access Pass users signed up. For fall 2022 and winter 2023, about 20-21% of new accounts joining the PP&R system also signed up for an Access Pass.
- Responses from access pass holders from family's income level and which access pass level they needed. Vast majority requesting 90% discounts identify as under 40,000 annually. During spot checks, folks self identified income matches the discount that we would have given them back in scholarship days when we asked for proof of income – not overly abusing system even through no proof of income is required.

Durelle then gave an update on the Early Registration pilot initiative, which creates opportunities to introduce PP&R programs and the registration system to partners with a focus on underserved communities. While early registration is intended to improve access for underserved communities, no one is excluded from signing up during the early registration period. In initial registration rounds, PP&R reached out to over 300 community partner organizations to advertise early registration. PP&R has also simplified registration materials to make them more accessible and translated those materials into 19 different languages. As the pilot progressed, the outreach process was further refined and PP&R now has 43 partner organizations who have opted in to reciprocal participation. The Early Registration pilot initiative has brought in new PP&R members and participants and assisted in building understanding of how the ActiveNet registration system works. In fall 2022, 20%

(2,257) of registrations were from Early Registration and in winter 2023, Early Registration accounted for 14% (2,041) of registrations.

PP&R continues to adapt the Early Registration pilot. Recent adjustments have included reducing the outreach timeframe in which PP&R contacts partner organizations from 6-8 weeks to 3-4 weeks. PP&R also now only allows Early Registration to fill classes and registered activities to 50% capacity, ensuring that there are additional spots available when Early Registration ends.

Alescia Blakely shared her experience as a partner, noting that Home Forward staff and residents have loved receiving information about the Access Pass and Early Registration and have added that information to Home Forward newsletters. Alescia also shared that additional communication to residents with examples or demonstrations of program activities would be beneficial to further reducing barriers to participation. Particularly, for seniors and older adults, seeing a demonstration of activities, equipment used, and skill level would make classes and activities more accessible. Alescia noted that she appreciates the communication on the initiatives but needs additional information to be able to answer what classes and activities will entail.

Claire asked members to consider if there is a preferred or ideal balance of free programming vs. discounted programming and programming provided by community partners in recreation spaces vs. PP&R programming.

- Alescia said that the variety of options and different levels of cost reduction is responsive to community needs. She's seen that Home Forward residents and community members are no longer being priced out of participation and the elimination of income verification is beneficial to engaging residents. Additionally, Alescia noted that she knows that some community members that she works with, such as Home Forward staff, can afford the full cost of programming. For this reason, the variety of cost levels and discounts is helping to better serve a wider reach of participants.
- Durelle asked Alescia and Maria, from their experience as community partners, how effective tabling has been for relaying information to their organizations' communities?
 - Alescia shared that tabling has been beneficial but that it is much more effective when a Home Forward staff member is tabling *with* PP&R staff. A familiar face at the table helps engage residents. She also noted that providing translations is important and effective; for example, New Columbia has 17 different languages. Having someone available to help translate can be another way to reduce barriers.
 - Maria Velez echoed Alescia's sentiments. In her work as with Latino Network's SUN school sites, Maria has seen that, when SUN managers make the extra effort to connect with individuals, that furthers engagement efforts and can proactively connect community members with programming and registration assistance.

Community Partnership Program

Claire shared a quick overview of the relationship between the Community Partnership Program and Parks Levy commitments. Community partnership grants are directly called out in the Parks Levy commitment to, "Prioritize services for communities of color and households experiencing poverty, including equity centered engagement and outreach, community partnership grants, and increased engagement with volunteer and partner groups." Additionally, the activities completed through the grants themselves advance other Parks Levy commitments.

Megan Dirks, Partnership & Development Coordinator, presented an overview of the [Community Partnership Program](#). The Community Partnership Program (CPP) strengthens the network of PP&R service by filling gaps in service and expanding PP&R's capacity to meet the needs of the community.

CPP activities do not duplicate or replace PP&R services and programs; they instead work to expand services across a variety of focus areas. CPP support is provided through grants, independent contractor agreements (ICA), and space use.

Grants are awarded to eligible partner organizations through a competitive application process to fill a service gap and meet a community need. Program activities are not directed by PP&R and are not necessarily provided in a PP&R facility. Through the CPP, 20 organizations received direct grant support for fiscal years 2022-2024:

- 8 Teen Collaborative Initiative (TCI) grants – Established in 2015, and now being run under the CPP umbrella, TCI grants lead activities and programs during out of school time with a focus on youth who are impacted by violence, represent underserved communities, and communities of color. A total of \$560,000 was allocated to grant activities for 2022-2024 TCI programming.
- 11 Community Partnership Program grants – A new funding opportunity that awarded \$640,000 over two years (2022-2024) to partners serving youth through a broad range of recreational activities (arts & culture, sports, aquatics) and greening activities (tree planting, environmental education, natural area stewardship, community gardens). The initial 2022-2024 opportunity was focused on teen and youth programming but additional CPP rounds could be expanded to provide services to other centered and underserved communities.
 - Alescia Blakely, Home Forward program manager and PLOC member, presented on Home Forward's KaChing! program, a recipient of a CPP grant. The KaChing! program serves the New Columbia community and was originally started in 2007, providing work opportunities to youth ages 12-17 to work for a month for a stipend in the summer. Previously, the program could only serve approximately 20 positions. With CPP funding, Home Forward has been able to expand the program to provide more workforce opportunities and include a new virtual program option. The virtual program provides classes, talks from working professionals, and job training skill for youth.

In addition to the TCI and CPP grants, an additional \$60,000 for 2022-2024 was given to the Portland Parks Foundation's Small Grant Program to foster equitable access to parks, community gardens, and recreation centers. Most recently, the CPP tools and application processes are being applied to a new grant opportunity to provide soccer camps and programming to underserved and underrepresented youth in Portland, at not cost to participants.

The CPP also awards funds through Independent Contractor Agreements (ICAs) and Space Use Partnerships. ICAs are directed contracts where PP&R identifies the need for services, provides the space for the services, and pays the partner organization to provide the service. Agreements are limited to \$10,000 per project per fiscal year. In FY 2022-2023, CPP ICAs included awards to four organizations who provide teen programming activities and one greening/natural stewardship organization. Space use grants waive or reduce fees for space use for partner organizations to provide programs that fill a service gap and meet an identified community need.

The CPP has established processes and will continue to focus on better tracking of existing partnerships, identify needs, strengthen existing partnerships, and expand partnership networks strategically. PLOC members did not have any questions.

Urban Forestry Goals

Jenn Cairo, Urban Forestry Manager and City Forester, provided a follow up to her first PLOC Urban Forestry presentation in November 2022 to answer additional questions about PP&R's tree planting and tree canopy goals. Key points included:

- *Emphasis on the complexity of factors and variables contributing to tree canopy.* Current tree planting goals are determined by the amount of resources available and contribute to but are separate from tree canopy goals. Canopy goals are being updated in Portland's Forest Management Plan – the current 33% city-wide average goal is low compared to potential for canopy. In addition to tree planting, other actions like tree preservation, maintenance, and compliance with required planting are some of the factors that impact total canopy coverage.
- *Difficulty in forecasting and tree canopy trajectory.* Due to the complexity of variables, there is not a current forecast or trajectory towards meeting tree canopy goals that accounts for all variables. Urban Forestry continues to monitor, assess and report canopy extent and change on a [regular basis](#), as was reported to City Council just last year, report annually on-line for many years on Portland Urban Forest Management Action Plan [implementation results](#), report [planting](#) annually, and we view canopy cover success in relation to [canopy cover potential](#).
- *Parks Levy impact and noting what is within PP&R's control.* PP&R's most recent [report](#) indicates that overall tree canopy cover declined slightly from 2015-2020, from 30.7% to 29.8%. Maintenance and preservation of trees within PP&R properties are most within Urban Forestry's control. The Parks Levy is impacting tree planting and tree canopy goals by starting the first proactive developed park tree maintenance program that will help extend the life of mature trees that currently make up the majority of tree canopy on these properties. PP&R is also dramatically increasing tree planting on public and private property as well as increasing permit and compliance checks to ensure more required plantings are completed.
- *Leveraging additional funding.* Urban Forestry is working with the Portland Clean Energy Fund (PCEF) to develop the new [Equitable Tree Canopy Initiative](#) that allocates \$40 million over five years starting in 2023. PP&R is also pursuing additional funding through federal sources such as FEMA grants and the Inflation Reduction Act.
- *Tracking and increasing partnerships.* A new Urban Forestry Community Stewardship Coordinator position was created and hired recently to refresh partnerships, nurture existing partnerships, and develop new partnerships. One key task for this role will be creating an inventory list of current partnerships. Current partnership activities include planting and stewardship at schools and community spaces, co-hosting education events, promoting tree planting opportunities, and Community Partnership Program grants.

Silas Sanderson asked if Parks Levy funding for tree planting is sufficient to make an impact on tree canopy.

- Jenn shared that tree planting has rapidly increased; prior to 2018, there was no dedicated funding for tree planting. Part of Title 11 Tree Code implementation, established in 2015, created a fund that is mitigation payments for tree planting and increased funding for tree planting. The Parks Levy has provided additional funding and help with tree planting by adding staff positions. If more funding were available, higher tree canopy (closer to the potential of 50%, could be possible.

Silas asked if Urban Forestry would be able to tap into unused Parks Levy funds at the end of the fiscal year to supplement tree planting funding.

- Jenn shared that tree planting generally takes two to three years when accounting for procuring the right stock and species, as well as finding the right locations for trees. Any money that is left over has to be budgeted for ongoing use.

- Silas asked for clarification that unused Parks Levy funds at the end of the 5-year collection timeframe could be used past the collection end date.
 - Claudio shared that the Parks Levy collect taxes for 5 years but any tax revenue collected can be used for as long as it takes to spend down the full Parks Levy balance. When there is underspending in any given year, that falls to the Parks Levy balance and goes into next budget decision-making process. Therefore, remaining funds could be used to support additional planting, as well as any of the Parks Levy commitments.

Silas asked what the confidence is that Parks Levy funds can be used to make a significant impact on tree canopy by the time that Parks Levy funding is exhausted?

- Jenn noted that PP&R can now do a lot more tree planting, on top of what has already been done. Planting is still on an upwards trajectory and, while a lot of the low-hanging fruit for planting locations have been exhausted, there is still space to plant more trees. PP&R has been working with the Bureau of Transportation to work on new places to plant trees where we haven't in the past. These locations can sometimes be more challenging and expensive but, to get to the full potential of 53% canopy coverage, we have to be progressive on ways to plant (for example, changing the right-of-way design so there's more room under the hardscape for trees).
- Claire noted that, while tree planting is a part of the overall canopy coverage, there are other aspects (such as maintenance) that are equally as important. With the Parks Levy, PP&R is now able to proactively care for park trees and trees in natural areas, which was not something that we were able to do before the Parks Levy.
- Jenn shared a reminder that Urban Forestry does have a budget ask forward for the FY 2023-24 budget that would mean more hires for the tree compliance team. This would help address the approximately 2,000 trees a year that are not being planted, even though they are required to be planted per Title 11 code. By following up on permits and planting requirements, the urban forest can be enhanced.

Silas reiterated that a measure of confidence would be helpful to understand Parks Levy impact.

- Jenn is confident that Urban Forestry can spend every penny that is given towards tree care, maintenance, planting, outreach and education, etc. However, it will take more than what is currently budgeted and available to reach the levels of canopy coverage and tree impact that is needed. This is why the PCEF and FEMA funding is helpful and necessary.
- Silas encouraged PP&R to leverage community opportunities, such as other friends groups and community groups. For example, over 500 flowering cherry trees in the Albina neighborhood, were planted by the local Black community and partner organizations with the intention of beautifying the neighborhood. Silas noted that there is potential to stimulate or find champions for trees by connecting with organizations who share Urban Forestry's vision and asked if there are additional opportunities to engage with community.
 - Jenn shared that programs like the Community Partnership Program or Learning Landscapes (a school education program about trees and nature that includes tree plantings) aim to engage the community. Urban Forestry's model is to serve as the tree experts and function in the background, having community organizations lead and take ownership. The new PCEF funding will be based in community driven initiatives and low income neighborhoods.
- Todd Lofgren, Deputy Director, emphasized that preserving the large trees that we have can also include elements of community engagement, such as outreach around how utilities operate in the right of way and development on private properties. These actions may put existing trees in danger. Additionally, Urban Forestry is leading a renewal of the urban forest management strategy (as the current plan is 20 years old) and that might be a good

opportunity to gather community input and voices on the urban forest that Portlanders want.

- Jenn echoed Todd's sentiments and reiterated that keeping big trees is really important to tree canopy, especially when we think of the shade that large trees provide. We won't see the benefits of newly planted trees for decades, if they survive – so existing large tree retention is critical.

FY 2022-23 Q1-Q3 Financials

Claudio Campuzano, Finance, Property, and Technology Manager, gave the PLOC an estimate of Parks Levy spending for Q1 through Q3 of fiscal year 2022-23. Due to the nature of the Leveraged Funding Model, the percent of Parks Levy funding spend on program and service expenses won't be determined until the end of the fiscal year. The final percentage of Parks Levy funding and actual amount can only be determined when the total year-end spend and program revenue are finalized. Any savings or underspending, even in non-levy-related areas, acts to reduce the amount of levy resource required, since more General Fund is available to cover more of the levy-eligible services. To show an estimate of Parks Levy spending for FY22-23 Q1 through Q3, PP&R used the budgeted percentage between General Fund and Parks for Parks Levy supported services. PP&R expects the Parks Levy spending for FY 2022-23 to be less than originally budgeted.

PLOC members did not have any questions or concerns.

Upcoming Annual Report Process

Claire gave an overview of the upcoming annual report process for the PP&R FY 2022-23 Parks Levy Annual Report and Executive Summary – as well as the Parks Levy Oversight Committee's annual report. In addition to sharing financial data and performance measure progress, the Bureau's report will feature community voices through interview and feature stories that connect participant experiences to Parks Levy commitments. The PLOC report will be in the same format as the first PLOC report – with key sections being Adherence to Parks Levy Ballot Language, Fiscal Accountability, and Transparency.

Claire shared a timeline for sharing the draft reports with the PLOC and going to City Council for acceptance, as well as detailing what materials will be translated and available online. PLOC members did not have any questions or concerns.

Claire thanked members in attendance for their service on the PLOC and noted follow up information would be coming on the report and upcoming meetings. Claire adjourned the meeting.

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अनुवादन तथा व्याख्या (Nepali)

पोर्टल्यान्डको शहरको नीति हो कि कुनै पनि व्यक्तिलाई जाति, रङ, राष्ट्रिय मूल, असक्षमता वा अन्य संरक्षित वर्गीकरण स्थितिको आधारमा कुनै पनि शहरका कार्यक्रम, सेवा वा क्रियाकलापमा सहभागी हुन भेदभाव गरिने, वञ्चित गरिने, लाभहरू प्रदान गर्नबाट अस्वीकार गरिनेछैन। नागरिक अधिकार शीर्षक VI र ADA शीर्षक II नागरिक अधिकारको कानूनहरूको पालना गर्दै, पोर्टल्यान्डको शहरले शहरका कार्यक्रमहरू, सेवाहरू र क्रियाकलापहरूमा बराबर पहुँच निश्चय गर्नको लागि निम्न प्रदान गर्दछ: अनुवादन र व्याख्या, परिमार्जन, आवास, वैकल्पिक ढाँचाहरू र सहायक सामग्री र सेवाहरू। यी सेवाहरू अनुरोध गर्नको लागि 503-823-2525, रिले सेवा: 711 मा सम्पर्क गर्नुहोस्।

Chiaku me Awewen Kapas (Chuukese)

Mi annuk non ewe City of Portland pwe esap wor emon esap etiwa an epwe fiti, esap angei feiochun, are epwe kuna iteingau non meinisin an ew tetenimw kewe mokutukut, aninnis, are mwich nongonong won i chon ia, enuan, chon menni muu, weiresin inis, are pwan ew tapin aramas mi auchea are pisekisek. Fan itan an fiti Civil Rights Title VI me ADA Title II annuken pungun manau, ewe City of Portland mi ennetata pwe epwe wor etiwaoch ngeni an ewe tetenimw mokutukut, aninnis, me mwichren an aworaochu: chiaku me awewen kapas, ekkesiwin, etufich, sokonon napanap, me pwan ekkoch minen awewe me aninnis. Ika ka mochen ekkei pekin aninnis, kokori 503-823-2525, Fon Fan Itan Ekkewe mi wor Ar Osukosukan Manau: 711.