Agenda

5:30 PM       Welcome and Ice Breaker          All
5:45 PM       Administrative Items            Claire Flynn
6:00 PM       Access Pass Update and Year-End Summary Craig Ward, Jamie Sandness
6:30 PM       BREAK
6:35 PM       Communications Update and Annual Report Overview Claire Flynn
7:00 PM       Presentation Topics Prioritization Malcolm Hoover
7:20 PM       Housekeeping                      Claire Flynn

Attending

Oversight Committee Members –
  • Mary Ruble
  • Silas Sanderson
  • Tim Williams
  • Zay Conant
  • Not in attendance, meeting materials shared:
    o Alescia Blakely

Parks Board Liaison –
  • Casey Mills

PP&R Staff –
  • Sarah Huggins | Sustainable Future Program Manager
  • Jamie Sandness | Recreation Support Systems Manager
  • Craig Ward | Recreation Support Systems Analyst
  • Malcolm Hoover | Community Relations Senior Community Outreach Coordinator II
  • Claire Flynn | Levy Coordinator

Members of the Public –
  • None
Malcolm Hoover, Senior Community Outreach Coordinator and meeting facilitator, welcomed participants and lead the group through an icebreaker.

**Administrative Items**

Claire Flynn, Levy Coordinator, presented administrative items to the PLOC.
- Claire reminded PLOC members about an upcoming Friends and Partners event.
- PLOC members were asked to review and vote on a change to the committee’s Charter and Bylaws. The proposed additional language to be added to both governing documents clarified the role of a new Parks Board liaison position. A Parks Board liaison is appointed and serves at the pleasure of the Bureau Director to provide additional transparency and communication between the Parks Board and the PLOC. The liaison is not a member of the PLOC but will attend meetings, receive meeting materials, participate in discussions, and relay information between the advisory bodies.
  - All members in attendance approved adding language to the Charter and Bylaws that outlined the role of the Parks Board liaison. Alescia Blakely (not in attendance) approved via email.
- Claire reiterated announcements and materials that the PLOC received via email including Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland Listening & Learning Wave 3 opportunities to participate in providing feedback to PP&R about Recreation activities, the orientation presentation and slides sent to the PLOC after the new member orientation, and a reminder that additional budget information summarizing Parks Levy budget additions would be sent to the group.
  - Mary asked if there would be a report out on the Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland community feedback and what the major themes of the feedback were.
    - Claire shared that PP&R gathered information from Wave 1 and Wave 2 of Listening & Learning and summarized into an internal report that may be shared in the future.
    - Malcolm noted that, once the reports become public, PP&R can share them with the PLOC.
    - Sarah also clarified that Wave 1 and 2 were focused on feedback around revising the bureau’s Mission, Vision, Values, and Equity and Anti-Racism Statement. Wave 3 is focused on gathering feedback from the community around recreation program services.
    - Claire noted that the Listening & Learning waves are part of a continuous cycle of feedback and community engagement that the bureau is prioritizing and incorporating in the long-term.
    - Mary asked if community feedback is looked at in quadrants of the city or if the data is aggregated.
      - Malcolm shared that Wave 3 is focused in East Portland to best hear from marginalized communities. Results, as applicable, will be disaggregated by race, age, income, etc.
      - Sarah also noted that, in the upcoming year, the bureau will be working with Portland State University to facilitate a city-wide survey with a broad range of questions for community feedback and we’ll be able to disaggregate that geographically as well.

**Access Pass Update and Year-End Summary**

Claire introduced the Access Pass presentation, specifically noting that the Access Pass is helping PP&R meet Parks Levy commitments made to voters. Parks Levy commitments include reducing cost
as a barrier to access and serving households living with low income. Because the Access Pass provides financial assistance to Portlanders, PP&R is better able to fulfill the commitments outlined in the Parks Levy.

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 and drop-ins, classes and other registered activities, preschool and afterschool programs, and personal training.

Craig shared an update of Access Pass for FY 2022-23 (from October 26, 2022 to June 26, 2023):

- As of June 26, PP&R had approximately 17,600 Access Pass users (households) signed up. PP&R saw a jump in users between May 22 and June 26, likely the result of new Access Pass sign-ups in advance of Summer 2023.
  - Zay asked if the Access Pass has any applicability to transportation or public transit costs. They noted that, in January 2024, TriMet is raising fares which will put additional burden on low-income families and add barriers to getting to community centers and participating in PP&R activities.
    - Craig noted that transportation stipends or passes wouldn’t be a part of the Access Pass, since the Access Pass is tied specifically to PP&R’s registration system (ActiveNet). However, additional funding has been used to provide PP&R teen program participants with bus passes and community centers have been able to supplement with bus passes as available. Craig noted that exploring decreasing transportation costs could be an option in the future for other programs.
  - Mary asked what the average discount selected by Access Pass users is.
    - Craig shared that $200 is the average monetary discount that is applied per Access Pass and 90% is the most popular discount percentage.
- For Fall, Winter, and Spring of FY 2022-23 – 49% ($929,563) of Access Pass discounts were applied to memberships, 43% ($812,076) of Access Pass discounts were applied to registered programs, 6% ($106,410) was applied to drop-in use, and 3% was to miscellaneous costs such as personal training. Craig also shared data for Summer 2023, which showed that the majority of Access Pass use in the summer is applied to registered activities (such as camps, swim lessons, etc.).
  - Tim asked whether the amount shared was the amount spent by households or if it was the amount of discount and Craig clarified that the numbers share are the dollar amount discounted.
- When showing the distribution of income level for Access Pass users, lowest income Portlanders are the highest percentage of Access Pass users.
  - Mary asked what percentage of people actually report income levels if the information isn’t required.
    - Craig clarified that users are required to identify their income level, but verification of that income level isn’t required.
    - While there are some blanks in income level, PP&R has removed the option for blanks and will require all users to report income level when signing up.
- The Access Pass and ActiveNet also tracks race and ethnicity data. However, because race and ethnicity data hasn’t been consistently tracked or required in the past, trends around user data cannot be analyzed at this point. In FY 2022-23, the total number of users, including those who identify as Black, Indigenous, people of color, or biracial, tripled.
Silas asked if PP&R can identify increased participation relative to past trends.
- Sarah shared that, with the updated city-wide survey in partnership with Portland State University, PP&R will be able to evaluate if Portlanders perceive cost as a barrier to participation. By comparing this new number to previous surveys, the bureau will be able to understand and see impact of programs like the Access Pass.
- Craig noted that Recreation has compared FY 2021-22 to FY 2022-23 and found that Access Pass users doubled from approximately 8,000 to 15,000 users. The total amount of financial assistance given increased from $1.5 million in FY 2021-22 to $3 million in FY 2022-23. Additionally, the average discount per user only slightly increased from $190 to $198. This shows, anecdotally, an increase in participation and Access Pass use. The bureau is also tracking how many unique users there are in ActiveNet and how Access Pass is applied in ActiveNet.
  - Tim asked and clarified if that means that the Access Pass is bringing in new users who were not previously participating in PP&R programs and activities.
    - Craig shared that Recreation also tracks when ActiveNet accounts were created and when they’re used. By tracking and analyzing this moving forward, PP&R can show how many new accounts were created at the same time as an Access Pass.

Mary shared that she is interested in total users at a Recreation facility compared to the percentage of those that use the Access Pass and whether PP&R can see whether growth in Access Pass is similar to the growth in overall users, asking: Is PP&R building more users through the Access Pass? Is a change or growth that can be directly attributed to the Access Pass? Is there a comparison between percentage of people using scholarships prior to COVID versus the percentage of people using Access Pass now?
- Claire shared that the Year 1 Parks Levy Annual Report references scholarship levels prior to the Parks Levy versus the amount of financial assistance provided in FY 2021-22.
- Jamie expanded and noted that the maximum budget for the scholarship program, prior to COVID, was $600,000. In FY 2022-23, PP&R provided approximately $3 million in financial assistance.
- Craig emphasized that, in the Spring quarter, PP&R added 9,909 new ActiveNet accounts. Of those, 5,900 accounts were also adding Access Passes, meaning that over 50% of new accounts added in the spring quarter also added an Access Pass while they created their account.
  - Mary asked if seeing the total growth in users for recreation offerings and the percentage of those who are using Access Pass could help answer if the Access Pass is bringing in new people who may have never used facilities or programs before. Or is the program just making it easier and cheaper for users who were already attending PP&R programs and facilities?
    - Sarah shared that limited capacity and class space also influences participation. For example, a finite number of swim classes means that, even if PP&R is bringing in new users, that might not mean an increase in total participation.
    - Craig also noted that data prior to FY 2021-22 is difficult to compare because of the changes in operations and revenue models. Prior to the Parks Levy, Recreation functioned on a revenue return model where class prices needed to bring in fiscal support. Now, Recreation is centered on a model to reduce cost. But, when comparing between FY 2021-22 and FY 2022-23, PP&R increased unique users from 42,000 to 58,000. Of those new users, about 50% also signed up for an Access Pass.
Zay asked how information regarding the Access Pass is shared and what communication avenues have been most effective for getting new users.

- Jamie shared that Access Pass information is on-site and online, available to current users, and is sometimes included in information blasts shared with current users. But the primary communication focus has been more on new users by partnering with community organizations to share information. 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, has 54 partner organizations who receive regular communication from PP&R each season and Access Pass information. As a pilot, Early Registration continues to be adapted with each season to best meet the goals of the program and adjust to community needs.

Tim asked how user and Access Pass data is stored and whether the information can be looked at by location.

- Craig clarified that the data is stored in ActiveNet, which limits how the data can be pulled and interpreted. He also emphasized that, if there is specific data and information that PLOC members want to see or hear about, he can pull reports to answer specific questions.
- Claire also noted that, for communication purposes, it’s helpful to hear from PLOC members the kind of information and analysis that is compelling and best communicates impact. She encouraged PLOC members to share how PP&R can best show the impact of the Access Pass.

Zay asked about the consideration that, with no income verification, users might take advantage of the program even if they do not have financial need.

- Craig shared that prior to COVID and the Parks Levy, a consultant did an analysis of the existing scholarship policy and need. The recommendation was to remove income validation barriers because validation could prevent low-income users from applying.
- Claire noted that the data shows that, in general, users are selecting a discount relative to their income that is aligned with the financial need recommendation.
- Jamie added that cost can be a barrier to participation even if a household isn’t in extreme poverty. By removing the burden of proof or validation, PP&R is deferring to the user on the judgment of need.

Communications Update and Annual Report Overview

Claire shared that, with an expanded Communications team, PP&R now has the capacity to manage a more formal Parks Levy Communications Plan. This living document outlines deliverables and outcomes for communicating about Parks Levy successes and impact, such as:

- Making sure the Parks Levy webpage is up to date, includes key documents, and clearly and transparently represents the Parks Levy. This also includes making sure that other PP&R webpages link to the Parks Levy page where programs are supported by the Parks Levy.
- Ensuring that the Parks Levy is included in social media wherever possible to show where funding is supporting programs. Social media will also be used after the annual report is published to share interview stories and celebrate performance measure from Year 2.
- Now that community centers are back in full swing, physical materials are useful to share information about the Parks Levy. A new informational flyer about the Parks Levy will be printed and available in community centers and at tabling events.
- The PP&R Communications team is also working on sharing and crediting the Parks Levy wherever possible for other press opportunities.
• PP&R is also using the Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland Listening & Learning opportunities to understand better service needs of specific populations called out in the Parks Levy commitments and how we can better meet those needs. The plan pulls together a lot of what the bureau is already doing but will serve as a reference point for making sure that Portlanders know about the Parks Levy.
• Sarah shared that feedback from the PLOC following Year 1 of the Parks Levy included a desire for more stories directly from community members and, in response, the Year 2 report will include more interviews with partners and participants.
• Tim asked for clarification that the Communications team is for the whole bureau and thus, has additional focus besides the Parks Levy.
  ○ Claire confirmed that the Communications team is for all PP&R comms and marketing. However, this new plan will serve as a reference point for what deliverables are locked in year-to-year. Additionally, because capacity is limited by other communication needs, the bureau will work efficiently to reference the Parks Levy where possible and not duplicate efforts. In the last year, staff have increased the proactive inclusion of the Parks Levy in social media and press.
• Silas asked if the Parks Levy will be showcased in any physical signage for tree planting, maintenance, etc.
  ○ Claire noted that Divisions are increasingly taking ownership of showing where Parks Levy support is impacting programs. For example, Urban Forestry is looking to cite the Parks Levy on proactive tree maintenance signage. While PP&R isn’t currently creating new signage just around the Parks Levy, using existing initiative with physical signs can be an area to include Parks Levy information.
• Zay asked if PP&R uses community events or other tabling opportunities to share information about the Parks Levy.
  ○ Claire confirmed that Parks Levy materials are distributed included at tabling events, specifically at PP&R events and at Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland tabling.
  ○ Malcolm shared that PP&R’s Community Engagement team works closely with Divisions to collect information, flyers, etc. to share with community members at events and through engagement initiatives.
• Mary asked if the Parks Levy flyer is final and suggested that the flyer include the key message that one-third of PP&R’s operating budget is supported by the Parks Levy.
  ○ Claire shared that the flyer is in the accessibility review stage and then going to translation but that a nod to the one-third support can be included.
• Zay asked if more student outreach amongst student leaders in schools would be beneficial to sharing information about the Parks Levy.
  ○ Claire noted that there is not currently any intentional outreach or communications to schools or external youth councils or meetings. However, PP&R has teen-focused programs such as the Teen Program, Youth Conservation Crew, Teen Nature Team, and more that are all supported by the Parks Levy. An area of expansion for communications would be increase internal communication to all staff, including seasonal staff, around the impact of the Parks Levy. The Recreation Division provides FAQs to staff around the Parks Levy, including key messaging.
  ○ Malcolm shared that the Community Engagement team is always keen to engage youth and teens – and that work could expand to school presentations if the opportunity arises.

Claire also shared an outline of the FY 2022-23 Parks Levy Annual Report. The full report will include:
• Letters from the Commissioner and from the Director
Introduction narratives focused on Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland, Centering Equity, and the Leveraged Funding Model

A main report body with spending details, performance measures, spotlights, and feature interviews organized by the 15 commitments under Recreation for All, Protect and Grow Nature, and Community Partnerships categories.

Appendices with have detailed information about Parks Levy expenses, performance measures, and more.

Six feature interviews:
- Three interviews with community partners who work with PP&R to offer events and programming
- One interview with staff who engage off-site with community members
- Two interviews with program participants and community members who participate in PP&R events and programming

Claire also emphasized that, in response to the bureau’s report, the PLOC will write and present their own annual report. Last year’s PLOC report include member bios and pictures, and three main sections focused on adherence to ballot language, fiscal accountability, and transparency. PP&R will send the bureau’s report to the PLOC in advance of the October meeting and will collect feedback and decide on the drafting process at that meeting. Claire also encouraged PLOC members to keep an eye out towards the December City Council presentation date because a PLOC member will need to present the PLOC report to City Council.

- Mary asked if a returning PLOC member should be the one to present to Council since they would have been present for FY 2022-23.
  - Claire and Sarah shared that, since the new members will be the ones reading the bureau’s Year 2 report and responding to the summary of actions and outcomes for Year 2, it does not necessarily need to be a returning PLOC member who presents.
- Tim asked who the audience for the reports is and what the goal of adding in the feature interviews is.
  - Claire noted that the full, long-form report is likely most closely read by PP&R staff, the PLOC, and City Council staff. While the shorter Executive Summary doesn’t include the feature stories text, the feature stories and pictures will be used in social media to highlight Parks Levy impact.
- Mary asked if presenting to community groups and external stakeholders will be part of Parks Levy communications.
  - Claire shared that, as opportunities come along, PP&R staff are prepared to present on the Parks Levy. Depending on the presentation topic, the Parks Levy information may be a part of a larger PP&R presentation but Claire and Sarah are working with the Friends and Partnerships team on opportunities to share.
- Zay asked if multiple PLOC members could present the PLOC report to City Council.
  - Claire and Sarah confirmed that as many PLOC members that want to attend and present are welcome and that, when the date and time is determined, they will work with the PLOC to determine presenter(s).

Presentation Topic Prioritization and Housekeeping

Malcolm led the group through a topic brainstorming exercise to collect topics of interest from PLOC members. These topics will be used to schedule presentations with PP&R staff on programs and topics that the Parks Levy funds.

Claire then collected available meeting dates for the October meeting from members and thanked all for attending. Claire adjourned the meeting.
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