

Tuesday, December 8, 2020

9:00 - 11:00 am

Zoom Virtual Meeting

Board Members Present

Paul Agrimis, Mike Elliott, Bonnie Gee Yosick, Jenny Glass, Randy Gragg, Casey Mills, Alejandro Orizola, Juan Piantino, David Staczek, Paddy Tillett, Erin Zollenkopf

Board Members Absent

Punneh Abdolhosseini, Alejandra Cortes, Katy Holland, Ian Jaquiss, Tamara Layden, Lorena Nascimento

City Staff Present

Maximo David Behrens, Tonya Booker, Claudio Campuzano, Sofia Chavier, Tim Collier, Margaret Evans, Brooke Gardner, Vicente Harrison, Linda Law, Todd Lofgren, Adena Long, Lauren McGuire, Nicola Sysyn, Kenya Williams

Call to Order/Social/Check-in

Paul Agrimis called the meeting to order at 9:04am and led the participants in a social activity.

Review/Approve November Minutes

Paul asked if there was a motion to approve the November minutes. Paddy made the motion, Mike seconded, and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Introducing Sofia Chavier - new Park Security Manager

Adena introduced Sofia Chavier who will be the new Security Manager for PP&R overseeing all Park Ranger program staff and security concerns. Sofia will report to Vicente Harrison who will shift to providing managerial oversight of the critical PP&R Safety, Security and Emergency Management portfolios.

Director's Report

Adena noted that the Monthly Report was shared prior to the meeting and asked the Board to share any questions they have. She noted that there was a request at a previous meeting to hear more about camping clean up near Laurelhurst Park. Camps on SE Oak Street near Laurelhurst Park were posted for removal and clean up a couple times during November. This effort was led by the Homeless Urban Camping Impact Reduction Team (HUCIRP). They coordinate with private social groups, Portland Police, Parks, and others. The effort was timed to ensure they could offer shelter beds at Mt Scott Community Center which reopened for shelter use. There were some protests by community members and a fair amount of media coverage. There are approximately 20 campers at the location currently which is down from over 100 campers. Camping in parks is a violation of Title 20. When Park Rangers find campers in parks, they attempt to connect, educate them on rules and offer potential solutions. Staff then enter the camp into the city database for evaluation. This ensures the camp is checked on



and services are offered as appropriate. There are several large encampments in natural areas. HUCIRP has modified criteria for evaluating camps due to COVID and in most cases, camps are not being removed from parks or other areas unless they meet the new threshold. Rangers and the Security Team continue to proactively coordinate with city agencies on response and support to the houseless community.

Paul asked how this effort relates to efforts made by other bureaus. Adena noted that the Bureaus of Transportation, Water and Environmental Services are also impacted by camping. They also coordinate with HUCIRP and other agencies for refuse removal and social services.

Juan asked what the demographics are of the individuals experiencing homelessness, if they are local, if Portland is considered homeless friendly, and if there is an increase in homelessness in Portland. Adena responded that the homeless population is increasing and there may be a mix of local and non-local individuals. Portland does not take as strong action as other cities so it is seen as more homeless friendly. Tim added that there is a homelessness crisis throughout the country due to lack of federal investment in affordable housing. People move to Portland for many different reasons, and COVID will make this crisis even worse.

Juan asked what Rangers do when they see homeless families in parks. Vicente shared that Rangers coordinate closely with HUCIRP with weekly meetings and coordination calls with bureaus, public safety agencies, medical and housing services managed by the Joint Office of Homeless Services. If they see families, they talk about it and report on what they have seen in the park system. They review this every week. When staff encounter people in camps, they have conversations with them. They are the first response to people in parks experiencing homelessness and often begin cleaning up trash and hypodermic needles. Land Stewardship staff in some zones spend about 40-50% of their time interacting and caring for people experiencing homelessness in parks. This has a significant impact on the bureau.

Working Group Reports

Financial Sustainability

At their last meeting the working group focused on financial statements and operation systems. The information was very helpful and at an upcoming meeting staff will review the bureau's projection tools. They will also receive an overview of failing assets in the system. The Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) is the mechanism the Board has for providing input on the budget. The BAC is working on the FY 20-21 (July-June) cycle developing a values framework and budget decisions based on the values created. The Requested Budget is due late-January. The levy makes this year's process different. The bureau will have more significant decisions about use of levy funds during the Fall Budget Monitoring Process (BMP). Budget priorities are focused on programming for summer 2021, building infrastructure to support levy growth and addressing potential critical failures.

Land Use/Infrastructure

Former Board member Jim Owens attended a virtual open house that ODOT put on. ODOT is redesigning the exit onto I-84, so it no longer overlaps the Eastbank Esplanade. The project is

moving forward without addressing the freeway covers. The group plans to learn more about the Level of Service for park patrons and the equity assessment in January. The group has concerns about the Burnside Bridge type selection potential impact to Waterfront Park specifically using the area north of the bridge as a staging area and the impact that will have on the Japanese Memorial Plaza and trees in the area. They are also concerned about pedestrian access to and from the bridge.

Process Improvement Ad Hoc

Bonnie sent out the final overview document for the PP&R/BES Tree Planting Strategy. This document includes information shared in past meetings. The goal is to improve community outcomes especially for those who have been disenfranchised. The Tree Planting Strategy is currently on hold. The process improvement effort started with direction from late Commissioner Nick Fish and will continue with focus on other efforts. Bonnie will remain involved in the process improvement effort as it transitions to other issues.

With Alejandra and Tamara absent, the Affirmation of Equity Statement and Community Development updates were postponed.

Portland Parks Foundation Report

Randy shared that the Barbara Walker Bridge received another design award. The Foundation will be discussing with PP&R what their role will be and what Summer Free For All (SFFA) will look like going forward. The Foundation is making flexible plans for its 20th anniversary event. The recent Green Dreams event with Urban Forestry Commission Chair Vivek Shandas was a success. Randy is working on the plan for the next series and will share more about the 20th anniversary event plans at the next Board meeting.

PP&R Planning Framework

Adena shared the new planning framework for the bureau. With the wrapping up and reporting out of existing plans, the bureau is looking at focusing its effort to build a Sustainable Future and commitment to becoming an anti-racist organization to develop a planning effort that includes other efforts like Level of Service, Cost Recovery and aligning cross-divisional workplans. The goal of “Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland” can only be achieved if our services, programs, parks and facilities are provided equitably to all Portlanders. The bureau will center Black, Indigenous, People of Color, Refugees and Immigrants, people experiencing poverty, people living with disabilities, youth, and elders and older adults.

Adena reviewed the information graphic for the framework which includes looking at where we are, what more we can learn, and what we need to do. This framework is a cyclical, overlapping process of continuous improvement that will go on forever. Phase I will go from now until January 2022, and the bureau will create a new Equity Statement and Equity Lens prior to the development of the bureau vision, mission, and values and new strategic objectives. They are beginning with Employee Gatherings where they review the Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland Framework, give an update on the levy and share progress reports on the three major bureau plans: Vision 2020, 2017-20 Strategic Plan and the Five-Year Racial Equity Plan. The next

Employee Gathering will focus on the results of the employee survey, racial justice listening sessions and community listening sessions. The third gathering will be a deeper dive into the bureau's racial equity work. The fourth will take staff through the planning approach for 2021: Vision, Mission, Values, and Strategic Objectives and how those will be connected to levy funded programs and projects. Adena suggested that the Board go through a similar series of conversations to prepare for the planning work in 2021 starting with the community listening sessions report in either January or February, followed by the racial equity report at the March meeting and the planning approach at the April meeting.

Paul expressed his interest in the Board having these conversations as proposed. Mike shared his concern about community engagement and timing for budget decisions. Adena noted that the levy ramp has limited time for community engagement, but they will have time to receive more input for the early years of the levy. Year zero of the levy is more inward focused to support any additional work the bureau does throughout the life of the levy.

Randy asked if this process is effectively the next Vision 2020. Adena does not envision doing a long-term vision process. There will be objectives, but they will be kept loose until they take form. There will not be a separate racial equity plan. The values statement will take priority. Randy suggested that long term vision plans be updated and asked what the real sustainable future is. He is uncertain if equity work sets the stage for levy renewal or a bond or other taxation that they'll need to sell to the voters. Adena added that the framework is structured so it will run in perpetuity, with constant reviewing and refining, and the levy will be part of the framework as well as financial planning for the future. Todd noted that Vision 2020 became too specific and the vision statement will provide the aspiration and purpose centering community input on decision making.

Paul raised the issue about creating a sustainable model and suggested going to Salem to advocate for a special district for parks noting the restrictions of the legislative session.

Casey pointed out that a byproduct of this effort may be a revised mission and goals for the Board. Adena noted the importance of the Board's impact and feedback on the mission and vision and the need to be in alignment on this work.

Kenya asked that they be mindful of who is left out and hasn't been served - not just by Parks but by government. Equity is essential to serve low income, Immigrant and Refugee, BIPOC communities who have been historically left out or disenfranchised, and keeping Equity first sets us up for success. It's about putting people first.

Paddy noted the importance of having a formal review of long-term plans as frequently as every three years. A vision provides a north star and ensures you're heading in the right direction. Adena suggested the planning framework would provide review more frequent than three years. Budget decisions that impact people occur every year so review should happen annually.

Erin asked if there will only be a five-year plan and no long-term plan. Adena noted that there will be a process to create objectives with appropriate timelines for each, but they have not yet determined to do a five-year plan and do not plan to create a 20-year plan. Todd reviewed the city directed and established milestones. These will help create timelines for objectives, but the focus is on the results. The bureau needs continuous process improvement and engagement to show employees and the community how the bureau is doing at meeting the goals. The vision statement will be the guiding north star and objectives will have shorter timelines.

Randy echoed the interest in having a long-term vision plan and the need for it to build the support of the constituency. Adena noted that another Vision 2020 is not the direction they want to go. Strategic objectives will be sized appropriately, and some may be long range. The bureau is looking at the life of assets and climate change as they do this work. This framework will get us through the next year and a half and will continue.

Paul noted that this conversation will proceed at the next Board meeting and his interest in the Board's involvement in crafting the vision for the Bureau.

Volunteers for 2014 Bond Oversight Committee

Paul shared that there are three vacancies on the Parks Bond Oversight Committee, and this is a volunteer opportunity for interested Board members. Lauren provided an overview of the committee. David volunteered to serve on the committee.

Mid-year Check-in on Retreat Goals for Service

Paul asked participants to break into two groups to discuss how the Board is doing in meeting their objectives identified at the June 2020 Retreat, what progress has been made, if they want to change the objectives, or if they want to redouble their efforts.

Break-out Group Reports

Bonnie shared that her group talked about sustainability. They want to shift into a higher gear now that there is the levy and a new equity manager. David is interested in getting involved in the planning work and project prioritization. Some of the bureau objectives are aspirational. When setting objectives, we need to consider what the metrics will be, how we quantify what is achieved, and how success is measured. The old engagement model was focused on building new parks. The new model is focused on continuous community engagement allowing the bureau to keep a pulse on who is and how they are being served and what the community would like to see.

Paul's group focused mostly on equity. Levy polling indicated low support for tree maintenance, so why is the bureau doing this work if it's not seen as a good use of tax dollars? Community members are impacted by hunger and other needs that should be addressed before providing other services. They need to make the case why tree planting is important for those who currently have more pressing needs. It is important to have an equity lens for work going forward.

Erin noted that the Board has a public comment procedure they do not follow and suggested that they either follow the procedure they have in place or revise it.

Paul asked members to contact him or Bonnie if they have agenda items for future meetings.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:59am.