

**CITY OF BELLEVUE  
PARKS & COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

Thursday  
November 13, 2008  
6:00 p.m.

Conference Room 1E-113  
Bellevue City Hall  
Bellevue, Washington

**BOARDMEMBERS PRESENT:** Chair Keeney, Vice-Chair Bennett, Boardmembers George<sup>1</sup>, Karle, Robinson<sup>2</sup>, Roland

**PARKS STAFF PRESENT:** Shelley Brittingham, Patrick Foran, Nancy Harvey, Glenn Kost, Brian Krause, Ken Kroeger, Shelley Marelli, Jerry Nissley, Terry Smith, Jon Wilson

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Loren Baker, Ruth Chaus, John Hutta, Cathlyn Kole, Nancy Quint

**MINUTES TAKER:** Michelle Cash

1. **CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Keeney at 6:04 p.m.

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

**Motion by Boardmember Roland and second by Vice-Chair Bennett to approve the meeting agenda. Motion carried unanimously (4-0).**

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**Motion by Boardmember Roland and second by Vice-Chair Bennett to approve the October 14, 2008 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Parks & Community Services Board. Motion carried unanimously (4-0).**

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<sup>1</sup> Arrived at 6:10 p.m.; departed at 7:45 p.m.

<sup>2</sup> Arrived at 6:17 p.m.

**4. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS/PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Loren Baker, SPLASH, Board of Directors, 14216 SE 51<sup>st</sup> St, Bellevue 98006

On behalf of SPLASH, Mr. Baker stressed the need for a new aquatic facility. SPLASH supports a new facility that includes a 50-meter pool and is ready to assist the City in making the aquatic center project a reality.

**5. CHAIR COMMUNICATION:**

Chair Keeney reported that the selection process for the new Park Boardmember position is complete. The City Council is currently reviewing the candidates to determine an appointment.

On behalf of the Parks Board, Chair Keeney congratulated the City of Bellevue for the recent Parks Levy that won 66.96% of the vote.

**6. BOARD COMMUNICATION:**

None.

**7. CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS:**

None.

**8. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:**

A. Aquatics Feasibility Study

Mr. Kost presented the draft of the Bellevue Aquatics Center Feasibility Study Update. He clarified that the study will assist the City to determine if, or to what extent, it supports the development of an aquatic center, by studying a range of options and operation models. No preferred option was presented.

The City's role in aquatics was summarized. In addition, the components of the feasibility study were discussed. Some of the outreach conducted for the study included: stakeholder meetings, focus groups, and phone surveys.

A statistical analysis of swimming on a national and local level was summarized. The phone survey results were also reviewed. Mr. Kost noted that approximately one-half of Bellevue households have a member that swims. Based on the phone survey, the number one reason people use an aquatic facility is for recreational swimming.

Mr. Kost discussed the importance of an aquatic center location. He also noted that the need for more aquatic facilities is universally recognized. Several cities, besides Bellevue, have conducted or are conducting feasibility studies for an aquatic facility.

Mr. Kost noted that King County expressed some concern for the potential of a Bellevue aquatic facility competing for the regional/national events that are important to King County. In addition, several organizations have expressed interest in exploring partnerships for an aquatic facility, including Issaquah, Redmond, and the YMCA.

There are five different market segments of the aquatic community. These segments include:

- Recreation/Leisure
- Learn to Swim
- Water Therapy/Rehabilitation
- Exercise/Fitness
- Competition

The following is a list of options derived from the feasibility study:

- Option A—Outdoor (Seasonal) Aquatic Center
- Option B—Indoor/Outdoor Aquatic Center
- Option C—Indoor Aquatic Center
- Option D—Regional Aquatic Center
- Option E—National Aquatic Center

The characteristics of each option were discussed as well as the land requirements for these options. Mr. Kost explained that the site location criteria will vary depending upon the option that is selected. In addition, financial performance will vary from option to option. The total cost recovery ranges from 90% for Option A to 49% for Option E. The existing Bellevue Aquatic Center (BAC) is currently at 49% total cost recovery.

The future of the BAC with regards to each option was discussed. The spectrum ranges from no changes to the BAC with Option A and elimination of the BAC with Options D & E.

Some of the next steps for the feasibility study include:

- Finalize draft Aquatics Study, incorporating comments from stakeholders.
- Present results to Council in January 2009.
- Determine the City's role, if any, in meeting the aquatics needs of the community.

*General Discussion:*

The following is a list of comments discussed by Boardmembers. There was a general consensus to forward these comments to the City Council, and a request that if the Council decides to proceed with this study and eventual recommendation, the Park Board would have another opportunity for review and recommendation.

- General consensus to develop a new aquatic facility within Bellevue.
- Research partnership opportunities with the Bellevue School District.
- General concern expressed with potentially eliminating the current BAC.
- Try to compare the need for ballparks versus the need for an aquatic facility.

- Concern expressed with people seeking therapy having to share the locker room with other facility users. Consider making the current BAC a dedicated therapy facility.
- Consider incorporating triathlete training into a facility.
- Elements of each option are favorable; however, overall Boardmembers prefer Options C, D, and E.
- Excited about possibility of having such a state-of-the-art aquatic facility in Bellevue. This will help emphasize Bellevue as a world-class city.
- Do not limit design options at this point.
- Would like City Council to approve the overall concept so the Park Board can narrow the concepts and options.
- Consider options that include recreational, exercise, and, most importantly, students (college or high school) for competitive sports.
- Some Boardmembers strongly opposed an outdoor facility.
- No point in having a competitive pool if it is not 50 meters.
- Would like the Park Board to have a defined role in the process.
- Would like to consider a wave pool.
- One Boardmember is not opposed to Option A; however, very wary of Option E.
- Great opportunity for partnerships. Would like these partnerships further defined.

#### B. Off-Leash Dog Areas Study

Mr. Kost explained that there has been a significant amount of interest expressed by community members for off-leash dog areas, in particular for small dogs.

Mr. Kost clarified that dogs on leashes are allowed in nearly all Bellevue parks. The current off-leash facilities in and around Bellevue were highlighted. The two different types of facilities are off-leash hours (OLH) and off-leash areas (OLA). There are benefits of both types of facilities, which Mr. Kost reviewed. When comparing Bellevue to other cities for level of service, Bellevue is considered a moderate service level.

Mr. Kost explained that localized interest has been expressed for off-leash areas. There have been nine NEP dog area requests since 2001. Off-leash areas are preferred when supervision is not available, which is most likely the case. Off-leash hours should only be considered when supervision is available.

The general characteristics of Downtown Bellevue and the Downtown Park were discussed. The Downtown Park is unique and considered an inappropriate use for an off-leash park. Other alternatives are being explored.

#### *General Discussion:*

Boardmember George supports OLA and would like to locate an OLA in the Downtown area.

Boardmember Karle also favors OLA and would like to see further data on the number of dogs per household. He feels that the number of NEP requests is a misleading number and suggested that Bellevue citizens are massively underserved for dog areas. Overall, Boardmember Karle

does not favor the Downtown Park for an OLA. His preferred location is Eastgate or the Phantom Lake area.

Chair Keeney sees a need for exploration of dog areas for Bellevue citizens. However, he cautions that the topic is a very passionate and emotional issue and does not want to react to the passion and emotion of a group of citizens and not take into account all citizens.

While Boardmember Roland understands the need for off-leash dog areas, she does not want to commit five acres of open space to a dog area nor does she support an OLA in the Downtown Park.

Boardmember George supports a small dog OLA in the Downtown area. However, she feels an area for larger dogs will be a challenge.

**Motion by Vice-Chair Bennett and second by Boardmember Karle to extend the meeting until 8:30 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).**

9. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

Mr. Foran reported that City Council is finalizing the City's budget. He cautioned Boardmembers that the future Parks project list and plans are more complex and bigger in scope. He suggested that Boardmembers start brainstorming ways to become more deliberate through the planning process.

In response to a previous request for information by Boardmember Karle, Mr. Foran clarified that the Ashwood Park master plan course of action is still being determined. Since the project is Downtown, it is quite complex and it would be premature to discuss any partnerships opportunities until the process has been identified.

10. **OLD BUSINESS:**

A. **Boardmember committee/liaison reports**

Chair Keeney updated Boardmembers on the Meydenbauer Bay project. A full environmental impact study is being conducted, which means that the process will be delayed until the study is complete.

11. **NEW BUSINESS:**

- A. Future agenda items

Boardmember Karle requested a status report of outstanding proposed projects. Mr. Foran clarified that this information is being compiled for City Council and will also be shared with Park Boardmembers.

Boardmember Robinson requested a recap of the recent shoreline tour.

12. **OTHER COMMUNICATIONS:**

- A. Staff Reports
- B. CIP Project Report and Timeline
- C. Email from T Wooley re Eastgate Master Plan
- D. Postcard re parks employee
- E. Email from the Dolucas re tree maintenance
- F. Email from Joyce Shui re parks employee

13. **INFORMATION:**

- A. List of upcoming Parks special events
- B. December 16 -- Human Services Commission/Park Board holiday gathering at MSEEC
- C. January 13, 2009 next Park Board meeting

14. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS/PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Ruth Chaus, 13208 – 68<sup>th</sup> Pl. NE, Kirkland, WA

Ms. Chaus suggested that the materials located in the Bellevue Botanical Garden Perennial Border area be offered to other municipalities and citizens rather than discarded for the current renovation.

Cathlyn Kole, 523 – 99<sup>th</sup> Ave., Bellevue, WA

In Ms. Kole's opinion, the Downtown Park is a dog park. She added that Park users and dog owners have been coexisting in the Park for years. She would like an opportunity to control and legitimize dog use of the Downtown Park. Ms. Kole feels that if nothing is done, the dogs will continue to inhabit the Park in very large numbers. She offered to obtain further petition signatures if needed to support an OLA in the Downtown Park.

15. **ADJOURNMENT:**

**Motion by Boardmember Roland and second by Vice-Chair Bennett to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).**