

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

Tuesday
February 9, 2016
6:00 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Room 1E-113
Bellevue, Washington

BOARDMEMBERS PRESENT: Vice-Chair Grindeland, Boardmembers Heath, Kumar, Powell, Synn, Van Hollebeke

BOARDMEMBER ABSENT: Chair George

PARKS STAFF PRESENT: Patrick Foran, Nancy Harvey, Alex O'Reilly, Terry Smith

OTHERS PRESENT: Jim McEachran

COUNCILMEMBER PRESENT: Councilmember Robertson

MINUTES TAKER: Michelle Cash

1. **CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chair Grindeland at 6:03 p.m.

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Motion by Boardmember Powell and second by Boardmember Kumar to approve the meeting agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Motion by Boardmember Powell and second by Boardmember Van Hollebeke to approve the January 12, 2016 Parks & Community Services Regular Board Meeting Minutes as presented.

Motion by Boardmember Van Hollebeke and second by Boardmember Kumar to amend the meeting minutes as follows:

- **Page 2, Betsi Hummer's presentation, correction to read: "Ms. Hummer noted that ~~the~~ some of the streets along..."**

The Parks & Community Services Board approved these meeting minutes on March 8, 2016.

- **Page 5, first paragraph, correction and add the following clarifying language: “Boardmember Powell would like to see a more ambitious bicycle path along 108th Avenue ~~NE~~ SE (north from Bellevue Way through Downtown) and north of Main Street.**
- **Page 6, first paragraph, correction and add the following clarifying language: “Boardmember Powell also encouraged Bellevue to embrace the White Ghost Bicycle Program, which is a bicycle program to lock a white bicycle at a place where a person has died, while biking, to bring more awareness to accidents and deaths with bikers/drivers sharing program.”**

At the question, motion carried unanimously (6-0) to approve the amendment to the main motion.

At the question, motion carried unanimously (6-0) to approve the meeting minutes as amended.

4. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS/PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None.

5. CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION:

Boardmembers welcomed Councilmember Robertson to the Park Board as the Council Liaison.

Councilmember Robertson provided the following report:

- Council recently received a presentation regarding the 2016 Parks & Open Space System Plan.
- Currently seeking a designer for the Wilburton Hill Connection.
- Council is interested in seeing the Ashwood Park project move forward.
- Since this is a budget year, all capital budget and related items will be reviewed.

6. CHAIR COMMUNICATION:

No report.

7. BOARD COMMUNICATIONS:

Vice-Chair Grindeland reported that National Geographic recently launched a yearlong exploration of the *Power of Parks* in celebration of the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service. She encouraged Boardmembers to check this out.

Boardmember Synn visited various parks over the past month.

Boardmember Kumar commended staff for their efforts in keeping the parks clean. She recently visited Airfield Park and many other parks with her dog.

Boardmember Heath is looking forward to a horseback riding session for his daughters at Kelsey Creek Farm. He also saw a recent article in a *Visit Bellevue* magazine that highlighted Bellevue parks. He noted that there was a heavy emphasis in the article and throughout the magazine about how parks play a role in the economic development. Boardmember Heath suggested that Boardmembers keep in mind that visitors may be another park constituency, and that may be important to remember when discussing parks issues in the future.

Boardmember Heath discussed a recent City Council meeting where a citizen spoke about the impacts of the legalization of marijuana in Bellevue. Boardmember Heath noted that he did not hear the citizen's entire presentation, but it appeared from the context that there may have been a diversity issue from the citizen's perspective. Since Bellevue prides itself on its diversity, Boardmember Heath questioned if the City of Bellevue was considering as part of its analysis of marijuana shops whether these shops will create an environment that conflicts with people from various cultures outside of the United States. He wonders if people from different cultures will be deterred from coming to Bellevue (i.e., potential Microsoft recruits/candidates) if we don't think through the impacts of some decisions.

Boardmember Powell visited the Mercer Slough and also attended a recent meeting regarding the Eastside rail system. She noted that an intriguing proposal was presented, which would help Eastside connectivity.

Boardmember Van Hollebeke called attention to the 2015 Volunteer Program Brief – Natural Resource and Resource Management Division memo included in the Board packet (page 19). He commended the community for the tremendous amount of support, and the Parks Department for engaging the community.

8. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

Mr. Foran made the following report:

- Mr. Parker provided a very informational presentation to City Council regarding the 2016 Parks & Open Space System Plan.
- There will be a *Rejecting the Rags of Racism and Living in the Riches of Diversity* event at City Hall tomorrow afternoon.
- SEPA hearings were held regarding the Complete the Circle and Inspiration Playground projects at Downtown Park.

9. **DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:**

A. 2015-2016 Human Services Needs Update

Mr. James McEachran, Chair of the Human Services Commission, discussed some of the ways that the Human Services Needs Update is utilized. He noted that many cities across the Eastside utilize this information. Ms. O'Reilly added that none of the other Eastside cities conduct a needs assessment—Bellevue is the leader in this effort.

Ms. O'Reilly noted that every two years, the Human Services Division staff prepares a comprehensive needs assessment, the Bellevue Human Services Needs Update, that presents an overview of the key health and human services issues and trends in Bellevue, and also references relevant regional, county, state and national data. Ms. O'Reilly discussed some of the overarching themes for the 2015-2016 report, which include:

- The need for affordable housing is still the number one issue and comment from a variety of populations and in all of the surveys.
- Though the unemployment rate is much lower, many people still report needing more than one job to afford to live in East King County to pay for the basics.
- Substance abuse is on the rise for youth and adults, with mental health issues also a big concern.
- Transportation access issues continue as the top barrier to services and employment.
- The growing diversity in all areas of Bellevue and all of East King County is bringing up the need for responsive services as well as community dialogue about differences.

Ms. O'Reilly noted that through a public engagement process, there were recurring themes around six focus areas: cultural competence, human services, public safety, education, economic development, and civic engagement. Together, these focus areas comprise the Diversity Advantage Plan.

The goals for the Human Services Needs Update include:

- Goal #1: Food to eat and roof overhead.
- Goal #2: Supportive relationships within families, neighborhoods, and communities.
- Goal #3: A safe haven from all forms of violence and abuse.
- Goal #4: Health care to be as physically and mentally fit as possible.
- Goal #5: Education and job skills to lead an independent life.

Boardmember Synn noted that Goal #1 provides predictive models.

Boardmember Heath discussed King County's 10 year plan to end homelessness, noting that the plan is now in the 15th year and the homeless population is increasing. Since there are many facets to homelessness, Boardmember Heath inquired if the demographics of the homeless population should be addressed. Mr. Smith noted that there are many models and best practices about how to deal with the homeless population. The first priority is shelter and then the root cause of the homelessness is addressed (e.g., treatment, support, etc.). Mr. Smith added that

there is a lot of outreach involved with helping someone that is homeless, and challenges arise when people suffer from addiction related issues. Ms. O'Reilly added that there is a county-wide project that focuses on diversions (e.g., helping someone get a car fixed, identifying childcare subsidies, locating housing, etc.). She also noted that the Bellevue School District is starting to see a stabilization of free and reduced lunch students. However, time will tell if this is a continuing trend.

Ms. O'Reilly discussed the specific populations that the 2015-2016 Human Services Needs Update targets, including:

- Older adults.
- People with disabilities.
- Refugees and immigrants.
- School aged children and youth.
- Veterans.
- Bellevue adult misdemeanor probation.

Boardmember Van Hollebeke questioned how citizens can connect someone that is homeless and/or in need of help with available services. Ms. O'Reilly explained that the best option for a citizen that finds a person in need is to contact the Human Services staff so that they can get the appropriate people involved.

Boardmember Powell does not want to see Bellevue parks become places for the homeless population to camp/congregate (i.e., public tent cities). She stressed the importance of proper services.

Boardmember Heath thanked staff for the thorough presentation. The data increases community awareness. Boardmember Heath views the key to dealing with homelessness issues is preventing homelessness before it happens (i.e., keep rental rates affordable, continue health services rather than merely focusing on insurance, etc.).

Boardmember Kumar inquired how the Bellevue Human Services Needs assessment compares to other entities across the country. Ms. O'Reilly explained that unlike many jurisdictions, Bellevue has funds that are allocated to developing a human services needs assessment. In addition, there are four staff members dedicated to advocate for funding and resources. Mr. Foran added that it is also important to use the resources wisely. Bellevue has the strategy, system, and methodology for making decisions. Bellevue conducts a Needs Assessment to provide as much compassion and empirical information for people that need to make decisions. Mr. Smith noted that there is a separate process of performance measures that connect the dollars to how things are measured.

Boardmember Synn inquired if some of the groups are disproportionately represented in the data. Ms. O'Reilly clarified that the data is referred to from a variety of reports that often is disaggregated data.

Vice-Chair Grindeland questioned how the needs have changed for Bellevue over the last three decades. Ms. O'Reilly noted that the largest change has been in regards to affordability.

B. Park Board Work Plan

Mr. Smith discussed the many topics that are on the Park Board's work plan. He noted that there is a tremendous amount of agenda items forthcoming.

Boardmember Van Hollebeke suggested that further discussions about funding options in order to contribute to the vision of a City in a Park be added to a future agenda. In addition, he requested a calendar sketch of the future agenda items. Mr. Smith discussed the agenda planning matrix that is reviewed with the Board Chair and Vice-Chair at their monthly pre-meeting. This can also be shared with Boardmembers. Mr. Smith suggested that he connect work plan priorities with future agenda items.

Boardmember Powell would like Boardmembers to further discuss the proposed concept of additional parking spaces along the southern edge of Downtown Park. She noted that the Planning Department made an error regarding parking regulations and she does not want this error to be at the expense of Downtown Park. She stressed that parks should not pay the price for the parking shortage. Boardmember Powell stated that there have been other compromises with park land (e.g., Mercer Slough and Ashwood Park). She asked how Boardmembers can assist staff with preserving park land. Boardmember Van Hollebeke clarified that the Park Board needs to determine how to influence decisions without the power to make the decisions. He suggested that an option for doing this is to provide alternatives (i.e., funding, collaboration, etc.).

Boardmembers discussed Council's expectations on what their role should be in regards to utilizing a portion of Downtown Park for additional parking spaces. Boardmember Synn questioned why the Park Board needs to be involved in the community outreach process when the Board does not agree with moving forward with the concept/project. Mr. Foran clarified that Council asked to hear the public's perspective on the proposed concept. However, it was not a mandate from the City Council that the Park Board conduct this outreach process.

Motion by Boardmember Van Hollebeke and second by Boardmember Heath to extend the meeting until 8:35 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).

Since the Park Board is an advisor to the City Council, Boardmember Van Hollebeke suggested that the Park Board be proactive in sharing recommendations that help City Council address issues that may be forthcoming or provide options to an item that may be deliberated upon in the future. Overall, Boardmembers concurred that alternate solutions must be researched in lieu of utilizing a portion of Downtown Park for additional parking spaces.

10. BOARDMEMBER COMMITTEE/LIAISON REPORTS:

None.

11. **NEW BUSINESS:**

A. Future agenda items

As discussed above, Boardmembers would like the following items added to a future meeting agenda:

- Funding options in order to contribute to the vision of a City in a Park.
- Proactively sharing recommendations to City Council.
- Utilizing a portion of Downtown Park for additional parking spaces.

12. **OTHER COMMUNICATIONS:**

A. CIP Project Status Report

B. Memo re 2015 Volunteer Program/Natural Resource and Resource Management

C. Memo re Airfield Park Forest Management

13. **INFORMATION:**

A. List of upcoming Parks special events

B. Next regular Park Board meeting—March 8, 2016, Bellevue City Hall

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

None.

15. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion by Boardmember Van Hollebeke and second by Boardmember Heath to adjourn the meeting at 8:34 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).