

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

Tuesday  
September 10, 2015  
6:00 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall  
Room 1E-112  
Bellevue, Washington

**BOARDMEMBERS PRESENT:** Chair George, Boardmembers Heath, Kumar, Powell, Synn, Van Hollebeke

**BOARDMEMBER ABSENT:** Boardmembers Grindeland

**COUNCILMEMBER PRESENT:** Councilmember Robinson

**PARKS STAFF PRESENT:** Patrick Foran, Nancy Harvey, Shelley McVein, Camron Parker, Terry Smith, Cathy VonWald

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Arlene Alton, Paula Baruffi, Rod Bindon, Barbara Eisenstein, Dallas Evans, Terry & Shirley Greve, James & Annette Hoxsey, Micki Larimer, Kurt Lutterman, Rion Moran, Susan Nelson, Don Osborne, Jeffrey Raj, Gary Rogers, Thomas Ruthcamp, Shannon Self, Robert & Marilyn Shay, Flora Sherma, Paul Simmerly, Stu Vander Hoek, Michelle Wannamaker

**MINUTES TAKER:** Michelle Cash

1. **CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order by Chair George at 6:06 p.m.

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Chair George reported that Boardmember Grindeland was ill and not able to attend the meeting. Therefore, she suggested that Item 9C: Re-Naming Facility in Honor of Nan Campbell be postponed until the next meeting.

**Motion by Boardmember Powell and second by Boardmember Kumar to amend the meeting agenda to postpone Item 9C: Re-Naming Facility in Honor of Nan Campbell. At the question, motion carried unanimously (6-0) to approve the revised meeting agenda.**

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**Motion by Boardmember Kumar and second by Boardmember Van Hollebeke to approve the July 14, 2015 Parks & Community Services Board Meeting Minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).**

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

Robert Shay

610 – 123<sup>rd</sup> Ave. NE, Bellevue, WA

Mr. Shay expressed his appreciation for the VFW monument in Downtown Park. He noted that the final dedication for the monument will be held on November 11, 2015 at 2:00 p.m. He also expressed his concern for the poor security throughout the park and suggested that an exhaustive review of security be conducted. Mr. Shay requested that Park Rangers be more thoroughly trained to handle security related issues and that the park signs be clarified so that law enforcement can enforce the laws.

Barbara Eisenstein

12609 SE 29<sup>th</sup> Street, Bellevue, WA

Ms. Eisenstein spoke on behalf of a group of friends that utilize Airfield Park as an off-leash dog park and enjoy the bench located in Airfield Park. She noted that one of the community members, Frank Kuske, built the bench and placed it in the meadow of Airfield Park. It has been a gathering spot for Ms. Eisenstein and her friends for quite some time. However, recently the bench was tagged with graffiti. Although the bench is not an officially sanctioned type of bench, Ms. Eisenstein is hoping that there is a way to have the bench inspected for safety and given approval to remain in the park until the development of the park forces it out. She added that the bench has a tremendous amount of sentimental value to the neighboring community. *(When asked by the Board, approximately 7-10 audience members raised their hands to express their support of the bench.)*

Don Osborne

13716 SE 31<sup>st</sup> Street, Bellevue, WA

Mr. Osborne expressed his support of Ms. Eisenstein's comments regarding the bench in Airfield Park. In addition, he suggested that the park be kept in its natural state.

Susan Nelson, Keep Ashwood Park Green Chair

919 – 109<sup>th</sup> Ave. NE, #1602, Bellevue, WA

Ms. Nelson discussed the many events that occurred at Ashwood Park over the summer months. She views Ashwood Park as a gem in the treasure box of Bellevue's parks and urged Boardmembers to keep it polished for years to come.

Thomas Ruthcamp

1106 – 108<sup>th</sup> Ave. NE, #702, Bellevue, WA

Mr. Ruthcamp explained that Ashwood Park is a critical element for Bellevue. He suggested that a dog run and restrooms be added to the park and asked Boardmembers to focus on Ashwood Park and the importance it plays in Downtown Bellevue.

5. **CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION:**

Councilmember Robinson reported that the Council recently heard presentations regarding the following items:

- City's participation in Eastside Pathways.
- Funding request for Bellevue Boys and Girls Club.
- Bellevue Youth Theatre Foundation presented a \$193,000 check supporting Bellevue Youth Theatre.
- Resolution with David Evans to complete the design for the Mountains-to-Sound trails in Factoria.

6. **CHAIR COMMUNICATION:**

Chair George requested that staff research the concerns expressed during Oral Communications regarding the bench in Airfield Park.

7. **BOARD COMMUNICATIONS:**

Boardmember Van Hollebeke enjoyed the food truck and cultural event at Ashwood Park. He is also looking forward to more progress at Meydenbauer Beach Park.

Boardmember Powell made the following report:

- Visited Mercer Slough.
- Attended the 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Bellevue Collection Bellevue Family 4<sup>th</sup> celebration.
- Enjoyed Bellevue Youth Theatre's Shakespeare in the Park.
- Golfed at Crossroads Park.
- Attended the Bellevue Arts Fair.
- Visited Robinswood Park.

Boardmember Heath and his family enjoy their visits to the Bellevue Botanical Gardens.

Boardmember Kumar attended the Joint Boards and Commissions meeting held in Seattle about transportation in Bellevue. She also encouraged Boardmembers to complete the survey about pedestrian and bicycle use.

Boardmember Synn recently visited Hidden Valley Park.

8. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

Mr. Foran noted that Bellevue's parks were heavily used during the summer months. He was pleased to report that the water/beach parks had no major emergencies/incidents during the summer.

9. **DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:**

A. Welcome to New Boardmember Eric Synn

Boardmembers welcomed newest Boardmember Synn to the Park Board.

B. Park Plan Update and Public Hearing

Mr. Parker explained that it is once again time to update the Parks & Open Space System Plan. The plan is updated at six year intervals. At its core is a set of 20-year capital project recommendations. The recommendations are used by the city during budget processes to set priorities for projects that preserve, enhance, or expand Bellevue's park and open space system.

Mr. Parker discussed the outreach methods utilized for obtaining public opinion about what is desired in Bellevue parks. Core public questions included: 1) How do you use the parks and open space system today? And 2) What would you like to see more of in the future? The focus areas for the update included:

- Open space, greenways, wildlife corridors, and trails.
- Park facilities.
- Active recreation facilities.
- Urban parks systems.
- Waterfront access.
- Partnership Opportunities.
- Historic, cultural, and art resources.

**Motion by Boardmember Van Hollebeke and second by Boardmember Powell to open the public hearing. Motion carried unanimously (6-0). The Public Hearing was opened at 6:52 p.m.**

Shannon Self  
16411 SE 23<sup>rd</sup> St., Bellevue, WA

Ms. Self distributed a handout that highlighted the benefits of off-leash dog parks. She enjoys Airfield Park as an off-leash dog park and encouraged Boardmembers to recommend that this park be kept as such.

Rion Moran  
3416 – 161<sup>st</sup> Court SE, Bellevue, WA

Mr. Moran discussed the enjoyment people have that work in the vicinity of Airfield Park. He recommended that the park be leveled and filled in.

Stu Vander Hoek

9 – 103<sup>rd</sup> Ave. NE, Bellevue, WA

Mr. Vander Hoek discussed his concern with the lack of parking at Downtown Park and Meydenbauer Beach Park Phase 1. He also noted that the addition of the Inspiration Playground at Downtown Park will be a regional draw causing higher parking demands.

Mr. Vander Hoek encouraged Boardmembers to look forward in time and make sure enough parking is provided, based upon true demand studies, for both the Downtown Park and Meydenbauer Beach Park, otherwise they will become very expensive, exclusive facilities the Bellevue taxpayers paid for, but won't have access to. He also requested that the Board consider changes to the management of both of the parks to the Special Events Committee.

Micki Larimer

4053 – 149<sup>th</sup> Ave. SE, Bellevue, WA

Ms. Larimer encouraged Boardmembers to include the Eastgate area in the parks plan. She noted that Eastgate needs a gathering place that is within walking distance for the neighboring community.

Michelle Wannamaker

4045 – 149<sup>th</sup> Ave. SE, Bellevue, WA

Ms. Wannamaker also lives in the Eastgate area and requested that a neighborhood park be added to the Eastgate area. She explained that Eastgate Park is not a neighborhood park. It is for South Bellevue residents, not Eastgate residents. She stated that Eastgate neighbors need an open space for neighbors to gather that is free of charge.

Barbara Eisenstein

12609 SE 29<sup>th</sup> Street, Bellevue, WA

Ms. Eisenstein requested that security within the parks be a priority. In addition, she requested that off-leash dog parks be added throughout the city. She noted that there are viable opportunities to create new off-leash areas in Newport Hills, Bel-Red corridor, and the north end of Bellevue. Ms. Eisenstein would like the city to develop the Wilburton and Highland Glen sites identified as options in the "Plan for Off-leash Areas" from 2009.

Terry Greve

10055 Meydenbauer Way, #11, Bellevue, WA

Mr. Greve explained that there is a tremendous amount of pressure on parking in the Old Bellevue neighborhood. He added that it will get worse as more retail shops are added. He encouraged Boardmembers to look ahead and find a solution for the parking problems in this area. He recommended that an underground parking garage be considered as a viable option.

Robert Shay, President of the Wilburton Community Association  
610 – 123<sup>rd</sup> Ave. NE, Bellevue, WA

On behalf of the Wilburton Community Association, Mr. Shay suggested that dog parks be added throughout the community. However, he noted that dog owners need to take responsibility for appropriate behavior of their dogs throughout the parks. Often times, dog owners are disrespectful and not following the rules of the park. Although the Bellevue Botanical Gardens is off limits to dogs, there have been dogs in the gardens. He suggested that better signage be provided in parks for dog owners and that Park Rangers be provided with enforcement capabilities.

Mr. Shay noted that the Wilburton Community Association would like to work with the Parks Department to help resolve some of the dog-related issues.

**Motion by Boardmember Powell and second by Boardmember Kumar to close the public hearing. Motion carried unanimously (6-0). The Public Hearing was closed at 7:21 p.m.**

Mr. Parker distributed copies of written comments that were submitted by people that could not attend the public hearing but wanted their comments added to the record.

Mr. Parker summarized the approach to updating the elements of the plan and some of the web survey results. Approximately 56% of respondents recommend that the city investments be focused more on acquiring new parkland and natural areas, while 44% recommend developing and improving currently owned parks. In addition, approximately 80% of survey respondents recommend that trails through forests, wetlands, or other natural areas be the highest priority for city development of parks and recreational facilities.

Mr. Parker noted that there were 11 pages of open response feedback for the type of park or recreational facility that citizens would like to see more of. Some of the themes submitted by email and through NextDoor include:

- Maintain park security – feeling of safety.
- More drinking fountains, trash cans, and restrooms with year-round access.
- Covered play areas.
- Off-leash dog areas.
- Continue development of interconnected trail systems.
- Aquatic center.

In reviewing the plan thus far, Boardmember Van Hollebeke expressed his confidence that the Board's insights and instructions have been heard and are represented in the plan. Boardmember Kumar agreed with Boardmember Van Hollebeke. However, she suggested that specific concerns (i.e., off-leash dog areas, security in the parks, etc.) may need further attention. Mr. Parker clarified that the Parks & Open Space System Plan does not go into detail regarding one particular site or park. However, Airfield Park is part of the community parks, along with the projects listed in the capital recommendations. Mr. Foran added that the Parks & Open Space System Plan is a direct result of the Comprehensive Plan. The park master plans are determined when designing the park.

Boardmember Kumar questioned where off-leash dog parks would be addressed in the Parks & Open Space System Plan. Mr. Parker clarified that the off-leash dog park area study went through a review process and can be utilized as a resource in the Parks & Open Space System Plan.

Boardmember Powell questioned how the Board can better protect parks from competing and compromising uses. She wants to be sure that there is a process to ensure that the details are followed. In addition, Boardmember Powell asked if it is possible to change the course of direction for Airfield Park and not develop the park. This request is based upon public comments and concerns about the park. Mr. Parker cautioned that decisions have already been made via the adopted master plan for Airfield Park.

In regards to security, Boardmember Kumar questioned if there should be a relationship between the Police Department and Park Rangers. Mr. Foran clarified that Park Rangers are trained by the Police Department. The Park Ranger's role is focused more on customer service than policing. If Park Rangers encounter a conflict, they are instructed to contact the police.

10. **BOARDMEMBER COMMITTEE/LIAISON REPORTS:**

None.

11. **NEW BUSINESS:**

A. Future agenda items

None.

B. Possible Special Meeting

Chair George questioned if a Board retreat is desired. Boardmembers concurred that a retreat is not necessary at this time. However, they would like to allocate a portion of an upcoming regularly scheduled meeting (i.e., one hour) to create a list of action items identified at last year's Board retreat.

12. **OTHER COMMUNICATIONS:**

A. CIP Project Status Report

B. City Council Agenda Memo and Ordinance re Park Board

C. Memo to Council and Proclamation re Americans with Disabilities Act

*The Parks & Community Services Board approved these meeting minutes on October 13, 2015.*

- D. Memo re Well-KEPT Program
- E. Email from Bob Shay re Downtown Park
- F. Email from Anna M re High Adventure camp
- G. Email from Peter G re Youth Sports camps and staff
- H. Comment from Winters House renter
- I. Email from Patti O re Youth Sports camp and staff
- J. Email from Shari S re Youth Sports camp and staff
- K. Email from Merrick V re trails and Park Plan Update
- L. Email from Dennis & Lisa K re Youth Sports camps and staff
- M. Email from Linda Martin re Highland Center staff
- N. Email from Rosemary D re trail landscapers

13. **INFORMATION:**

- A. List of upcoming Parks special events
- B. Next regular Park Board meeting—October 13, 2015, Bellevue City Hall

**Motion by Boardmember Van Hollebeke and second by Boardmember Kumar to extend the meeting until 8:40 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).**

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

Jeffrey Raj

2511 – 157<sup>th</sup> Ave. SE, Bellevue, WA

Mr. Raj frequently visits Airfield Park. He requested that dog waste stations be placed in the open field at the park.

15. **ADJOURNMENT:**

**Motion by Boardmember Van Hollebeke and second by Boardmember Powell to adjourn the meeting at 8:31 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).**