

Explore

WASHINGTON PARK

Board Meeting
Thursday, February 10th, 2022
2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/95361381932?pwd=amN5bmNBbVVoeFJzL29BWklMQmdUZz09>

Minutes

Attending

Steve Cole – at large
Kathy Goeddel – Arlington Heights Neighborhood Association (“AHNA”)
Joe Furia – World Forestry Center (“WFC”)
Cynthia Haruyama – Portland Japanese Garden (“PJG”)
Adena Long – Portland Parks & Recreation (“PP&R”)
Dave Malcolm – Sylvan Highlands Neighborhood Association (“SHNA”)
Heather McCarey – Explore Washington Park (“EWP”)
Billie Moser – Travel Portland (“TP”)
Heidi Rahn – Oregon Zoo (“OZ”)
JC Vannatta – TriMet (“TM”)

Absent

Anna Goldrich – Hoyt Arboretum Friends (“HA”)

Guests

Keith Baich – Explore Washington Park (“EWP”)
LeiLani Barney – Explore Washington Park (“EWP”)
Lisa Christy - Portland Japanese Garden (“PJG”)
Danny Dunn – Portland Parks & Recreation (“PPR”)
Gwen Sullivan – Sparks + Sullivan (“S+S”)
Ryan Sullivan - Sparks + Sullivan (“S+S”)

Welcome & Partner Updates

Vice-Chair Cynthia Haruyama called the meeting to order with a quorum present at 2:01 PM and began with a round of introductions and individual updates.

Cynthia PJG – The organization continues to deal with staffing issues and summer hours with closing time at 6 p.m. will be starting in March. The timed ticketing process for guests is working well. There has been an increase in employee car break-ins. The American Public Gardens Association Annual Conference is scheduled for June 2022 and the primary sponsor is the US Forest Service.

Kathy (AHNA) – The Association is working with the Oregon Zoo on analyzing the viability of bringing back a functioning zoo train. The Association members have also been pulling vines and ivy from the zoo train tracks.

Adena (PP&R) – The Bureau has submitted their budget to City Budget Office of Portland at the end of January. In March they will be involved in City Council Budget work sessions, these will be held in order of priority areas. Since January 1, 2022 PP&R has experienced staff illnesses and many interruptions of program operations that have cost approximately 2,500 hours of lost time in January due to the Omicron variant of COVID 19.

Danny (PP&R) – Vehicle break-ins have increased in the Park and the Park Rangers have increased their presence to curtail this. The final part of Kingston Avenue which needed paving has been completed.

Heidi (OZ) – The Zoo is also dealing with staffing issues. Beginning on February 17, 2022 they will be resuming their normal operating schedule of 7 days a week. There will be a two year pause on sponsoring the summer concert series and they are planning more community nights events which will be smaller and locally focused. They had a great ZooLights season and thanked all who helped in this endeavor.

Joe (WFC) – The WFC has also experienced a break-in as the large front door window to Merlo Hall was shattered. They are preparing to reopen the Discovery Museum and are working towards this happening in June 2022. This entails looking for opportunities to include new exhibits. They are planning opportunities to improve the WFC campus and programs in the future. Event rentals are slowing increasing.

Billie (TP) – This winter experienced low visitation with hotel occupancies on the decrease. The TP staff will be returning to onsite office work in the next few weeks. British Airways is starting year-round nonstop air service from Portland in June 2022 and it seems that international visitors are more positive about Portland than domestic visitors.

JC (TM) – TriMet also continues with hiring struggles and have had to cut 10% of their service. They are working with the City of Portland to improve the city's cleanliness.

Agenda, Minutes and Financial Reports

The Board discussed the consent agenda, October 2021 Board minutes, and the September 2021, October 2021, November 2021, and December 2021 financial reports

Motion: JC Vannatta moved to approve the October 2021 Board minutes, and the September 2021, October 2021, November 2021 and December 2021 financial reports. Steve Seconded. Motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.

Annual Transportation Report

Keith (EWP) shared a presentation highlighting visitor demographics and profiles, peak season visitors and the destinations they visited in the Park. It also included data on where visitors hailed from and the modes of transportation used to get to the Park and move throughout the Park. The report included trends in transportation and attendance, visitor experience and attitudes as well as key takeaways – There were multiple requests for the presentation to be sent in PDF format so that it could be shared within their respective organizations.

Washington Park Brand & Wayfinding Plan Next Steps

Gwen and Ryan (S+S) will schedule one on one meetings with Board Members and key stakeholders to discuss project hopes and fears, desired goals and objectives as well as stakeholder engagement. They presented the project schedule, objectives and stakeholder engagement for consideration prior to seeking approval at the April EWP Board Meeting. They would like to establish a project Advisory Committee and will be asking for volunteers to finalize the committee.

Board and Committee Agenda Calendar – 6 Month Outlook

Heather (EWP) presented an overview of what Park committees are focusing on. These committees include the Board, Board Executive Committee, Marketing Committee, Diversity Equity Inclusion Committee, Transportation Advisory Committee and the Safety and Security Committee. Adena (PP&R) shared concern that the Safety and Security Committee would not inhibit the work of the current Emergency Management Plan (EMP) and not adversely affect the workload of that committee. Heather (EWP) suggested that perhaps it would be good to call it a “work group”. Adena (PP&R) would like to see a charter drafted for this committee. Cynthia (PJG) asked to have a timeline of when to expect the first draft of the EMP. Heather (EWP) has been struggling with what the EMP is covering, gaining clarity on what PP&R would like the EMP to cover as EWP does not manage any other organizations assets. Adena (PP&R) asked to identify what each organization’s EMP is, find the common areas of responsibility and then coordinate between organizations. It was agreed to connect with Danny (PP&R) concerning how to launch a cooperative plan. Joe (WFC) volunteered Chuck Wiley (WFC) to help with this endeavor. Cynthia (PJG) asked to identify issues so that solutions can be identified. Plans that need Board Approval include brand and wayfinding marketing, equity access plan, transportation access plan, parking management tool kit (led by PP&R), and the marketing plan.

Marketing Plan

LeiLani (EWP) shared that as an outcome of Washington Park Strategic Operations Plan Phase One, a One Park Marketing Plan would be created. The purpose of the plan is to provide a unified strategy to guide cohesive, parkwide marketing and communication efforts through a One Park lens over the next five years. The goal is to have the final plan ready for Board approval at the June 2022 Board Meeting.

South End/TriMet Plaza Bathrooms

Heather (EWP) shared the history of the TriMet Plaza restroom maintenance and custodial responsibility. TriMet built the restrooms upon the request of Washington Park partners, and

they are the only public restrooms on TriMet's system. The Oregon Zoo initially maintained them until PP&R took over maintenance in 2016. The agreement between PP&R and TriMet ends in April and PP&R will not renew it. JC (TM) asked why PP&R didn't want to renew. Adena (PP&R) shared that the original arrangement was dependent upon the use of the kiosk and as there is no need to use the kiosk anymore, there is not a need to renew the arrangement. Joe (WFC) asked if the TriMet Plaza restroom maintenance was part of the services included in the Services Plan. Danny (PP&R) shared that the total funds allocated to PP&R for maintenance in 2021 will be reallocated to focus on transportation and parking services. Kathy (AHNA) shared that public restrooms are deemed to be an essential service for our society. Steve (AL) agreed with this observation. Upon being asked, Danny (PP&R) stated that PP&R staff spend about an hour a day during the peak season on maintenance of the restrooms and 30 minutes a day during the off-peak season. Dave (SHNA) queried about the importance of the visitor experience and whether changing the maintenance will make this better or worse. Danny answered a question regarding the bathrooms on the north side of the park, explaining they are currently, and will remain, cleaned and maintained by PP&R. He also offered that OZ has a public restroom available in their plaza.

Two main issues arose from this discussion: restroom maintenance, and PP&R changing the approved Service Delivery Plan without input from the Board. Two potential solutions for the first issue are the use of a portable toilet and handwashing station, or for EWP to pay for a private contractor for restroom maintenance. EWP had collected data regarding cost and found \$40 – 55,000 per year is a realistic cost. This cost is outside of the EWP operating budget. These interim solutions are impacted by the beginning of Park visitation peak season beginning in May. The second issue was PP&R changing the Service Delivery Plan (contractual obligation of 6-party agreement) without Board input. Adena (PP&R) understood this and notified EWP that the lease would not be renewed. A discussion on transparency of process followed and what is owed from the Trust Fund for delivery of services (partnership commitment). A Board meeting discussion will take place to discuss and solve these issues, options will be presented to the Board via email and, if unanimous, EWP will move forward. If it is not unanimous an additional Board meeting (most likely a Zoom meeting) will be scheduled.

Meeting adjourned at 3:58 p.m.

Next Board Meeting is scheduled for April 14, 2022