

# Explore

## WASHINGTON PARK

### Board Meeting

Thursday, April 8, 2021 via Zoom

## Minutes

### Present:

Steve Cole – at large  
Scott Cruickshank – Oregon Zoo (“OZ”)  
Joe Furia – World Forestry Center (“WFC”)  
Kathy Goeddel – Arlington Heights Neighborhood Association (“AHNA”)  
Anna Goldrich – Hoyt Arboretum Friends (“HAF”)  
Cynthia Haruyama – Portland Japanese Garden (“PJG”)  
Jani Iverson – Portland Children’s Museum (“PCM”)  
Adena Long – Portland Parks & Recreation (“PPR”)  
Heather McCarey – Explore Washington Park (“EWP”)  
Billie Moser – Travel Portland (“TP”)

### Absent:

Dave Malcolm – Sylvan Highlands Neighborhood Association (SHNA)  
JC Vannatta – TriMet

### Guests:

LeiLani Barney –EW)  
Jon Bell –TriMet, substitute for JC Vannatta  
Danny Dunn –EWP  
Dana Garrett –EWP  
Antonina Pattiz – PPR  
Colleen Shoemaker – AHNA)  
Gwen Sullivan - Sparks + Sullivan (S+S)  
Ryan Sullivan – S+S

The zoom meeting commenced at 2:02 PM. Anna Goldrich (HAF) chaired the meeting with a quorum present.

### 1. Member Announcements

- Scott Cruickshank (OZ). Scott appreciated the input provided for Zoo Director and they continue to work with Karras Consulting and hope to have a description within a week. The goal is to have a new director at the beginning of their fiscal year, July 1. Polar Passage is open, Nora is back and she’s a crowd pleaser. OZ hopes to have a polar bear friend join her this fall. Primate Forest is open and the chimpanzees have more access. Eight additional chimpanzees are scheduled to arrive this fall. Plans are moving forward to having rhinoceros return; this involves crate training. There will be a virtual launch event for the Primate Forest, it will be online and distributed to partners, clients and stakeholders. Per state guidance regarding the pandemic, we went back to “High Risk”, this is not impacting the OZ as they are operating at a percentage of visitors.
- Jon Bell (TriMet, Senior Manager Customer Experience). Jon is very excited to attend today’s meeting as an alternate for JC Vannatta. He was a Zoo teen at the Metro Washington Park Zoo and has a great love for the Park. TriMet ridership is 50 – 60% of pre-Covid. The recent update of the risk level has TriMet on

alert for what capacity and riders look like. Riders are required to wear masks and frequently use sanitizer. TriMet anticipates the reopening of “Portland Saturday Market” next week and is working with community partners to help this happen. The General Manager survey is complete and is being distributed in efforts to collect data on what the community desires in a general manager. Jon encouraged all to take the survey. The Portland Timbers and Thorns reopened (first live sporting event which TriMet has supplied service for). Providence Park’s capacity is reduced and TriMet added extra service to facilitate safe movement of our riders. The next two months are an opportune time to do construction projects (such as East at Gateway, 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue curb – Banfield). Ridership now since the beginning of the pandemic.

- Cynthia (PJG). The PJG reports staff are beginning to be vaccinated. The café will reopen in May with limited service and seating. The PJG is also able to move the closing time to 6 pm and are hiring staff to accommodate that change. PJG is very excited to be in the process of purchasing a four-acre campus in NW Portland, previously owned by the Salvation Army, to use for education and cultural programs. This location has its own parking and is part of a long-term strategic plan. It will take 6 – 9 months to work through all the contingencies. It is an exciting chapter for PJG.
- Steve Cole (at large). No report.
- Kathy Goeddel (AHNA). AHNA is sponsoring an Arlington Heights “shred” event to encourage members to eliminate goods and possessions. They plan to reach out to OZ to find out what is needed to get the Zoo Train up and running.
- Billie Moser (TP). TP recently met with Team PDX (air service) and can report that transcontinental service to the northeast could return as soon as July. TP hopes that as people are vaccinated they will resume traveling. Delta Airlines has Portland in some of their promotions as does Air Canada. TP hopes to help with this outreach through regional funds. Portland City Council (“Council”) passed the continuation of the 2% base tax for the Tourism Improvement District (levied on hotel and vacation rental stays). There is a temporary increase to 3% for a 5-year period and 2% was voted to be permanent. TP is optimistic that revenue will begin to increase.
- Joe Furia (WFC). WFC is hosting a “Virtual Wildfire Summit” which is a 5-part series that is described as “A Community and Expert Summit on Catastrophic Wildfire in Oregon and Beyond”. Episodes are free and on Wednesdays (April 14, 21 and 28, and May 5 and 12) and open to the public. Contributors include Oregon Senators, Governor Brown and others. WFC observed an uptick in tours and interest with no cancellations, only delays. The Discovery Museum has no plans to open since it is an indoor, child focused experience it is difficult to keep safety protocols during the pandemic. WFC posted a job opening for an Experience Director and are excited about this hire.
- Heather McCarey (EWP). EWP applied for and received a second PPP loan of \$74,552. EWP is in the interview phase for a Visitor Service Specialist and posted openings for Washington Park Field Representatives.
- Adena Long (PPR)
  - Finance Summary: On March 25, PPR submitted Spring Budget Adjustments as part of the City’s Spring Budget Monitoring Process. This submission includes year-end projections for the various bureau funds, making changes to the budget to allow for Levy ramp up and summer programming, and requesting to access contingency funds to cover larger than usual unemployment insurance costs associated with seasonal and casual staff layoffs last spring.
  - Sustainable Future Update: PPR continues its work on financial sustainability and has hired Sarah Huggins as it’s Sustainable Future Manager and Claire Flynn as the Levy Coordinator. In this new position, Claire will work to ensure that the Parks Levy is on course to transparently and effectively deliver on the ballot measure passed by Portland voters.

- Recruitments are underway for five community representatives to serve as the Parks Levy Oversight Committee. A link to the application and recruitment is also posted on the [Parks Levy webpage](#).
- Shelter to Housing Continuum (“S2HC”).
  - On March 17, Commissioners heard testimony from dozens of community members. That hearing was followed by an initial discussion of possible amendments on March 24. Concern about the possibility of temporary shelters being allowed in the Open Space zone dominated the hearing and written comments received by the Council. On Wednesday, March 31, the Council considered and voted on several amendments to the S2HC project. This was the third Council meeting to address the project proposals.
  - On March 31, the Council accepted the following amendments:
    - prohibit temporary outdoor shelters in the Open Space zone;
    - prohibit temporary outdoor shelters in natural area overlays in all zones;
    - a new directive calling for City agencies to examine surplus City property for suitability for transitional shelter accommodations and affordable housing;
    - rewording of Outdoor Shelter definition for clarity;
    - reduce site size standard for outdoor shelters to 3,000 square feet;
    - drop the right-of-way encroachment code element;
    - clarify allowed building mass for congregate structures in single-dwelling zones;
    - clarify outdoor area requirements for congregate structures; and
    - clarify short-term rental occupancy due to removal of household definition.
  - The code update also allows for indoor temporary shelters in buildings in Open Space, such as community centers, for up to 180 days in a calendar year. The Council also voted to extend the state of housing emergency for a 12-month duration, resulting in waiving portions of the Portland Zoning Code. In effect, this would allow indoor and outdoor shelters in Open Space, if they are operated by a non-profit or public agency and approved by the PPR Director through a Non-Park Use Permit.
- Antonina Pattiz (PPR). Washington Park is running smoothly with no issues and higher visitation. Antonina is currently working with Sergio Garcia Vega (Park Maintenance Supervisor) to clean up the Park, prepare for peak season and to get the Park in tip top shape for the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary. She’s working on a project to replace all Park signs.
- Anna Goldsmith (HAF) This week and next are prime weeks to enjoy the magnolia blooms. The parking lot was full today which was wonderful. HAF hired two full-time parks employees to care for 200 acres. One of these positions had been empty for a year and since it was filled in late March it has been amazing. We feel as if we are coming out of the end of storm damage and the beginning of a new year.
- Jani Iverson (PCM). It has been a heart wrenching call to dissolve PCM. The decision to permanently close the PCM is final. We were dedicated to taking care of the children and families of Opal School and hoped to be able to transfer them to a different charter school. As we worked towards this goal we realized the effort and financial support it would require and decided it’s time to dissolve. It has been a challenge of staff and students and families to have something they love come to an end. We are working to find ways to integrate the legacy of PCM into different venues. We are also working with OMSI on different options. There have been social media and community efforts to keep PCM open which has been comforting, however we did not see that support over the last year when asking for funding in the

community. This has been a bit of a disconnect. The building contents are being inventoried and decisions being made on where to distribute the contents.

Anna updated us that the PPR-EWP contract was signed by all parties earlier this week. EWP should receive payment for Q2 invoices in the next 7 – 10 days. Anna specifically thanked Cynthia, Adena, Heather and Antonina in resolving this issue and for participating in the process. Anna mentioned the letter Adena asked to be included with the February 2021 EWP Board Meeting Minutes. Billie thanked everyone for working together to resolve the issue.

## **2. Agenda, Minutes and Financial Reports**

The Board discussed the meeting's consent agenda, February 11, 2021 Board minutes, and January 2021 and February 2021 financial reports.

Joe requested a change to the February minutes and to remove a portion from the consent agenda. Adena wanted to know the impact that the second draw PPP loan on the Parking Trust Fund. Heather asked for clarification and Adena stated that the loan should reduce the impact to the Parking Trust Fund. Anna thought that it possibly could and wondered if this is a separate discussion? Heather suggested that a subgroup be convened for additional discussion as it impacts the Washington Park Transportation and Parking Management Agreement ("WPTPMA") amendment (a.k.a. 6 Party Agreement). Steve (EWP Treasurer) and Adena were invited to participate. The second draw PPP loan does not affect any of the January or February 2021 financial reports.

Motion: Joe moved to approve the consent agenda which included only the November 30, 2020 and December 31, 2020 financial reports, Steve seconded and the motion passed without abstentions.

The Board discussed the February 2021 minutes. Joe requested that the following language replace the minutes concerning his thoughts in the February 2021 EWP Board Minutes.

"Joe, clarifying that he was not serving as counsel for EWP or any other entity and that he had not conducted any legal analysis of the existing contract between EWP and PPR, stated that it would not be uncommon for an entity in a situation such as that described by EWP to send a letter alleging a material breach of contract for failure to pay under this existing contract. Joe expressed the necessity of Adena participating in these negotiations directly and possibly PPR legal counsel if possible."

Heather asked for Joe to read the minutes, which Joe did and then shared the above statement. Anna asked for any further discussion of the minutes.

Motion: Cynthia moved to approve the amended February 11, 2021 Board minutes, Steve seconded and the motion passed without abstentions.

## **3. Washington Park Strategic Operations Plan (WPSOP)**

Heather introduced Gwen Sullivan and Ryan Sullivan (S+S). They shared that today they are presenting information and not taking any votes. Gwen acknowledged all attendees and the progress that is happening with the WPSOP. S+S shared a presentation entitled "One Park".

Washington Park faces many of the same challenges today as in the past 150 years. The plan has a visitor centric vision and the technical elements to support it. Since it is visitor centric this process may produce different results than expected. We worked to identify problems and the opportunities and tools needed to move forward. S+S want to rally the thinking that the Park is a thriving ecosystem with principles that unite everything within. S+S used internal surveys, visitor interviews, the One Park exhibit in January 2021 (which produced 604 post-it thoughts/notes/ideas), meetings with the EWP Board and the One Park Advisory Committee to formulate their thoughts.

Purpose – Why we exist. The purpose of the Park is to connect people with the culture, diversity and wonder of nature. It is built for human relationships and to celebrate the unique qualities of the Park. Nature is the essential unifying element.

Principles – Five principles describe who we are and how we act. Each principle has developed questions to help keep EWP on target and define what words mean in action. These principles have been through many iterations and are helping to shift the focus toward "One Park" which makes many of these principles aspirational.

1. We are caretakers of the natural world. How can we improve the health of our Park and planet? How can we empower visitors to be caretakers?
2. We eliminate barriers that exclude. How can we make visitors feel welcome and safe?
3. We are stewards of exploration. How can we make it easier to explore the Park?
4. We embody the nature the Portland. How can we celebrate and contribute to Portland's unique identity?
5. We are One Park – a community of destinations. How can we reinforce the One Park mental model?

Adena asked to return to the fourth principle “We embody the nature of Portland”. Gwen related that this has a two-part meaning as the Park is a critical piece to the city's identity as well as the Park being representative of Portland. Adena understood the double entendre of the term “nature” and was concerned that others won't understand. Adena doesn't know if the statement standing alone is strong enough to not think that we mean nature as in the natural world or the environment versus the character of Portland. The accompanying paragraph adds clarity, but the statement alone may not be strong enough. Gwen said that it wasn't anticipated that these principles would be public facing.

Priorities – The priorities are to begin with the current and aspirational visitor experience and that there is a need to address the pre-visit, visit and post-visit elements. There are five critical insights that address the entire journey. They are:

1. Many people don't know what Washington Park is or what makes it special. Is it Forest Park or just a big green space?
2. Visitors perceive the Park as neighboring venues rather than a community.
3. The wayfinding, circulation, and entrances are inconsistent and fragmented. This leads to visitor confusion.
4. Quality visitor services require access to venues and are unavailable in the overall Park; for example, food and access to restrooms in all seasons.
5. The current organizational structure doesn't support the future goals and growth of the overall Park. First, we must build capacity of the entire Park in order to fulfill the aspirations of the Master Plan. This is a shift in thinking.

Project Priority Areas – Ryan shared how these five insights addressed a specific project.

1. Identity. Renaming the Park may be a way to support a clear mental model of the Park and its brand identity as well as to clarify the relationships between the venues within the Park. Our current cultural state is very concerned about renaming institutions, sports teams, roads to better reflect communities and this may possibly be the time to consider this. This should be done first as it affects all other projects and is definitely falls under the PPR stewardship.
2. Marketing and Communications. Develop a project to increase awareness, visits and stewardship of One Park. Utilize a Park-wide marketing and membership strategy combined with a black, indigenous and people of color (“BIPOC”) partnership strategy.
3. Access and Circulation. Develop a project to improve wayfinding thereby making it easier to enter and explore the Park. Wayfinding is a critical need and an important Transportation Management Plan component. This needs to refer to the components of the 2018 Master Plan Update. Our current wayfinding state is a broken asset and we must remember that wayfinding has enormous impact to visitor experiences within the Park. A plan could be prepared and when funding is available the plan can be implemented which it could yield immediate positive results. Because the Transportation Management Plan doesn't have immediate capital projects there seems to be no barrier to looking into this option.
4. Visitor Services. Develop a project to provide tools and guidance for the Park-wide visitor experience, possibly evolving the EWP kiosks to a Visitor Center. Develop a project to enhance maintenance of

amenities including the availability of local food purchase options without requiring an entrance fee to a venue.

5. Internal Organization. Develop a project to adapt internal systems to serve future growth and funding possibly embarking on a conservancy model study. A conservancy study is a plan to fund the future vision of the Park and would help to build a sustainable entity.

Steve asked if there have there been studies about renaming the Park. Would it add to the confusion and would the benefit of having a unique name outweigh the confusion? Gwen conducted studies regarding this. Washington Park was named after its original entrance, Washington Street, and this is no longer the case. This process could offer an opportunity to invite many communities to increase ownership of the Park by changing its name. Ryan noted that the process and celebration of renaming the Park is an amazing opportunity to connect with the region.

Adena graciously thanked Gwen and Ryan for their work including the visuals which are helpful in seeing the big picture. She is familiar with public-private partnerships with conservancies and they definitely hold a certain value and are important but is not certain if Washington Park is quite ready for that. Adena appreciates the notion of a further study into a conservancy but is concerned about EWP spending energy on this component rather than other components, particularly the access elements in phase two of the Transportation Management Plan. She wants to think more on this and provide more feedback, especially as it relates to renaming the Park. PPR is investigating a renaming initiative and this is a city-wide conversation. Adena hopes that there would be a cohesive process and that the timing is appropriate. There's been conversations with the Regional Arts Council concerning this. The racial justice work and activity over the last six months propelled that conversation. Adena hopes to use that momentum to make further process. Adena wants to provide written comments to the Board.

Gwen was surprised how much energy the renaming was getting. Adena completed a cursory listing of parks and park assets that could be offensive. Washington Park was not on the list (the Park was named after a street; however, there is consideration for who the street was named for).

Cynthia suggested revisiting the big picture of the Washington Park Strategic Operations Plan as it comes out of the Council's directive for EWP to develop a Transportation Management Plan because access, transportation and circulation were inadequately addressed in the Master Plan. EWP needs to focus on access and working within the existing infrastructure. The Transportation Management Plan was going to illustrate why the Master Plan wouldn't work and this creates a gap between aspirations and what can possibly be achieved. There is a gap and we have to work on building organizational capacity as this is a pathway forward to close the gap. We need to be clear in our report to the Council and on the public record, what the commitment of the EWP Board is in order to ever give reality to the Master Plan (which is the Transportation Management Plan's purpose). It was a capacity issue across different fronts rather than just strictly a Transportation Management Plan that was needed. Cynthia is concerned about a public record regarding a Master Plan that has these major contingencies recorded and what they continue to be. The aspirations of the Master Plan are worth pursuing provided we can build the capacity at the same time.

Heather expressed that everything on the slide presented is related to access and circulation. This is not just a Transportation Management Plan update as it shows that everything affects access and circulation.

Joe asked if Gwen and Ryan would be willing to work on a narrative of this presentation documenting the decision making of the particular solutions and placing this within the context of an implementation plan,

Next Steps – Continue working on the plan together with the advisory committee to refine scopes of work. When does this happen, who is leading it, where is the funding coming from? There's a committee meeting set for early May. Heather wants as many voices as we would like to be on this committee as it is very helpful. All Board members will be made aware and are encouraged to participate.

Adena asked what is the final vote? Does the operations plan become an action plan, work plan, guiding document? We must be very clear what the expectation is for voting and to ensure that EWP has the resources necessary for implementation of the components that are reasonable to expect. EWP will be held accountable to implement. Heather noted this first phase was constructed to establish the principles and needed alignment. The

vote is specifically on phase 2 of the Washington Park Strategic Operations Plan. Adena was interested on how phase 1 is operation wise.

#### **4. Annual Transportation Report**

Danny Dunn (EWP) presented a compilation of results from the annual surveys. Generally, this only includes one conducted survey in August, however there was an additional survey done in February 2020. The report included the following information:

- 2019 was a record year for attendance 1.3 million (June – August). July – August 2020 had a 56% reduction in visitors (a pandemic effect).
- The region of origin of visitors showed they came from the Portland metro area (a pandemic effect).
- There was a surprising the number of Oregon and Washington visitors coming to the Park in January and February which is off-peak season. This showed that off-peak season has promise for growth.
- The largest change was the reduction in attendance. There was also a decrease in first time visitors (a pandemic effect).
- Cross venue attendance revealed that International Rose Garden, Hoyt Arboretum and the Portland Japanese Garden have a close geographical relationship, therefore a high cross venue attendance.
- There was an impactful change is the mode of visits. There were record highs of visitors via automobile and record lows with mass transit (a pandemic effect). There were also less people in each car (a pandemic effect).
- North and South end parking trends revealed the north end exceeding parking sales over the south end for the first time.
- One of the biggest wins was that ratings for the Park increased during the pandemic. The theory is that peak season wasn't crowded, and visitors could park on-site, access venues easier and enjoy them with less people. This was positively affected through venue use of timed ticketing and venue capacity limits. Visitors also could have been more appreciative for opportunities to leave the house during the pandemic.

Jon asked if any data was collected as to why the net promoter score increased. Danny (EWP) didn't gather data on this. Anna appreciated the presentation and explanation of the valuable information and data.

Danny hopes the conversations will continue with venues to make this data more impactful. Some additional fascinating facts – 51% of visitors rely on previous experience, friends or no information when planning their visits. 43% of respondents learned of the Free Shuttle from the survey. The surveys will ask for different tiers and metrics going forward. Danny acknowledged that the loss of the Portland Children's Museum will significantly affect the visitors to the Park. Future data collection will include monthly reports using cell phone data to show visitor trends. EWP plans to apply an equity lens to existing data and future data collection. Off-peak surveys will resume in 2021.

Heather acknowledged Danny's enormous effort to research and produce the report. Joe shared that the interesting thing is the meaning of the data. He would love for Danny to create a "Danny's Things to Watch" narrative to help revisit the important findings of the data. Danny noted TriMet and TP would be great to create a way to partner on more current data. Joe noted we can't manage what we don't measure.

#### **5. Final Thoughts/Questions**

Anna acknowledged the great amount of information discussed at the Board meeting as well as the great amount of work being done.

The next EWP Board Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. The meeting adjourned at 4:00 PM.